

**LAND TO THE REAR OF THE ANGEL INN,
ST AUBYN'S COURT, POOLE
Archaeological Watching Brief**



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Land to the Rear of the Angel Inn, St Aubyn's Court, Poole

Archaeological Watching Brief, June–July 2003

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SUMMARY

Archaeological observations and recording were carried out by Terrain Archaeology during the construction of new houses to the rear of The Angel Public House at 28 Market Street, Poole (SZ00959057). Very few features or deposits of archaeological significance were encountered. The whole site was covered by a thick layer of garden soil overlying the natural sands. In the centre of the site was a brick-lined ice well.

INTRODUCTION

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Keyestates Development Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief in connection with the proposed development of land to the rear of the Angel Inn, 28 Market Street, Poole.

Keyestates Development Ltd submitted an application for planning consent for the erection of five town houses on land to the rear of the Angel Inn, 28 Market Street, Poole (Planning Application No. 01/04041/010/F). Prior to determination, the Borough of Poole, the Local Planning Authority, requested an archaeological assessment of the site. This was undertaken by Terrain Archaeology in March 2002 (Terrain Archaeology 2002) and on the basis of that assessment, a condition for archaeological observations and recording was attached to the grant of planning consent.

The site lies to the rear of The Angel Public House at 28 Market Street, Poole, at Ordnance Survey NGR SZ00959057 (Figure 1). Prior to redevelopment, it was occupied by a single storey skittle alley and car park of the pub. The topography is flat, lying about 4 m above Ordnance Datum.

The new development comprised the construction of five new houses along the southern side of the site, constructed on continuous strip footings (Figure 2).

The fieldwork was carried out between 6th June and 8th July 2003 by Peter Bellamy, Joanne Best, and Steven Tatler.

Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge the following for their help and cooperation during this project: James Stewart (Keyestates Development Ltd), Keith Jarvis (Poole Museums Service), Roger Brock and the groundworkers (Spetisbury Construction).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the Archaeological Assessment report on the site (Terrain Archaeology 2002) and only a summary is presented here.

The site lies within the historic centre of Poole — Market Street was one of the three main lateral streets through the old town of Poole and by the 18th century it was the main shopping and business street in the town (Hillier 1983). In 1761 a new meat market was built in Market Street and a new town hall (the Guildhall) built over it. The Angel Inn was owned by the Corporation and was one of the main coaching inns in Poole in the 19th century. It was almost completely rebuilt in 1890.

The historic mapping indicates that the site itself was gardens or fields until the later 18th century when the earliest outbuildings occur on the site. There are a series of small outbuildings constructed and demolished during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Previous archaeological work in the immediate vicinity of the site has produced little evidence for medieval and later activity. Archaeological observations at 4 Market Street (Watkins 1996), 7 Market Close (Heaton 1998), Rogers Almshouses (Horsey 1992) and at 82–4 West Street (*Ibid.*), all within about 125 m of the present site, have all encountered an extensive layer (about one metre thick) of fine black garden soils containing post-medieval material. The area seems to have been on the edge of the area of medieval and early post-medieval activity in the town.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

The archaeological works aimed to observe and record all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.

METHODS

The work was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct and *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, although there was no written brief produced for the archaeological works.

The groundworks comprised strip footings for the walls, excavated using a mechanical excavator. The depth of the footings trenches was determined by the contractors. The location of the footings trenches was taken from a plan provided by the client. All depths recorded were below existing ground surface. Prior to the archaeological observations, the ground level had been reduced by up to 0.3 m, removing both external yard surfaces (tarmac) and internal floors (concrete) of the skittle alley.

The observations of the footings of the new development was intermittent, as defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, with a suitably qualified archaeologist viewing all footings trenches either during or immediately after machining. The trenches were very unstable due to the nature of the soils and had to be continually shored up which reduced visibility considerably (Plate 2). All deposits exposed in the trenches were recorded using elements of Terrain Archaeology's recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records.

The records have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current UKIC guidelines and the requirements of the receiving museum. The archive will be deposited with the Poole Museums Service.

RESULTS

Introduction

Almost all the footings trenches were observed, though most of the south wall footings trench had been filled with concrete prior to the observations. There were also small areas in the southeast and southwest parts of the site that were not observed before concreting. The same general

stratigraphic sequence was observed throughout all the footings trenches and very few archaeological features or deposits were noted.

Natural deposits

The top of the natural sands (3) was exposed at a depth of between about 1.6 m at the east end and 1.8 m at the west end of the site. These sands were yellow to reddish-brown in colour with occasional patches of pale grey and with occasional small flint gravels. The surface of the sands was relatively level and apparently undisturbed.

Archaeological Features

In the southwest corner of the site, a feature (6) was observed cut into the natural sand (Figures 2 and 3; Plate 4). It was only observed in one length of trench and a complete profile was not obtained. It measured over 1.8 m wide and had a steeply sloping eastern side and a flat base and was cut about 0.55 m into the natural sand. It was filled with a black sandy loam (5) indistinguishable from the soils (2) above. At first it was thought to be a possible boundary ditch running N-S, dividing the properties on West Street and Market Street. As it was not observed in any other footings trench it is more likely to be a discrete feature, possibly a large pit or other disturbance, rather than a linear feature. The fill did not contain any dating evidence and appears to be simply a build up of garden soils.

Archaeological Deposits

In the eastern half of the site, a layer of pale grey sand (4), about 0.2 m thick and over 4 m across, was observed overlying the natural sand (Plate 3). This layer contained frequent oyster and cockle shell but no artefacts.

This shelly layer was sealed beneath a thick layer of black sandy loam (2), up to 1.5 m thick, which lay directly on top of the natural sand over most of the site. This layer produced a moderate quantity of artefacts, mainly post-medieval pottery, animal bone, oyster shell, clay pipe and glass, which were not systematically collected. The pottery ranged in date from the medieval period through to the 19th century.

In several of the footings trenches patchy lenses of building debris could be observed at various levels throughout the deposit possibly indicating that this soil layer comprises a number of phases of build-up. The most significant deposit of building debris was found in the southwest corner of the site. Here, a layer of pale greyish-brown silty sand (7) containing lenses of lime mortar and brick fragments, up to 0.5 m thick was observed within context 2. In the area overlying feature 6 it dipped down towards the west, perhaps filling a hollow caused by the underlying feature (Figure 3). In the southern edge of the site, it appeared to be dipping down to the north. This deposit measured at least 3.5 m by 6.5 m across (Figure 2).

The deposits described above were sealed beneath a layer of floor and yard surfaces (concrete and tarmac) with underlying foundation layers of sand, gravel, chippings and general building rubble (1) up to 0.50 m thick.

Ice Well

In the centre of the site a circular brick-built structure (8) was exposed immediately below the yard surface. This was a brick-lined circular shaft, about one metre in diameter with vertical sides over 3.6 m deep (Plates 5 and 6). The bottom of the structure was not exposed. The interior was void down to a depth of about three metres. There was very little mortar bonding visible and the whole structure appears to have become deformed in places (Plate 5). The shape of the surviving top

indicates that originally it may have had a corbelled cover. The original top appears to have been removed and the structure had been capped by flat concrete slabs.

This structure was most likely an ice well, particularly as the upper part of the structure appears to have been corbelled inwards. Ice wells were stores to keep ice into the summer (Penny 1964). Unlike ice houses, wells were totally underground, and generally had a drain at the very bottom to let water melting from the ice disperse. Both ice houses and wells are most commonly associated with large country houses, but they are occasionally found in towns where they may relate to the storage of fish, etc by shops rather than domestic use. This one perhaps relates to the market under the Guildhall. Although undated, it is likely to be 18th or early 19th century in date. From the mid 19th century imported ice (much of it from Norway and the refining of the refrigerator made ice houses and ice wells redundant.

Finds

Pottery

Thirty-two sherds of pottery (1258 g) were recovered from context 2, mainly from the area surrounding the ice well, and one sherd from context 7. Two sherds of medieval pottery (14th century and 16th century) were recovered and the remainder were post-medieval in date. The post-medieval pottery included some high quality pieces including a sherd of a Worcester soft paste porcelain bowl, a small pearlware tureen (1800–1810), sherds of a late 18th century English delftware bowl and a sherd of late 18th century Jackfield ware. There was also a single sherd from a possible imported vessel with pale fabric and bright green glaze. The remainder of the pottery was local Verwood earthenwares ranging in date from 17th to 19th century. The single sherd from context 7 was not closely identifiable, but is probably 17th–18th century in date. The pottery was identified by Jo Draper.

Clay tobacco pipe

Seven fragments of clay tobacco pipe were retained from context 2. These included one complete bowl and two bowl fragments, all of 19th century type. Two had fluted or fluted and lobed decoration and the third was plain.

Other finds

Glass. Three fragments of glass were recovered: one clear window fragment and a green wine bottle base fragment from context 7; and a fragment of green wine bottle from context 2. Both wine bottle fragments were from mould-blown bottles indicating a 19th century or later date.

Ceramic Building Material. Four fragments of post-medieval roof tile were recovered from context 2, one with two pegholes.

CONCLUSIONS

The results from this site fit well with the findings from other nearby sites and indicate that this area probably lies on the margins of the medieval core of the town. The deep deposits of garden soils suggest that this area was largely used for horticulture. The archaeological results are consistent with the documentary evidence which indicates that the site was not developed until the late 18th century.

PROJECT ARCHIVE

The archive (Terrain Archaeology Project No. 53130) will be deposited with Poole Museums Service, which has agreed in principle to accept the archive, subject to fulfilment of the Museum's requirements of the preparation of archaeological archives. A copy of the microfilmed archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record.

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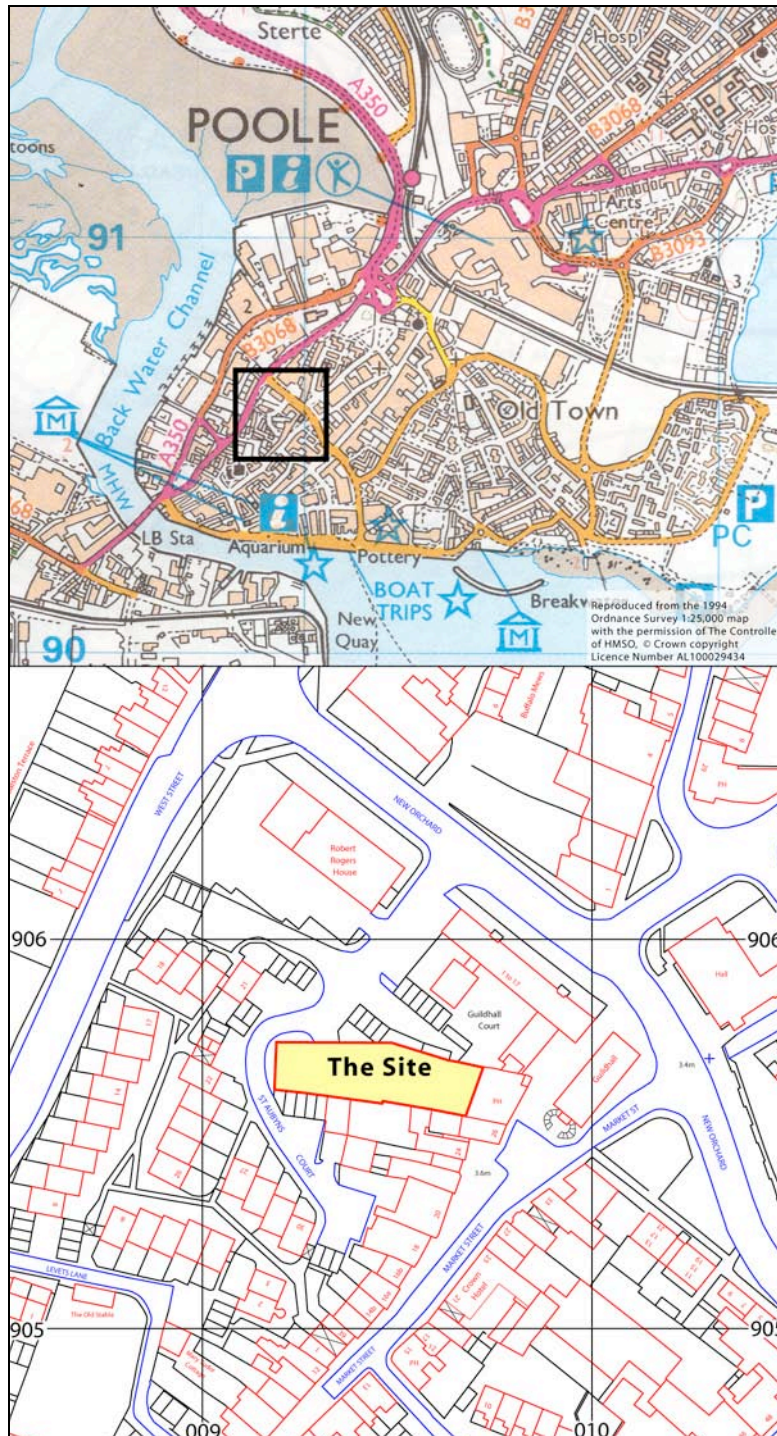


Figure 1: Location map

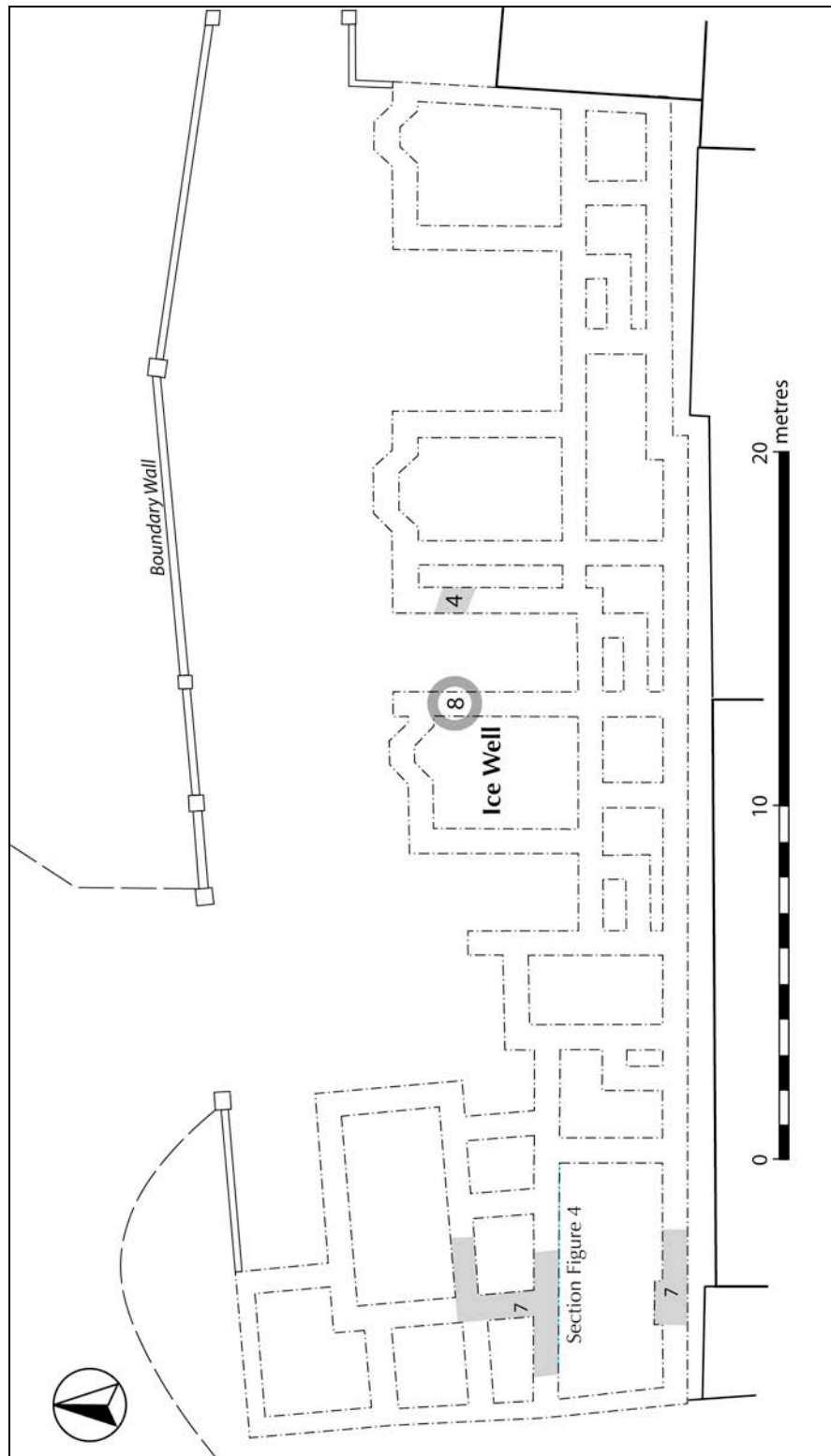


Figure 2: Plan of observations

North-facing section across Feature 6

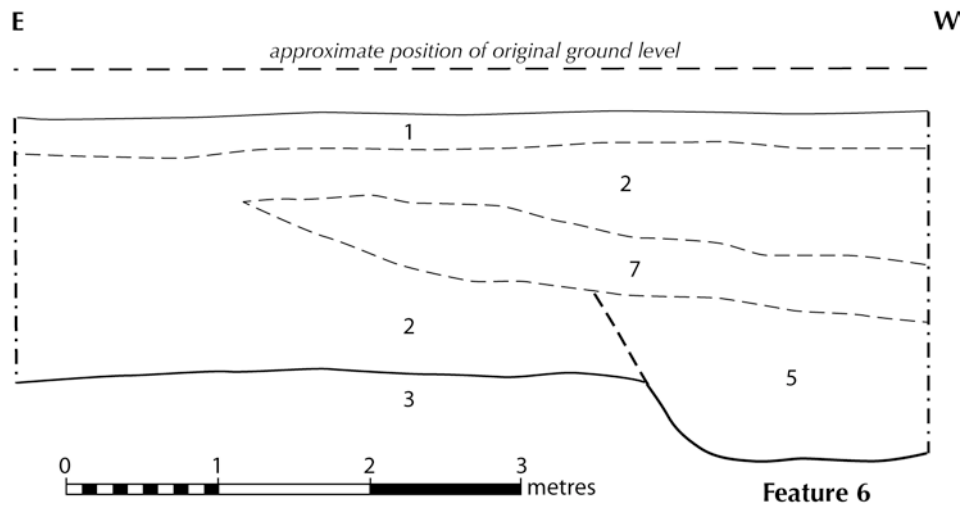


Figure 3: Section across Feature 6 and Layer 7.



Plate 1: General view of site, viewed from west. The ice well is beneath the grating in left foreground.



Plate 2: Typical view of deposits in footings trench, showing depth of layer 2.



Plate 3: View of layer 4 beneath layer 2.



Plate 4: Feature 6 with layer 7 overlying it, viewed from north.



Plate 5: Ice well 8.



Plate 6: Ice well 8 after excavation of footings trench.