

Smiths Butchers, High Street Chipping Campden Gloucestershire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



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Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1905
JANUARY 2019



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: Watching Brief Smiths Butchers, High Street,
Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire

Commissioned by: Sandstone Property Developments

Site Code: GCC17

Planning Reference: 17/03970/FUL

Planning Authority: Cotswold District Council

National Grid Reference: SP 1505 3907

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SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during groundworks in the passageway at Smith's Butchers, High Street, Chipping Campden as part of the redevelopment of the existing buildings.

This revealed a thick layer of clay that had been dumped across the area to raise the level to the rear of the properties on High Street. This levelling material was also recorded to the south in an earlier archaeological evaluation.

A small trench excavated against the wall of the neighbouring property revealed a length of offset stone walling below the standing wall that was either a rough foundation for the existing building, or was the remains of an earlier building. The current building dates from the 17th century, so if the foundation was part of an earlier building it is likely to have been a part of the later medieval high street.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Cotswold District Council for redevelopment of the former Smith's Butchers site, Chipping Campden, GL55, 6AT to include a new dwelling to rear; demolition of redundant ancillary lean-to structures and conversion of existing abattoir into cafe/bistro; part conversion of upper apartment into office space and reconfigured apartment; and demolition of existing modern outbuilding group and replacement with single ancillary outbuilding.
- 1.2 A condition of the planning permission required the applicant to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Planning Authority. Archaeology Warwickshire carried out a field evaluation of the site in December 2017 which identified a thick layer of clay and stone dumped across the site during the 18th century (Page 2018).
- 1.3 Thereafter, the Council's archaeological adviser recommended that a programme of archaeological work be carried, out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the planning authority, in November 2018.
- 1.4 This report presents the results of that work. The project archive will be stored with Archaeology Warwickshire under Site Code GCC18 until deposition with Gloucestershire Museum Service at Corinium Museum. The work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidelines (2014).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The application area is centred on National Grid Reference SP 1505 3907 in the village of Chipping Campden, in the parish of the same name. The site is located on the southern side of High Street, in a central location in the town, opposite the square and within the Chipping Campden Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is Dyrham Formation – Siltstone and Mudstone. No superficial deposits are recorded (British Geological Survey 2017).
- 2.3 There is a drop in levels from the back of the buildings to the location of the former evaluation trench and from there to the lane at the south end of the site.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The archaeological background to the site was recently detailed in a report on the evaluation to the rear of the property (Page 2018) and can be summarised as follows:
- 3.2 Recent fieldwork to the south of the town, at Badgers Field in advance of residential development has added considerably to the understanding of the early development of open land immediately to the south of the historic core of Chipping Campden. A series of positive anomalies (HER 42433) identified during geophysical survey (HER 42432) which were subject to an evaluation in 2011 (HER 28406) and strip map and sample excavation in 2016 (HER 48957). A limited amount of material suggestive of transient Mesolithic activity was found as well as evidence likely to be associated with low level agricultural activity at the site. A number of ditches were found, although with few datable finds. Pottery, some of it residual recovered from the ditches indicates activity of a prehistoric date (possible Early Bronze Age and Iron Age), as well as of Romano-British and Saxon date.
- 3.3 The nearest evidence of Roman activity to the development site is a single sherd of residual pottery recovered during an evaluation of two test pits in 2010 at 6 - 7 Sheep Street (HER 35554) located 110m to the south-west of the development site. A watching brief on the same site during development did not reveal any archaeological features.
- 3.4 Saxon sherds found in ditches and a pit containing fired clay and animal bone (HER 42765) on the same Badgers Field site point to some level of occupation during this period. The presence of pottery of possible early Saxon (6th to 7th century AD) date, fired clay, plant remains and charcoal, and animal bone, including suggestions of bone working, are characteristic of a small rural settlement practicing a mixed agricultural economy. The site therefore has provided the first direct archaeological evidence (albeit limited) for Saxon settlement at Chipping Campden.
- 3.5 A large settlement was already established at Chipping Campden at Domesday in 1066, when it was described with 73 households and belonging to *Earl Harold* (opendomesday.org). Chipping is from the Old English *ceping* meaning a market or market place.

- 3.6 A weekly market had been granted to the inhabitants of Campden by 1247 (HER 20910). The market fell into decline during the 17th century. The medieval and post-medieval markets would have been in High Street.
- 3.7 The town has a planned medieval layout typical of borough towns of the 11th to 13th century with a linear settlement pattern and long narrow burgage plots extending at right angles to the main streets. Smiths itself is sited within one of these long narrow plots, with the building extending towards the back of the plot from High Street.
- 3.8 The Grade I Listed parish church is located approximately 600m to the north-east of the development site. The List Entry Description (List UID: 1341977) describes the Church of St James as a magnificent Cotswold Wool Church, in the Perpendicular style of the mid-late 15th century but incorporating part of the earlier Norman Church.
- 3.9 A medieval chapel (HER 2766) may once have stood opposite the development site. It is recorded as being located within the grounds of the Manor of *Campden* by *Hugh de Gonville* in 1180. Two proposed locations are in the centre of the town suggested as being either in the location of the present Town Hall, or Island House in locations roughly opposite the development site.

Map Regression

- 3.10 The Ordnance Survey 1st edition mapping of 1884 (1:2500 scale) shows a long L-shaped range of buildings consistent with the current building, adjoining a building on its northeast side with an alley along its south-west side. The building range is shown extending back within the plot for approximately 20m. Part of a rear extension attached at the rear of the neighbouring building to the west (today Drinkwaters Campden Fruit and Veg) is shown extending directly behind the rear of Smiths. Two other, smaller buildings are shown positioned against the eastern plot boundary.
- 3.11 The 1903 and 1924 Ordnance Survey editions show the same general arrangement, although at a smaller scale, with less refinement of detail.
- 3.12 The Google Earth Image of 1999 shows the same basic arrangement with the side alley still present. The projecting extension from Drinkwaters to the west was gone and at least two narrower extensions with corrugated iron roofs are shown on the rear of the current building. A stone and slate building against the east plot boundary is

on roughly the same footprint as one of the buildings on the 1st edition OS mapping. Vehicle access has been added to the rear of the plot with a surfaced road hard up against the western plot boundary. The plot is grassed over elsewhere with a few trees present. The later Google Earth images record a similar arrangement.

Listed Building

- 3.13 Smiths Butchers is a Grade II listed building (List UID: 126193) and is described in the list entry description as:

Circa 1700. Coursed squared rubble with Cotswold stone roof. Two storeys and attic, 3 windows to whole. The ground floor has 2 small shop windows, a plain doorway, a casement window, and a moulded 4 centred arch stone doorway to alleyway. The first floor has two 3 light stone mullion casements with drip moulds to left and modern replacement tripartite casement to right. Steeply pitched roof with 2 gabled dormers.

Evaluation 2017

- 3.14 In 2017 an archaeological field evaluation was carried out in the footprint of the proposed new dwelling. The evaluation consisted of a single trench that exposed no archaeological features other than a layer of clay and stones that appeared to have been dumped deliberately to raise the ground level behind the shop. Pottery from the layer suggested that it was deposited during the 18th century. The depth of the dumped material indicated that there was originally a steep slope from the rear of the buildings along High Street down towards the river to the south. A map of the town from the early 18th century shows the evaluation area as a bowling green, so the levelling may have been for the creation of the green.
- 3.15 No finds earlier than the later post-medieval period were recovered, suggesting that the medieval activity in this area was nearer to the buildings along High Street.

4 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODS

- 4.1 The main aim of the work was to record any archaeological remains that were disturbed by the development, to collate the records in an archaeological archive and present the significant aspects of the archive in a report for dissemination.
- 4.2 The secondary aim was to form an understanding of the remains recorded in terms of their character and date, and to place the evidence in its local and regional context.
- 4.3 The work required that an experienced archaeologist be on site each day of groundworks to supervise ground reductions to formation levels, or the geological natural, whichever the higher.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Groundworks consisted of the reduction of ground for the access ramp along the NW/SE oriented passage between Smith's Butchers and the neighbouring 'Drinkwaters fruit and veg' store fronting High Street to the south-east. This was excavated by machine using a toothless bucket. The reduced area for the ramp was c.3m wide and c.20m long and it sloped from the NW and SE ends to a maximum depth of 1.2m at the centre (Fig 3; Photo 1). A test-pit was also excavated against the wall of the building.

Deposit Sequence

- 5.2 The geological natural clay (5), visible only in the base of the test-pit, was overlain by a >1.2m thick deposit of grey brown silty sandy clay (1) that contained frequent large limestone fragments, some animal bone and occasional fragments of internally black-glazed post-medieval pottery. The animal bones, which included pig tibiae, were probably from the former abattoir that occupied the plot next to the site. This was very similar to a make-up layer identified during the earlier evaluation and it probably represents the extensive post-medieval raising of the area.

The neighbouring wall (Photos 2 – 4)

- 5.3 A test-pit was excavated against the north-east wall face of Drinkwaters in order to determine if the excavation would undermine its footings. The sondage was located 3m back from High Street extending 1m along the wall. It was hand-excavated to a depth of 1.5m which revealed the full depth of the building footing at this point. The footing was constructed in two different styles between the lower and upper halves.
- 5.4 The lower part (3) was cruder than the upper and projected c.0.18m out from the standing wall face. It was comprised of irregular-shaped blocks of limestone and sandstone which were roughly laid and bonded with a mix of silty clay and lime mortar. The wall foundation cut into the geological natural clay (2). A further section of wall footing (8), 0.46m high, projected out from the wall line in the north-western side of the sondage. This projecting part was a single course incorporating a large limestone block c.0.4m wide, but otherwise of the same rough construction as footing 3. Its full width was not visible, however, it is presumed to have formed part of a wall across the present passage. The upper portion was truncated and overlaid by formation deposit (1), likely brought in to create a level passageway.

- 5.5 The upper course (4) of footings was constructed in a similar manner to the walling above, with regular sub-square limestone coursed blocks between 0.2 and 0.5m wide and bonded with a lime mortar. The lower course formed a plinth that was offset by 80mm from the standing walling. This difference between the construction style of the wall and upper offset footing and the material and bonding of the walling below suggests two possible scenarios. The existing building may have been built on the remains of an earlier, largely demolished, building which was much cruder in construction. Alternately, it may be that the 17th-century building's footings, which would never been visible above ground, were simply constricted in a much rougher manner than the walling above. The significant difference in the styles and bonding materials used suggests it may be more likely that the lower part of the wall belonged to an earlier structure, possibly supporting the plinth of a timber-framed building.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 A thick layer of clay and stone dumped during the 17th or early 18th century was recorded across the site during the evaluation and watching brief phases. A similar deposit was recorded during a watching brief c.20m to the west (Cotswold Archaeology 2012), which suggests the area along the passageway and behind the buildings fronting onto High Street was deliberately raised and levelled.

- 6.2 The identification of a possible earlier building below Drinkwaters, including a section that extended across the passageway is significant, although no structures are shown on any maps of the town. The centre of Chipping Campden is almost entirely made up of buildings from the 14th century to the 17th century. Drinkwaters dates to the later part of this period, indicating the putative earlier building pre-dates this. Many of the early buildings in the town are timber-framed, on a stone plinth, and this may well have been the remains of such a structure.

- 6.3 The earlier evaluation and this watching brief have recorded a significant increase in the height of the ground levels to the rear of High Street throughout the post-medieval period. This was presumably done to raise and level the area to the rear of the High Street that sloped southwards towards the river.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDICES

A List of contexts

Context	Description	Thickness (m)	Comment
1	Layer of yellowish brown silty clay with limestone rubble	1.2	Contained occasional fragments of post-medieval pottery*
2	Cut for stone wall footing 3	1.4	Visible in section
3	Stone wall footing, limestone and sandstone blocks		Rough wall footing
4	Limestone wall made up of regular blocks		Well-constructed wall footing
5			Geological natural
6	Cut for stone wall 4		Visible in section
7	Cut for stone wall 8		
8	Stone wall footing		Running perpendicular to the building

Post-medieval pottery and animal bone from Layer 1 not retained

B Oasis

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1: Excavation of the new access ramp between the buildings



2: Location of test-pit against neighbouring building



3: Remains of offset stone walling (3 and 4) below neighbouring building



4: Remains of projecting stone walling (8)

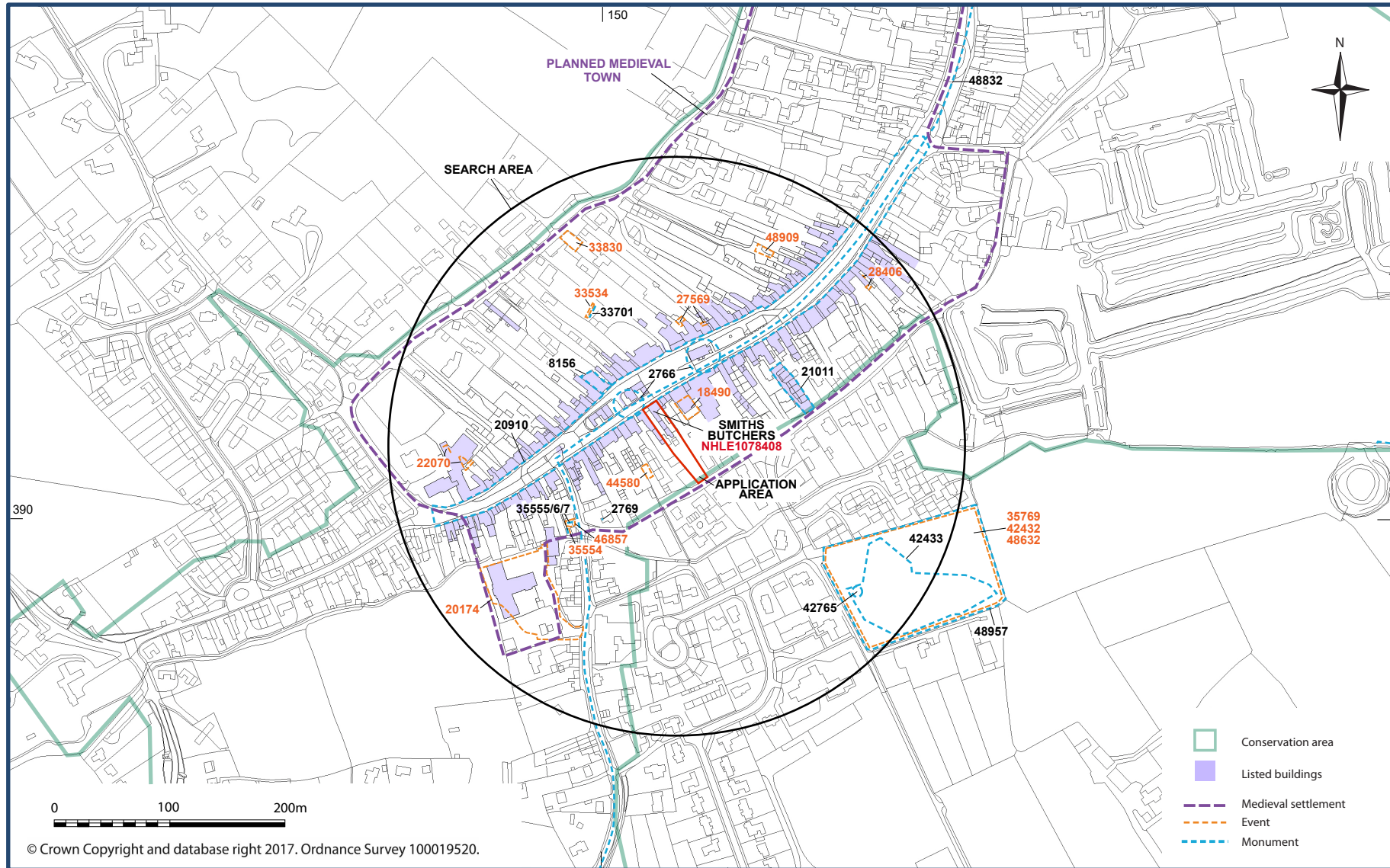


Fig 1: Location of application area and Historic Environment information



Fig 2: Location of area excavated, with detail and section