

MRKB/01



LAND AT MARKSBURY ROAD, BRISTOL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

commissioned by The Environmental Dimension Partnership
on behalf of Linden Ltd & Homes and Community Agency

May 2016

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project info

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ARCHAEOLOGY**

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology undertook a trial trench evaluation on a plot of land at Marksbury Road, Bristol. The evaluation identified modern overburden extending to a depth in excess of 1m below ground level. The area of previous buildings had clearly been terraced, causing extensive modern truncation. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified during the site works and the survival of any significant remains is considered very unlikely.

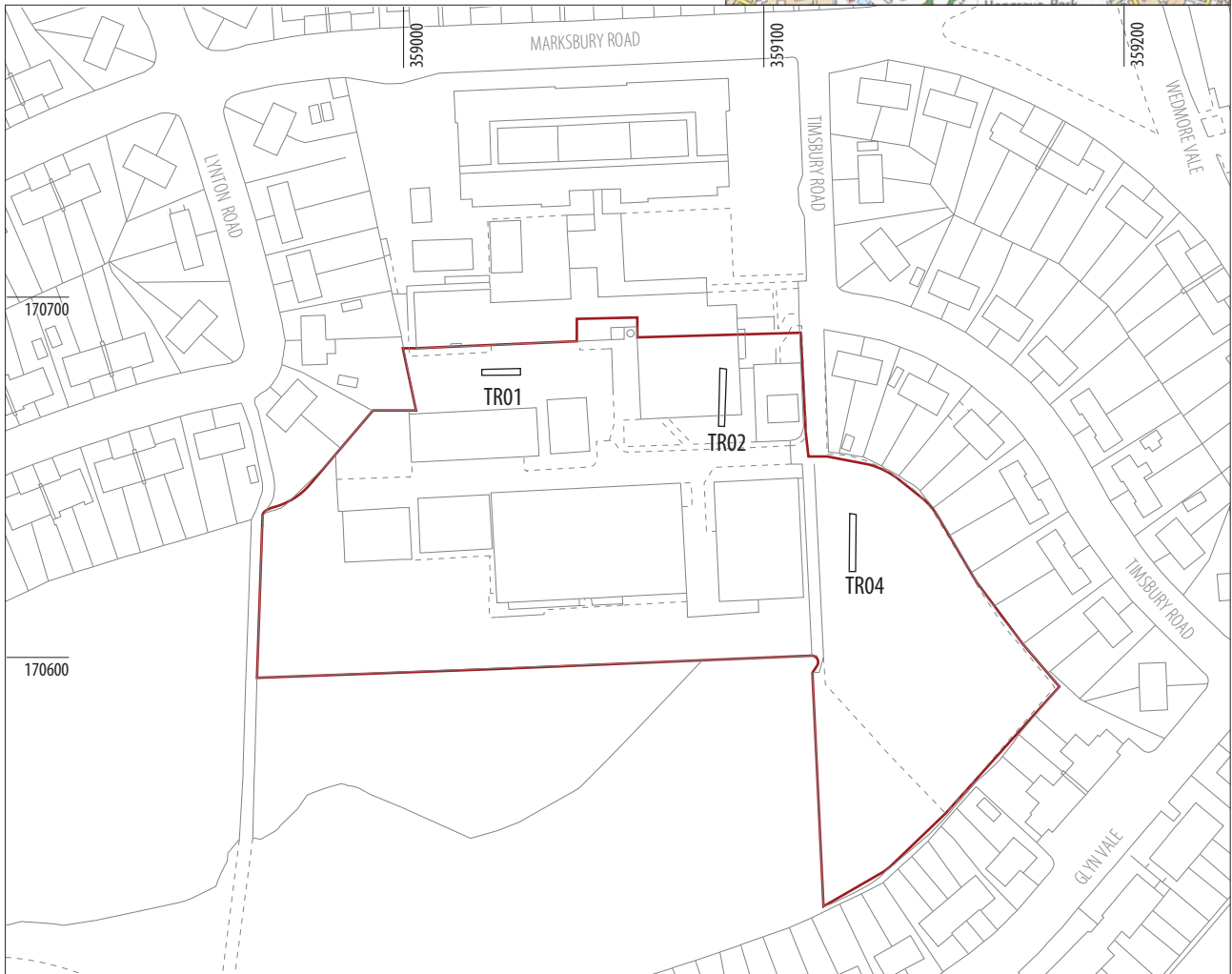
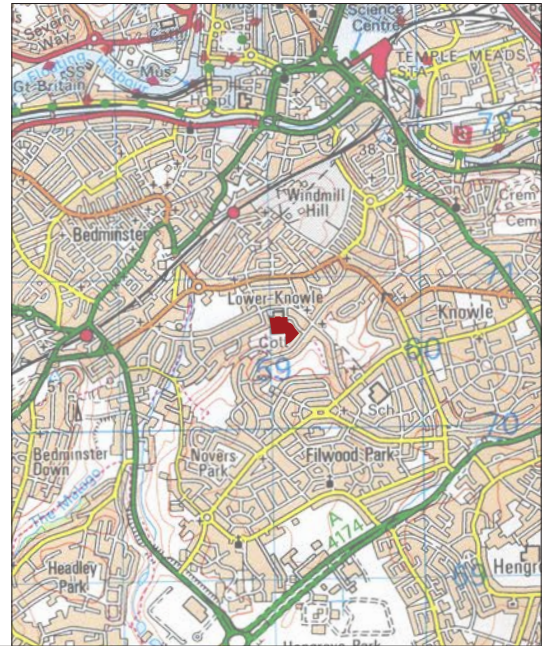
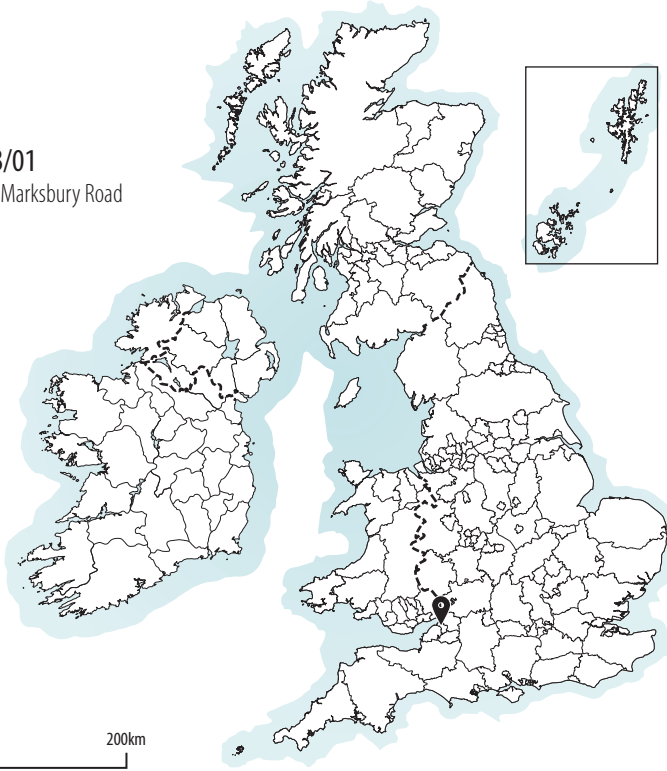
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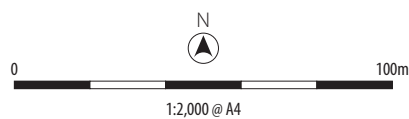
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MRKB/01
land at Marksbury Road
Bristol



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KEY
 development boundary
 trench location



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This report presents the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation on an area of land at Marksbury Road, Bristol. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned to undertake the works by Linden Ltd & the Homes and Community Agency through their agent the Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP).

Planning permission (Planning Application Ref: 12/05581/P) has been granted subject to conditions. Condition 9 relates to the archaeology and states that no development shall be undertaken on the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.

This report details the evaluation that was undertaken to fulfil condition 9.

The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a project design (Craddock-Bennett 2016) submitted by Headland Archaeology, and agreed by the archaeological advisor to Bristol City Council.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

The development site comprises 1.5ha of land located at NGR 359042, 170660 (ILLUS 1). It is bordered by Marksbury road to the north, housing to the east and west and a wooded area to the south.

The site is located to the south of Marksbury Road in the Knowle area of Bristol. The City of Bristol College was formerly located on the site, but most of the buildings have been demolished and the site is awaiting development. Approximately half of the evaluation area lies either on a very steep slope, or contains substantial building footings. Approximately 25% of the area was occupied by the former car park to the college; to the north of the site was an area of scrubland previously cleared of buildings.

The underlying geology of the site consists of Triassic Mercia Mudstone Group overlain by Quaternary Alluvium in the Malago Valley to the northwest.

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological desk-based assessment undertaken by Avon Archaeological Unit (2009) concluded that the overall potential of the development site was low.

The first recorded activity in the vicinity of the site is the historic Manor of Knowle, one of six 10th century tythings and a separate Manor at Domesday (1086) held by Osbern Griffard, the remainder of the Bedminster Hundred being land held by the King.

A late 18th century estate plan of the Smyth holdings in the parish of Bedminster shows the area occupied by several fields. This remained the primary use for the following 150 years with the exception of a series of earthworks associated with a rifle range established before 1886, which was in use until after the First World War.

The first significant changes to the site environs occurred during the inter-war years when extensive housing schemes were constructed in both Bedminster and Knowle during planned expansion of the City of Bristol (Willis & Young 2009).

Although no recorded archaeology is present within the site, the former presence of allotments was thought to potentially preserve buried archaeological remains.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In general, the purpose of the evaluation was to determine whether archaeological remains survived on the site, in order to determine the need or otherwise for further archaeological work.

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.



ILLUS 2 West facing shot of Trench 1

3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

- › ClfA 2014. Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation;
- › ClfA 2014. Standard and Guidance for the creation and compilation and deposition of archaeological archives.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of 3 trenches, two measuring 15m x 1.6m in plan and one 10m x 1.6m in plan.

The potential for unexploded ordnance had been identified on the site and, as such, works were monitored by a suitably trained UXO clearance operative.

The evaluation trenches were excavated by a JCB 3CX equipped with a 1.6m wide ditching bucket. All trenches were excavated by machine in controlled spits, under direct archaeological supervision. Machine excavation terminated at the top of the natural geology, the first archaeological horizon, or a depth at which safety considerations made it impracticable to continue excavation.

Excavation in Trenches 1 and 2 ceased at a depth of 1m due to the nature of the unconsolidated material through which they were cut. A sondage was excavated in Trench 2 in an attempt to establish the depth at which geological material was present. Excavations ceased

at a depth of 1.97mBGL, due to safety considerations, and remained within made-ground. A very large concrete block 5m from the southern end of Trench 2 prevented the maximum safe depth from being achieved as it extended outside of the edges of the trench.

Trench 3 was unexcavated due to the number of services that were present within and around the proposed trench location. Trench 4 was moved to the adjacent car park within the development area for the same reasons. Only in Trench 4 was the natural geology encountered.

All variations from the agreed scope of works detailed in the Project Design (Craddock-Bennett 2016) were discussed and agreed ahead of trench excavation with Peter Insole, Principal Historic Environment Officer, in his capacity as Archaeological Advisor to the Local Planning Authority.

The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA). The recorded contexts were assigned unique numbers and recording was undertaken on Headland Archaeology pro forma trench and context record sheets. Digital colour photographic images, and black and white 35mm film photographs were taken of all trenches with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital surveying was undertaken using a Leica TCRA 1105.



ILLUS 3 East facing section of sondage in Trench 2

4 RESULTS

A full trench and context register is included in Appendix 1.

4.1 TRENCH 1 (ILLUS 2)

Trench 1 contained modern overburden in three layers. A surface deposit (101) comprised a dark brown, sandy clay, loose with frequent root intrusion. This was deliberately levelled material from the demolition of the previous technical college and contained fragments of construction debris throughout. This deposit reached 0.31m below ground level (BGL). Below this was a brown sandy clay with a red hue (102), this was present between 0.31m and 1.03m BGL and overlay a red clay with a brown hue (103). This deposit at the eastern end was 1.03m below the eastern ground level and 1.80m below the western ground level due to the slope the trench cut through. The natural geology was not encountered in this trench and excavations ceased at 1.80m due to concerns over the stability of its sides.

4.2 TRENCH 2 (ILLUS 3)

The stratigraphy in Trench 2 matched that of Trench 1 in nature however was slightly shallower. The surface deposit (201) extended to 0.29m BGL and the first subsoil deposit (202) was present between 0.29m and 1.00m. Below this was the third deposit of made ground (203) that was seen at the maximum excavated depth for this trench of 1.97m in a sondage at the centre of the trench. This was excavated to establish the depth of the natural geology below ground level, however, it was not reached due to the instability of the side of the trench.

4.3 TRENCH 4 (ILLUS 4)

Trench 4 was excavated in a car park in the south east of the site. The tarmac surface (401) extended to a depth of 0.08m BGL. Beneath this was a red stone hard core deposit associated with the carpark (402) that measured between 0.08m and 0.44m BGL. This overlay a grey silty clay with a red hue (403) that contained very few inclusions and was present between 0.44m and 1.04m BGL. The natural geology (404) was present at 1.04m BGL and was a brown sandy clay with a red hue and frequent patches of degraded stone.

5 DISCUSSION

Significant deposits of made ground were identified across the site. The presence of brick and rubble within this material suggests that the uppermost horizons related to the recently demolished buildings which had formerly stood on the site. The lower deposits which also contained elements of demolition rubble, directly overlying the natural, appear to originate from the complete clearance and levelling of the site in advance of the construction of these buildings.

The depth of the made ground present in Trenches 1 and 2 may well be in part from the terracing that has taken place to increase usable areas for construction ground. The borehole survey that was undertaken on the site by Hydrock, revealed 3.15m of made ground in the area of Trench 1 and 0.80m to the south of Trench 2 (Anthony 2012). This sharp increase in the depth of the made deposits goes some way to explaining why no natural was reached during the excavation of these trenches.



ILLUS 4 North east facing section in Trench 4

Trench 4, within the car park where no obvious levelling had taken place, revealed much less substantial deposits of made-ground and the natural geology was reached across the whole length of the trench. No archaeological finds or features were revealed.

6 CONCLUSION

The evaluation confirmed that the excavated areas of the development site contained no archaeological remains from any period. A deep deposit of made ground was found across the western part of the site where the former college stood and this area appears to have been terraced prior to its construction. Where the geological horizons were reached no archaeological finds or features were identified. This evidence suggests that, had archaeological features or deposits been present prior to the construction of the college, it is highly unlikely that they would have survived the impacts of its construction and subsequent demolition.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER

DBGL = depth below ground level

TR1	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	E–W	10	1.6	1.04

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DBGL (M)
101	Surface deposit – Dark Brown, Clay sand, loose, frequent root intrusion, deliberately levelled and full of small-med fragments of construction debris. Occasional large fragments.	0–0.31
102	Subsoil deposit – Mid red brown, sandy clay, friable, with some root intrusion. A deliberate layer of construction debris including brick, tile, concrete.	0.31–1.03
103	Subsoil deposit, mid brown red, clay, firm which is predominantly natural clay with some lenses and dumps of charcoal and brick.	1.03+

TR2	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	N–S	15	1.6	1

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DBGL (M)
201	Surface deposit – Dark Brown, Clay sand, loose, frequent root intrusion, deliberately levelled and full of small-med fragments of construction debris. Occasional large fragments.	0–0.29
202	Subsoil deposit – Mid red brown, sandy clay, friable, with some root intrusion. A deliberate layer of construction debris including brick, tile, concrete.	0.29–1.00
203	Subsoil deposit, mid brown red, clay, firm which is predominantly natural clay with some lenses and dumps of charcoal and brick.	1.00–1.97+

TR4	ORIENTATION	L (M)	W (M)	AV. D (M)
	NW–SE	15	1.6	1.04

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DBGL (M)
401	Tarmac carpark surface	0–0.08
402	Red stony support layer to tarmac with regular angular and sub angular stones in sand. Larger white stones at base.	0.08–0.44
403	Mid reddish grey silty clay with little in the way of inclusions – the occasional rare stone. Possible colluvium	0.44–1.04
404	Natural – red brown sandy clay with frequent white degraded stone patches.	1.04+

APPENDIX 2 PHOTO REGISTER

PHOTO	B & W	DIGITAL	DIRECTION FACING	DESCRIPTION
01	36	279	–	ID Shot. Film no: 1270
02	35	280	E	Pre-ex shot of water tank manhole covers on trench 1 location
03	34	281	NE	Pre-ex shot of TR4
04	–	282	–	Working shot
05	33	283	W	Pre-ex shot of TR3
06	–	284	NW	Working shot
07	–	285	NW	Working shot
08	–	286	NW	Working shot
09	32	287	W	Pre-ex - water tanks on location of TR3
10	–	288	–	TR3 Drains
11	–	289	–	TR3 Drains
12	–	290	–	Working shot
13	31	291	W	Pre-ex shot of TR1
14	–	292	W	Pre-ex shot of TR1
15	30	293	N	TR2 General trench shot
16	29	294	S	TR2 General trench shot
17	28	295	S	TR2 General trench shot
18	27	296	W	TR2 East facing section of sondage
19	–	297	W	TR2 East facing section of sondage
20	26	298	W	TR2 East facing section of sondage

PHOTO	B & W	DIGITAL	DIRECTION FACING	DESCRIPTION
21	–	299	W	TR2 East facing section of sondage
22	25	300	E	TR2 Sample section
23	–	301	E	TR2 Sample section
24	–	302	E	TR2 Sample section
25	24	303	E	TR1 Completed trench shot
26	23	304	W	TR1 Completed trench shot
27	22	305	S	TR1 Sample section
28	21	306	NW	TR4 Completed trench shot
29	20	307	SE	TR4 Completed trench shot
30	19	308	SW	TR4 Sample section
31	–	309	NW	TR4 Partial backfill for safety
32	–	310	S	TR4 Partial backfill for safety
33	18	311	S	TR2 Completed trench shot with 3m extension to north
34	17	312	E	TR1 Backfilled
35	16	313	W	TR1 Backfilled
36	15	314	N	TR2 Backfilled
37	14	315	S	TR2 Backfilled
38	13	316	N	TR4 Backfilled
39	12	317	S	TR4 Backfilled



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