



Marshall Walk Knowle West, Bristol

Archaeological Watching Brief



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September 2021



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Unit 9
City Business Park
Easton Road
Bristol
BS5 0SP

www.wessexarch.co.uk

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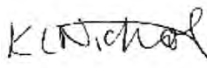
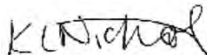
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BS1 9NE

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County Bristol
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Planning authority Bristol City Council
Museum name Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
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Project management by Kirsty Nichol
Document compiled by Cai Mason
Graphics by Amy Wright

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Bristol City Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground investigation (GI) works to inform proposals for residential development at Marshall Walk, Knowle West, Bristol, centred on NGR 358674 169243. The watching brief took place on the 6 September 2021.

The archaeological work, which comprised monitoring the excavation of five test pits, demonstrated that the site has suffered a significant degree of horizontal truncation associated with the construction of buildings in the early 1970s. This was most evident along the southern and eastern edges of the site, though the presence of a probable buried topsoil in two of the test pits, suggest that the western half of the site may be relatively unaffected by this later disturbance. No finds or features were observed.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Bristol City Council for commissioning the archaeological watching brief, in particular Louise Brown. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Principal Historic Environment Officer, who monitored the project for Bristol City Council, and to Hydrock for their cooperation and help on site.



Inns Court Avenue, Knowle West Bristol

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Bristol City Council, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground investigation (GI) works to inform proposals for residential development of a 0.12 ha parcel of land at Marshall Walk, Knowle West, Bristol, BS4 1TB, centred on NGR 358674 169243 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.1 The proposed GI works comprised the excavation of four geotechnical test pits and two soakaways, but due to onsite constraints, the number of test pits was reduced to three (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The GI works had the potential to disturb buried archaeological deposits, in particular remains relating to a nearby Late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement.
- 1.1.3 The watching brief is part of a programme of archaeological works, which has included a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2021a).
- 1.1.4 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies, and standards to be employed (Wessex Archaeology 2021b). The Principal Historic Environment Officer approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing. The watching brief was undertaken on the 6 September 2021.

1.2 Scope of the report

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the watching brief, to interpret the results within their local or regional context (or otherwise), and to assess their potential to address the aims outlined in the WSI, thereby making available information about the archaeological resource (a preservation by record).

1.3 Location, topography, and geology

- 1.3.1 The watching brief was located on vacant land to the south of Inns Court Avenue, in the Knowle West district of Bristol. Most of the site is currently surfaced with concrete or tarmac; the northern end is grassed. The land is bounded by Inns Court Avenue to the north; Marshall Walk to the east, the rear garden of 7 Berners Close to the south and the rear gardens of 1–6 Quilter Grove to the west.
- 1.3.2 Topographically, the site is situated on the brow of a gentle west-facing slope overlooking the valley of the Pigeonhouse Stream. Existing ground levels range from 56.01 m in the north to 55.06 m in the south.
- 1.3.3 The underlying geology is mapped as Jurassic/Triassic mudstone of the Salford Shale Member, which is overlain by interbedded Jurassic limestone and mudstone of the Rugby Limestone Member, towards the southern edge of the site (British Geological Survey 2021).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site was assessed in a prior desk-based assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2021a), which considered the recorded historic environment resource within 1 km of the proposed development. A summary of the results is presented below, with relevant entry numbers from the Bristol Historic Environment Record (BHER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) included. Additional sources of information are referenced, as appropriate.

2.2 Previous investigations related to the development

2.2.1 There are no known previous archaeological investigations within the site boundary.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

Romano-British (AD 43 - 410)

2.3.1 Several watching briefs and excavations since the 1980s have recorded evidence of Late Iron Age and Romano-British remains at Inns Court and Filwood Park, both of which lie a short distance to the south-east of the site.

2.3.2 Excavation at Inns Court (BHER 20054 and 20348), 25 m to the south-east of the site, uncovered the remains of two stone walled and floored buildings separated by a wide ditch, with artefactual evidence suggesting a possible Late Iron Age/early Romano-British origin. There was increased occupation during the later 3rd century AD, with stone-lined drains and parts of three stone founded buildings, set within a ditched enclosure. Two of the buildings (linked a courtyard) were substantial, and at least one had two or more rooms, a stone tiled roof and flagstone floors. The other building contained a small furnace. The third building was separated by a boundary ditch and comprised only a short length of wall and a cobbled floor. A late 1st-/early 2nd-century inhumation burial was also recorded. The site was occupied until the mid-4th century (Williams 1999; Jackson 2007; Allen et al. 2018).

2.3.3 At Filwood Park (BHER 2011M, 20253), 400 m to the south-east, the main occupation spanned mid-2nd to later 4th century AD. This part of the settlement centred on a trackway and ditched enclosure that contained at least one stone-founded building, as well as areas of packed metalling. A V-shaped drain ran through the enclosure to a limestone water tank and much metalworking debris recovered. A further stone building to the south as well as another enclosure (possible double ditch with stone bank), bounding an area of cobbling with evidence for metalworking and pottery kilns (mainly 3rd century). It is suggested that the settlement comprised a series of such ditched enclosures and buildings spread over at least 12 ha. Further archaeological evaluation (BHER 20254) and excavation (BHER 20349) indicated that this settlement extended westward at least to Gerrard Close, 319 m south-east of the site (Williams 1983; Allen et al. 2018).

Anglo-Saxon (AD 410–1066)

2.3.4 At the time of the Domesday Survey (AD 1086), the site was situated within the manor of Bedminster and Hareclive, and the sub-manor of Bishopsworth. There are no known Anglo-Saxon remains in the vicinity of the site.

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1500)

2.3.5 Inns Court (BCHER 1732M), which is situated 105 m to the east of the site, was the location of a property owned by John Onewyn in 1353. The property is named after its 15th-century



owner named John Inyn. The surviving parts of the building include a substantial 16th-century stair tower.

- 2.3.6 Filwood Deer Park (BCHER 1743M), which was located 380 m to the south-east of the site, belonged to Keynsham Abbey.

Post-medieval and modern (AD 1500+)

- 2.3.7 By the 19th-century Inns Court was being used as a farm, and it remained in agricultural use until it was acquired by Bristol City Council in 1937 for the construction of a new housing estate.
- 2.3.8 Inns Court farmhouse was subsequently demolished, and in 1949–50 Holy Cross Church was established in one of the converted farm outbuildings (BCHER 1879M). The 16th-century stair tower was however retained, restored, and was given a Grade II* listing in 1959 (NHLE 1202314). A new purpose-built Holy Cross Church was constructed in 1959 (BCHER 1928M); this building was replaced with a new church in 1999.
- 2.3.9 Historic mapping shows that the Inns Court Avenue site remained undeveloped until the late 1940s. By 1949, four prefabricated houses had been erected on the site. These remained extant until c. 1973, when a row of four new shops and houses were erected on the northern half of the site (planning ref. 73/05283). Historic satellite imagery shows that these buildings were demolished between 1999 and 2003. Since then, the site has remained vacant.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

- 3.1.1 The aims of the watching brief, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2021b) and as defined in the ClfA *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), were to:

- allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of the development or other works;
- provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and
- guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

3.2 Objectives

- 3.2.1 To achieve the above aims, the objectives of the watching brief, also defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2021b), were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;



- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results of the watching brief.

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methodology set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2021b) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

4.2.1 The watching brief comprised monitoring the excavation of five ground investigation (GI) pits; composing two soakaway pits (SA1 and SA2) and three test pits (TP1, TP2 and TP3). SA2 was located on a grassed area to the northern end of the site; the remainder were dug through concrete or tarmac hard standing. The pits were approximately 3.00 m long and 1.00 m wide and ranged between 1.50 m and 2.85 m deep.

4.2.2 Spoil was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. No pre-modern finds were observed, and no modern finds were collected.

Recording

4.2.3 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system.

4.2.4 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of GI pits. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSTN15 and OSGM15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.

4.2.5 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Monitoring

4.3.1 The Principal Historic Environment Officer monitored the watching brief on behalf of the LPA.

5 STRATIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

5.1.1 Full details of the stratigraphic sequence is provided in **Appendix 1**, a summary of which is presented below.



- 5.1.2 The test pits were excavated to a depth of 1.50–2.85 m below ground level (bgl); the natural geology was encountered at 1–2 m bgl.
- 5.1.3 The geology of the site comprised gravel rich silty clay (degraded mudstone) across the northern and central parts of the site, and limestone interbedded with clay at the southern end of the site. The geology was overlain by 0.20–0.60 m of mid grey silty clay subsoil, the upper surface of which was encountered at 0.80–1.40 m bgl.
- 5.1.4 In SA1 and TP1, the subsoil was overlain by a 0.10 m thick band of dark grey silty clay that contained flecks of organic material. This deposit is interpreted as a pre-1970s topsoil and land surface.
- 5.1.5 In the other pits, the buried topsoil was absent, and the subsoil had been subject to varying degrees of truncation associated with the construction of buildings in the 1970s. This was most evident in TP3, where there was no surviving subsoil.
- 5.1.6 The natural soil sequence was overlain by between 0.80 m and 1.30 m of modern made ground and surfaces (tarmac, concrete, or imported topsoil) associated with the 1970s development.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 The watching brief demonstrated that the site has suffered a significant degree of horizontal truncation associated with the construction of buildings in the early 1970s. This was most evident along the southern and eastern edges of the site, though the presence of a probable buried topsoil horizon in SA1 and TP1, suggest that the western half of the site may be relatively unaffected by this disturbance.
- 6.1.2 No finds or features were observed during the watching brief, though this may simply reflect the limitations imposed by monitoring deep and narrow GI test pits.

7 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

- 7.1.1 The archive resulting from the watching brief is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Bristol. It is proposed that the archive will be deposited with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

7.2 Preparation of the archive

Physical archive

- 7.2.1 The physical archive, which comprises paper records, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011).
- 7.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with an accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:
- 1 file/document case of paper records



Digital archive

- 7.2.3 The digital archive generated by the project, which comprises born-digital data (eg site records, survey data, photographs and reports), will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, in this instance the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by metadata.

7.3 Selection strategy

- 7.3.1 It is widely accepted that not all the records and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during the course of an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, ie the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving Museum.
- 7.3.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; Wessex Archaeology's internal selection policy) and follows ClfA's 'Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives'. It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists, external specialists, local authority, museum) and fully documented in the project archive.
- 7.3.3 In this instance, given the absence of finds, the selection process has been deferred until after the fieldwork stage was completed. Project-specific proposals for selection are presented below. These proposals are based on recommendations by Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists and will be updated in line with any further comment by other stakeholders (museum, local authority). The selection strategy will be fully documented in the project archive.
- 7.3.4 Any material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by Wessex Archaeology.

Finds

- 7.3.5 No finds were recovered.

Documentary records

- 7.3.6 Paper records comprise site registers (other pro-forma site records are digital) and reports (Written Scheme of Investigation, client report). All will be retained and deposited with the project archive.

Digital data

- 7.3.7 The digital data comprise site records (tablet-recorded on site) in spreadsheet format; survey data; photographs; reports. Given the very limited results of the fieldwork, it is recommended that only selected digital data are deposited with ADS, an approach commensurate with the scale and significance of the project. Deposition will involve the uploading of the site report via OASIS only.

7.4 Security copy

- 7.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an



ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

7.5 OASIS

- 7.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (<http://oasis.ac.uk>) has been initiated, with key fields completed (**Appendix 2**). A.pdf version of the final report will be submitted following approval by the Principal Historic Environment Officer on behalf of the LPA. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

8 COPYRIGHT

8.1 Archive and report copyright

- 8.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.
- 8.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

8.2 Third party data copyright

- 8.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (eg, Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Test pit tables

SA1		Length 3.25 m	Width 1.05 m	Depth 2.85 m
Easting 358665		Northing 169241		m OD 55.85
Context Number	Fill Of/Filled With	Interpretative Category	Description	Depth BGL
101		Concrete floor	Internal floor of demolished modern building. Overlies 107	0.00–0.20
102		Concrete surface	Modern external yard surface. Overlies 105. Modern	0.00–0.20
103		Manhole	Modern brick manhole connected to redundant plastic drains. Overlies 106	0.20–1.00
104	111	Wall foundations	Modern breeze block foundations founded on concrete	0.00+
105		Made ground	Angular reddish grey fine to coarse gravel scalpings. Abuts 103; overlies 106	0.00–1.00
106		Concrete layer	Modern concrete blinding for construction of manhole Abuts 104; overlies 112.	1.00–1.10
107		Made ground	Angular reddish grey fine to coarse gravel scalpings. Abuts 104	0.20+
108		Buried soil	Buried topsoil. Dark grey silty clay. Overlies 109	1.30–1.40
109		Subsoil	Pale yellowish brown silty clay. Overlies 110	1.40–2.00
110		Natural	Pale yellow and grey silty clay mixed with gravel-sized degraded mudstone	2.00+
111	104	Construction cut	Cuts 108	1.30+
112		Made ground	Modern made ground. Mixture of redeposited topsoil, subsoil, scalpings, with occasional brick inclusions. Overlies 108	1.00–1.30

SA2		Length 2.96 m	Width 1.34 m	Depth 2.50 m
Easting 358677		Northing 169264		m OD 56.05
Context Number	Fill Of/Filled With	Interpretative Category	Description	Depth BGL
201		Topsoil	Dark grey silty clay with sparse brick, angular gravel, modern pottery, glass, plastic, and metal inclusions	0.00–0.40
202		Made ground	Mid brown silty clay with abundant angular cobble- and boulder-sized concrete inclusions, with occasional pieces of iron rebar	0.40–0.80
203		Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay	0.80–1.40
204		Natural	Pale yellow clayey gravel interspersed with bands of dark greenish grey silty clay (degraded mudstone)	1.40+

TP1		Length 2.52 m	Width 1.20 m	Depth 2.70 m
Easting 358669		Northing 169256		m OD 56.01
Context Number	Fill Of/Filled With	Interpretative Category	Description	Depth BGL
301		Concrete floor	Internal floor of demolished modern building	0.00–0.10
302		Made ground	Angular reddish grey fine to coarse gravel scalpings	0.10–1.20
303		Buried soil	Buried topsoil. Dark grey silty clay	1.20–1.30
304		Subsoil	Mid greyish brown silty clay	1.30–1.60
305		Natural	Pale grey and pale-yellow silty clay and fine to coarse degraded mudstone gravel	1.60+



TP2		Length 2.00 m	Width 1.00 m	Depth 2.40 m
Easting 358679		Northing 169246		m OD 55.94
Context Number	Fill Of/Filled With	Interpretative Category	Description	Depth BGL
401		Concrete floor	Internal floor of demolished modern building	0.00–0.20
402		Made ground	Angular reddish grey fine to coarse gravel scalpings	0.20–1:00
403		Subsoil	Mid greyish brown silty clay	1.00–1.20
404		Natural	Pale grey and pale yellow silty clay and sub-angular gravel (degraded mudstone)	1.20+

TP3		Length 2.84 m	Width 1.20 m	1.50 m
Easting 358677		Northing 169208		m OD 55.06
Context Number	Fill Of/Filled With	Interpretative Category	Description	Depth BGL
501		Tarmac surface	External yard surface.	0.00–0.06
502		Made ground	Angular reddish grey fine to coarse gravel scalpings.	0.06–0.50
503		Made ground	Redeposited natural. Dark grey silty clay with common sub-angular cobble sized limestone inclusions.	0.50–1.00
504		Natural	Truncated limestone bedrock interspersed with bands of mid-grey clay	1.00+



Appendix 2 OASIS record

OASIS ID: wessexar1-429810

Project details

Project name	Inns Court Avenue, Knowle West
Short description of the project	Watching brief during the excavation of five grounds investigation pits. No archeology found
Project dates	Start: 06-09-2021 End: 06-09-2021
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	242321 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Recommendation from DBA

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CITY OF BRISTOL CITY OF BRISTOL BRISTOL Inns Court Avenue, Knowle West
Postcode	BS4 1TB
Study area	1.2 Hectares
Site coordinates	ST 58674 69243 51.420199006165 -2.594388267566 51 25 12 N 002 35 39 W Point

Project creators

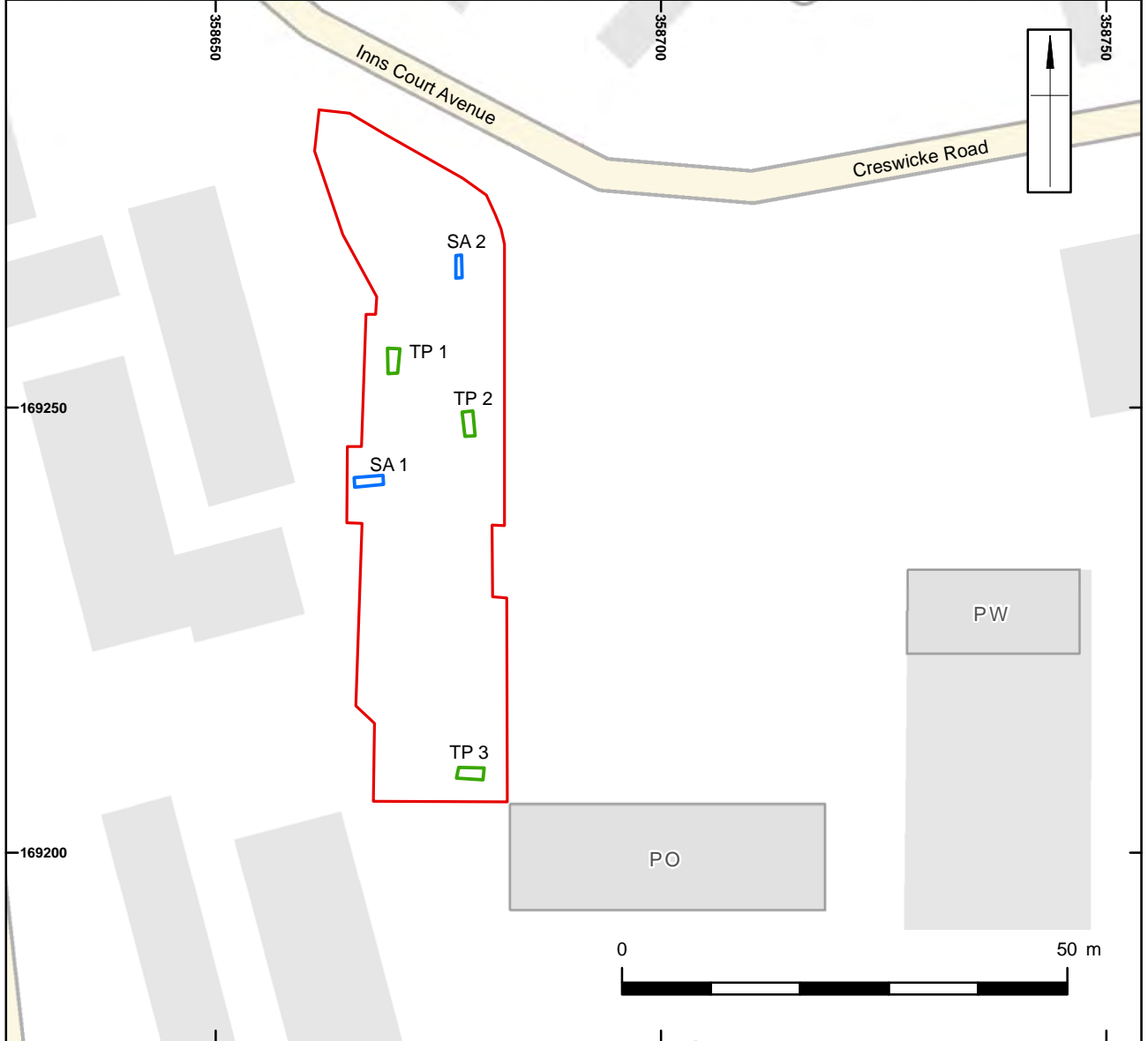
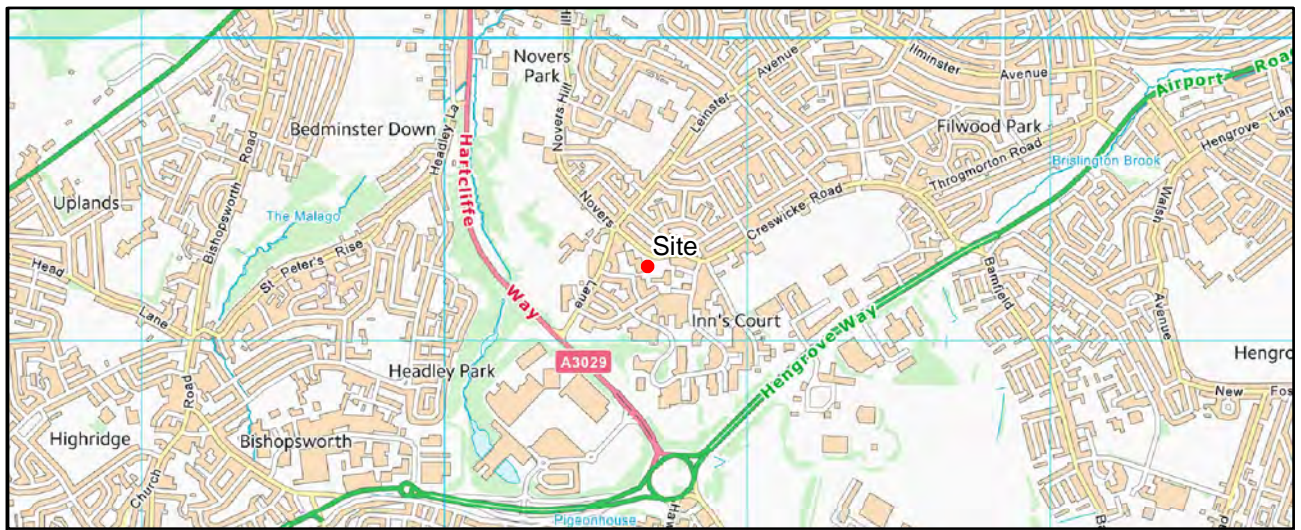
Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Kirsty Nichol
Project supervisor	Cai Mason
Type of sponsor/funding body	Local Government
Name of sponsor/funding body	Bristol City Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	ADS
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

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Location of Site and GI works

Figure 1



Plate 1: General view of the site, looking south



Plate 2: General view of the site, looking north


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Plate 3: SA1, looking south. 1 m scale



Plate 4: SA2, looking west. 1 m scale


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Plate 5: TP1, looking west. 1 m scale



Plate 6: TP2, looking west. 1 m scale



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Plate 7: TP3, looking north. 1 m scale

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Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



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