

IMPG14/01



# IMPERIAL GATE, GLOUCESTER

## Archaeological Evaluation

commissioned by CgMS Consulting  
on behalf of Robert Hitchens Ltd

October 2014



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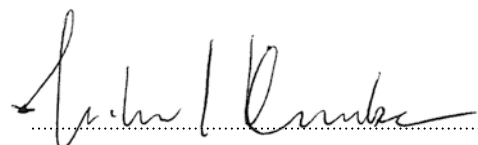
October 2014

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## CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	VI
	1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION	VI
	1.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	VI
2	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	VI
3	METHOD	VI
4	RESULTS	3
	Trench 1	3
	Trench 2	4
5	DISCUSSION	4
6	CONCLUSION	4
7	REFERENCES	5
8	APPENDICES	6
	APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS	6
	Context register	6
	Photographic register	6

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<b>ILLUS 1</b>	1
Site location	
<b>ILLUS 2</b>	3
General view of Trench 1	
<b>ILLUS 3</b>	4
S facing section of Trench 1	
<b>ILLUS 4</b>	4
S facing section of Trench 2	
<b>ILLUS 5</b>	4
Detail of service run seen in both Trench 1 and Trench 2	



# IMPERIAL GATE, GLOUCESTER

## Archaeological Evaluation

An Archaeological Evaluation comprising two trial trenches measuring 20m x 2m each demonstrated that the area of a proposed office development had been previously disturbed by 20th century construction activity. No significant archaeological remains were found.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

CgMS Consulting commissioned Headland Archaeology to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation on behalf of Robert Hitchins Ltd on land at Imperial Gate, Gloucester. The developer intends to submit a planning application for development on the site. Proposals comprise a new office development with associated infrastructure and parking in the southeast of the study site.

#### 1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The study site lies to the east of Gloucester City Centre, north of Barnwood Village and is located adjacent to the Birdseye-Walls factory, off Corinium Avenue. It occupies a light industrial estate, the internal topography of which comprises mostly level ground at 23m AOD.

The topography of the wider landscape comprises a gentle slope down from east to west and the site is centred at National Grid Reference 385900, 218720.

The underlying solid geology within the proposed development site comprises mudstone of the Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation. No superficial deposits are mapped. (British Geological Survey website; <http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

#### 1.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A DBA was produced by CgMS (Gidman, 2014) which identified no known archaeological remains or designated heritage assets on or around the development site.

The DBA suggested was a moderate potential for previously unknown buried archaeological remains dating to the Roman period, especially in the south-east of the site

### 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the evaluation were as follows:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area;
- To assess the artefactual and environmental potential of the archaeological deposits encountered;
- To provide further information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed;
- To assess the impact of previous land use on the site To inform formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains;
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Gloucester HER.

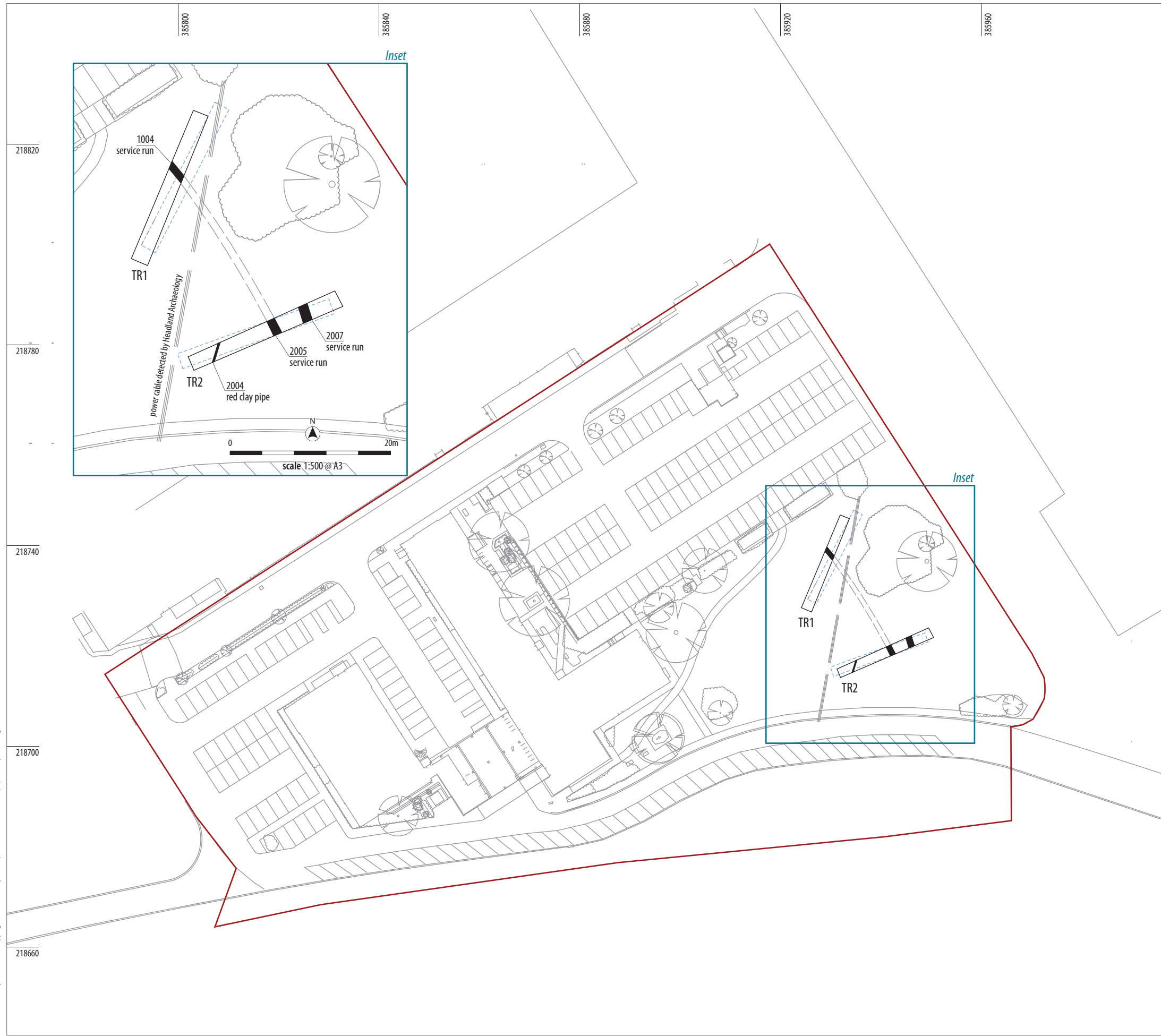
The results of the evaluation will enable reasoned and informed recommendations to be made to the local planning authority and a suitable mitigation strategy for the proposed development to be formulated.

### 3 METHOD

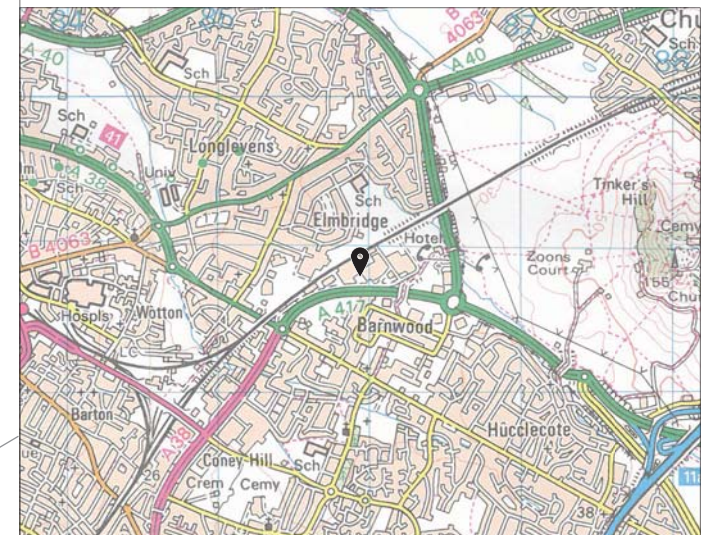
A total of two evaluation trenches measuring 2m x 20m were excavated within the proposed development area, the location of the evaluation trenches was agreed with the Archaeological Planning advisor to Gloucester Council prior to the commencement of the archaeological works.

All trenches were excavated using a 180 degree mechanical excavator with a 1.8m wide toothless bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Machine excavation terminated at the top of the natural geology or the first significant archaeological horizon.



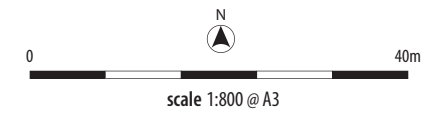


**IMPERIAL GATE**  
land adjacent to  
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- KEY**
- development boundary
  - trench location
  - original trench location







02



ILLUS 2

General view of Trench 1

## 4 RESULTS

A full description of the trenches and the deposits identified within is provided in Appendix 1 and the locations of the trenches and features are recorded on **Illus 1**.

The topsoil across the site was generally consistent, comprising of dark grey to black silty deposit with occasional small stones and brick fragments, only varying between in depth between evaluation trenches 0.2m and 0.3m in depth ([1001], [2001] respectively).

No distinct subsoil was observed in the excavated evaluation trenches, the top soil directly overlying a deposit of modern building debris ([1002], [2002]) which subsequently overlay the geological substrate.

The geological deposits remained fairly consistent and were comprised of a mid-blue grey clay interspersed with patches of small to medium rounded gravels in irregular shaped deposits of mid orange silty clay. ([1003], [2003]).

### Trench 1

Trench 1 was excavated to a depth of approximately 0.5m before a geological and archaeological sterile horizon was encountered, investigation of the geological deposits was conducted to a further depth of 0.25m, the geological natural remaining consistent. Within the trench a line of a modern service run was identified, aligned approximately north-south, the service run was comparable to one identified within Trench 2 ([2005]), both sharing a similar fill and coal dust capping. The service run [1004] was cut from a modern deposit of building debris (1002), located directly beneath the topsoil which consisted of a mixture of stone, brick fragments and concrete. Slight traces of charcoal smearing visible at the surface of the substrate were investigated, but were not associated with any archaeological feature and are likely to have derived from the modern levelling activity.

The trenches were set-out using differential GPS, which was also used to provide absolute heights above OD. Service plans were consulted in advance of excavation and safe digging techniques were observed.

Trenches 1 and 2 were relocated from the original position to avoid a previously unidentified electrical service identified during a CAT scan of the site conducted by Headland archaeological staff.

On completion of machine excavation, all faces of the trench that require examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools. The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). All contexts were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological norms. Photographs of archaeological features and deposits were taken using 35mm monochrome and colour slide film; registers were kept for context records, photographs and drawings.



**ILLUS 3**

S facing section of Trench 1



**ILLUS 4**

S facing section of Trench 2



**ILLUS 5**

Detail of service run seen in both Trench 1 and Trench 2

## Trench 2

The stratigraphic sequence of Trench 2 was identical to that of Trench 1, however the depth of the deposits was slight greater, suggesting that the present landscape has been levelled.

Within the evaluation trench three features were identified, two relating to modern service runs ([2005], [2007]) while [2004], a red clay pipe may indicate evidence of past agricultural land use in the form of a land drain.

## 5 DISCUSSION

The evaluation identified a series of modern features probably associated with the development of the surrounding industrial estate. The deposit of modern building debris encountered in both evaluation trenches ([1002], [2002]) indicate that the landscape within the proposed development area consists of made ground suggesting that the site has been truncated to the level of the geological substrate and then subsequently landscaped and levelled.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The evaluation has met its objectives by demonstrating that it is very unlikely that the proposed development area contains any features of archaeological significance.



## 7 REFERENCES

*Archaeological Archives Forum Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, 2007, published by the IfA.

English Heritage 2011, *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (second edition).

*PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide*, 2010.

*IfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised October 2008).



## 8 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS

#### Context register

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
1	1001	Topsoil-dark grey to black silty deposit with occasional small stones, brick fragment, loose.	20m x 2m x 0.65m (max)	0.2m
	1002	Mixed deposit of modern construction debris- stone, reinforced concrete, brick fragments, plastic cable and scaffold poles.		0.25m
	1003	Geological Deposit - mid blue grey clay, firm, with patches of small to medium rounded gravels in irregular deposits of mid orange silty clay.		Excavation ceased at this level
	1004	Cut for modern service trench.		Cut from 1001
	1005	Fill of modern service trench- black coal dust capping with large scalping's- not excavated.		Same as [2006] Not excavated

#### Summary of excavation

The trench contained the cut for a modern service run, approximately aligned north south. The evaluation trench contained no archaeological features of significance.

Trench	Context	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth
2	2001	Topsoil - dark grey to black silty deposit with occasional small stones, brick fragment, loose.	28m x 1.6m x 0.65m (max)	0.38m
	2002	Mixed deposit of modern construction debris- stone, reinforced concrete, brick fragments.		0.25m
	2003	Geological deposit - mid blue grey clay, firm, with patches of small to medium rounded gravels in irregular deposits of mid orange silty clay.		Excavation ceased at this level
	2004	Red clay drainage pipe.		No cut visible
	2005	Cut for modern service run.		Cut from [2002]
	2006	Fill of [2005]- modern service trench- black coal dust capping with large scalping's- not excavated.		Same as [1005], not excavated
	2007	Cut for service run.		Cut from [2002]
	2008	Fill of [2007]- hard pack re-deposited topsoil with a re-deposited stone capping, partially excavated- modern ceramic recovered from fill.		—

#### Summary of excavation

The evaluation trench contained no archaeological features of significance

#### Photographic register

PHOTO	COLOUR SLIDE	B&W	Digital	FACING	DESCRIPTION
01	36	36	002	S	Trench 1, Section
02	35	35	003	W	Trench 1, General view
03	34	34	004	N	Trench 2, Section
04	33	33	005	NE	Trench 2, clay pipe,
05	32	32	006	NE	Trench 2, Service run,
06	31	31	007	NE	Trench 2, Service run,
07	30	30	008	SW	Trench 2, General view
08	—	—	009	N	Pre excavation

PHOTO	COLOUR SLIDE	B&W	Digital	FACING	DESCRIPTION
09	—	—	010	N	Pre excavation
10	—	—	011	W	Post excavation
11	—	—	012	N	Post excavation





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