ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT: 
WYKEN EXTENDED LEARNING CENTRE, TIVERTON ROAD, COVENTRY, WEST MIDLANDS

Planning Reference: Pre-Planning
NGR: SP 36692 80449
AAL Site Code: COTR 16

Report prepared for Sykes Planning Limited

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number AAL

August 2016
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Cover image: South-eastern elevation of Wyken Extended Learning Centre, looking northwest
Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Sykes Planning Limited to prepare a desk-based assessment to evaluate the archaeological potential of land at Wyken Extended Learning Centre, Tiverton Road, Coventry, in advance of the submission of a planning application for the demolition of former school buildings and the construction of residential housing.

- Data was gathered from a range of primary and secondary sources including a search of the Coventry City Council Historic Environment Record (CCCHER), historic maps and online resources.

- There is a single find of prehistoric date, comprising a stone battle axe fragment found to the southeast of the site, suggesting a negligible archaeological potential.

- There is no evidence to suggest physical activity in the study area between the Roman and early-medieval periods, although place-name data suggests Wyken was established as a settlement during the Anglo-Saxon era.

- Medieval activity is evidenced in the study area by the parish church and two moated sites, although the area appears to have been largely agricultural land during this period.

- Evidence suggests the site remained primarily agricultural land until the construction of the Wyken Extended Learning Centre in the mid-20th century, with the surrounding area developing as a primarily residential area during the early-20th century.

- Based on the available evidence, the potential for sub-surface archaeological remains to be affected by the proposed development is negligible.
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Sykes Planning Limited to prepare a desk-based assessment to evaluate the archaeological potential of land at Wyken Extended Learning Centre, Tiverton Road, Coventry in advance of the submission of a planning application for the demolition of former school buildings and the construction of residential housing.

1.2 The document has been completed with reference to current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists ‘Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment’ (CIfA 2014), the Historic England documents ‘Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning’ (Historic England 2015a), ‘Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment’ (Historic England 2015b), and the West Midlands Regional Research Framework (Watt 2011).

2.0 Site Location and Description

2.1 The proposed development site (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’) is located in Coventry, in the administrative district of Coventry City Council. It is situated 5km east of the centre of Coventry and 31km southeast of Birmingham. The site is approximately 0.98ha and presently occupied by a former educational centre. The site is centred at NGR SP 37312 79789 and is approximately 77m above Ordnance Datum.

2.2 The bedrock geology comprises sandstones, siltstones and mudstones belonging to the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation laid down between the Early Triassic Epoch and Anisian Age, with superficial silty clay and peat alluvium deposits laid down during the Holocene Epoch (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritian/home/html).

3.0 Planning Background

3.1 This desk-based assessment has been prepared to inform a planning application that will be submitted in due course for the demolition of former school buildings and the construction of residential housing. This is the first stage of archaeological investigation, intended to provide detailed information that will allow the planning authority to make an informed decision as to whether further archaeological investigations will be required prior to or following the determination of a planning application for the proposed development.

National Planning Policy

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on the 27th March 2012 (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012) and supersedes Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010).

3.3 The relevant sections of the NPPF (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012) concerning archaeological and cultural heritage assets, are Paragraphs 58 and 61 of ‘Section 7. Requiring good design’, and Paragraphs 126-141 of ‘Section 12. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’. Paragraph 128 has special relevance concerning the responsibilities of planning applicant:
3.4 Paragraph 128 ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’.

Local Planning Policy

3.5 The Preliminary Coventry Local Plan was submitted for approval in April 2016 and is currently the enforcement on planning to guide the area’s future development (Coventry City Council 2016). The Local Plan documents refer to the National Planning Policy Framework throughout, and refer to that document where specific provision is not made in local policy.

3.6 The relevant policies of the Coventry City Council Local Plan concerning archaeological and cultural heritage assets are DE1 and HE2:

Policy DE1 – Ensuring High Quality Design:

‘1) All development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area.

2). The setting, integrity and character of heritage assets will be protected in accordance with Policy HE2.

3). All development will be expected to meet the following key principles:

   a) Respond to the physical context of the site;

   b) Consider the local distinctiveness and identity of the site but also have regard to opportunities to enhance the local built and natural environment through new development and enhanced design;

   c) Where appropriate, retain and incorporate into the layout the protection of important views, including key views of the three spires;

   d) Preserve or enhance the character and setting of the historic built, landscape and where appropriate archaeological environment;

   e) Preserve or enhance the character and setting of major road, rail and canal corridors;

   f) Clearly define the boundaries between public and private spaces and enclosure of space;

   g) Provide attractive, safe, uncluttered, active and easily identifiable, high quality public spaces;

   h) Make places that inter-connect and are easy to move through;
i) Ensure places are easily understood by users, with clear routes and distinct physical features;

j) Seek high quality design and attention to detail in the layout of developments, individual buildings and infrastructure in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term, but over the lifetime of the development;

k) Be adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions and ensure that developments maximise the use of the site;

l) Promote diversity through mixes of uses within a site or building, which work together to create vital and viable places;

m) Be proactive in responding to climate change and adopt sustainable and low carbon construction principles in terms of their design, layout and density;

n) Consider green infrastructure at the earliest stage in the design process, to ensure that it is well planned, designed, managed and maintained. It should also be well integrated and serve multiple purposes (as appropriate);

a) Minimise adverse impact on important natural resources;

p) Conserve, restore or enhance biodiversity; and

q) Respect and enhance landscape quality including trees, hedges and other landscape features of value.’

Policy HE2 – Conservation and Heritage Assets:

‘1) In order to help sustain the historic character, sense of place, environmental quality and local distinctiveness of Coventry, development proposals will be supported where they preserve and, where appropriate, enhance those aspects of the historic environment which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic, landscape or townscape significance. These Heritage Assets include:

a) Listed Buildings and Locally Listed buildings;

b) Conservation Areas;

c) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological sites;

d) Registered Parks and Gardens; and

e) Other places, spaces, structures and features which may not be formally designated but are recognised as significant elements of Coventry’s heritage and are positively identified on the Coventry Historic Environment Record.

2) Proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset or its setting should demonstrate an understanding of such significance using currently available evidence.

3) Development proposals involving heritage assets in general and listed buildings in particular, should acknowledge the significance of the existing building and the area by means of their siting, massing, form, scale, materials and detail.
4) The sympathetic and creative re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged, especially for heritage that is considered to be at risk, so long as it is not damaging to the significance of the heritage asset. The embodied energy present in historic buildings contributes to sustainability.

5) The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the preservation of buildings and other heritage assets that are deemed to be at risk by the national and local heritage at risk registers.

6) Demolition or destruction of heritage assets will be resisted; proposals to demolish a heritage asset will therefore need substantial justification. The greater the damage to the significance of the asset, the greater the justification required and the public benefit needed to outweigh such damage.

7) All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce the special character and preserve the following distinctive historic elements of Coventry:
   
a) The surviving buildings, defences and street plan of the medieval city centre and its suburbs;

b) The surviving pre-industrial settlements and landscape features which have been subsumed by the expansion of the city such as Walsgrave, Canley, Binley, Brownshill Green, Coundon Green, Little Heath (Spring Road), Stivichall Croft and Lower Eastern Green (at Dial House Lane);

c) The wider Arden rural environment on the fringe of the city comprising field-systems, ancient woodlands and commons which developed over centuries; interspersed with a mix of settlements, farmsteads and smallholdings;

d) Buildings associated with the city’s industrial heritage; ribbon weaving, cycle making, motor car manufacturing, brick making, coal mining, synthetic textiles, munitions, aeronautical engineering, canals and railways;

e) The Victorian and Edwardian suburbs such as Earlsdon and Stoke;

f) Designed landscapes, including historic parks and gardens (both registered and locally listed), historic cemeteries, churchyards and public parks;

g) The significant elements of Coventry’s ground-breaking post-war reconstruction including its plan, built form, public art works and public spaces; and

h) Archaeological remains of all periods from the earliest Prehistoric human habitation to the modern industrial period.

8) Where material change to a heritage asset has been agreed, recording and interpretation should be undertaken to document and understand the asset’s archaeological, architectural or historic significance. The scope of the recording should be proportionate to the asset’s significance and the impact of the development on the asset. The information and understanding gained should be made publicly available, as a minimum through the Coventry Historic Environment Record.”
4.0 **Methodology**

*Data Collection*

4.1 A full range of primary and secondary archaeological and historical sources were consulted in the preparation of this document. The sources consulted were as follows:

- Coventry City Council Historic Environment Record (WHER) – a database of archaeological sites and artefacts, listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments. A search of this resource was undertaken for a study area extending 1km from the centre of the site.

- Warwickshire County Record Office – holds a range of historic maps, for example enclosure maps, Tithe maps, estate plans, and former editions of Ordnance Survey maps of the development area.

- Allen Archaeology’s own reference library – secondary sources pertaining to the archaeology and history of the region.

- Heritage Gateway Website – searchable online resource allowing access to the National Monuments Record (NMR) and Archaeology Data Service (ADS), online national databases of archaeological sites and artefacts. Also includes information pertaining to Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings, as well as data from the Defence of Britain project, which has mapped surviving monuments relating to 20th century military sites. A search was conducted of these resources to identify any significant buildings, sites or findspots not covered by the WHER search, and to highlight other major sites within a wider study area.

- A site visit was carried out on Tuesday 19th July 2016 in order to assess the present situation of the development area, to identify any areas where the potential archaeological resource may be particularly well preserved or damaged by recent development, and to observe the site in its landscape context.

4.2 Each archaeological and historic site and Listed Building identified in the study area has been allocated a one or two digit ‘Site’ number and assigned to a specific period according to the definitions outlined on the English Heritage Periods List (formerly the RCHME Archaeological Periods List). These sites are described in the Archaeological and Historical Background section (See Section 5.0 below). Further details are provided for each site in Appendix 1, and where applicable the sites are depicted on Figure 3.

5.0 **Archaeological and Historical Background**

5.1 There is a single find spot dating from the prehistoric era, comprising a stone battle axe fragment discovered in the area of Arch Road and Ansty Road, c.0.46km southeast of the proposed development area (Site 1). There is no evidence for Roman activity in the study area.

5.2 Despite there being no physical evidence of activity dating to the early medieval period within the study area, the name Wyken is likely to have derived from the Old English ‘wic’, meaning a collection of buildings for a special purpose, such as a dairy farm (Watts 2004). The origins of the
name Coventry also derive from Old English, meaning ‘Cofa’s tree’, taken from an Old English personal name and ‘treow’, meaning tree or a large piece of wood.

5.3 Additionally, Coventry is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 as a very large settlement of 69 households, with a population of 50 villagers, 12 smallholders and taxable assets of five geld units, a mill, 4 leagues of woodland and 20 ploughlands (Williams and Martin 2002). There is no mention of Wyken in the Domesday Survey as a separate settlement, although the CCHER entry for the settlement suggests it was first mentioned during the early 12th century, when the Church of St. Mary Magdalen was granted to Coventry Priory by the Earl of Chester (Site 2). The Church of St. Mary Magdalen, a Grade I Listed 12th century construction that was heavily restored in 1886, is situated c.0.23km north of the proposed development area (Site 3).

5.4 Caludon Castle, a moated site and associated water management system, occupied since at least the 11th century, is located c.0.74km southeast of the proposed development. The Grade I Listed remains of a sandstone wall are the only evidence of any buildings left on the site, which originated as a large house before being restyled following crenellation in 1305 (Site 4). Roughly 190m south of Caludon Castle lies an additional moated site, with a moated mound and several naturally silted ditches (Site 5).

5.5 The principal estate of Wyken, which began to be called a manor in the 14th century, was owned by the Langley family and situated c.76m northwest of the proposed development area, whilst a deer park also associated with the family was located c.0.13km southwest of the site (Sites 6 and 7). There is evidence of a former watermill held by Nich de Segrave, Lord of the Caludon estate, to the north of the proposed development, although the exact location is not known (Site 8).

5.6 It appears the region was primarily agricultural land during the post-medieval period, which is indicated by entries within the Coventry City Council Historic Landscape report that details extensive enclosed fields and woodland throughout the search area, including land that occupied the northern area of the current site. Development was therefore scarce during this period, the only entries of this date in the study area being two early 17th century farmhouses located between c.0.49–0.78km north of the site (Sites 9 and 10).

5.7 Although there are no HER entries related to the modern period, the 1906 and 1925 Ordnance Survey maps highlight the continuation of the agricultural nature of the development into the modern period. On both maps the site occupies an area that extends across three open fields, and there is very little development visible in the wider region (Figures 4 and 5). To the east there is a large undated cropmark, also shown by aerial photographs, which may suggest former settlement activity (Site 11). By 1938 there has been extensive residential development to the southwest of the site where numerous blocks of terraced housing are shown, alongside the construction of a network of roads to connect the growing population of the suburbs with the city of Coventry. The site remains within the same three fields as the previous maps (Figure 6).

5.8 An archaeological evaluation in 2008 at Lyng Hall School, c.0.59km northwest of the site, revealed no archaeological remains, although evidence for extensive terracing relating to the construction of the school buildings and sports facilities, alongside occasional traces of World War Two military occupation were noted (Site 12).

5.9 The Ordnance Survey map of 1952 indicates the current site buildings have yet to be developed. There is however significant further development in the area, with terraced housing to the south, east, west and northwest of the site. West of the site a large complex of buildings annotated as the St. John Fisher School are now present (Figure 7).
6.0 Site Visit

6.1 The site was visited by the author on Tuesday 19th July 2016. Selected photographic images taken during the site visit are included in the text and their locations indicated on Figure 2.

6.2 The site comprises the grounds of a former educational centre, occupied by a large modern single-storey irregularly shaped building with associated outbuilding, and an area of grassland to the north.

6.3 The main site building is constructed of concrete blocks with a hipped corrugated metal roof over the central part of the building and single storey flat-roofed units at the four corners (Plate 1). The main entrance is to the south beneath a metal canopy extending from the roofline (Plate 2).

Plate 1: Flat roofed elements at northwest of building, looking southeast

Plate 2: Main entrance on south of building, looking north
6.4 There is a large single-storey rectangular porta cabin style outbuilding to the west of the main centre (Plate 3). Immediately north of the central building there is an asphalt playing area, enclosed within high modern wooden and steel mesh fencing (Plate 4).

Plate 3: Outbuilding to the west of the centre, looking southwest

Plate 4: Asphalt playing area within metal and wooden fencing, looking northwest

6.5 To the north of the playing area, there is a large open area of overgrown grassland and trees sloping down away from the buildings (Plate 5). Immediately south of the centre there is an additional area of overgrown grassland (Plate 6). The south-eastern corner of the site is occupied by a large asphalt area used for car parking (Plate 7).
Plate 5: Overgrown grassland area to north of centre, looking southeast

Plate 6: Overgrown grassland area to south of centre, looking east
6.6 The site is bordered by terraced and detached residential housing to the north, east and south (Plate 8), with Tiverton Road running along the southern site border providing vehicular access (Plate 9). To the west there is a primary school, although large hedgerows along the western site border inhibit intervisibility with the site.
7.0 Constraints

7.1 There are no Registered Parks and Gardens or Battlefields within the study area.

7.2 There are two Scheduled Monuments within the study area, both to the southeast of the proposed development. Caludon Castle, a medieval moated enclosure, is situated c.0.68 km southeast of the site (HE Ref: 1014044). A further c.0.16 km south lies an additional moated site, consisting of an island with naturally silted ditches (HE Ref: 1014045). Neither of these assets are visible from the site due to intervening residential development.

7.3 There are four Listed Buildings within the study area, of which the aforementioned remains of Caludon Castle are attributed a Grade I protected status. The Grade I Listed Church of St. Mary Magdalen, a 12th century construction restored in 1866, is situated c.0.23 km north of the proposed development, beyond several rows of residential housing and enclosed within a hedged area. Both assets have no intervisibility with the site, and therefore the impact of the proposed development is negligible.

7.4 The other two Listed Buildings are the Grade II 17th century timber framed Manor farmhouse (HE Ref: 1076611) and red brick Green Farm farmhouse (HE Ref: 1116101), between c.0.53–0.87 km north of the site. There is no intervisibility between the site and these heritage assets.

8.0 Discussion and Conclusions

8.1 Activity from the prehistoric era is evident within the study area through a battle axe artefact revealed during groundworks, in the area of Antsy Road. The singular find is unlikely to be indicative of settlement activity, and therefore the archaeological potential of this period is negligible within the study area.
8.2 There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development area or wider region was subsequently occupied during the Roman or early-medieval periods, although place-name origins suggest Wyken was an established settlement during the Anglo-Saxon era.

8.3 Activity within the study area increased during the medieval period, with the construction of St. Mary Magdalen church in the early 12th century, and the development of a former manor into Caludon Castle and an associated moated site and water management system. A watermill, deer park and additional moated site highlight the agricultural focus of the study area during this period.

8.4 The agricultural focus of the area continued into the post-medieval era, indicated by areas of enclosures, field systems and woodlands listed in the Coventry City HER Landscape report. Other than the construction of several 17th century farmhouse, the area continued to be principally undeveloped agricultural land until the early 20th century, when the focus shifted from entirely on farming and to cater for the growing commercial and residential requirements of nearby Coventry.

8.5 The proposed development will be located on land that until the construction of the Wyken Extended Learning Centre was open fields. There is limited evidence indicating the potential for sub-surface archaeological remains within the site itself. Furthermore, given that the surrounding area has been heavily developed with residential buildings, an adjacent school, and a convoluted infrastructure network, the archaeological potential within the study area remains minimal.

9.0 Acknowledgements

9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Landmark Planning on behalf of Brayford Estates Limited for this commission.

10.0 References


Coventry City Council, 2016, *Coventry City Council Local Plan*, Coventry: Coventry City Council.


**Cartographic Sources**
1906 Ordnance Survey map (Warwickshire Archives)
1925 Ordnance Survey map (Warwickshire Archives)
1938 Ordnance Survey map (www.promaps.co.uk)
1952 Ordnance Survey map (www.promaps.co.uk)
### Appendix 1: List of CCCHER Entries within a 1km search area

<table>
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<th>Site No.</th>
<th>HER No.</th>
<th>Grade &amp; Listing No.</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MCT631</td>
<td></td>
<td>437100</td>
<td>280200</td>
<td>Prehistoric battle axe fragment found in the area of Arch Road and Antsy Road, Wyken.</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MCT1018</td>
<td></td>
<td>436680</td>
<td>280770</td>
<td>Medieval settlement of Wyken. First mentioned early C12th when it was granted to Coventry Priory by Earl of Chester. Began to be called manor in C14th, although no evidence that village or hamlet were around the church. Early in the C19th there were 2 or 3 minor buildings and a plot on which the former vicarage may have existed, before enclosure.</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MCT971</td>
<td>1076583, I</td>
<td>436670</td>
<td>280760</td>
<td>C12th Church of St. Mary Magdalen, restored in 1866.</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1076645, I</td>
<td>437386</td>
<td>280163</td>
<td>Caludon Castle: a moated site and part of an associated water management system. Site occupied since at least C11th, with original building a large house that was restyled as a castle following crenellation in 1305, and later rebuilt in mid C14th, with additions during post medieval period. Now a ruin, all that remains is a sandstone wall.</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>437404</td>
<td>279961</td>
<td>Moated site 190m north of Caludon Castle. Moated island and naturally silted ditches.</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MCT1060</td>
<td></td>
<td>436600</td>
<td>280600</td>
<td>Principal estate began to be called manor in the C14th. Langley family probably had a house near field called Halffurlong and a small park to the south of the church.</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MCT1059</td>
<td></td>
<td>436500</td>
<td>280400</td>
<td>Possible site of a medieval deer park associated with the Langley family.</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>MCT1058</td>
<td></td>
<td>436700</td>
<td>280800</td>
<td>Wyken watermill. Literary source says it was held by Nich de Segrave Lord of Caludon estate. Exact location not certain</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1116101, II</td>
<td></td>
<td>436271</td>
<td>280899</td>
<td>C17th red brick 2 storey farmhouse.</td>
<td>Post-medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1076611, II</td>
<td></td>
<td>436971</td>
<td>281349</td>
<td>Early C17th timber framed and nogging farmhouse.</td>
<td>Post-medicinal</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>MCT834</td>
<td></td>
<td>437000</td>
<td>280400</td>
<td>Cropmarks shown through aerial photograph suggest a settlement site.</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>MCT2487</td>
<td></td>
<td>436112</td>
<td>280799</td>
<td>Trial trenching at Lyng Hall School, Blackberry Lane, revealing evidence of extensive terracing for the construction of the school, with occasional traces of World War Two military occupation. No other archaeological remains.</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
</tr>
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Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code: COTR 16

Scale:
1:10,000,000
1:1,000,000
1:25,000 @ A4

Drawn by: J Johnson
Date: 22/07/16
Figure 2: Position and direction of site visit photographs with site outlined in red (base plan provided by client)
Figure 3: Location of Coventry City HER entries within a 1km search radius with site outlined in red
Figure 4: Extract of 1906 Ordnance Survey map with site outlined in red
Figure 5: Extract of 1925 Ordnance Survey map with site outlined in red
Figure 6: Extract of 1938 Ordnance Survey map with site outlined in red
Figure 7: Extract of 1952 Ordnance Survey map with site outlined in red