

Wirksworth Archaeological Society
President: Dr Bill Bevan

FIELD EVALUATION METHOD

SURVEY OF THE MEADOWS,
OFF SUMMER LANE, WIRKSWORTH, DERBYSHIRE, DE4 4EB

DATE AND TIME

To be confirmed for dates in spring and summer 2020

FOR

WIRKSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

PROJECT ORGANISER

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INTRODUCTION

The Wirksworth Archaeological Society (“WAS”) launched a project “The Wirksworth Roman Project” on the 15th July 2006 which was a project funded by the Derbyshire Community Foundation to search for evidence of Roman activity in and around Wirksworth in Derbyshire and feed any finds or discoveries into the Victoria County History, the Derbyshire Archaeological Society and other local history and archaeology streams.

The WAS follow the Standards and Guidance Procedures laid down by the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Appended to this document is a Risk Assessment and a Site Safety Brief. The site at Wirksworth (owned by Wirksworth Town Council, whose permission was sought and granted) was visited on the 18th of December 2019 and it was felt that the field was of sufficient interest to warrant a survey.

The field is at NGR SK 2849 5374 and consists of a single open meadowland field, the last remaining field of a number of fields historically called the Meadows which lay on the west side of St John’s Street and on the north side of Summer Lane at Wirksworth, a historic market town in the Peak District.

The purpose of this survey is to properly record the field and seek to identify whether any archaeological remains or other features might or might not be associated with it, and to document the findings and disseminate them as necessary, lodging a report with the Town Council and county bodies. It is neither an intrusive nor substantial survey and can be regarded as providing an overview to inform decision making.

THIS PROJECT

The purpose of the work is to:

1. Record the field at the Meadows
2. Evaluate by a walkover, and minimal investigative work, whether there is any archaeology in the field
3. Make recommendations to the Town Council based on any findings.

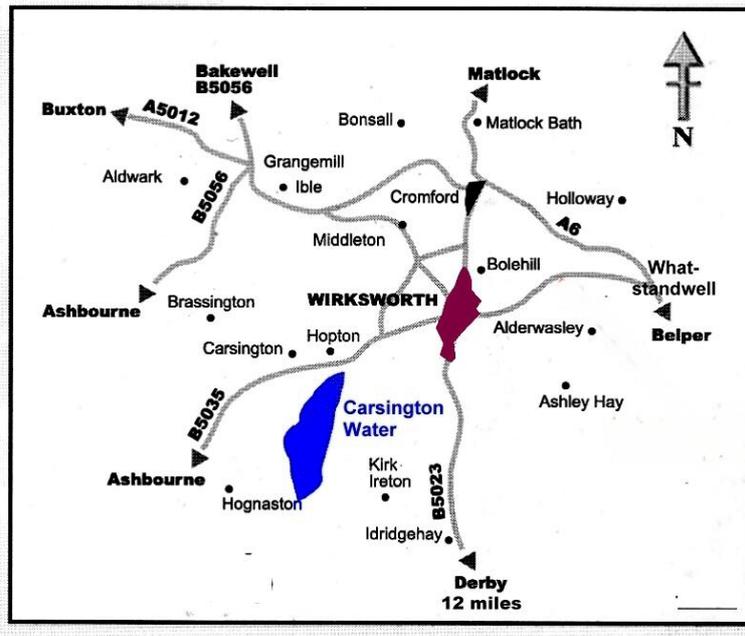
THE SITE

Location: The Meadows, off Summer Lane, Wirksworth, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 4EB

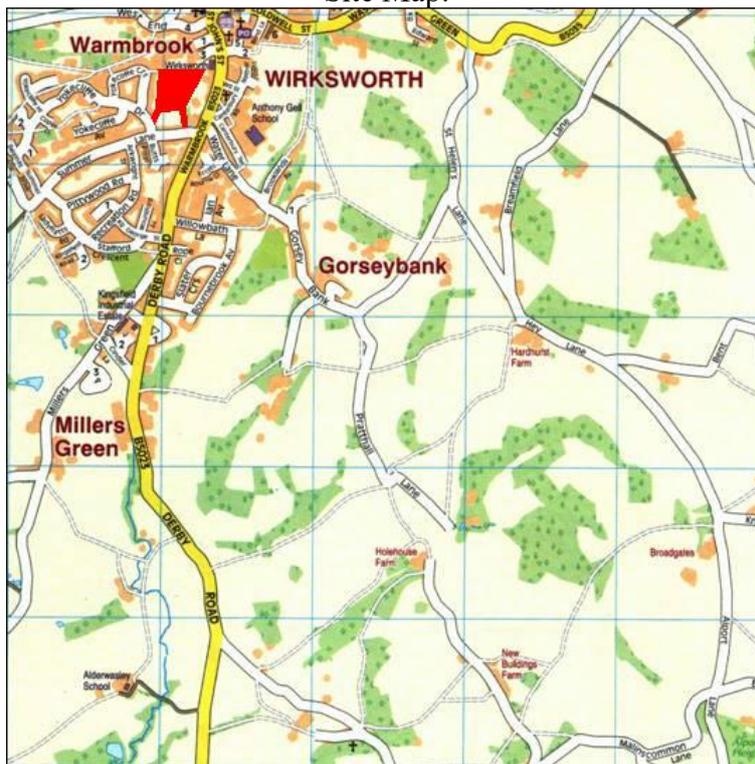
Grid Ref: SK 2849 5374

Owners: Wirksworth Town Council.

Location of Wirksworth:



Site Map:



The Meadows Field highlighted in red on the above map.

Picture of the field:



THE WORK

We proposed to survey, measure and record the field and any features in it which might perhaps represent archaeology, this might, for example be in form of Ridge and Furrow ploughing; ditches; possible building platforms or other features. There are no buildings mapped in this field on any map going back to the earliest extant map of Wirksworth from 1709, but visibly there are ditches and former watercourses in the field. There are no above ground archaeological remains in the field or nearby, although recent evaluations of St John's Street determined that the street was medieval in origin and there have been small pottery and limited other finds in gardens on the west side of St John's Street, which back onto the Meadows field itself.

METHOD

The site will be marked out and grid references taken. The field will be walked, mapped, measured and photographed. Electronic survey means (geophysics) will be used where appropriate including but not limited to magnetometry or resistivity. Should the geophysics or visual survey suggest any features requiring investigation an auger survey will be carried out and only then would small test pits be considered - it is not intended that this is in any way to be a full investigation, it is a limited survey to quantify if the field is anything other than pastureland or has been so in the past.

A work diary will be kept of the progress of this work. Any finds and their positions will be accurately recorded and a scale drawing made if anything is found. If any incidental finds occur during fieldwalking, these will be properly recorded and reported. Any finds will be lodged either in the Society Archive or with the Wirksworth Heritage Centre. The Officer in Charge and a colleague will be on site from 09.30, but volunteers should attend at 10.00 am to give us time to lay out the site without interference.

It is intended that there would be two weeks (14 days) of actual survey work within a given time frame, for example within a time frame of 1st May to 30th June 2020. These may not necessarily be consecutive days (it depends on volunteer availability). We note that the Lidar survey of the Meadows appears to show various

features and should these require more detailed or specific surveys themselves we may have to ask for more time.

COMPLETIONS

The site will be returned to its normal grassland state as can be achieved (that is to say any auger holes or test pit will be immediately refilled, nothing will be left overnight). All equipment will be removed and the site checked for litter. Finish time will be 16.00. Any artefact of local interest will be conserved, if possible, and rendered for public display at the Wirksworth Heritage Centre. Copies of the report will be passed to the County Archaeologist; the County Local Studies Library at Matlock, Derby Museum and Wirksworth Heritage Centre.

OFFICER IN CHARGE

The Officer in Charge shall be Anton Shone. Staff (volunteers) will include such members of the Wirksworth Archaeological Society (WAS) who wish to assist. This does not preclude members of other archaeological societies, the landowners, or members of the public, from attending to observe.

HEALTH, AND SAFETY

A Risk Assessment is attached. All risks are low. The field is laid to pasture. The Society holds its own Public Liability Insurance.

Staff (this being any volunteer who is participating in any way) should wear appropriate clothing and boots, as the field tends to be damp. There will be an introductory briefing at 10.00 am about what we will be doing and this will also cover safety and hygiene issues. A first aid kit will be provided on site. Staff attending will sign in and out of the diary and will be given a copy of Site Safety Brief. Members of the public will not normally be allowed beyond a given tape into any active survey area (the magnetometry grid are laid out on small tent pegs that have to stay in place when the electronic equipment survey takes a couple of hours. Staff should keep themselves well fed and refreshed, and should bring a flask and sandwiches (as well as a trowel). No Drugs or Alcohol are permitted on site. No member of staff shall expose themselves to danger, and must prevent, as far as possible, such exposure on the part of other persons, and spare no opportunity of warning any who neglect to take due care.