PRIORY GATE TO DOME ALLEY BROADBAND CONNECTION DUCTS, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL CLOSE, WINCHESTER, HAMPSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF





PCA REPORT NO: R14788

WINCM SITE CODE: AY740

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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

PRIORY GATE TO DOME ALLEY BROADBAND CONNECTION DUCTS, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL CLOSE: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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1 ABSTRACT

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was appointed by the Chapter of Winchester Cathedral to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the installation of a new cable duct below ground between Prior's Arch gate and Dome Alley within the Cathedral Close, Winchester, Hampshire. The watching brief was a requirement of Scheduled Monument Consent for the installation.

The route of the duct lay between an Openreach junction box at the east end of St Swithun's Street and Dome Alley, passing beneath the Prior's Arch gate, then paving and grass and alongside an existing duct, terminating in a new junction box in Dome Alley close to the rear of 9 The Close.

Groundwork for the new cable duct was monitored in keeping with the requirements of Historic England and in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI. The groundwork did not reveal significant known or previously unidentified archaeological remains, other than a small section of possible core work tentatively associated with the medieval Infirmary wall recorded in earlier observations close to the cable duct trenching. In large part the groundwork appears to have been contained within previously disturbed and reworked deposits.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was appointed by the Chapter of Winchester Cathedral to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the installation of a new cable duct below ground between Prior's Arch gate and Dome Alley within the Cathedral Close, Winchester, Hampshire, hereafter 'the Site' (Figure 1).
- 2.1.2 The archaeological watching brief and subsequent reporting were requirements of Historic England that form conditions of Scheduled Monument consent for the installation granted under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas act 1979, as amended.
- 2.1.3 The consent notice stated, '...that the Secretary of State is agreeable for the works to proceed providing the conditions set out below are adhered to, and that accordingly Scheduled Monument Consent is hereby granted under section 2 of the 1979 Act for the works...'. The watching brief was intended to monitor groundwork for the installation and provide archaeological supervision, investigation and recording if and when required in satisfaction of the conditions. These requirements were implemented in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (PCA 2021) approved by Historic England in advance of work starting.
- 2.1.4 This report has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (CIfA 2020a) and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015). PCA is a CIfA Registered Archaeological Organisation and is bound by its code of conduct.

2.2 Location, Topography and Geology

- 2.2.1 The Site is located within Winchester Cathedral Close and comprised the route of the new cable duct between an Openreach junction box at the east end of St Swithun's Street and Dome Alley, passing beneath the Prior's Arch gate, then paving and grass and alongside an existing duct, terminating in a new junction box in Dome Alley close to the rear of 9 The Close.
- 2.2.2 The Site lies on the lower ground of the southern and eastern part of the historic core of Winchester at a height of approximately 35m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 2.2.3 The bedrock geology beneath the Site is mapped as Seaford Chalk Formation, which is likely to occur at a considerable depth beneath the Site and below an alluvial sequence typical of the River Itchen valley floor over which the historic town and the Cathedral was built.

2.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.3.1 The Site lies within the Scheduled Monument Winchester Cathedral and Close (Scheduled Monument No. 1005520). The archaeological and historical background, relevant to the

proposed cable, was described in a desk-based assessment prepared by John Crook (2021) and is not repeated here. In summary, the immediate archaeological background concerns evidence of the medieval layout of the Inner Close and specifically evidence of the Infirmary that was located south of the main cloister range. Archaeological evidence is known to survive at a shallow depth of just 0.2m beneath the existing ground surface and was recorded in previous service runs closely followed by the new cable duct. The evidence included faced masonry walls and wall core identified as the remains of the twelfth-century Infirmary Hall as well as evidence for later use of the Site.

3 AIMS

3.1 Watching Brief

- 3.1.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to monitor excavation for the new cable duct and any related sub-surface disturbance and, in the event significant archaeological remains were revealed, carry out detailed investigation and recording of the remains in accordance with the aims and methodology set out in the approved WSI.
- 3.1.2 A further aim was to prepare an archive of the results of the investigation leading to the preparation of a post-excavation assessment report and, if appropriate, a further programme of analysis and publication. This report aims to demonstrate that the watching brief was carried out in fulfilment of the conditions of the Scheduled Monument Consent.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following sections of this report present a summary of the results of the watching brief based on the Site archive, which comprises a Site diary, written and drawn records and digital photographs. Plates are presented in Appendix 1, finds reports in Appendices 2 - 4 and an OASIS report in Appendix 5 The archive is currently held at PCA's Winchester office and in due course will be deposited with Hampshire Cultural Trust on behalf of the Chapter of Winchester Cathedral under the site code AY740.

4.2 Methodology

- The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the WSI between the 3rd 24th August 2021. The watching brief monitored the hand excavation of two trial holes, three inspection box pits and cable run trenching (**Plate 1**), as well as the machine excavation of trenching along Dome Alley from Judge's Lodgings to the rear of 9 the Close (**Figure 2, Plates 2 & 3**).
- 4.2.2 The cable run trenches were excavated to a shallow depth of no more than 0.4m below ground level. Trial holes and inspection box pits were excavated to a greater depth of between 0.41m and 0.80m below ground level.
- 4.2.3 A GPS device was used to record the positions of the trenching and section locations including the excavation of Boxes 1 3 and Trial Hole 1. Due to the difficulty of achieving GPS connectivity and intermittent excavation of the trench by the groundwork contractor, the cable duct trench between Box 1 and Box 2 was not surveyed using GPS.

4.3 Summary of Deposition Sequence

4.3.1 Along Dome Alley and to the north and west of the Judge's Lodgings the deposit sequence revealed in the sides and base of the cable duct excavations comprised in large part layers of redeposited/disturbed post-medieval and modern levelling or backfill material with a thickness of between 0.13 and 0.21m (**Figure 3**). These deposits lay beneath bedding material such as sand or gravel, with a thickness of between 0.02m and 0.16m, covered by surfacing comprised of modern asphalt or paving slabs with an average thickness of 0.10m. As an example, Box 3 demonstrated two layers of modern made ground and backfill (**Figures 2**, **3** and **Plate 3**). Natural deposits were not observed.

4.4 Archaeological Deposits

- 4.4.1 Despite the re-worked character of the general deposit sequence, a small number of stratified deposits of archaeological interest were recorded at different locations and gave some indication of the upper-most components of the location's archaeological potential, in keeping with previous observations (Crook 2021).
- 4.4.2 In 'Box 1' (Figure 3, Plate 4) several layers were observed. The earliest of these [006] was a layer of loose white chalk mixed with light grey, brown sandy silt. Cut through it was feature [004]. This feature was not fully revealed and not investigated due to restricted space. It was linear in form on a north east south west alignment, extending for 0.70m. It was 0.16m wide, with a depth greater than 0.22m. It contained a single fill [005] of firm dark brownish grey silty clay with common small charcoal fragments, small fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) and chalk inclusions; animal bone and oyster shell were noted, but not recovered within the fill. Above [005] were layers [002] and [003]. Context [002] was a firm light brown yellow sandy clay, with moderate small flint inclusions, measuring 0.13m deep. No finds were recovered from this context. Context [003] was a firm mid brown grey clayey sand with common flint and sparse small CBM inclusions (CBM was not recovered), measuring 0.26m thick. Animal bone was recovered from this context.
- 4.4.3 Above [002] and [003] was context [001], a layer of compact mid brown grey clayey sand with moderate small flint and sparse small CBM inclusions, measuring 0.32m thick. Animal bone was recovered from this context. CBM was not recovered.
- 4.4.4 In Box 2, east of the Judge's Lodgings basement lightwell retaining wall (Figure 3, Plate 5), context [007] was a layer of firm mid brownish grey silty sand with frequent small CBM inclusions (CBM was not recovered) and occasional charcoal and yellow sandy mortar inclusions. This context had an observed thickness of at least 0.6m and was truncated by the lightwell retaining wall and its foundation and an iron pipe. The same layer was also observed in the cable trench running between Box 1 and Box 2. The retaining wall dates to the late 18th to early 19th Century and was observed to be formed of orange brick with some non local sone, possibly reused from within the cathedral precinct. No samples of these materials were removed to protect the stability of the retaining wall. No discernible bonding pattern was observed.
- 4.4.5 On the cable trench north-west of Box 2, a hand dug trial hole was opened by the groundwork contractor. This was in the vicinity of the 2003 observations of the medieval Infirmary wall (Crook 2021) and revealed feature [012] and context [009] (Figures 2, 3 and Plate 6). [009] was a firm, light brownish grey silty clay with frequent chalk, flint, and charcoal inclusions, [009] is thought to be a layer of post-medieval levelling or made ground. Occasional loose/voiding patches were noted, this is likely due to the large size of some chalk and flint inclusions.
- 4.4.6 Feature [012] was recorded on the west side of the trial hole, and consisted of chalk blocks and CBM, which were left in situ, in a light yellow brown/yellow pink bonding material and

patches of mid grey brown silty clay at least 0.40m thick. Although of limited extent within the trial hole, the feature may tentatively be identified as a section of core-work of the Infirmary wall, but devoid of any evidence of outer, facing, stonework. The route of the cable duct trench was adjusted slightly further south to avoid impacting [012]. No other evidence for the Infirmary wall was revealed, suggesting that the cable duct trench was achieved without exposing or impacting the wall or any other significant archaeological remains. Layer [009] is thought to represent a levelling event to bring ground level up to or above the level of [012] and was partially removed by the excavation of the trial hole. Feature [012] was observed to have been disturbed by [013], an existing cut for a service trench.

- 4.4.7 Box 3 did not contain any archaeological remains, being comprised of two layers of modern deposits capped by tarmac. Lowest layer [016] was a friable, mid grey clayey silt with frequent animal bone and shell inclusions with sparse plastic inclusions. [016] was seen to be disturbed by modern services.
- 4.4.8 A very small finds assemblage was recovered (**Appendices 2 4**). The assessments of each category of this material has led to the following comments and recommendations:
- 4.4.9 Metal Finds The metal finds are of limited potential. They suggest structural activity of the early modern period in the area. No further work is required. The items can be discarded.
- 4.4.10 Animal Bone These bones no doubt represent general food and preparation waste of unknown derivation. They offer very little insight into food usage in this area during the supposed period of deposition. No further work can be recommended.
- 4.4.11 Shell The shell is of limited potential and significance and can be discarded.

4.5 Conclusion

4.5.1 Groundwork for the new cable duct was monitored in keeping with the requirements of Historic England and in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI. The groundwork did not reveal significant known or previously unidentified archaeological remains, other than a small section of possible core work tentatively associated with the medieval Infirmary wall recorded in earlier observations close to the cable duct trenching. In large part the groundwork appears to have been contained within previously disturbed and reworked deposits.

5 ARCHIVE PREPARATION, DEPOSITION AND COPYRIGHT

5.1 The Site Archive

5.1.1 The Site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the project, will be prepared in accordance with Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (UKIC 1990) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives' (ClfA 2020b), taking account of recommended approaches to archive selection strategies and data management plans: https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit . The requirements of the Hampshire Cultural Trust for digital archives to be prepared in accordance with standards defined by the Archaeology Data Service will also be followed, as will the Trust's recommendation for digital archives to be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service. The designated receiving museum for the non-digital archive is Hampshire Cultural Trust. The Curator of Archaeology provided the site code AY740. Any alternative arrangements will be agreed with Historic England and the Local Planning Authority.

5.2 Copyright

- 5.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. Winchester City Council, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003. Further distribution and uses of the report either in its entirety or part thereof in paper or electronic form is prohibited without the prior consent of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
- 5.2.2 The licence extends to the use of all documents arising from this project in all matters relating directly to the project, as well as for *bona fide* research purposes (which includes the Winchester City Historic Environment Record).
- 5.2.3 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the content of this report. However, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd cannot accept any liability in respect of, or resulting from, errors, inaccuracies or omissions this report contains.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PCA is grateful to the Chapter of Winchester Cathedral for commissioning the watching brief and to Alex Bellisario of Historic England and Dr John Crook for their advice.

The watching brief was carried out by Dominic McAtominey and Gareth Howland. This report was written by Dominic McAtominey, with illustrations prepared by Mark Roughley. The project was managed for PCA by Paul McCulloch.

7 REFERENCES

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Context Area/Trench Number		Description	Туре	Interpretation		
001	Box 1	Compact mid brown grey clayey sand with moderate small flint and CBM inclusions. Length: 0.86m, width: 0.7m, depth: 0.32m.	Layer	Post medieval to modern levelling material.		
002	Box 1	Firm, light brown yellow sandy clay with moderate small flint. Length: 0.86m, width: 0.7m, width: 0.13m.		Undated levelling material. May be a cap to 5. Relationship with 3 unclear.		
003	Box 1	Firm/loose mid brown grey clayey sand with common flint and sparse CBM inclusions. Length: 0.86m, width: 0.7m,Layer		Possibly the same as 1 but drier and voiding? Unclear relationship with 2.		
004	Box 1	depth: 0.26m.CuLinear shape with unknown sides and an unknown base.CuLength: 0.77m, width: 0.16m, width: 0.22m. Orientated southwest to northeast. Cuts natural chalk (6) Filled by 5.Feature is only partially exposed and was not investigated.		Possible linear feature, not investigated.		
005	Box 1	Firm, dark grey brown silty clay with common small charcoal, chalk and CBM. Length: 0.7m, width: 0.16m, width: 0.22m. Fill of 4	Fill	Backfill of possible linear 4		
006	Box 1	Hard, loose compaction with light white and light grey-brown flecks. Composition is chalk with sandy silt. Length & width: 0.8m. Loose chalk layer cut by 4.	Layer	Layer of chalk, which may have been redeposited.		
007	Box 2	Firm, mid brownish grey silty clay with frequent CBM, occasional charcoal and yellow mortar inclusions. Length/width: 0.6m+. Post medieval levelling layer.	Layer	Post medieval levelling material or made ground.		
008	Trench	Hard, compact light yellowish white chalk with sparse flint and CBM inclusions.	Layer	Layer of hard packed chalk in trench. Probable made ground or levelling. Post- medieval to modern.		
009	Trial Hole	Firm, light brownish grey silty clay with frequent chalk, flint and charcoal inclusions. Length/width: 0.22m+.	Layer	Firm levelling deposit with the occasional loose/voiding patches due to the large size of inclusions. Post- medieval levelling or made ground.		

Context Number	Area/Trench	Description	Туре	Interpretation	
010	Duct trench West of Box 2	Firm mid brown grey silty clay with moderate small to medium flint, shell and charcoal.	Layer	Post-medieval to modern levelling.	
011	Trial Hole	Firm, mid brown grey silty clay with sparse small flint and charcoal. Dimensions: 0.03m - 0.09m. Thin layer of material above wall 12. Immediately below (+), a compact layer of mid brown yellow sandy clay with frequent medium sized flint.	Layer	Either capping or large put down above 12 after previous excavation.	
012	Trial Hole 1	Hard, mid greyish brown with light yellow/brown chalk, CBM and silty clay. Length: 0.32m, width: 0.66m, width: 0.4m.	Layer	Interior core work of medieval wall.	
014	Duct trench between boxes 1 and 2	Firm, mid brownish grey sandy clay with moderate chalk, CBM and spare charcoal.	Layer	Post-medieval to modern made ground.	
015	Duct trench West of Judges Lodgings	Firm, mid brownish grey silty clay with moderate chalk, CBM and flint. Mixed post-medieval to modern material.	Layer	Post-medieval to modern made ground.	
016	Box 3	Friable, mid grey clayey silt with frequent animal bone, oyster, shell and sparse plastic. Dimensions: 0.4m. Layer across whole of trench/box.	Layer	Post-medieval made ground.	

APPENDIX 2: PLATES 1-6



Plate 1. View of cable duct trench between Boxes 1 and 2, view to south.



Plate 2. Cable trench excavation by machine in Dome Alley, view to west.

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Plate 3. Excavation of Box 3, view to east, scale 1m.



Plate 4. Section of Box 1, view to east, scale 1m.

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Plate 5. Section of Box 2, view to north, scale 1m.



Plate 6. Section of trial hole 1 showing [012], possible medieval core work of Infirmary wall. View to west, scale 1m.

APPENDIX 3: SPECIALIST REPORT – METAL OBJECTS

The Metal Finds

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

Four metal items weighing a total of 50g were recovered from the site. The finds were examined and reported in accordance with CIfA guidelines (2020c). The assemblage was recorded in October 2021.

Results

Table 2, the metals

Context	Material	Description	No.	Wt(g)	Context date
	iron	Nails, round-sectioned shafts, 90mm long, 19 th -20 th century	2 20		
007	iron	Nails, encrusted, possibly round- sectioned shafts, <i>c</i> . 90mm long, 19 th -20 th century?	2	30	19 th -20 th century
Totals			4	50	

Provenance

The metal items were recovered from layer (007).

Discussion

The metal finds are all nails. These probably imply structural activity in the area. At least two of them are early modern 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (90mm) wire-drawn nails. The other two may be further examples of such nails but are encrusted and corroded and the section shape of the shafts are unclear.

Potential and Recommendations

The metal finds are of limited potential. They suggest structural activity of the early modern period in the area. No further work is required. The items can be discarded.

References

Abbreviations

CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

- No. Number
- Wt(g) Weight (grams)

APPENDIX 4: SPECIALIST REPORT – ANIMAL BONE

The Animal Bone

By Kevin Rielly

Introduction

The trenching for a new cable duct within the Inner Close south of the Cathedral revealed some postmedieval cut features and levelling dumps. A few bones were hand collected from these deposits.

Methodology

The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered.

Description of faunal assemblage

A total of 11 bones were hand collected from the cable duct trench, as shown in Table 1, of which approximately 50% were identifiable to species. These included a cattle pelvis and sheep/goat tibia from the post-medieval levelling or made ground deposit (7); a sheep/goat tibia from the fill (5) of a possible linear cut (4); and a sheep/goat loose mandibular molar and a pig mandible from post-medieval to modern levelling layer (1). The latter mandible is from a sub-adult pig, probably a second year.

Context:	1	3	5	7	Total
Species					
Cattle				1	1
Cattle-size		2		1	3
Sheep/Goat	1		1	1	3
Pig	1				1
Sheep-size	1		1	1	3
Grand					
Total	3	2	2	4	11

Conclusion and recommendations for further work

These bones no doubt represent general food and preparation waste of unknown derivation. They offer very little insight into food usage in this area during the supposed period of deposition. No further work can be recommended.

APPENDIX 5: SPECIALIST REPORT – SHELL

The Mollusc Shell

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

A single item weighing 13g was recovered.

Results

A summary of the finds is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 3, the mollusc shell

Context	Species	Description	No.	Wt(g)
001	oyster	top shell	1	13

Provenance

The items were recovered from layer (001).

Discussion

A shell of an edible marine mollusc, oyster, probably food waste, was recovered. The item is intrinsically undatable.

Potential and Recommendations

The shell is of limited potential and significance and can be discarded.

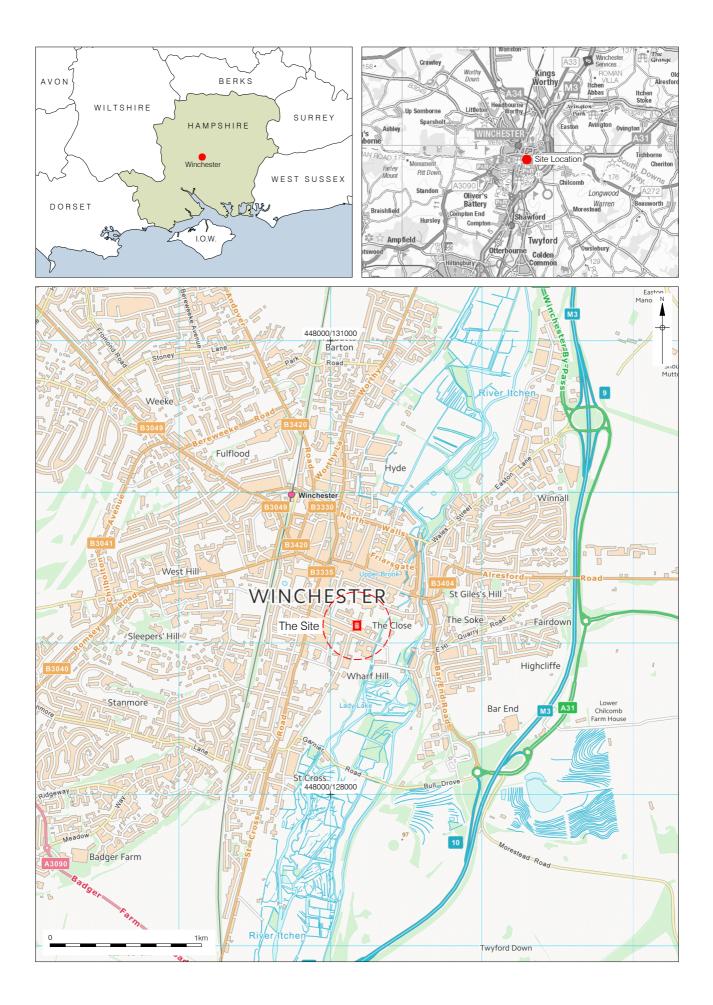
Abbreviations

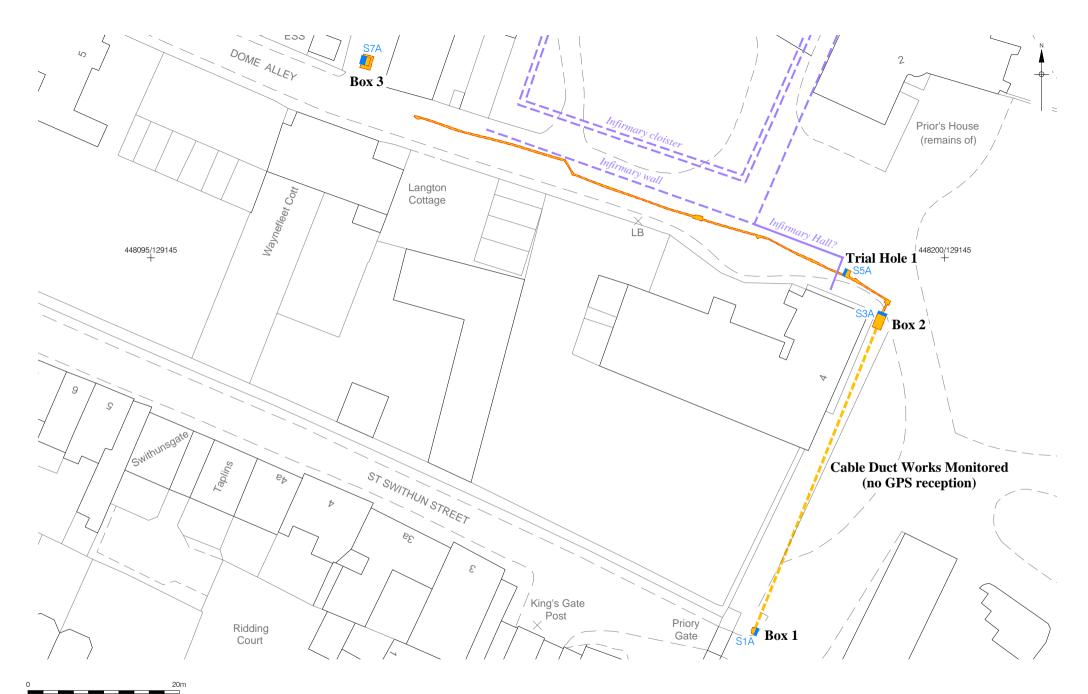
No. Number Wt(g) Weight (grams)

APPENDIX 6: OASIS RECORD

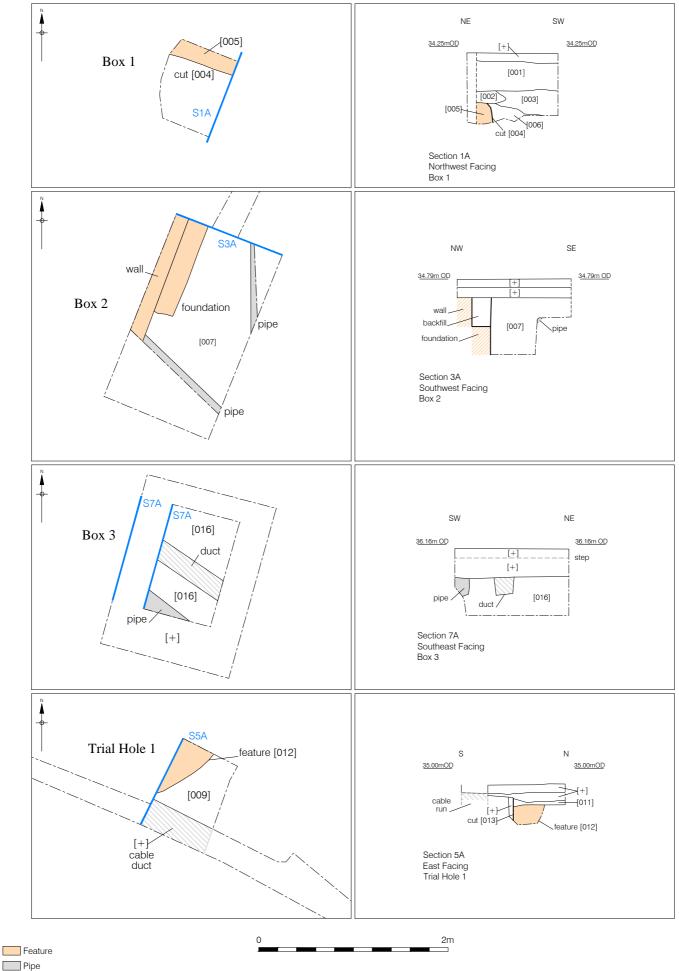
OASIS ID (UID)	preconst1-503539
Project Name	Watching Brief at Dome Alley, Winchester, South East,
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	Winchester Cathedral Close Broadband Connection Ducts
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Scheduled monument consent
Organisation Responsible for	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project Dates	03-Aug-2021 - 24-Aug-2021
Location	Dome Alley, Winchester, South East, England NGR : SU 48113 29168
	LL : 51.0598439, -1.3148362
	12 Fig : 448113,129168
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Hampshire District : Winchester Parish : Winchester, unparished area
Draiget Methodology	
Project Methodology	The watching brief monitored the hand excavation of two trial holes, three inspection box pits and trenching, as well as the machine excavation of trenching along Dome Alley from Judge's Lodgings to the rear of 9 the Close. The trenches were excavated to a shallow depth of no more than 0.4m below ground level. Trial holes and inspection box pits were excavated to a greater depth of between 0.41m and 0.80m below ground level.

Project Results	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was appointed by the Chapter of Winchester Cathedral to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the installation of cable ducts below ground between Prior's Arch gate and Dome Alley within the Cathedral Close, Winchester, Hampshire. The Site is located within Winchester Cathedral Close and comprised the route of the proposed cable duct formed below ground between an Openreach junction box at the east end of St Swithun's Street and Dome Alley, passing beneath the Prior's Arch gate, then paving and grass and alongside an existing duct, terminating in a new junction box in Dome Alley close to the rear of 9 The Close. The Watching Brief in Winchester Cathedral Close did not reveal significant previously unidentified archaeological resources. The Watching Brief recorded features and layers observed in other Watching Briefs carried out by John Crook during previous service installations, including part of the medieval infirmary wall north of the Judges' Lodgings. Contexts identified in Box 1 are likely post medieval in date and probably represent repeated phases of raising the ground level.
Keywords	Monastery - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
HER	Winchester HER - unRev - STANDARD
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Hampshire Cultural Trust





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Cable duct

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2022 18/01/22 MR Figure 3 Plans and sections from Boxes 1 to 3 and Trial Hole 1 1:40 at A4