



BRISTOL & WEST ARCHAEOLOGY

Bath Spa University Campus, Newton
St Loe, Bath, Bath and North East
Somerset

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Bristol & West Archaeology

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**Bath and North East Somerset
Council**

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ST 69390 63961

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Bristol and West Archaeology during excavations to provide a new footpath from the Wellow Building, within the grounds of the Bath Spa University. The site lay within the Grade II* Registered Park and Gardens of Newton Park, including elements of the Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument of Newton St. Loe Medieval Castle.

Groundworks comprised the excavation of a strip of topsoil up to 200mm deep the west, part of which was found to overlay the course of an earlier footpath. No deposits or features of archaeological interest were observed during the works.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks are owed to Bath Spa University and Joseph Brennan, Surveyor – Building Consulting, Jones Lang LaSalle Limited.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning consent (16/02303/FUL) was obtained from Bath and North-East Somerset Council for the refurbishment of the Wellow Building, part of the Newton Park Campus of Bath Spa University, Newton St Loe. The refurbishment works included the formation of a pedestrian footpath across part of the late 18th century Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, in close proximity to the medieval remains of St Loe's Castle, a scheduled ancient monument.
- 1.2 These assets were described by Historic England as forming a coherent group which are still prominent features in the designed landscape and the University Campus. Furthermore, they state that although the remainder of the castle was demolished during Brown's landscaping, that there are buried walls between the tower and the gatehouse (revealed during excavations in the 1980s) and that these were associated with the Scheduled Ancient Monument and were "Nationally Important".
- 1.3 Furthermore, the Senior Archaeological Officer for Bath and North East Somerset Council, Mr Richard Sermon, pointed out that "The proposed footpath lies within the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden and in close proximity to the medieval remains of St Loe's Castle (MBN1318) which is a Scheduled Monument including two Grade I Listed Buildings" (the South East Tower and the Gatehouse). He concluded "The site is within an area of significant archaeological interest and the Council will wish to examine and record items of interest discovered. This is a condition precedent because archaeological remains and features may be damaged by the initial development works".
- 1.4 Because of the possibility that significant archaeological remains may have been disturbed during the groundworks, the local planning authority attached a planning condition to the consent requiring a controlled archaeological watching brief during development groundworks. A Written Scheme of Investigation was provided by Bristol & West Archaeology. This document detailed the methodology to be used to satisfy the requirement of the planning consent. It was guided in its composition by Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (CIFA 2014) and the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE: The Project Managers' Guide (EH 2006).
- 1.5 The watching brief work will be assigned a Historic Environment Record number on completion of the work and will be entered in the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS). An accession number for the project archive has been requested from Roman Baths and Pump Room Heritage Services.

2. SITE LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

Location

- 2.1 The Wellow Building is centred on ST 69390 63961 and is located within the Newton Park Campus of Bath Spa University. The building itself is a 1960's build and the proposed pedestrian path runs from the north elevation.

Geology

- 2.2 The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale map for Bath indicates the underlying strata to be Blue Lias dating from the Triassic.

3. OBJECTIVES AND RECORDING METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 All groundwork was monitored. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (BWA 2016) approved by Bath and North East Somerset Council and followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (Cifa 2014) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE: The Project Managers' Guide)* (EH 2006).
- 3.2 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded on standard BWA pro-forma sheets with scaled plans and section drawings as appropriate. All records, drawings and photographs have been prepared as a standard archive and will be stored long-term at Roman Baths and Pump Room Museum, Bath.

4. HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The site lies within the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden of Newton Park, landscaped by Lancelot "Capability" Brown in the 1760s. The site includes the remains of the former medieval castle, both the Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument of the South East Tower and the Grade I Listed Building of the Gatehouse.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 The only deposits recorded during the stripping of topsoil along the route of the new path were topsoil (101) and in the west part of the path, the gravel of an earlier path which occupied part of the same route (102). No other deposits were recorded and no features, structures or finds of archaeological significance were revealed.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The excavation of the new path revealed no deposits, features, structures or finds of archaeological significance, partly owing to the shallow depth of excavation and the remains of an earlier path constructed over part of the route.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Consultation Response, Sermon, R. September 16th 2016

Written Scheme of Investigation for a Controlled Archaeological Watching Brief – Land opposite the Wellow Building, Newton Park, Newton St Loe, Bath & North-East Somerset

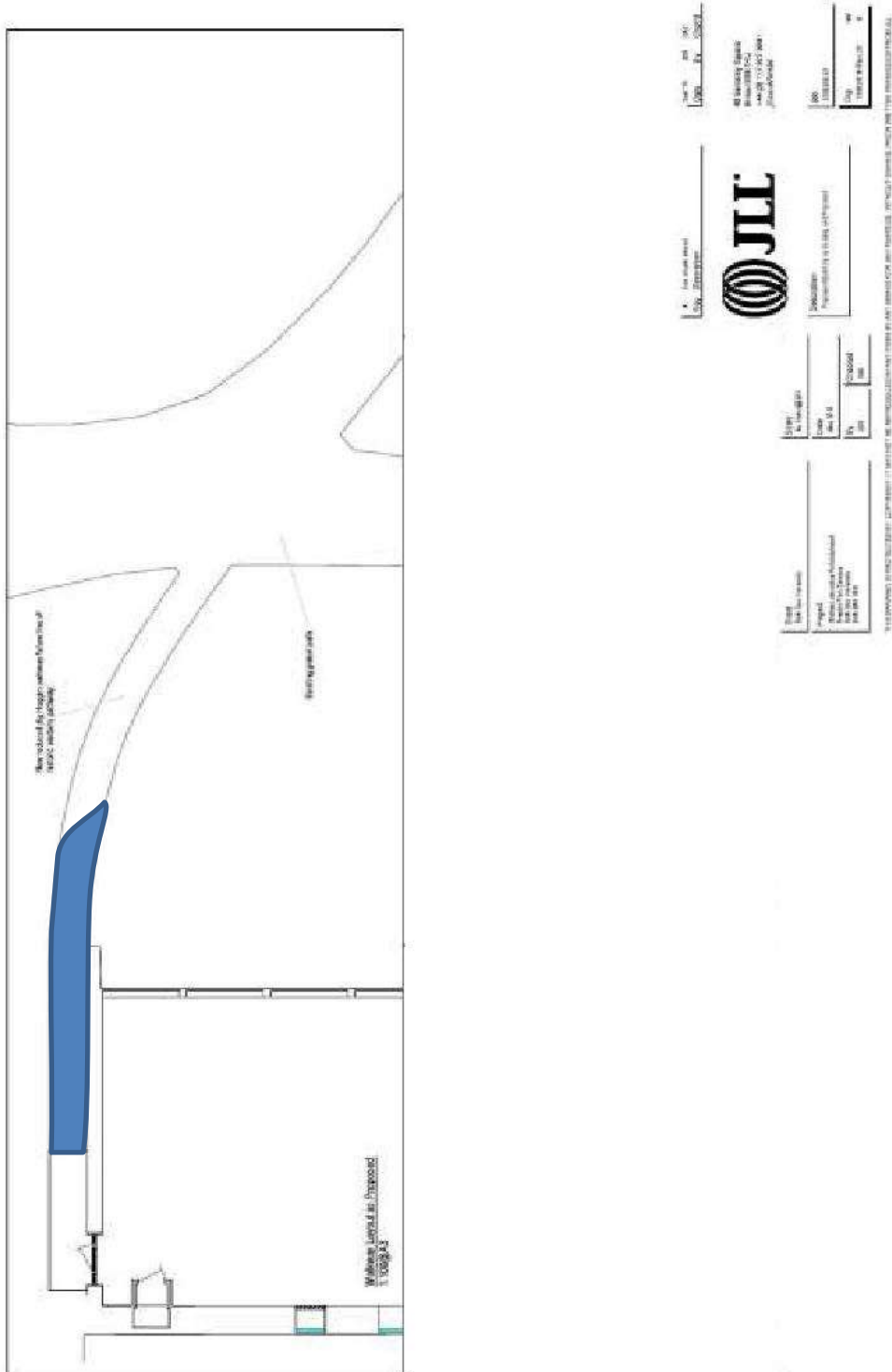
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No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Date

100	Deposit	Dark brown, fine sandy clayey silt loam. Rare (1%) small limestone fragments. Root disturbed. Topsoil.	Whole route of new path up to 180mm deep	-
101	Deposit	Gravel and topsoil	At base of trench, excavated up to 100mm	-



Figure 1. Location of the site. scale as shown.



Approximate extent of earlier path bedding (102)

Figure 2. Detail of the new path and extent of Deposit (102).



Plate 1. East half of the new footpath as excavated, looking W. Scale 1m.



Plate 2. West half of the new path as excavated, showing gravel from older path in base, looking WSW. Scale 1m.