

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

**ALDERMINSTER KENNELS AND CATTERY,
ALDERMINSTER, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON,**

WARWICKSHIRE

SP 237 479

On behalf of

Ms. S. Jones

JULY 2012

REPORT FOR Ms S. Jones
Alderminster Kennels and Cattery,
Alderminster,
Stratford-upon-Avon,
CV37 8NX

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Summary

A watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during the ground work for redevelopment at Alderminster Kennels and Cattery, Alderminster, Stratford-upon-Avon. No archaeological features were seen.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site lies at NGR SP 237 479 at Alderminster Kennels and Cattery, Alderminster, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 8NX. The underlying geology is on the boarder of Rhaetic Lias and Sandstone (BGS 200).

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission has been granted by the Stratford on Avon District Council for the erection of a two-storey side extension at Alderminster Kennels and Cattery (ref. 12/00199/FUL). A condition was attached requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during groundworks. This is in line with the NPPF and Local Plan policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The proposed development lies within an area of significant archaeological potential. The earliest indications of human activity within 500m are a small group of flints dated roughly from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age (HER MWA6024: SP 2370 4785). Roman activity has also been identified from the same site, this includes an enclosure, linear features and settlement in an area from which field walking has produced Roman pottery (HER MWA3844: SP 2370 4785). This site lies adjacent, but to the south of the A3400. Further areas of linear cropmarks have been identified to the south of the A3400 in Eversfield (HER MWA7312: SP 2358 4789), and further Roman pottery has been reported from Eversfield in a watching brief (HER MWA 8741: SP 23654 47928).

The estate of Alderminster is first historically identified in 972 by the Great Charter of Pershore, where it is accounted amongst the possessions of the abbey or minster of Pershore (VCH 1924, 7-12). At this time the estate is referred to as Sture. It is one of a number of estates in the Stour valley that use this designation; the key indication for identification is its later retention by the abbey of Pershore. This early ecclesiastical arrangement marks Alderminster out with a group of other parishes in the Stour valley (Tredington and Tidmington) which were held by Worcestershire churches and hence led to the inclusion of Alderminster in the historic county of Worcestershire, not Warwickshire. It was only transferred to Warwickshire at a relatively late date.

The name Alderminster is first recorded in the high medieval period as *Aldermanneston* (VCH 1924, 7-12). It is clear from these early records that the present name, which seems to imply that the village was the location of an early medieval church, is misleading. However, the reference to an Alderman, or lay lord's

settlement, would imply that this settlement had an important, but non ecclesiastical origin. Such a settlement is likely to have had an important church, but one which was not a minster or cathedral (top end early medieval churches) but with a possible mother church in its own right. The reference to the Alderman must in theory if not in surviving documentation pre-date the 972 charter when the estate was granted to Pershore Abbey. The manor, or 5 carucates of it, remained with the abbot in 1291 and continued to be held until the dissolution of the monasteries.

In 1560 the manor was granted to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton (VCH 1924, 7-12) and by 1626 had come to Edward Partriche and his wife Catherine (an heiress of the Throckmorton family). The manor remained in the Partriche family until its sale in 1819, and in 1829 the lord of the manor was a Campane of Shennington. In 1868 the manor came to James Robert-West of Alscot Park, it remained with that family until the publication of the VCH.

Two other manors developed in the parish of Alderminster, the earliest identified is Goldicote which has been identified as a 2 hide estate in 1086, while the other is Upthorpe not named until c. 1280, which is believed to have been carved out of the main Alderminster manor (VCH 1924, 7-12). The early indications of the origins of the manor of Goldicote are of interest as this was held by 2 radmen by a knight in the manor of Alderminster. Radman or Radmen are recorded elsewhere (for example Hanbury minster, Worcestershire) where it is apparent that the term is an early medieval one referring to a tithing man. This person is responsible for the claiming and distribution of church tithes. In this case it could be indicative of the influence of the church at Pershore, but as they are associated with a knight in the manor of Alderminster it could be older and an indication of a lay church with earlier localised tithe claims. The present church was appropriated by Pershore in the high medieval period (VCH 1924, 7-12).

Two farm complexes are listed as historical sites with unknown foundations, which are Tithe Farm (HER HWA12371: SP 2336 4829) and Barton Farm (HER HWA12372: SP 2421 4794). The later of these farmhouses is a grade II listed building (HER DWA4724: SP 24198 4790).

Two imperial or industrial sites are catalogued in the 500m radius on the HER. These include the A3400 which is a toll road from Stratford to Andoversford (HER MWA4829: 4300). The aim to build the road was initially set out in an act of 1756, and this was reorganised in 1818. This road runs to the south of the site. There is a cast iron milestone also on the HER (HER MWA5451: SP 2363 4800). The remains of a horse drawn tramway from Stratford-upon-Avon to Moreton-in-the-Marsh ran close to the site (HER HWA10849: SP 2378 4619).

Two pre-First Series Ordnance Survey maps were identified. The earliest of these was a group of farm maps attached to the West Estate dated c. 1835 (WRO CR936/Box 13, plans 2, 5, 6, 7), however, this was only possible if approved by written request. The tithe map was dated c. 1840 (WRO CR 569/2) shows buildings in the locations of the historic farms of Tithe Farm and Barton farm, and also at Upthorne Manor adjacent to Barton Farm. The location of Alderminster Kennel is shown as an open field, an extension of the field to the southeast. The toll road and tramway are shown on the maps.

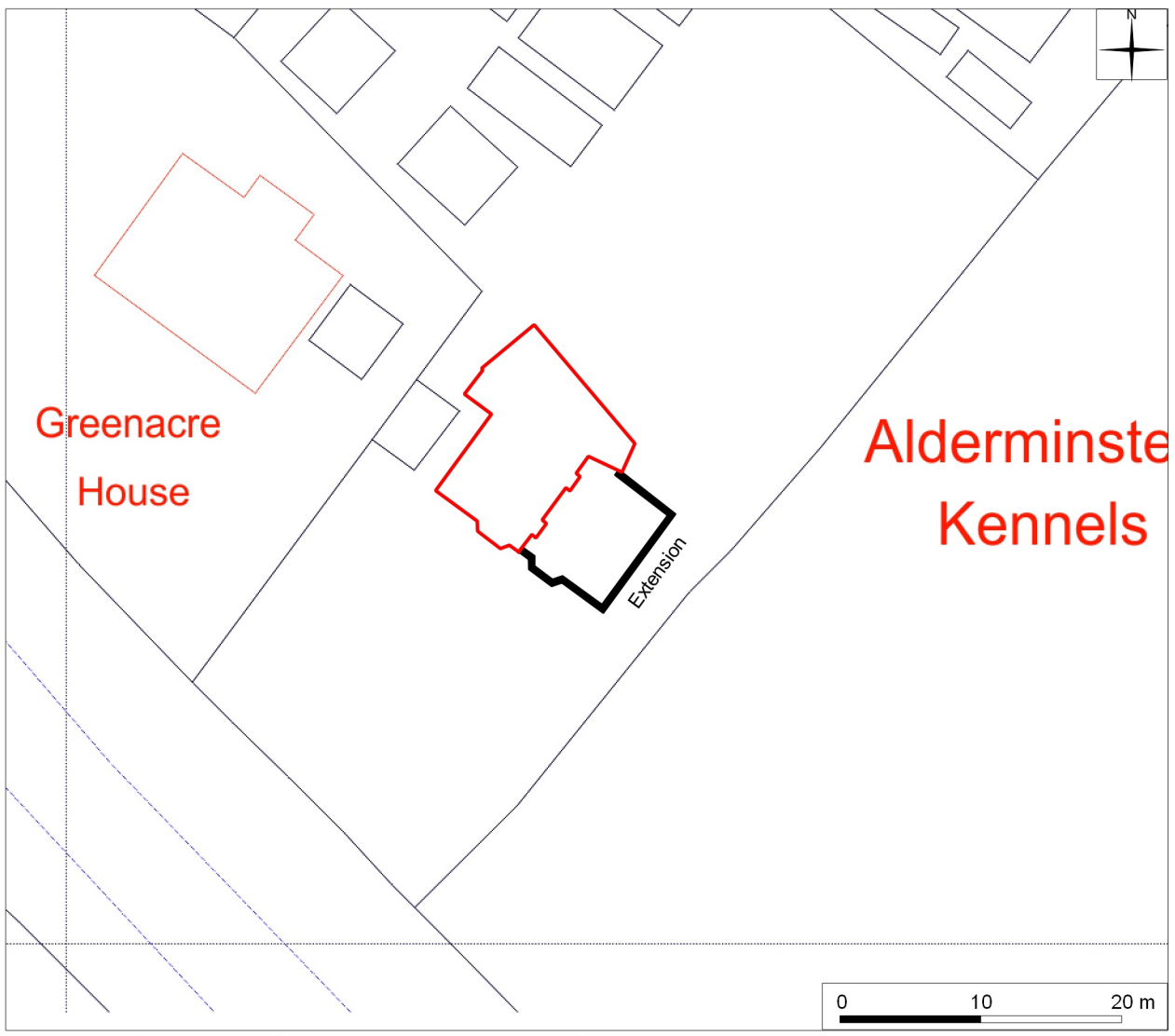
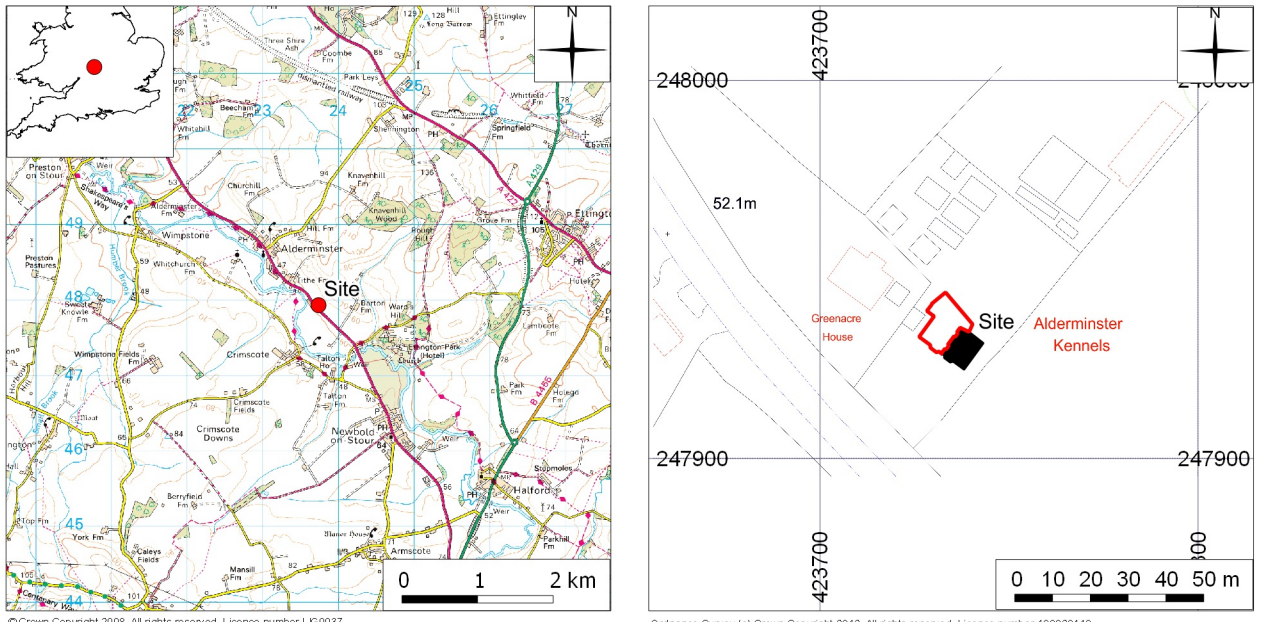


Figure 1. Site location

Four 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey maps were consulted of the area. The open fields of the Tithe map were shown on the maps dated 1885, 1905, and 1923. The map of 1969, drawn to this same scale, is the first to show buildings in the vicinity of Alderminster Kennels. The smaller scale map of 1:10560 dated to 1955 shows the neighbouring Roads Cottage and the Kennels for the first time on any Ordnance Survey map. A construction date from 1923-55 is apparent.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular

- to record the potential for features relating to Roman activity the area.
- to record the potential for features relating to the Saxon and medieval settlement of the area.
- to attempt to assess the status of any late medieval remains encountered

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Warwickshire Museum. Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

3.2 Methodology

All additional groundwork was monitored within the area of the extension. The footing trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator employing a toothless 0.6m ditching bucket.

4 RESULTS

All features were assigned individual context numbers. This number covered both the feature cut and the fill for pits, unless the feature was sample excavated by hand. Context numbers in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material. A general description of the feature fills is given.

The natural geological deposit in the area was a compact brown-orange clay (03), mottled orange-brown in places. This is related to the Lias clays of the area. Above this was up to 0.5m of brown-grey silty clay (02). This deposit appears to represent an accumulation of colluvium due to soil-creep from the nearby hill to the north. Overlying this was the topsoil/garden soil of dark grey-brown clay loam (01) that varied in depth between between 0.1m and 0.2m.

5 FINDS

Three sheds from a flowerpot were noted from the topsoil (01) and not retained.

6 DISCUSSION

No archaeological features or artefacts were recorded.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site records

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Warwickshire Museum.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*.

VCH 1924 *A History of the County of Worcester: volume 4*, pp. 7-12.