

# Urban Archaeology

*...define, record, remove...*

**St Nicholas House,  
47 London Road,  
Gloucester,  
Gloucestershire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**for Royston Davies on behalf of  
Gilbournes Ltd**

**Chiz Harward BA MCIfA**

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# Archaeological Watching Brief Report

## St Nicholas House, 47 London Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire

Client: Royston Davies, on behalf of Gilbournes Ltd

Local Authority: Gloucester City Council

Planning ref: 17/00975/FUL

Historic England List no 1271705

NGR: SO 83792 18862

Project no: UA203

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Doc Ref: UA203\_WB\_report\_v1

Date: March 26<sup>th</sup> 2020

Site Code: NIC19

OASIS ref: urbanarc1-342180

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## Non Technical Summary

During February 2019 and March 2020 Urban Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during the renovation of St Nicholas House, Gloucester, Gloucestershire. Two test pits were excavated in the basement of the property and an external service trench was monitored.

The construction of St Nicholas House has caused a general truncation to c14.08m OD within the footprint of the building and has removed any horizontal archaeological deposits from this area.

The surface of the natural Lias Clay substrate had been truncated within the internal test pits, and was not reached in the external works. The original ground level cannot therefore be ascertained, although it probably lies between 14.10 and 14.81m OD.

Within the basement test pits two cut features (not excavated) are likely to be part of the same ditch, or a large quarry pit for clay extraction. Finds from the surface of the features suggest a later post-medieval date for the infilling, pre-dating the construction of St Nicholas House. Residual Roman pottery indicates the likely presence of Roman activity within the area.

Externally the homogenous dark grey brown soil deposit is typical of post-Roman 'Dark Earth' and cultivation soil deposits observed at sites in the area. There was no evidence for buildings or other occupation along the London Road frontage.

The external foundations of St Nicholas House were exposed in the external trench; the street frontage was built in brick, but the side walls in Lias blocks, presumably for reasons of cost. A brick tank or interceptor at the south of the forecourt may be associated with the bus depot.

Overall the results are of local significance only, adding to the existing corpus of observations in the London Road area. No further work is recommended on the site archive.

# 1 Introduction and planning background

- 1.1 On February 26<sup>th</sup> 2019 and March 23–24<sup>th</sup> 2020 Urban Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief for Royston Davies, on behalf of Gilbournes Ltd, at St Nicholas House, 47 London Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL1 3HF, SO 83792 18862 (Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil conditions placed upon planning consent for the conversion of the building from offices to residential apartments (planning ref. 17/00975/FUL):

### *Condition 3*

*No development or groundworks shall take place within the proposed development site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of historic environment work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme will provide for archaeological monitoring, investigation and recording (a 'watching brief') during ground works related to the development proposal, with the provision for appropriate archiving and public dissemination of the findings.*

### *Reason*

*The proposed development site has potential to include significant elements of the historic environment. If present and revealed by development works, the Council requires that these elements will be recorded during development and their record made publicly available. This accords with Policies BE.31 and BE.36 of the Second Deposit City of Gloucester Local Plan (2002), Policy SD9 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy Main Modifications 2017 and Paragraph 141 of the NPPF. This is necessary pre-commencement due to the potential impact from first phase works on significant assets.*

- 1.2 Drainage works had been completed on the site *prior* to the submission of the Written Scheme of Investigation required by Condition 3 of the consent. Following a meeting on site between Andrew Armstrong (City Archaeologist, Gloucestershire City Council, archaeological advisor to Gloucester City Council) and Royston Davies (21st February 2019) it was agreed that -in addition to the watching brief on any remaining groundworks or drainage- two 1.5m square test pits should be archaeologically excavated within the basement adjacent to the newly installed drain. This programme of test pitting was intended to '*preserve and advance understanding of any heritage assets of archaeological interest which may have been impacted by the previous groundworks. This approach is intended to investigate the presence or absence of archaeological remains in the area adjacent to the groundworks and, if present, record their depth, condition and character without causing further disturbance.*'
- 1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Urban Archaeology (Harward 2019) and approved by Andrew Armstrong (archaeological advisor to Gloucester City Council).
- 1.4 The fieldwork also followed the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (ClfA 2014), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006) and the *2016 Brief for an archaeological field evaluation* (GCC).
- 1.5 The Site Code for archaeological work was NIC19.

## 2 Site background

- 2.1 The site is a c1820 Grade II listed stuccoed brick villa of three storeys with half-basement and attic located to the north of central Gloucester (listing no 1271705; Historic England 2019). The property fronts onto the north side of London Road, with the Stagecoach bus depot to the west, and Nos 49 and 51 London Road to the east. The area is relatively flat and lies at approximately 16m AOD. The site lies within the London Road Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The solid geology beneath the site is mapped as Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation; superficial deposits of Cheltenham Sand and Gravel are mapped at the site (British Geological Survey 2019).

## 3 Archaeological and historical background

- 3.1 There is currently limited evidence for prehistoric activity within Gloucester. A Bronze Age scraper was recovered from just above the natural substrate at St Margaret's Hospital in 1992 (HER 14096).
- 3.2 To the north of the site, the Kingsholm Fortress was built in the late AD 40s but abandoned during the AD 60s, with a new fortress being established at the centre of present day Gloucester (*Glevum*). Ermin Street links Gloucester to Cirencester, the Roman administrative capital for the west of England. Remains of Roman metalled surfaces have been recorded (HER 7542).
- 3.3 Ermin Street was realigned after the second fort was built in Gloucester, with Denmark Road representing the earlier course (to the Kingsholm fort), and London Road representing the later alignment dating to approximately AD 70.
- 3.4 Wotton Roman Cemetery is known to have extended for 500m along London Road to St Catherine's Church on the junction with Denmark Road. The boundaries of the cemetery area are not fully defined and burials may extend into the area of the development, two burials were found at Alvin Street, northwest of the site (Heighway 1980, HER 14096). Most of the cremations from this site have been located towards the eastern end of the cemetery, suggesting the site started as a cremation cemetery in the 1st century. Inhumations extended along the road to the southwest, indicating the expansion of the cemetery towards the town. Most of the early information on the cemetery is from the excavation of individual burials in the 19th century, although burials have been excavated under archaeological conditions.
- 3.5 Extra-mural settlement appears to have developed along London Road from the second century, with remains of masonry buildings recorded immediately west of the site at the bus depot in 1981 (HER 42935), and further west at Northgate Court (HER 27707). The extent and interaction between the cemetery and extra-mural settlement is not currently fully understood, and the site may lie within both landuses at different times.
- 3.6 Dark Earth deposits are known from sites in the vicinity, sealing earlier Roman activity and reworked into the medieval and post-medieval periods. Ermin Street/London Road continued in use through the medieval and later periods. Fifteenth-century documents refer to London Road as being lined with 'diverse tenements', but all trace of these disappeared

when the suburb was largely destroyed during the siege of Gloucester in 1643. Medieval pits and ditches have been recorded in the area.

- 3.7 In the medieval period the site lay within the horticultural/agricultural area adjacent to London Road, outside of the Saxon and medieval town of Gloucester. The site continued to form part of the agricultural hinterland of Gloucester until the 19th century, when residential development expanded along London Road.
- 3.8 St Nicholas House was built in c1820 as a villa, apparently as a pair with Claremont House opposite. The building is shown on the 1851 map of Gloucester as Malvern House set in extensive grounds to the front and rear.

### **Selected archaeological sites**

- 3.9 At the Bristol Omnibus Depot immediately west of the site a watching brief was carried out on a 485m<sup>2</sup> area undergoing machine excavation to a depth of 1.4 metres. It is suggested the site was open ground until the 2nd century. Observations recorded the remains of two successive mortar surfaces with associated robbed wall alignments, above a late 1st/2nd century horizon. The site appears to have been occupied by a building consisting of at least two rooms with mortar floors and a courtyard area to the north and east. In the courtyard was an octagonal oolite stone well-head, which was machined out of trench and the exact original location is not known. The area east of the courtyard was open ground. This open area was metalled over in the late 3rd or 4th century. The building presumably lies within the Roman suburbs, 500m beyond the walled area of the *colonia* (HER 42935, Garrod 1982).
- 3.10 Approximately 20m east of the site an archaeological evaluation was carried out at 56–65 London Road, Gloucester. A 10 x 2 metre trench was excavated. Most of the site had been proved to have been destroyed by modern cellars. The excavation did however suggest the presence of Roman timber buildings on the fringe of the suburban settlement. The land had reverted to fields during the medieval period (HER 42928, Atkin 1987).
- 3.11 In 1973 at 69 London Road two Roman gullies were found at a depth of 1.7m. The gullies were silted up from later industrial use. Remains of a masonry structure discovered are possibly lime kilns and thought to have been demolished late 2nd century. A wide medieval ditch was located towards the west of the site, probably a boundary ditch, between lands to west of London road and King or Abbots Barton with medieval pottery found (HER 42927).
- 3.12 150m to the west, during excavations at Northgate House (23 London Road), observations were made in 1989 of the Roman outer north suburb at a depth of 1.4m below pavement level. A ploughsoil contained Neronian-Flavian pottery. Remains of two timber buildings with floors, hearths, and one with evidence for ironworking, date from the Flavian to 2nd century. A large masonry building was built in the 2nd to late 3rd century, replacing the timber metalworking building. No evidence for 4th century occupation was recovered within this area of the outer north suburb. A late Roman inhumation burial lies to the rear of the buildings. A succession of silt and gravel metalled frontage capped with iron slag surfaces totalling 1m thick lay between the front of the buildings and the Roman street alignment, average width 2.2m.
- 3.13 Remains of gravel surfaces were recorded to 1.5m deep below the modern pavement. Subsequent eroded and silted street layers of Roman to post-Roman date were observed from 90cm deep beneath 11th–12th century levels. The street or spur was originally constructed to connect the north gate of the Gloucester Flavian fortress with the Claudio-Neronian Ermin Street alignment at Wotton, where it aligns onto Kingsholm.

- 3.14 Medieval pits associated with possible building remains and surfaces of 11th–12th to 15th century date were recorded along the London Road frontage (Garrod 1990).
- 3.15 At the former Kwiksave site on Worcester/Northgate Street, six evaluation trenches identified well preserved levels of Roman activity including metallated surfaces, cultivation activity, bank material and possible demolition rubble. Evidence was uncovered to suggest that these levels were well stratified and may represent a considerable period of Roman activity. Two probable ditches were also observed to be cutting into Roman layers. The majority of Roman layers were sealed by a deposit of dark earth, in some cases up to a metre thick. Dating evidence suggests that this material is of Roman and later date.
- 3.16 Evidence for a bank of probable medieval date was also revealed in a position and in an alignment consistent with the postulated outer line of the medieval town boundary incorporating the 13th century town suburb. The top of the Roman deposits was recorded at between 13.20 and 13.56m OD, with the top of Dark Earth deposits at between 13.55 and 14.26m OD (CA 2004).
- 3.17 At 32 London Road significant Roman archaeology was located in almost every area of the site observed and included pits, ditches and rich material finds. A series of stakes apparently formed two structures within the north-east part of the site, and a substantial alignment of 23 stakes may have formed part of a structure or a boundary fence. A series of deposits formed part of a Roman metallated road surface) extending from the known Roman road route underlying what is now London Road. These deposits indicate the possibility of Roman activity immediately outside the known extent of the Roman town and within the immediate vicinity of the site during the late 1st/early–mid 2nd century AD (Border Archaeology 2005).
- 3.18 At 36 London Road during an archaeological watching brief on groundworks a single ditch was recorded. It contained fragments of Roman pottery and tile. No other features or artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered. No levels are given in the report, but natural ground appears to be at approximately 14.4m OD (CA 2012).
- 3.19 At 74 and 76 London Road two test pits were dug to a depth of 1m below current ground level revealed post-medieval/modern cultivation soils. The report does not give height levels for the test pits (CA 2011).
- 3.20 At 92–98 London Road a watching brief during groundworks associated with the residential redevelopment of the site in 2006 recorded four extended human burials; it was not clear if these inhumations were associated with the nearby Roman cemetery at Wotton or the medieval St. Margaret's Hospital which lay immediately to the east of the site (CA 2006). The report does not include OD levels, but records natural clay at a depth of between 0.95 and 1.6m below the then ground level.
- 3.21 At an archaeological evaluation at 97 London Road two Roman inhumations and a cremation burial were identified, along with broadly uniform cemetery soil deposits, dating to the mid-1st to late 4th centuries AD; these extended across the site at a consistent depth below present ground level. A ditch, and structural remains, were also identified which may also relate to Roman funerary practices in the area.
- 3.22 Only limited truncation of cemetery remains was recorded within the trenches excavated within the cellar. In the external trench in the north of site, the Roman horizons were sealed by later agricultural and garden soil horizons which were cut by two medieval or post-medieval ditches.

- 3.23 Natural substrate was recorded at 15.1–15.14m OD, Roman cemetery soil horizons were recorded at 15.74–84m OD and medieval/post-medieval deposits at 16.39m OD (CA 2017).
- 3.24 It is clear that the site lies in an area with high potential for significant archaeological remains, principally for the Roman period where there may be remains of Ermin Street (and associated side roads and ditches. The site appears to lie at the western end of the Wotton cemetery, with extra-mural settlement developing up to, and possibly onto, the site from the 2nd century AD. The extent and nature of these landuses is not currently fully understood.
- 3.25 Whilst some nearby sites have identified extensive archaeological sequences, with masonry buildings, others have not encountered significant archaeological deposits. This may be due to later truncation, or to the localised nature of settlement and burial. Roman deposits lie up to c1.5m below present street level and are likely to survive beneath the present basement. Within the site there is likely to have been relatively little truncation as the site appears to have been open ground prior to construction of St Nicholas House.

## 4 Aims of the watching brief

- 4.1 The objectives of the watching brief were to record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains that were exposed or destroyed by the proposed development. Attention was given to sites and remains of all periods (including evidence of past environments).
- 4.2 The watching brief aimed to record the level of natural substrate and subsequent occupation levels, as well as their nature and date. A key aim was to establish whether the site lies within the Wotton cemetery, and/or extra-mural settlement developing eastwards from *Glevum* in the 2nd century, and how these two landuses develop over time.

## 5 Methodology

- 5.1 Prior to the engagement of Urban Archaeology, work to install new drains within and towards the rear of the property had already been completed. Following discussion with Andrew Armstrong (GCC) two test pits, each measuring 1.5m by 1.5m, were excavated in the basement of St Nicholas House adjacent to the newly installed drainage (Fig 2). The test pits were excavated to the top of the archaeological deposits on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019.
- 5.2 A 0.75m wide and 0.75m deep trench for the installation of new services was monitored on the 23–24<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- 5.3 All recording was undertaken in accordance with the Museum of London *Archaeological Site Manual* (1994), the Written Scheme of Investigation (Harward 2019), and the methodologies described and referred to in that document.
- 5.4 Levels were linked to a Temporary Benchmark on site calibrated by level traverse from the Ordnance Survey benchmark on the east side of Claremont Road (value 16.11m OD).



## 6 Results

- 6.1 This section provides an overview of the watching brief results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, matrix and archive contents are to be found in Appendices 1–3 respectively.

### Test pit 1

- 6.2 Natural substrate comprised a stiff Lias Clay natural substrate (7) that was an olive-green colour at the surface, increasingly blue-ish with depth. The clay was truncated horizontally by the basement construction to 14.08m OD.
- 6.3 The Lias Clay was truncated by [6], a north-south aligned feature filled by a compact greeny-grey sandy clay silt fill (5) which contained occasional fragments of orange-red handmade brick and tile, charcoal, burnt clay and pebbles (Fig. 3). The feature was observed over a width of 1.09m, it was not excavated however a fragment of brick and two sherds of pottery were recovered during cleaning.
- 6.4 Feature [6] was truncated by a small pit [9] measuring 0.4m by 0.32m by 0.18m deep, filled by sand (8).
- 6.5 The construction cut of the St Nicholas House basement [10] caused a horizontal truncation to 14.07–14.08m OD. A 0.17m thick layer of limecrete screed [4] was recorded across the test pit, it was sealed by a 0.05m thick layer of sand and gravel blinding (3) for a floor of York Stone slabs [2], which had a surface at 14.33m OD.
- 6.6 The York stone floor was sealed by a 0.05m thick concrete slab [1] with a surface at 14.38m OD.

### Test pit 2

- 6.7 Natural substrate comprised a stiff weathered Lias Clay natural substrate (19). The clay was truncated horizontally by the basement construction to 14.10m OD.
- 6.8 The Lias Clay was truncated by [18], a north-south aligned feature filled by a compact greeny-grey sandy clay silt fill (17) similar to fill (5) in Test Pit 1 (Fig. 4). The feature was observed over a width of 0.85m, it was not excavated.
- 6.9 The Lias Clay was also truncated by a small pit [16] measuring 0.8m by 0.2m by 0.18m deep, filled with bricks and clay (15).
- 6.10 The construction cut of the St Nicholas House basement [20] caused a horizontal truncation to 14.07–14.24m OD. Above this, a similar sequence of deposits was laid down as in Test Pit 1: a limecrete screed [14], sealed by sand and gravel blinding (13) with a floor of York Stone slabs [12] with a surface at 14.33m OD.
- 6.11 The York stone floor was sealed by a 0.05m thick concrete slab [11] with a surface at 14.38m OD.

### External works

- 6.12 A homogenous dark grey-brown clay sandy silt deposit (23) was exposed across the length of the trench, and extended below the base of the trench (lowest observation at 14.81m OD;

Fig. 5). The deposit was observed at a maximum of 15.47m OD, 0.17m below present ground level (bpgl). Fragments of Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery and Clay Tobacco Pipe were recovered from the deposit.

- 6.13 The external face of the foundation [24] of St Nicholas House was exposed at the north of the trench; the foundation of the street frontage was in orange-red bricks (BTL 112x70x230mm), whilst the side walls were built using Lias blocks measuring 350x150mm, offsetting 0.1m at 15.08m OD (0.48m bpgl; Fig. 6). The foundation had been trench built.
- 6.14 At the southern end of the trench a brick wall [25], bonded with Portland cement, was recorded (Fig. 7). It had been constructed within construction cut [26]. The eastern, internal, face was lined with cement render, with heavy hydro-carbon contamination suggesting it was a diesel tank or interceptor.
- 6.15 A reinforced concrete slab [21] was present across the forecourt.

## 7 The Finds

### The pottery

Paul Blinkhorn

- 7.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 8 sherds with a total weight of 164g. It consisted of a mixture of Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval wares, and was classified using the coding system of the Gloucester City type-series (eg. Vince 1984), as follows:

**TF5:** Local Grey Ware, 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> century. 2 sherds, 34g.

**TF12A:** Oxford Red–Slipped Ware, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 51g

**TF19:** Malvernian Rock-tempered Ware, 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 33g.

**TF61:** Midlands Purple Ware, late 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 27g.

**TF62:** Anglo-Dutch Tin-Glazed Earthenware, 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 11g.

**TF90:** Worcester-type Sandy Glazed Ware, 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 2g.

**TF94:** Westerwald/Cologne Stoneware, 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 2g.

- 7.2 The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Context	TF5		F12A		TF19		TF61		TF62		TF90		TF94		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
5			1	51	1	33									RB
23	2	37					1	27	1	11	1	3	1	2	17thC
Total	2	37	1	51	1	33	1	27	1	11	1	3	1	2	

Table 1 Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

- 7.3 The fabrics are common finds in the region. The assemblage is mainly plain bodysherds, other than the sherd of TF12A which is from the rim of a flanged bowl with an upright rim, and the fragment of TF62 which is from the rim of a small plate with blue-painted decoration. Both are somewhat abraded. They are both typical products of their respective traditions.

## The brick

Chiz Harward

- 7.3 The ceramic building material (CBM) has been assessed in accordance with the guidelines of the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group, (2002).
- 7.4 The brick was measured and weighed, and the fabric inspected using a x10 hand lens (Table 2). Due to the small size of the assemblage it has not been entered into a database. Following assessment the brick has been discarded.

CBM Type	Context	Breadth x Thickness x Length (mm)	Weight (g)	No of fragments	Fabric	Comment	Date
Brick	5	62x43x86	218	1	Hard dark orange-red fabric with black pellets 1-4mm, occa quartz sand 0.5-1mm. Coarse sand on base, yellow fireskin locally	Fragment of brick. Hand made in mould	Late 18th c to early 19 <sup>th</sup> century

Table 2 The Ceramic Building Material

- 7.6 The dating of ceramic building material is based largely upon the form of the materials. The degree of firing and, on some occasions, fabric type can also give an indication of date. The brick from context [5] is of post-medieval date; dating such bricks is not without difficulties but the brick is most likely to date from the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Generally bricks increase in thickness over time, with the introduction of George III's Brick Tax in 1784 bricks increased in thickness to approximately 3 inches, 76mm, although bricks had been this thickness prior to the tax (Brunskill 1997, 38).

## The clay tobacco pipe

Chiz Harward

- 7.7 Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe (CTP) were recovered from soil layer (23), a stem and an incomplete bowl. No mouthpieces were recovered.

Context	Weight (g)	No of fragments	Comment	Date
(23)	9	2	Stem fragment and incomplete bowl	1690-1800

Table 3 the clay tobacco pipe

- 7.8 The clay tobacco pipe assemblage from NIC19 has been classified and dated according to the Simplified General Typology (Oswald 1975), Chronology of London Bowl Types (Atkinson and Oswald 1969) or the Gloucester typology (Peacey 1979). Due to the small size of the assemblage it has not been entered into a database.
- 7.9 The incomplete bowl is hard to date accurately as the spur, and the junction with the stem is missing, but it is certainly not earlier than 1690. The bowl is slightly flattened, with thicker walls at the mould; it has been neatly finished and burnished. There is no milling, decoration or maker's stamp. It is perhaps most similar to a Gloucester Type 14 but is similar to 18<sup>th</sup> century pipes (Peacey 1979).

- 7.10 The potential for further study of the small clay tobacco pipe assemblage is limited and the CTP assemblage has only minor local significance.
- 7.11 Following assessment all finds have been discarded.

## 8 Conclusions and statement of significance

- 8.1 The archaeological monitoring of the recent refurbishment and construction work at St Nicholas House has added to our general understanding of the site. The construction of St Nicholas House has caused a general truncation to c14.08m OD within the footprint of the building, this is below the surface of the natural Lias Clay substrate and has removed any horizontal archaeological deposits from this area.
- 8.2 The surface of the natural Lias Clay substrate had been truncated within the internal test pits, and was not reached in the external works. The original ground level cannot therefore be ascertained, although it probably lies between 14.10 and 14.81m OD.
- 8.3 Cut features [6] and [18] are likely to be part of the same feature, possibly a ditch, or a large quarry pit for clay extraction. Finds from the fills, especially the presence of late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century brick, suggest a later post-medieval date for the infilling, pre-dating the construction of St Nicholas House, although the brick might have been pushed down into the fills during the construction of St Nicholas House. The Roman pottery is likely to be residual within the quarry/ditch fills but does indicate the likely presence of Roman activity within the area.
- 8.4 Externally the homogenous dark grey brown soil deposit is typical of post-Roman 'Dark Earth' and cultivation soil deposits observed at sites in the area. The presence of Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery, as well as Clay Tobacco Pipe, suggests that this deposit was extensively reworked as a cultivation or orchard soil until the construction of St Nicholas House c1820. There was no evidence for buildings or other occupation along the London Road frontage.
- 8.5 The small pits [9] and [16] may be associated with the construction of St Nicholas House, although they appeared to be truncated by the basement cut. They are likely to be 18th or 19th century in date.
- 8.6 The internal York Stone basement floor of St Nicholas House was revealed, although given it was laid above a limecrete screed this may not be the original floor. The external foundations of the building were exposed in the external trench; the street frontage was built in brick, but the side walls in Lias blocks, presumably for reasons of cost.
- 8.7 The brick tank or interceptor at the south of the forecourt may be associated with the bus depot.
- 8.8 Overall the results are of local significance only, adding to the existing corpus of observations in the London Road area. No further work is recommended on the site archive.

## 9 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Urban Archaeology would like to thank Royston Davies, of Gilbournes Ltd, for commissioning and providing information on the project, and Andrew Armstrong of Gloucester City Council, for his advice throughout the project. The author would like to thank Dan Ponting for his assistance during the watching brief. The watching brief was carried out by the author and all illustrations are by the author. The pottery was assessed by Paul Blinkhorn, all other finds were assessed by the author.

## 10 Archive

- 10.1 The site code NIC19 has been allocated to the excavation.
- 10.2 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation and watching brief are currently held by Urban Archaeology at their offices in Stroud. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive, which will comprise all retained artefacts and the written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited with Museum of Gloucester. Digital data will be deposited on the Archaeology Data Service.
- 10.3 The archive will be prepared in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990), specifically complying with Gloucestershire Museum guidelines (Paul 2017). The archive will be presented to the receiving museum within six months of the completion of the fieldwork (unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with Andrew Armstrong (GCC). The archive will then become publicly accessible.
- 10.4 A copy of this report and a summary of information from this project will be submitted to the OASIS online database of archaeological publications (urbanarc1-342180; Appendix 4). A further copy of the report will be submitted to Gloucestershire HER. Shape files of the trench locations will also be submitted to the HER.

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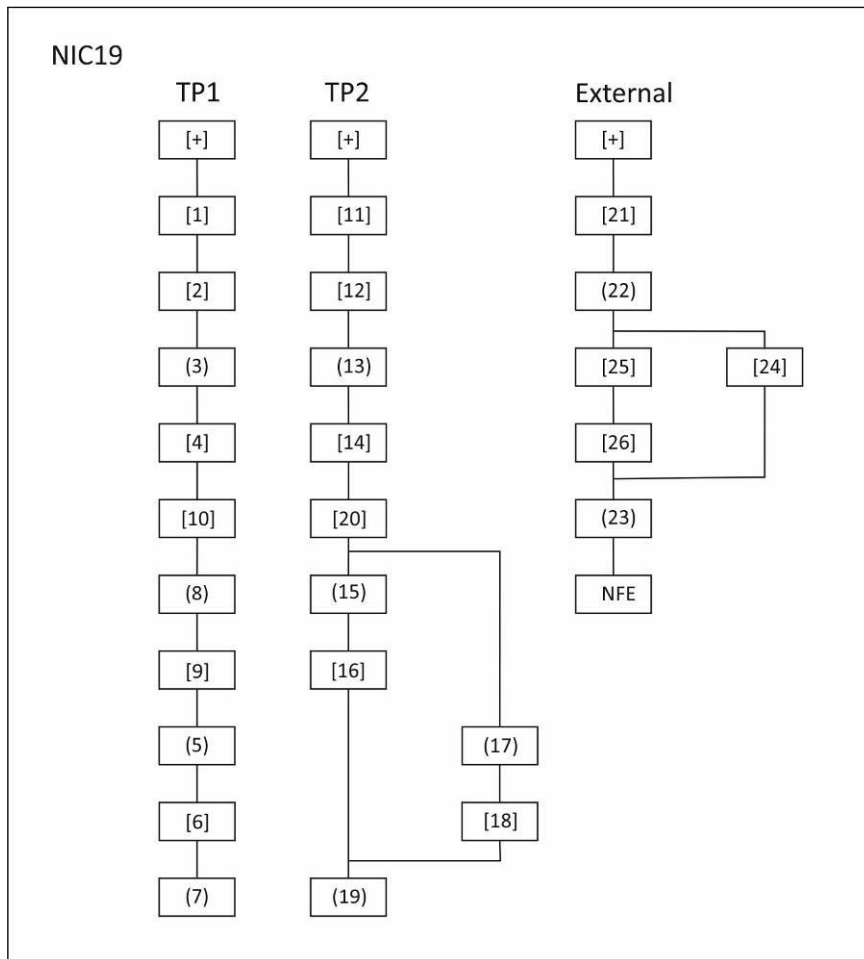
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## Appendix 1 Context Register

Context no	Type	Description
1	Masonry	Concrete slab
2	Masonry	York stone slabs
3	Deposit	Sand and gravel blinding for slabs
4	Masonry	Grey limecrete with bricks
5	Deposit	Greeny grey silt fill of [6]
6	Cut	Cut of pit or ditch
7	Deposit	Lias Clay
8	Deposit	Sandy fill of [9]
9	Cut	Cut of pit or ditch
10	Cut	Cut for St Nicholas House basement
11	Masonry	Concrete slab
12	Masonry	York stone slabs
13	Deposit	Sand and gravel blinding for slabs
14	Masonry	Grey limecrete with bricks
15	Deposit	Brick and clay fill of [16]
16	Cut	Cut
17	Deposit	Soil fill of [18]
18	Cut	Cut of ditch/pit
19	Deposit	Weathered Lias clay
20	Cut	Cut for St Nicholas House basement
21	Masonry	Concrete slab across forecourt
22	Deposit	Modern made ground below concrete slab
23	Deposit	Homogenous soil deposit, post-medieval
24	Masonry	Brick and stone foundation for St Nicholas House
25	Masonry	Brick tank
26	Cut	Cut for brick tank [25]

## Appendix 2 Harris matrix



## Appendix 3 NIC19 Archive contents

### Digital archive

Type	Number	Comments
Digital photographs	15	

Table 4: The digital archive

### Paper archive

Type	Number	Comments
Context sheets	3	
Trench Record Sheets	3	
Level traverse		
Matrices	1	Printed matrix
WSI	1	Written scheme of investigation for watching brief
Report	1	Watching brief report

Table 5: The paper archive

### Drawn archive

Type	Number	Comments
Permatrace	2	2 plan sheets

Table 6: The drawn archive

### Finds archive

Description	Count	Weight	Retain/discard?
Pottery	8	164g	Discard
Brick	1	218g	Discard
CTP	2	9g	Discard

Table 7: The finds archive

## Appendix 4 OASIS Form

OASIS ID	urbanarc1- 342180
<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	
Project name	St Nicholas House, 47 London Road
Short description of the project	During February 2019 and March 2020 Urban Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during the renovation of St Nicholas House, Gloucester, Gloucestershire. Two test pits were excavated in the basement of the property and an external service trench was monitored. The construction of St Nicholas House has caused a general truncation to c14.08m OD within the footprint of the building and has removed any horizontal archaeological deposits from this area. The surface of the natural Lias Clay substrate had been truncated within the internal test pits, and was not reached in the external works. The original ground level cannot therefore be ascertained, although it probably lies between 14.10 and 14.81m OD. Within the basement test pits two cut features (not excavated) are likely to be part of the same ditch, or a large quarry pit for clay extraction. Finds from the surface of the features suggest a later post-medieval date for the infilling, pre-dating the construction of St Nicholas House. Residual Roman pottery indicates the likely presence of Roman activity within the area. Externally the homogenous dark grey brown soil deposit is typical of post-Roman 'Dark Earth' and cultivation soil deposits observed at sites in the area. There was no evidence for buildings or other occupation along the London Road frontage. The external foundations of St Nicholas House were exposed in the external trench; the street frontage was built in brick, but the side walls in Lias blocks, presumably for reasons of cost. A brick tank or interceptor at the south of the forecourt may be associated with the bus depot.
Project dates	Start: 26-02-2019 End: 23-03-2020
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	UA203- Contracting Unit No. NIC19 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	HOUSE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	None
Investigation type	"Test-Pit Survey", "Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	
Country	England
Site location	GLOUCESTERSHIRE GLOUCESTER GLOUCESTER St Nicholas House, 47 London Road
Postcode	GL1 3HF
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SO 83792 18862 51.867658755474 -2.235423509842 51 52 03 N 002 14 07 W Point
Height OD/depth	Min: 14.05m Max: 14.1m
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	
Name of Organisation	Urban Archaeology
Project brief originator	Contractor (design and execute)
Project design originator	Urban Archaeology
Project director/manager	Chiz Harward
Project Supervisor	Chiz Harward
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Gilbournes Ltd

PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of Gloucester
Paper Media available	"Stratigraphic"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	St Nicholas House, 47 London Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire An Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Harward, C
Other bibliographic details	
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Urban Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Stroud
Description	Illustrated typescript report

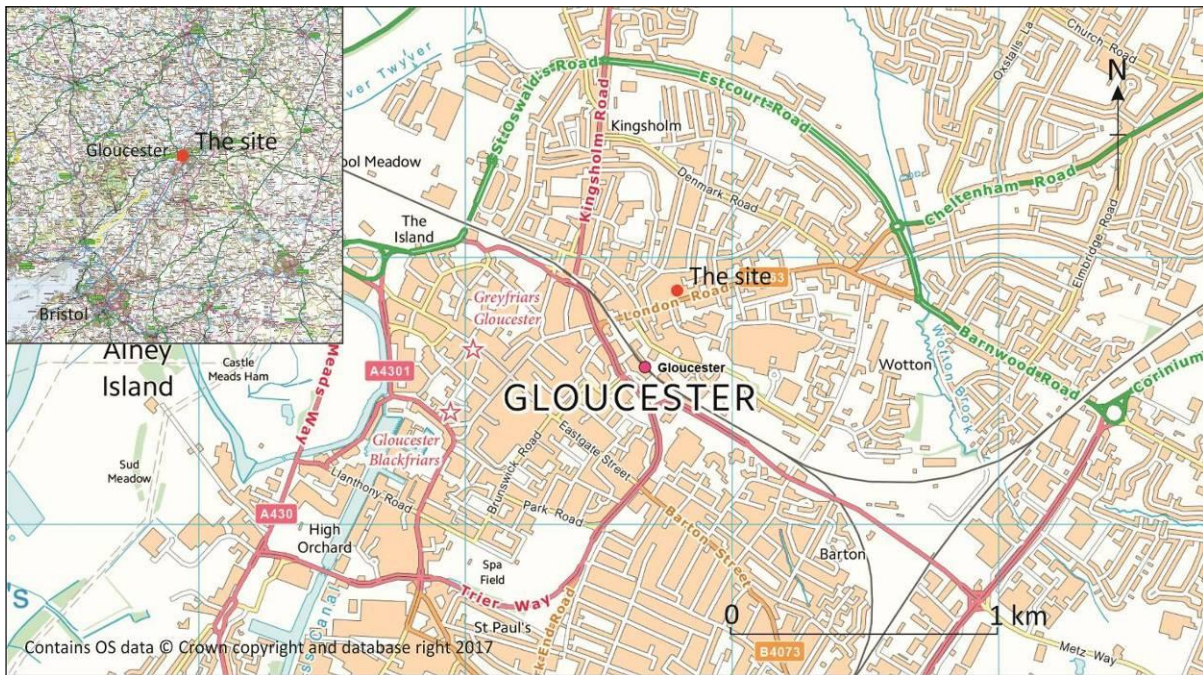


Fig. 1 Site location



Fig. 2 Trench location plan



Fig. 3 Test pit 1, looking north; scale 0.5m



Fig. 4 Test pit 2, looking east; scale 0.5m



Fig. 5 West facing section showing soil deposit (23); scale 0.5m



Fig. 6 Southwestern corner of St Nicholas House showing brick and stone foundation, looking northeast; scale 0.5m





Fig. 7 View looking west of brick tank structure [25]; scale 0.5m