

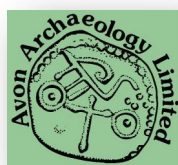
Land Between No. 199 & 223 Newfoundland Road, St Pauls, Bristol

Report on Archaeological Watching Brief



Rachel Heaton BSc

Avon Archaeology Limited
Bristol: February 2018



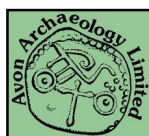
CONTENTS

Abstract
Acknowledgements
Notes
Copyright
Abbreviations

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Site Location, Topography and Geology**
- 3 Archaeological and Historical Background**
- 4 Aims and Methodology**
- 5 The Monitoring**
- 6 Finds**
- 7 Conclusions**
- 8 Bibliography**

Figures

- 1** Location of the Study Area
- 2** Site Location Plan with Location of Cellar
- 3** Remains of Houses 203 and 205.
- 4** Ashmead 1828 showing fields, the approximate location of site is outlined in red (KYP Bristol).
- 5** Ashmead 1855, showing sporadic development in the vicinity of the site, while the site itself has been divided it remains as essentially as garden (KYP Bristol).
- 6** Ashmead 1874 Map showing the block of terraced housing on the site (KYP Bristol).
- 7** Aerial view of the site prior to the current development (Google Earth).



Plates

Cover View north towards the site during development.

Frontispiece View of the site before Victorian Terrace demolished (Flickr).

Plate 1: Exposing the top of the cellar, filled with bricks and rubble, view north.

Plate 2: View of the cellar once emptied of rubble fill, looking south.

Plate 3: Stairwell at the north east end of the cellar, view north.

Plate 4: South west end of the cellar, forms the front of the former building, looking south.

Plate 5: Section of the north east cellar wall removed, revealing made ground and a drain pipe.

Plate 6: Section of the cellar wall removed revealing layers of made ground behind.

Plate 7: Cellar area once all the cellar walls had been removed.

Plate 8: Existing floor surface within the footprint of No. 203

Plate 9: Existing floor surface within the footprint of No. 205, from the top of the back wall of the cellar.

Plate 10: Excavation of footings around pile caps.

Plate 11: North-east by south-west footings trench at the front of the development site.

Plate 12: Section of foundation trenches, relatively shallow and only showing modern, disturbed ground.

Plate 13: Drainage trenches, at the north end of the site showing the same made ground as seen during the removal of cellar walls at the south end of the site.

Plate 14: View north of drainage trench section, showing layers of made ground.



Abstract

Avon Archaeology Limited were commissioned to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (Archaeological Watching Brief) during groundworks associated with the construction of ten terraced houses on land between numbers 199 and 223 Newfoundland Road in Bristol.

The land was formerly occupied by a terrace of houses built in the mid-Victorian period, has been unoccupied for at least 40 years and has been used as a car park in recent years.

A row of terraced houses, contemporary to ones that still stand in the surrounding streets had occupied the site from the late 19th century until the 1960's when they were pulled down. The reason for their removal is not entirely understood.

The results of the archaeological monitoring produced a consistent sequence across the site. Natural ground was revealed at a depth of slightly over 2m below the current ground surface level. It was overlain by a thick band of garden/plough soil which in turn was sealed by made ground; generally a soft, grainy deposit interspersed with re-deposited natural sands and clays.

The row of terraced houses were built, with shallow footings, directly on top of the made ground. Floor surfaces were recorded in the location of former houses 203 and 205. House number 205 was unusual as it included a very large stone built cellar. The cellar was of identical size to the main living space of the building that originally stood atop it.

No features were seen cut into the top of the natural and no deposits such as regular garden or subsoil were recorded. There were no features or any indication of any subterranean structures, other than the cellar found in the location of number 205.

The archaeological monitoring began on the 12th September and continued intermittently until 1st of December 2017 and was overseen by the writer of this report, Rachel Heaton of Avon Archaeology Limited.



Acknowledgements

Thanks to the team at Helm, Danni, Ryan and Chris, for assistance during the project. Thanks are also due to Martin and the groundwork team from GMEC for patience and assistance on site.

Notes

Whereas Avon Archaeology Limited has taken all care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

Copyright

The copyright to the following text, drawings and photographs is, unless otherwise credited, the property of the author and Avon Archaeology Limited. Full joint copyright passes to the commissioners of the project upon full settlement of the project account.

All enquiries should be addressed to:

Avon Archaeology Limited
Avondale Business Centre
Woodland Way, Kingswood
Bristol BS15 1AW
Telephone 0117 960 8487.
Email: mail@avonarchaeology.co.uk

Plans and maps based on the Ordnance Survey Sheets are reproduced by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright Reserved. Licence number AL 100005802


Abbreviations

AAL	Avon Archaeology Limited
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum
HER	Historic Environment Record
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

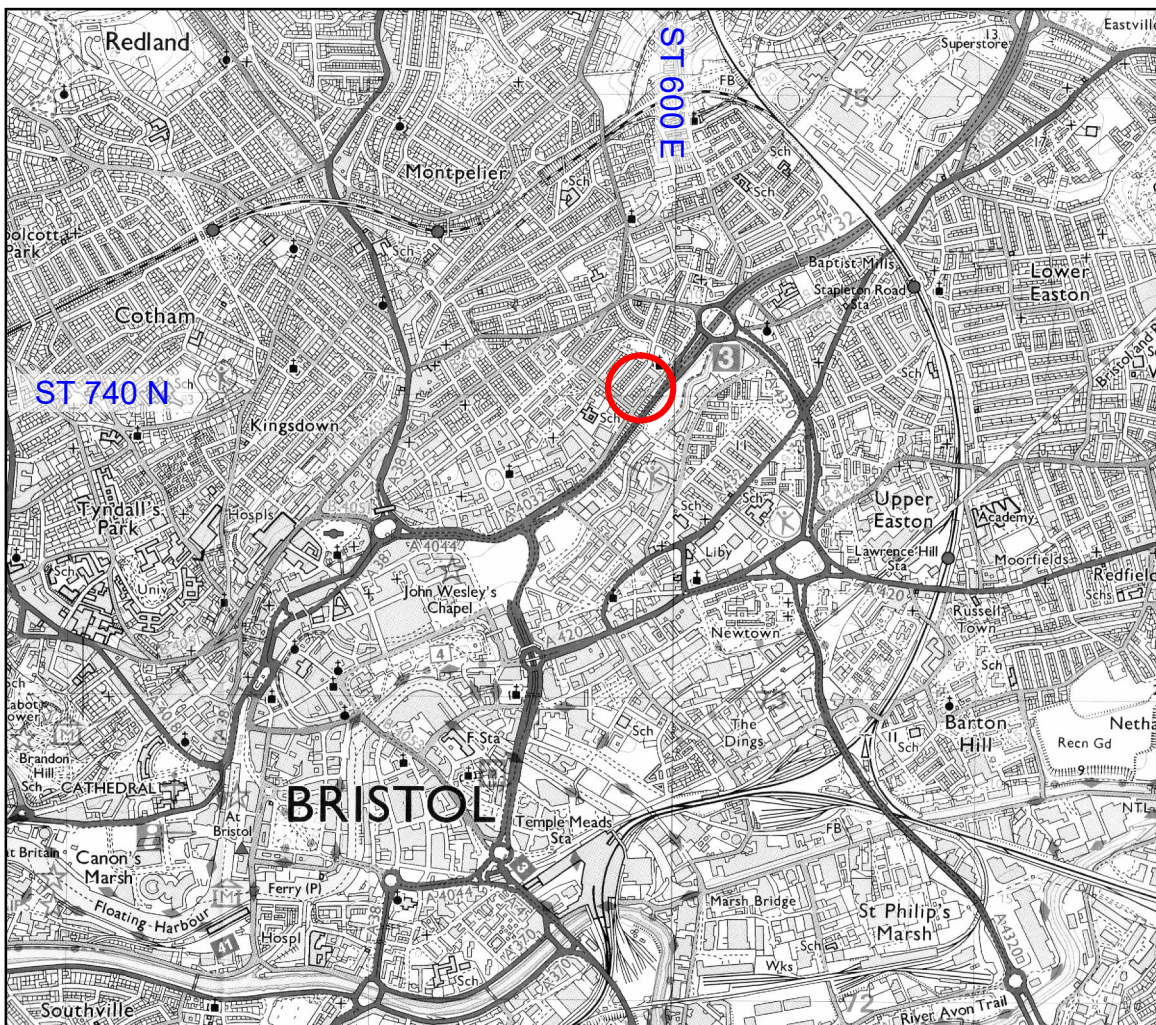


Figure 1

Location of the Study Area

The Study Area 

Plans and maps based on the Ordnance Survey Sheets are represented by the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.



Scale: 1:25000

© Crown Copyright Reserved. Licence Number: AL 10005802



Figure 2

Site Boundary Plan

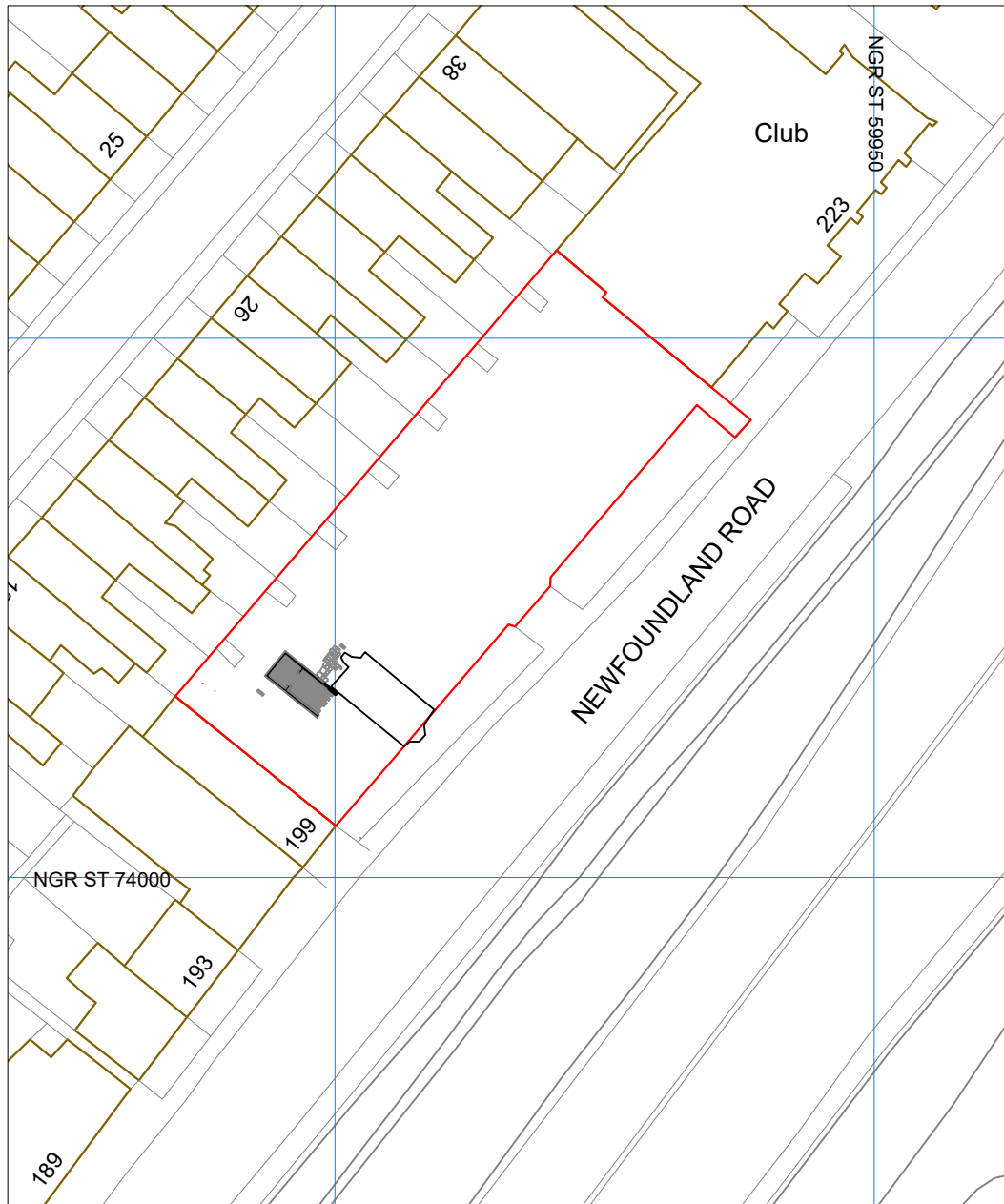
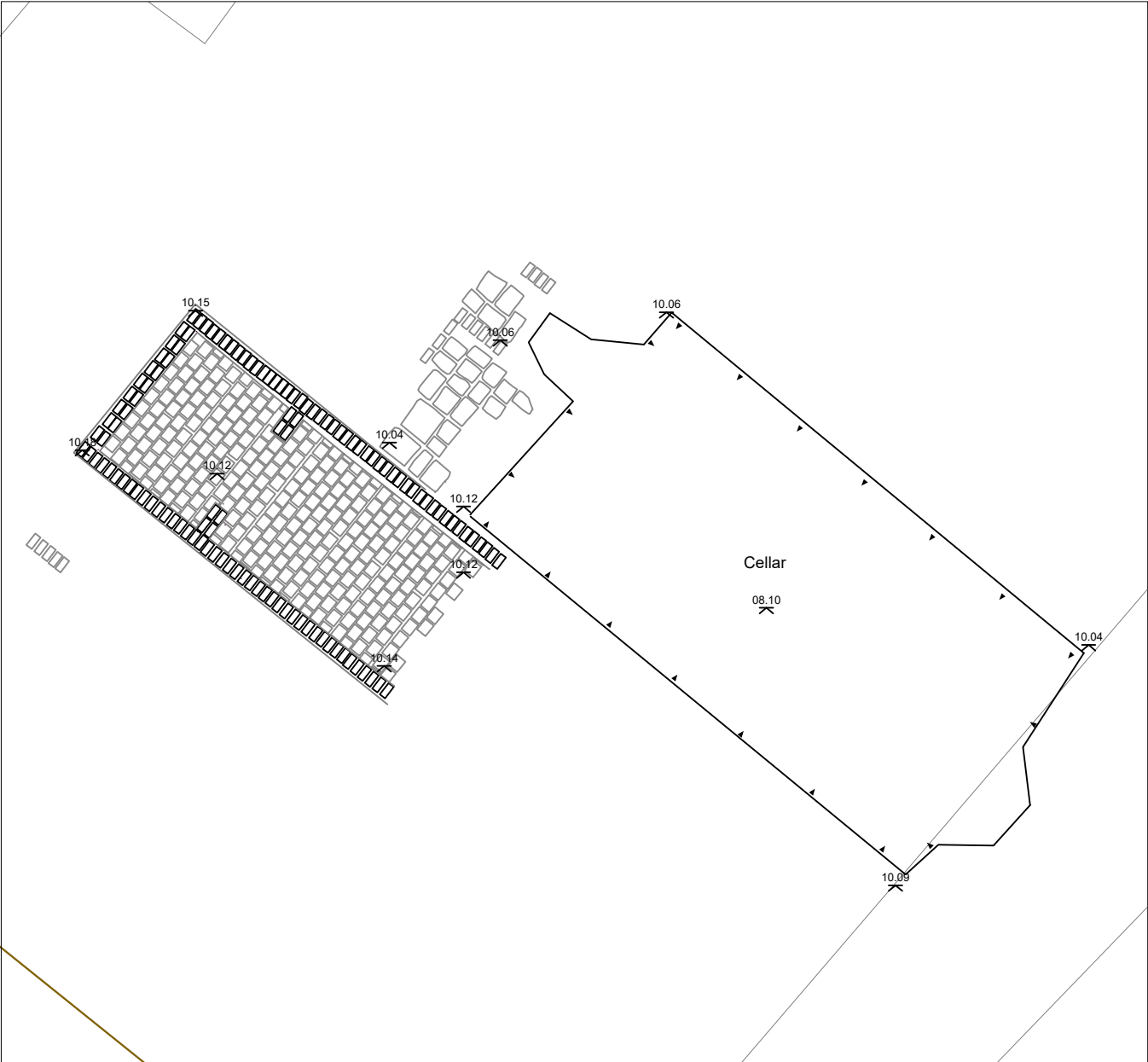


Figure 3

Remains of Houses 203 and 205



1 Introduction

Avon Archaeology Limited were commissioned by Helm Construction to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring (Archaeological Watching Brief) on land between number 199 and 223 Newfoundland Road, St Pauls, Bristol.

The site forms a rectangular parcel of land, of roughly 1100m² which fronts Newfoundland Road. It has lain empty for over 40 years and has recently been used as a car park. A development of 10 new terraced homes has been agreed by Bristol City Council, however, a condition arose from the application, Reference 15/05293/F, which required all ground works associated with the project to be archaeologically monitored. The site is centred at OS NGR ST 59911 74028.

Archaeological monitoring was intermittent and took place between September and November 2017. Rachel Heaton of Avon Archaeology Ltd managed the project and was in attendance during the majority of the ground works.

The archive for this project will be deposited with the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, an accession number has been requested but is yet to be provided. BRSMG 2018.14

2 Site Location, Topography and Geology



2.1 The site lays to the north east of the Parish of St Pauls, close to the centre of the city of Bristol. It fronts Newfoundland Road to the south-east with the dual carriageway of the M32 just beyond. It is bounded to the south-west by residential properties and St Nicholas Road and to the north-west by residential properties fronting Thomas Street. A former Mission School building, most recently used as a fitness centre, (Empire Sports Club, now closed) is located to the north-east end of the site, with St Agnes Church beyond.

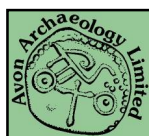
2.2 Eleven Terraced houses of mid-Victorian date, similar to the existing buildings to the south of the site and in surrounding streets, partially occupied the site until the 1960's, when for reasons which are unclear, they were demolished. The M32 was in construction at this time, and many local buildings were demolished to make way for the development, and it seems reasonable that this was also the case here. The site was not re-developed and has remained undeveloped since, being utilised as a car park.

2.3 Topographically, the site is relatively flat at an average of 10m aOD, and sits on the northern flood plain of the River Frome which passes less than 150m to the south.

2.4 The British Geological Survey records the underlying geology of the site as Redcliffe Sandstone, the physical characteristics of which it describes as

Distinctive fine- to medium-grained, deep red, calcareous and ferruginous. Commonly decalcified at shallow depths below the surface, giving rise to an uncemented sand (BGS).

3 Archaeological and Historical Background



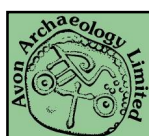
There is no archaeological, cartographic or documentary references to the development site for the prehistoric or Romano-British periods.

The St Pauls area of Bristol was originally part of the ancient Parish of St James, whose bounds followed the limits of the local estate of the Benedictine Priory of St James; St James Church remains at the north end of the modern Broadmead Shopping area. St James's Priory was surrendered in 1539 during the dissolution of the monasteries, and the lands subsequently divided up and sold on (Bryant, 2002).

A plan produced by John Roque in 1742 showed that while there was expansion of Bristol, the land on the east side of the city remained a predominantly horticultural area punctuated by occasional residential properties (Bryant 2002). Newfoundland Road, originally known as Newfoundland Lane is shown as an established thoroughfare, with the land either side divided into small enclosures or 'closes' in which there were several 'swapes'; wells with a bucket attached to a counterweighted arm, which may indicate market gardening (Baker, Brett & Jones 2018).

The 18th century saw rapid population increases in Bristol, (population of the city tripled from 1701 to 1801 from approximately 20,000 to 60,000 which then doubled by 1840 to 120,000) fanned by buoyancy within the economy, resulting in a greater demand for housing and urbanisation in general (Baker, Brett & Jones, 2018).

The Parish of St Pauls was created out of the Parish of St James in 1787, to serve the growing population. The parish church of St Paul was built on the east side of the fashionable Portland Square, opening to parishioners in 1895, although the building was completed and consecrated a year before in 1894 (Bryant, 2002).



Historic Map evidence shows that, until at least 1830, the site was open agricultural land, with very few scattered buildings, some of which were dwellings (Figure 4). By the mid-19th century, a lane ran diagonally across the site from south-west to north-east, and houses on large plots had been established along both of its frontages (Corcos, 2017). By 1874, all previous buildings had been swept away, a new road layout drawn and the site completely redeveloped to contain terraced housing; of what were probably very modest workers houses, along the frontages of Newfoundland Road (now Newfoundland Way), St Nicholas Road, and Thomas Street (Figure 6). The current development site was occupied by address numbers 201 to 221.

By the earlier 20th century, a mission school hall had been added on the north-eastern side of the block of terraces. The block of terraces on the south-eastern side of the site, fronting onto Newfoundland Road, has only relatively recently (after 1990) been cleared.

There are no scheduled ancient monuments anywhere near the site, and no archaeological work of any kind has previously been undertaken there. The Sunday School building and the church which bound the north-eastern side of the site are, however, both listed buildings. The site does not lie in any of Bristol's conservation areas. The KnowYourPlace online resource does not record any known significant archaeological sites, features or finds anywhere near the vicinity of the site.



4 Aims and Methodology

Aims

The aims of the archaeological Watching Brief were:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological features encountered
- To determine the extent of previous truncations of any archaeological deposits
- To enable the archaeological officer at South Gloucestershire Council to make an informed decision on the basis of the extent and condition of any archaeology revealed and to add any further possible requirements for further work in order to satisfy the planning conditions
- To make available to all interested parties the results of the investigation.

Methodology

The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Corcos, 2017) previously approved by Bristol City Council Archaeological Officer, Pete Insole.

Excavation was carried out by the contractor, using a mini 360° tracked mechanical excavator with grading bucket, under the supervision of an archaeologist.

A written, drawn, and photographic record of all significant archaeological deposits will be compiled, to include:

- A pro-forma context-based record for each stratigraphic unit
- Plans of each area excavated showing: the extent of the area (tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on a digital CAD based mapping, incorporating spatial data of a type that can be integrated into the local authority



HER), the extent of all significant stratigraphic units, and appropriate detail within stratigraphic units. Overall site plans will be at a scale of 1:100; plans of stratigraphic units usually are at 1:20 scale.

- Sections or profiles (at a scale of 1:10 in areas of detailed excavation) will be drawn of all significant stratigraphic units, and related in level to the Ordnance Datum.

- A digital colour photographic record of all significant stratigraphic units will be compiled in addition to a representative photographic record of the progress and circumstances of the archaeological work.



5 The Monitoring

General

The ground works began with the removal of the modern asphalt car park surface, which was underlain with a 0.2m thick layer of hard-core. The surface covered the majority of the development area. There was limited evidence of the former terraced housing directly below the modern surface across the majority of the site, however in the location of former house number 205, the upper courses of a large cellar could clearly be seen in plan, with a number of floor surfaces remaining to its rear. The cellar was completely removed as part of the ground preparation and the resultant hole was backfilled with hard core to provide stability for the building works.

Previous bore hole testing of the ground indicated that the soil was weak to a significant depth, so pile foundations were incorporated into the construction. The foundation trenches connecting each pile cap were then relatively shallow at 0.75m deep (Plate 12).

The work associated with the cellar proved to be the deepest intervention on the site, and provided a full stratigraphic sequence from bedrock, which is described below. Excavation for drainage was also carried out to some depth, and sections mirrored the stratigraphy recorded during removal of the cellar. Pile foundations were used for the new development with relatively shallow trenches of 0.75m below formation level linking each pile cap. Nothing of significance was exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches.

Stratigraphic Description

The bedrock, context (117), was found at a depth of approximately 2m below the current working ground level at approximately 8m aOD. It was exposed at the base of the cellar structure (context 103) which had been built directly on top of it.

The bedrock was overlain by context (116) a friable orangey red-brown sandy silt, of up to 0.2m thick. A completely sterile deposit, context 116 was identified as natural.



Context (115) was a layer of mid brown sandy silt containing occasional flecks of charcoal, and small pebbles. Up to 0.75m thick, context 115 sealed context 116 and was identified as a buried garden soil (Plate 7).

Context 115 was overlain by context (114). Described here as a single stratigraphic event, context 114 was actually several layers of made ground, interspersed with lenses of either re-deposited natural or charcoal rich soils. Generally, Context 114 consisted of a loose, dark brown, grainy material, containing a high quantity of fine grained coal, and occasional tiny pieces of crushed red ceramic building material (Plates 5, 7 13 & 14).

The made ground was truncated by the cellar structure discussed above (Plate 2, Figure 3). The cellar (context 113) was of a single construction, built from randomly coursed, roughly hewn pennant sandstone blocks. The internal dimensions of the cellar were 9.5m in length, by 4.5m width, and 2m deep. The walls were approximately 0.5m thick and stood at a height of 2m, directly on top of the bedrock, as mentioned above. An angled bay was set into the south east end of the structure (Plate 4), and a set of access steps was set into opposing north-west end (Plate 3). There were no additional features within the walls of the cellar other than some red brick repairs within the north-west end, by the stair well. There was no floor surface, at the base of the cellar. Other examples of similar buildings across the city would indicate that it was likely to have had a pennant flagstone surface, though no evidence of any in situ flagstones were found.

The cellar was backfilled with red bricks and decomposed mortar; probably the demolition rubble of the terraced buildings, context (102).

A number of structural features were found to the rear of the cellar and to the rear of what would have been house number 203 (see Figure 3). They consisted of the lowest courses of narrow red brick built walls (contexts 106, 107, 108, 109 & 111, Figure 3) and surfaces of either pennant sandstone flags (contexts 104 & 112, Plates 2 & 9) or red ceramic tiles (context 105, Plate 8). All the walls were found to be of shallow depth, only one or two courses remaining and were cut into the top of made



ground context 114. All the surfaces noted were essentially built atop the same deposit, with the addition of a narrow band of re-deposited clay bedding material. The walls found were all narrow clearly not load bearing, indicating that they were constructed as internal dividing walls, yard structures or garden walls.

In addition, a drainage pipe context (120), contemporary with the cellar, was exposed in the section once the south-west wall of the cellar had been removed (Plate 5). It was constructed within deposit 114, aligned north-west by south-east, starting at a shallow depth of 0.3m becoming gradually deeper to meet with a mains sewer below Newfoundland Road. It would have served either address 203 or 205 if not both properties.

As mentioned above, pile foundations were used across the site, linked with relatively shallow trenches of 0.75m deep, though broad (Plate 11). They were all dug within the made ground deposit, context 114 (Plate 12). Occasionally, shallow foundations of the terraced housing were encountered, never any deeper than 0.4m below the site formation level (Plate 10). No further significant structural or archaeological deposits were found on the site.

Table of Contexts

Context	Type	Description
100	Surface	Modern asphalt surface with underlying stone aggregate up to 0.25m thick covering the majority of the site.
101	Topsoil	Strip of garden soil along the rear boundary of the site, partially overlain by surface 101, where gardens/yards of previous terraced housing would have been located. Currently holds a number of young trees.
102	Fill	Predominantly consists of red brick mixed with some finer material, probably mortar, with occasional stone slab and tiles. Fills 103
103	Structure	Pennant sandstone built cellar, Internal dimensions 9.5m length, 4.5m width, 2m depth. Wall thickness; 0.5m. Features a bay at the front and a stairwell at the rear. Randomly coursed, bonded with light grey mortar. Filled by 102. Was part of House number 205.
104	Surface	Flagstone floor surface – pennant, covers a roughly square area to the rear of Cellar 103, thin layer of mortar but otherwise built on to of deposit 114.
105	Surface	Red ceramic tile surface, to the rear of house 203, bounded by wall 109
106	Wall	Section of red brick wall, abuts rear wall of cellar 103, extends 2.5m, leaving only a dark scar where it originally continued further



		to form a corner and join to wall 109.
107	Wall	Section of red brick wall, on the north west side of floor surface 112
108	Wall	Section of red brick wall
109	Wall	Section of red brick wall, forms a corner around tile floor surface 105
110	Wall	Short section of red brick wall, bricks laid next to each other, dark grey mortar, forms a partial division of floor area 105. Same as 118.
111	Wall	Section of red brick wall
112	Surface	Small area of flagstone flooring – stone is pennant sandstone between walls 106 and 107
113	Wall	Foundations of former terraced houses, seen across site, classified as a single context, only ever partially seen, very shallow never any deeper than 0.2m below working level.
114	Deposit	Essentially made ground, which predates the construction of the former terrace houses. Loose and grainy, contains a high quantity of fine grained coal, and occasional tiny pieces of crushed red ceramic building material. The deposit also contains lenses within it of orange sandy clay, which is clearly re-deposited natural. The deposit is an average of 1m thick, varying slightly across the site
115	Layer	Dark brown sandy silt, approximately 0.75m thick, sealed by deposit 114. Identified as a buried garden soil
116	Natural	Orangey red brown sandy silt, found in a narrow band directly above bedrock
117	Bedrock	Pennant sandstone bedrock, reached at 2m below working ground level (8m aOD)
118	Structure	Short section of red brick wall, bricks laid next to each other, dark grey mortar, forms a partial division of floor area 105. Same as 110
119	Wall	In the loosest terms a wall, several red bricks aligned end to end, bonded with dark grey mortar, a single course.
120	Structure	Ceramic drainage pipe, runs parallel to cellar seen in section behind south-west wall of cellar



7 Conclusions

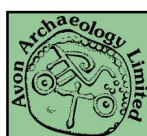
The watching brief did little to advance the historical record for development of this corner of the district of St Pauls. The stratigraphy was consistent across the site; bedrock with a narrow band of natural soils sealed by a thick layer of a garden or plough soil, in turn sealed by an even thicker, soft made ground. Structural developments are apparent in the form of the remains of the terraced housing built between 1855 and 1874, which were then demolished, about 100 years later in the 1960's, with the site left as open ground and car park to the present day.

The process of development of the site can be viewed through successive maps of the area. There were no structures at all on the site until the row of terraced housing was built. The garden/plough soil indicates use for farming or possibly market gardening on the site, a common use for land close to, but on the edge of a city such as Bristol.

The thick layer of made ground on top of the garden soil suggests some level of activity on the land prior to the construction of buildings in the mid-Victorian period.. The main bulk of the deposit consisted of a very soft grainy dark coloured material, indicative of industrial waste, possibly emanating from one of the local coal pits close by; Pennywell Colliery was located on the opposite side of the river for example.

The site is on the floodplain of the River Frome, which until it was culverted, flooded regularly throughout the winter months. Perhaps the material was used to raise the ground level, in an attempt to reduce flooding? It may equally have been dumped for no other reason than general disposal of waste across relatively unoccupied land. No dating evidence or items which may also have been indicative of the origin of the deposit were recovered from it so interpretation remains indefinite.

The terrace of housing, seen in the photograph on the frontispiece of this report, was constructed after the dumping of material on the site. There was no indication to why only one property in the terrace had a cellar incorporated into its structure, which remains a mystery.



Other than the remains of the terraced housing, there were no further significant archaeological features or deposits on the site at Newfoundland Road.



8 Bibliography

Baker, N., Brett, J., & Jones, R., 2018 (forthcoming)

Bristol: A Worshipful Town and Famous City: An Archaeological Assessment.
Oxbow Books.

BGS

Geology of Britain Viewer, online resource, British Geological Survey.

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Bryant, J., 2002

Archaeological Watching Brief at St Pauls Church, Portland Square, Bristol.
An unpublished client report for The Churches Conservation Trust by Bristol
and Region Archaeological Services

Corcos, N., 2017

A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief.
Unpublished client document by Avon Archaeology Ltd.

DCLG 2012

National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local
Government, London, March 2012.

MoRPHE

*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE
Project Managers' Guide*, English Heritage, 2015.

KnowYourPlace online heritage resource (Bristol)

<http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/kyp/?edition=southglos>

Parry, A. 2000.

Archaeological Watching Brief at Wilson Street, St Pauls, Bristol. An
unpublished client report for Boleen Construction Ltd by Bristol and Region
Archaeological Services.





Ashmead 1828 showing fields, the approximate location of site is shown outlined in red.
(KYP Bristol, not to scale).



Ashmead 1855, showing sporadic development in the vicinity of the site, while the site itself has been divided it remains as essentially as garden (KYP Bristol, not to scale).



6
Ashmead 1874 Map showing the block of terraced housing on the site (KYP Bristol not to scale).



7
Aerial view of the site prior to the current development. Google Earth.

Plates



Plate 1: Exposing the top of the cellar, filled with bricks and rubble, view north.

Plate 2: View of the cellar once emptied of rubble fill, looking south.

Plate 3: Stairwell at the north east end of the cellar, view north.

Plate 4: South west end of the cellar, forms the front of the former building, looking south,

Plate 5: Section of north east cellar wall removed, revealing made ground and a drainage pipe.



Plate 6: Section of the cellar wall removed revealing layers of made ground behind.

Plate 7: Cellar area once all the cellar walls had been removed.

Plate 8: Existing floor surface within the footprint of No. 203

Plate 9: Existing floor surface within the footprint of No. 205, from the top of the back wall of the cellar.

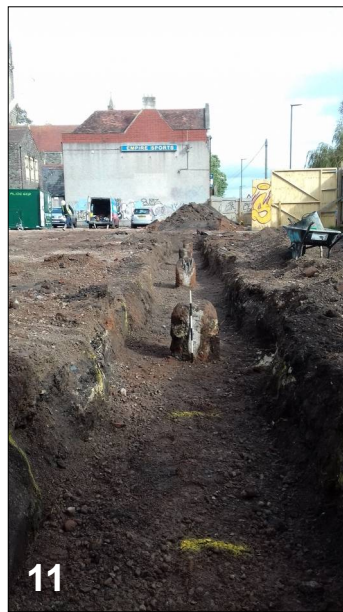


Plate 10: Excavation of footings around pile caps

Plate 11: North-east by south-west footings trench at the front of the development site.

Plate 12: Section of foundation trenches, relatively shallow and only showing modern disturbed ground.

Plate 13: Drainage trenches, at the north end of the site showing the same made ground as seen during the removal of cellar walls at the south end of the site.

Plate 14: View north of drainage trench section, showing layers of made ground.

