

# Archaeological Watching Brief at Elsewhere, Broad Lane, Bishampton, Worcestershire

Worcestershire Archaeology  
*for Elmwood Heritage*  
*on behalf of Styler Homes Ltd*

March 2021



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# ELSEWHERE, BROAD LANE BISHAMPTON WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological watching brief report

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## SITE INFORMATION

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Site name:	Elsewhere, Broad Lane, Bishampton, Worcestershire
Site code:	WSM 71622
Local planning authority:	Wychavon District Council
Planning reference:	17/02151/OUT
Central NGR:	SO 99073 51231
Commissioning client:	Elmwood Heritage
WA project number:	P5546
WA report number:	2899
HER reference:	WSM 71622
Oasis reference:	fieldsec1-380666
Museum accession number:	n/a

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### DOCUMENT CONTROL PANEL

Version	Date	Author	Details	Approved by
1	10/03/2021	Graham Arnold	Draft for comment	Tom Rogers

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# An archaeological watching brief at Elsewhere, Broad Lane, Bishampton, Worcestershire

By Graham Arnold

## Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Elsewhere, Broad Lane, Bishampton, Worcestershire (NGR SO 99073 51231). It was commissioned by Elmwood Heritage on behalf of Craig Styler Homes. Planning permission for the demolition of an existing dwelling and the construction of two houses on the site was granted subject to a programme of archaeological works subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works.

The site lies close to the historic core of the village and the archaeological advisor to Wychavon District Council considered that the development had the potential to have an impact upon heritage assets. It was therefore advised that a watching brief should be maintained on groundworks associated with the development.

The works took place in two separate stages. The footprint of one house in the northwest corner of the property was monitored in November 2019 and a second house footprint in the southeast of the property was monitored in August 2020. In both areas redeposited natural material overly a former topsoil which itself overlay the natural substrate. Due to the lack of any significant archaeology within the monitored areas, it was agreed with the curator that monitoring beneath the demolished building was not required.

No evidence of any pre-20<sup>th</sup> Century use of the site was observed during the works, with only modern landscaping, drainage and services for the current property present.

## Report

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA) in November 2019 and August 2020 at Elsewhere, Broad Lane, Worcestershire (NGR SO 99073 51231). This comprised the observation of a site strip and footings for two houses. The project was commissioned by Elmwood Heritage on behalf of Craig Styler Homes. Planning permission had been granted subject to a programme of archaeological works (planning reference 17/02151/OUT).

The archaeological advisor to the local planning authority considered that the development had the potential to impact upon possible heritage assets.

No brief was provided but a WSI was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA2019) and approved by Aidan Smyth, Archaeology and Planning Advisor to Wychavon District Council.

The watching brief conformed to the industry guidelines and standards set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in the *Standard and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014) and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

#### 1.2 Site location, topography and geology

The site is located on the south side of Broad Lane on the eastern side of the village of Bishampton.

Prior to construction the site comprised of a house called Elsewhere with landscaped gardens to the south and east of the property and a pond in the northeast corner. There are a row of trees along the western boundary of the property, and it is bounded by other residential properties and gardens.

The site slopes northwards from c42m AOD at the south to 38m AOD at Broad Lane.

The underlying geology comprises bedrock of Mercia Mudstone and Charmouth Mudstone formation, with no superficial deposits recorded (BGS 2021).

### 2 Archaeological and historical background

#### 2.1 Introduction

Prior to fieldwork commencing, a search of the Worcestershire HER was completed, covering a search area of 1 km around the site. A summary of the results of this research are presented below.

#### 2.2 Historical Summary

Within the Worcestershire HER there are monument records for the site of an undated enclosure on Broad Lane (WSM02940), Roman settlement (WSM38942), Saxon road (WSM3042), medieval mill (WSM02445), moated sites (WSM03006), ridge and furrow (WSM3033, WSM 3089-91), shrunken village (WSM3031), historic village core (WSM33733) and post-medieval farmsteads and associated buildings and blacksmith's workshop. The site lies opposite a Grade II listed building, Westcote (MWR 18785, WSM 42518), a timber framed building of 17th Century date.

The Portable Antiquity Scheme has recorded finds within the search area which include a Bronze Age spear (WSM65988), Iron Age coin and pottery, Roman brooches and bracelet, Saxon mount and medieval pin and horse harness pendant (WSM 65093).

Archaeological investigations have also recovered a number of artefacts including a Bronze Age flint implement, Roman, medieval and post medieval pottery (WSM 69430), Roman and medieval coins from metal detecting (WSM 25849-51, WSM404085, WSM40486) and a post medieval glass vessel (WSM 35775) in unstratified finds from a garden. These are likely to be stray finds.



### 3 Project aims

The aims of the watching brief 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.

### 4 Project methodology

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2019) and approved by Wychavon District Council. The footprint of one house in the northwest corner of the property was monitored in November 2019 and a second house footprint in the southeast of the property was monitored in August 2020.

In both phases, the ground reduction and foundation trenches for the development excavated across site were monitored by an archaeologist. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under constant archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand.

Observation of excavated areas and foundation trenches was undertaken during and after machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified. Selected areas showing with modern intrusions were cleaned by hand. Access to deep trenches was not made for safety reasons.

Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012) and trench and feature locations were surveyed using a differential GPS with an accuracy limit set at <0.04m.

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

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology.

A copy of the report will be deposited with ADS OASIS for validation with the Worcestershire HER, to disseminate the results. Due to the negative results of the project no further archiving will take place.

## 5 Archaeological results

### 5.1 Trench descriptions

The features recorded in the trench are shown in Figure 2. General photographs of the Phase 1 works are shown in Plates 1-7. Phase 2 works are shown in Plate 8. The trench context inventory is presented in Table 1.

During Phase 1 in the northwest corner of the site the natural substrate of Mercia Mudstone was recorded in the house footing trenches at a depth of 1.00m below ground level. This was overlain by a firm mid orangey brown silty clay relict soil. The relict garden soil was sealed by redeposited grey and yellow clay, used to level the area of the garden, probably following the excavation of the pond to the east. A humic garden topsoil and turf lay over this with modern porcelain, which was not retained.

The only feature observed within the footprint of phase 1 (trench 1 and 2) was a burnt patch in the north eastern corner of the site, from a modern bonfire, with modern ceramics and glass (Plate 2), which were not retained.

The natural substrate had been frequently truncated by modern services for the current property on the site (Plate 6)

During Phase 2 (Plate 8), in the southeast of the site, topsoil comprised a friable dark yellowish-brown clayey silt with occasional rooting. This overlay a compact dark reddish-brown silty clay with frequent

grey blue and yellow clay mottling with modern refuse. This is interpreted as redeposited natural substrate and mixed modern materials from garden landscaping activity, pond excavation and land drainage. Beneath this, a relict topsoil overlay the undisturbed natural substrate.

. No significant archaeological features, finds or deposits were present in this area.

## 5.2 Trench description table

### Phase 1 November 2019 - Trench 1 (site strip) and 2 (house footings)

Context	Brief description	Max depth (m)	Depth from ground surface (m)	Comments
100 / 200	Topsoil and lawn	0.25	0.00	Friable dark greyish brown clayey silt with frequent rooting from trees particularly on western extent due to former row of trees. Occasional white porcelain china and modern brick fragments. Not retained.
101 / 201	Redeposited natural	0.10	0.25	Firm, cohesive greyish yellow clay with occasional gravels, redeposited layer from modern pond excavation
102 / 202	Natural substrate	-	0.35	Mid orange brown silty clay with frequent rooting, occasional gravels and disturbance from bricks
103	Fill of modern burning disturbance	-	0.25	Mixture of black charcoal, red sand and sandstone, bricks, glassware and stoneware jars. Modern made ground from bonfire disturbance
104	Cut for circular scorch mark of made ground	-	0.25	1.50m diameter with 0.75m visible in northeast corner of site strip.
203	Solid Geology	1.50	1.00	Firm red clay natural substrate
204	Solid Geology		1.50 +	Firm and cohesive blue grey clay siltstone and Charmouth mudstone
205	Electric service	0.60		Backfilled with redeposited natural
206	Linear service trench	0.60		Modern service trench
207	Water pipe	0.60		Red sand backfill of service trench
208	Linear service trench cut	0.60		Modern service trench

Table 1: Summary context descriptions

**Phase 2 August 2020 Trench 3 site strip**

Context	Brief description	Max depth (m)	Depth from ground surface (m)	Comments
300	Topsoil and lawn	0.25	0.00	Friable dark yellowish brown clayey silt with occasional rooting. Occasional pebbles and modern refuse. Not retained.
301	Redeposited natural made ground	0.40	0.25	Compact dark reddish brown silty clay with frequent grey blue and yellow clay mottling with modern refuse. Redeposited natural and mixed modern materials from garden landscaping activity, pond excavation and land drainage.
302	Buried topsoil	0.24	0.46	Not fully excavated.
303	Natural substrate	-	0.65	Compact light brownish yellow clay with moderate limestone inclusions. Natural mudstone geology covered by made ground and often heavily truncated by modern landscaping activity.

## 6 Artefactual evidence

Recovery of artefacts was undertaken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event, no artefacts were identified which were considered to be suitable for analysis. All finds were of late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and residual within the garden topsoil so not retained.

## 7 Environmental evidence

Environmental sampling was approached using standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event, no deposits were excavated which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

## 8 Discussion and conclusions

In both areas only features and deposits relating to modern garden landscaping were observed, overlaying the natural clay and mudstone substrate.

Due to the lack of significant archaeological findings within the landscaped garden, the groundworks in the area of the demolished building were not be monitored due to the modern disturbance. No significant archaeology was observed on the site.

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. Conditions were suitable in all of the trenches/areas to identify the presence or absence of archaeological features. It is considered that the nature, density and distribution of archaeological features provides an accurate characterisation of the development site as a whole.

## 9 Project personnel

The fieldwork was led by Graham Arnold PCIfA, assisted by Jamie Wilkins ACIfA.

The project was managed by Tom Rogers, MCIIfA. The report was produced and collated by Graham Arnold. Specialist contributions and individual sections of the report are attributed to the relevant authors throughout the text.

## 10 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for the successful conclusion of this project: Craig Styler (Director, Styler Homes), Shona Robson-Glyde (Elmwood Heritage) and Aidan Smyth (Archaeology and Planning Officer for Wychavon District Council).

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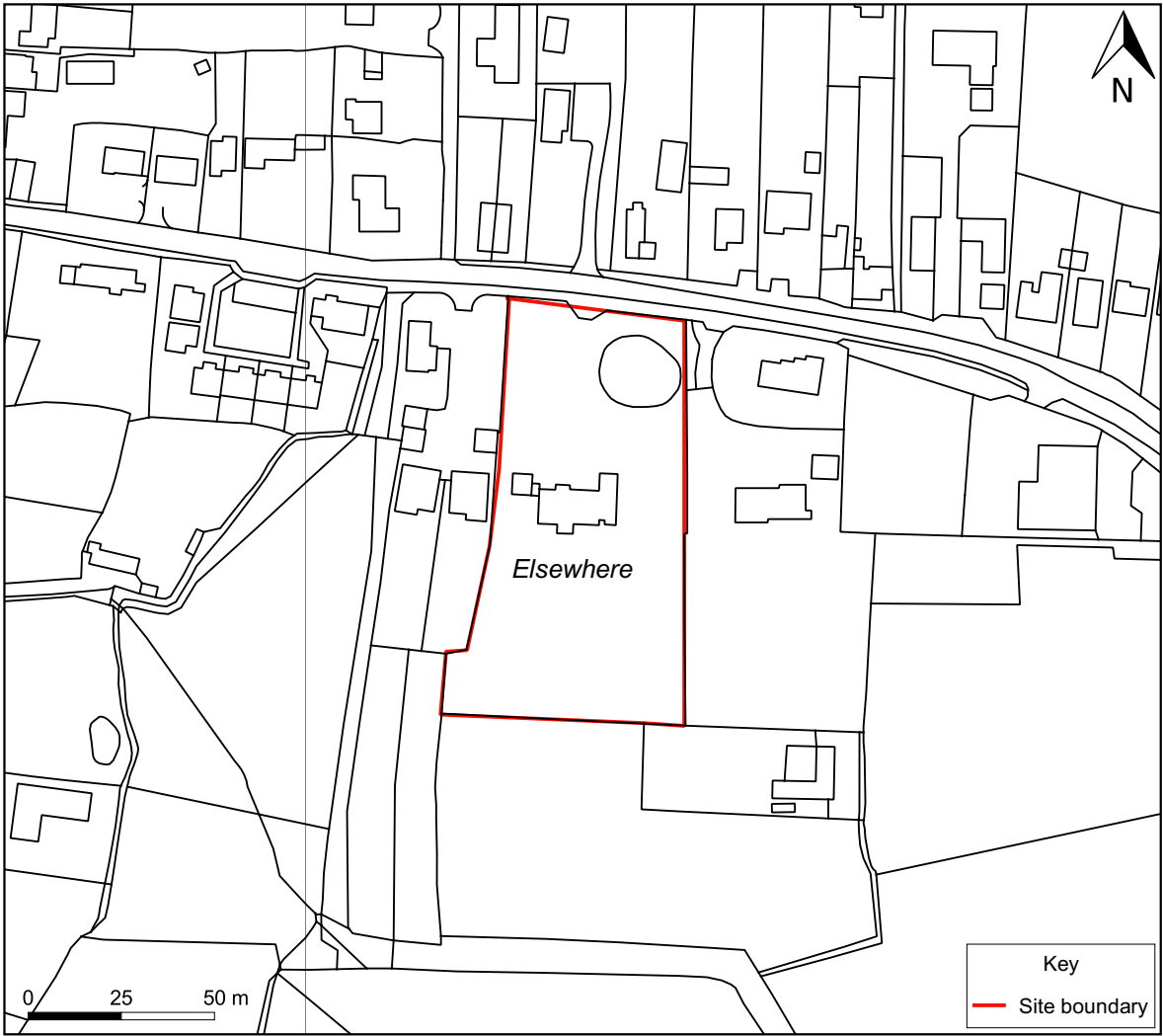
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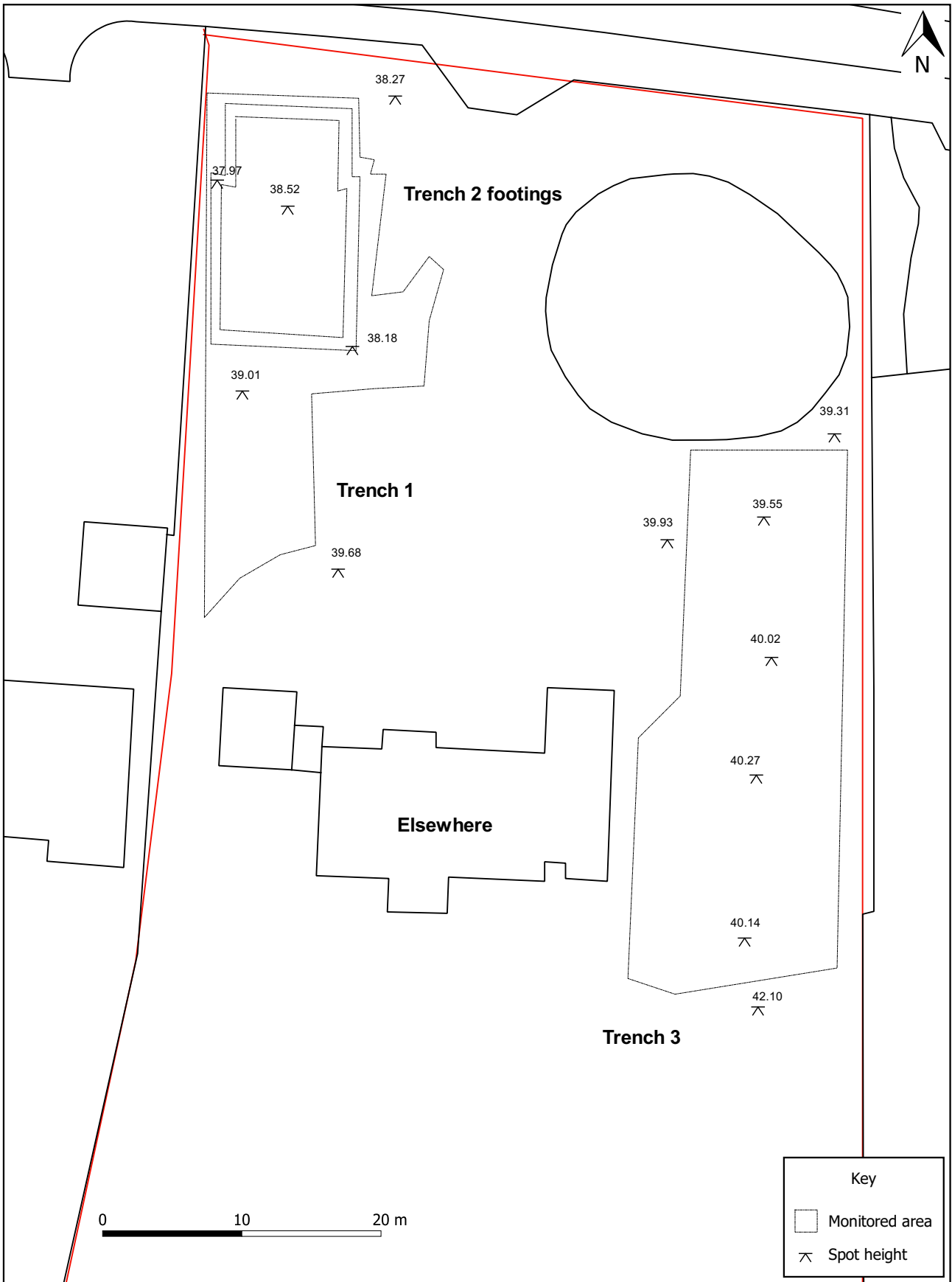
## Figures



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Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location of monitored groundworks

Figure 2

## Plates



*Plate 1: Front garden prior to excavation, looking north*



*Plate 2: Modern bonfire burning in northwest corner of Trench 1 containing glass and stoneware jars.*





*Plate 3: Topsoil strip of trench 1. View north with 1m scales.*



*Plate 4: Example of sample section of footings trench. Looking west with 1m scale*



*Plate 5: House footings, looking south towards existing house and garage.*



*Plate 6: Eastern footing trench showing modern water pipe. Looking north with 1m scales*



*Plate 7: Access area to Trench 1, looking north with 1m scales.*



*Plate 8: Site strip of Trench 3 complete, looking northwest with 1m scales*

## Appendix 1: Summary of project archive

TYPE	DETAILS*
Artefacts and Environmental	None
Paper	None
Digital	GIS, Images raster/digital photography, Text

\*OASIS terminology

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology. A copy of the report will be deposited with ADS OASIS for validation with the Worcestershire HER, to disseminate the results. Due to the negative results of the project no further archiving will take place.

## **Appendix 2: Summary of data for HER**

No significant finds or environmental samples were present on the site.