



# 2 Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset

## Observations and Recording



Report No. 53388/3/1

April 2013



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## Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
<b>OASIS Reference</b>	terraina1-148234		
<b>Project Title</b>	2 Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset: Archaeological Observations and recording, March 2013		
<b>Short Description of Project</b>	<p>Terrain Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological observations and recording during excavation of foundation trenches for a rear extension to the commercial property trading as 'Lavender &amp; Bay', 2 Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset. The site lies within the Late Saxon and medieval <i>burh</i>, and previous excavations during redevelopment of the adjacent property immediately to the north east demonstrated a high potential for archaeological remains relating to the Saxon and medieval development of the town to be present.</p> <p>No archaeological features or deposits were observed, and no archaeologically significant finds were recovered. However, no major areas of disturbance were noted and the sequence of soils observed within the foundation trench strongly suggests that there is potential for significant archaeological remains to survive elsewhere within the property.</p>		
<b>Project Dates</b>	Start: 28-03-2013	End: 28-03-2013	
<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No/No		
<b>Project Code</b>	53388		
<b>Monument Type and Period</b>	None		
<b>Significant Finds</b>	None		
Project Location			
<b>County/District/Parish</b>	Dorset/ Christchurch/Christchurch		
<b>Site Address</b>	2 Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1HX		
<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SZ 1589 9265		
<b>Site Area</b>	c. 18.5 m <sup>2</sup>		
<b>Height OD</b>			
Project Creators			
<b>Organisation</b>	Terrain Archaeology		
<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	None		
<b>Project Design Originator</b>	Terrain Archaeology		
<b>Project Supervisor</b>	Mike Trevarthen		
<b>Project Manager</b>	Peter Bellamy		
<b>Sponsor or Funding Body</b>	Developer		
Project Archive			
<b>Archive Type</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
<b>Location/Accession No</b>	None	None	None
<b>Contents</b>			None

# 2 Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset

## Archaeological Observations and Recording, March 2013

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Project Introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Mr W. Bullock to undertake a programme of archaeological observations and recording at the rear of 2 Wick Lane, Christchurch, Dorset, during foundation trenching associated with construction of a new single storey extension to the premises.

The archaeological works have been undertaken as a result of the requirements of Condition 4 of the granting of Planning Permission (Application No. 8/12/0460), which states "*The applicant shall make arrangements for archaeological observation and recording to take place during groundworks. Details of these arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, at least one month before any work commences on the development site.*"

'Archaeological observations and recording', also more colloquially known as an archaeological watching brief, is defined by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) as "*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive*" (IfA 2008). Its purposes are: "*to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works*" and "*to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.*"

The fieldwork was carried out on 28th March 2013 by Mike Trevarthen.

Terrain Archaeology wishes to acknowledge the assistance and cooperation of Mr W. Bullock and Steve Wallis (Senior Archaeologist (Advice and Management), Dorset County Council).

#### 1.2 Brief

No written brief was issued by, or on behalf of, Christchurch Borough Council.

#### 1.3 Site Location and Topography

The site lies in the rear garden of the property trading as 'Lavender & Bay', on the south side of Wick Lane some 40 m west of its junction with Church Street, at Ordnance Survey NGR SZ 1589 9265 (Figure 1).

#### 1.4 Geology

Bedrock geology is mapped as Branksome Sand Formation of Tertiary date (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The present work and adjacent excavations on the Dolphin Development site (Jarvis 1983, 37) have both revealed that the Branksome Sand is overlain by superficial alluvial gravel drift, probably of Pleistocene date, but of unknown depth.

## 1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The Christchurch area contains abundant evidence for human settlement and land use since the end of the last Ice Age. In the Iron Age and Roman periods Hengistbury Head became an important trade port, facilitating commerce with continental Europe (Cunliffe 1987). The former existence of a significant Roman site predating the town is suggested by the substantial amounts of residual Roman pottery found in excavations within the burgh (Jarvis 1985) and by the use of quantities of Roman tile in a Middle-Late Saxon corn drier found beneath the Town Hall car park (Jarvis 1983, 34),

There may have been a Middle Saxon settlement at Christchurch. Hase (cited in Bellamy & Davey 2011) has suggested there was a minster church at Christchurch as early as the 8th century AD. This settlement was subsequently formalised into a defended *burh* (*Tweoxneam*, later *Twinham*) in the 10th century AD, possibly exerting some strategic control over the harbour and access to the two rivers. Wick Lane may have formed part of a minor east-west road within the burgh, and its intersection with Church Street, Castle Street (diverted in the medieval period) and High Street probably marked the focus of early urban settlement (Bellamy & Davey 2011, 27). Archaeological evidence for Late Saxon settlement is, however, very limited, comprising poorly-dated features excavated at the Dolphin Development site immediately north of the present work (Jarvis 1983, 37-42).

After the Conquest, the status of the town appears to have diminished: it was no longer listed as a *burh* in 1086 (Keen 1984, 243) and by Domesday it was relatively minor by comparison with the more successful Dorset *burhs* of Bridport, Wareham, Dorchester and Sherborne (Penn 1980, 38). William Rufus gave the town and church to Ranulf Flambard and it passed thereafter to Richard de Redvers, becoming a 'middling borough', no longer held by the king, but by a lesser-ranking lord. The church became a separate manor at this time. The Castle was begun c. AD 1100 (Penn 1980, 39), and probably served as a focus for comparatively sparse Norman settlement within the walled defences.

## 1.6 Previous Archaeological fieldwork

No archaeological work has previously been carried out on the site itself. However, land immediately to the north east was at least partially investigated during its redevelopment in 1974 and 1975 (Christchurch Site X11, Dolphin Development). This revealed a Saxo-Norman pit along with several other early medieval features. Medieval pits and other features of 13th-15th century date were more common, and large numbers of post-medieval features were identified, including pits, wells and a soakaway (Jarvis 1983, 37-42). To the south west, investigations at 14 Wick Lane indicated considerable post-medieval disturbance of the street frontage along with possible evidence for post-medieval sand quarrying (Watkins 1991, 181).

## 1.7 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the archaeological programme was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

Its objectives were:

- To observe and record the all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate archaeological standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

## 1.8 Groundworks

The footprint of the new single storey extension covers an area about 5.0 m by 4.25 m across with the footings constructed in a trench about 0.55 m wide and about 0.6 m deep (Figure 2). The foundation trench was dug by hand and the spoil removed from the site, prior to Terrain Archaeology being contacted by the Client. The area within the footprint of the new extension had also been reduced in level by about 500 mm. In addition, the base of the footings trench had been sealed beneath a skim of concrete prior to the arrival of the archaeologist on site, so it was not possible to examine the underlying deposits.



## 1.9 Methods

The archaeological programme was commissioned at very short notice and, following consultation with Dorset County Council's Senior Archaeologist (Advice and Management), work was not accompanied by a site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation. The work was otherwise carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008).

All features and deposits, regardless of their perceived date and archaeological significance, were recorded using components of Terrain Archaeology's system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records. These have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current guidelines (AAF 2007; IfA 2009) and the requirements of the receiving museum. A photographic record of the works was maintained in digital format, and includes aspects of their setting, conduct and technical detail.

## 1.10 Archive and Dissemination

No paper archive will be retained beyond the end of the project. No artefacts or other materials were recovered from the site.

A copy of this report will be lodged with Dorset County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a publicly funded and accessible resource, and deposition of the report will place it, and the project results, in the public domain.

A digital summary of the archive will be placed with the OASIS project ([www.oasis.ac.uk](http://www.oasis.ac.uk)) under the reference code *terrains1-148234*. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

A brief report of the project will be published by Terrain Archaeology in the *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*.

## 2. Results

### 2.1 Natural Deposits

Natural deposits (102) were encountered at depths of between 0.7-0.6m below modern ground level and comprised occasional outcrops of light yellow-brown flint gravel, sometimes clean and loose, but more commonly intermixed with a matrix of mid yellow-brown loamy sand.

### 2.2 Subsoil

A subsoil layer (101) was present throughout the trench except along its westernmost edge, where it had been comprehensively disturbed by the foundation trench of a modern extension to the adjacent property. Layer 101 comprised friable, homogenous mid dark yellowish-brown loamy silt-sand with common gravel clasts, usually less than 40 mm in size. The layer ranged from 0.2-0.4 m thick, depending upon the elevation of the underlying natural deposits. No finds were recovered.

### 2.3 Garden Soil

Garden soil (100) was present throughout the trench, except in the area of the adjacent extension footing referred to above. The layer, present to a thickness of up to 0.3 m, comprised friable, mixed, slightly humic dark greyish-brown loamy silt-sand, occasional gravel clasts and considerable quantities of post-medieval domestic debris, probably mostly of 19th-20th century date and including clinker, industrially produced ceramic wares, locally made earthenwares, animal bone, bottle- and window glass, red brick and ceramic roof tile fragments, oyster shell and iron.

### 3. Finds

#### 3.1 Finds Assemblage

A small group of artefacts was recovered, all from mixed garden topsoil 100. All are probably post-medieval in date, and none need be older than 19th, or at the earliest 18th century in date. All are broadly indicative of deposition of domestic refuse.

The finds assemblage is of negligible archaeological, academic or commercial value. With the consent of the property owner all items recovered have been discarded following basic quantification and comment.

Context	Lead	Post-medieval Pottery	Ceramic Building Material	Glass	Animal Bone	Shell
100	1/25g	8/203g	2/81g	4/56g	3/49g	1/15g

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context

#### 3.2 Metal

One offcut of D-section lead rod (25 g) was recovered. Numerous pieces of iron including food containers, wire fragments and other objects were noted but not recovered.

#### 3.3 Pottery

Five sherds of industrially produced glazed whiteware (45 g) were recovered, along with three sherds of East Dorset ('Verwood') glazed earthenware (158 g).

#### 3.4 Ceramic Building Material

One fragment of red brick (56g) and one fragment of post-medieval/modern ceramic roof tile (25 g) were found.

#### 3.5 Glass

One sherd of green glass wine bottle (38 g) was found, along with three fragments (18 g) of clear window glass.

#### 3.6 Faunal Remains

Three fragments of animal bone (49g) including one cut fragment probably represent disposal of food waste. A single oyster shell (15g) could also represent consumption.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusions

#### 4.1 Discussion

The site lies in an area of known Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval archaeological potential, demonstrated most clearly by the results of archaeological investigation on the adjacent Dolphin Development site. Within this site, however, the nature and extents of the remains most immediately proximal to the 2 Wick Lane site remains unclear, as this area was incompletely investigated under watching brief conditions (Jarvis 1983).

Whilst the present observations have not identified any archaeologically significant features or finds, it must be noted that the impact of the footing was minimal in terms of its exposure of archaeologically sensitive levels, and that the base of the trench was not available for inspection, having already been concreted. The reduction of soils inside the footing trench did not penetrate below the base of the subsoil unit and is unlikely to have exposed or impacted any *in situ* archaeological remains. No areas of deep ground disturbance were seen and the soil sequence revealed strongly suggests that the site as a whole retains considerable potential to contain significant Late Saxon, Norman, medieval and post-medieval archaeology.

## 4.2 Conclusions

No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed during the project: the groundworks for the new single storey extension do not appear to have penetrated into archaeologically significant deposits. However, the digging of the footings, the removal of the spoil from the site and the concreting of the base of the foundation trench before the archaeological observations and recording were undertaken means that it is not possible to determine whether there were archaeological features present on the site. The lack of significant disturbance in the area of the observations indicates that there is potential for significant archaeological remains to survive within the area of the site.

## 5. References

- |                            |      |  |
|----------------------------|------|--|
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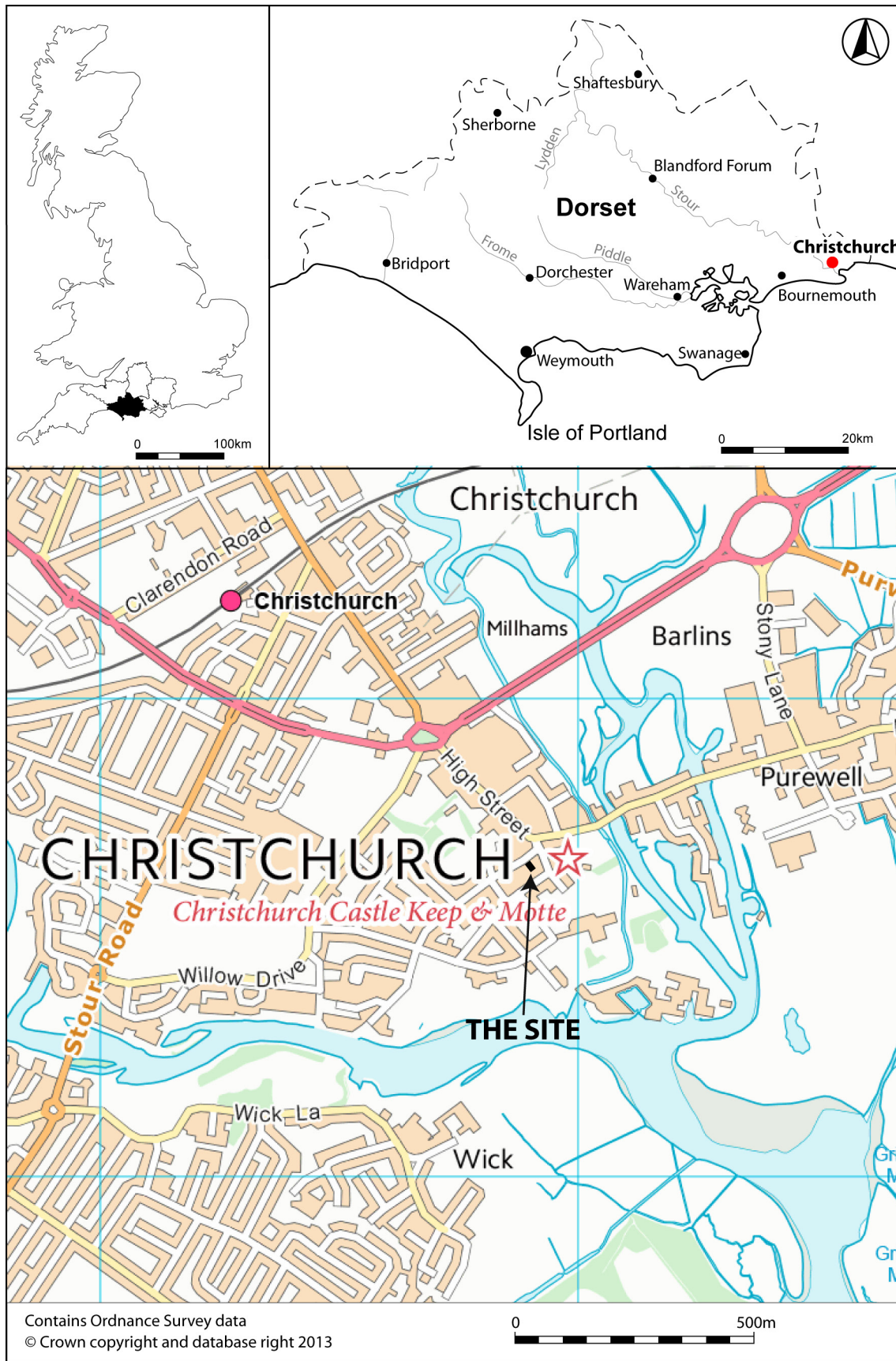


Figure 1: Site Location.

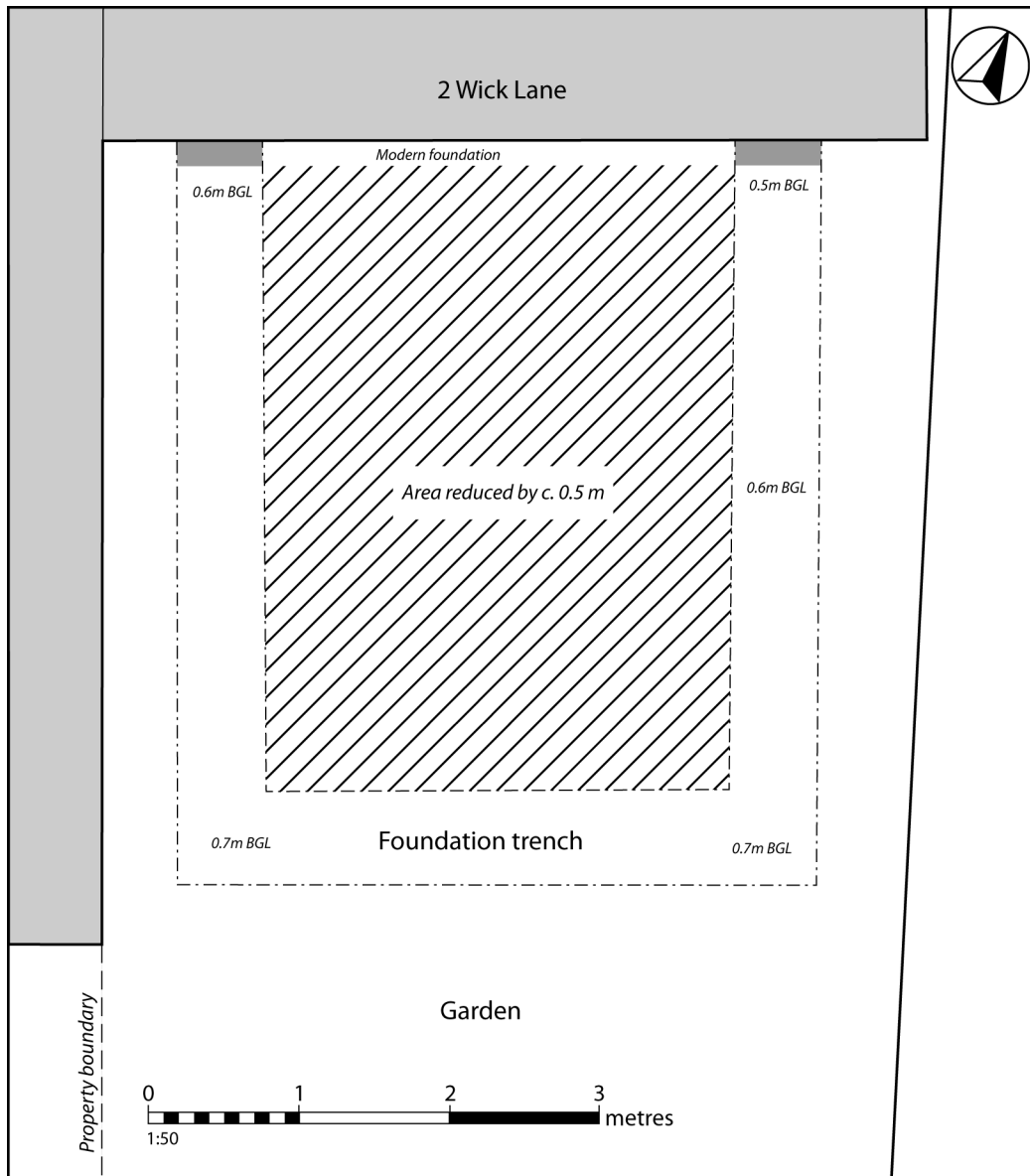


Figure 2: Plan of groundworks at rear of 2 Wick Lane, Christchurch.



*Plate 1: View of footings trench, western part, looking North. 1m scale.*



*Plate 2: View of footings trench, eastern part, looking Northeast. 1m scale.*



*Plate 3: Soil profile in southeast corner, looking South. 1m scale.*