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The Dormers, Cirencester Road, Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Ref: 100070.01
May 2013



**The Dormers, Cirencester Road
Tetbury, Gloucestershire**

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared for:

CgMs Consulting Ltd
Ragsdale, 1 Church Lane,
Great Cransley,
Kettering,
NN14 1PX

Prepared by:

Wessex Archaeology
Unit R6 Riverside Block,
Sheaf Bank Business Park,
Prospect Road,
Sheffield,
S2 3EN

www.wessexarch.co.uk

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The Dormers, Cirencester Road Tetbury, Gloucestershire

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The Dormers, Cirencester Road Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd to undertake an archaeological investigation at The Dormers, Cirencester Road, Tetbury, Gloucestershire (NGR 389762 193632). The evaluation was conducted to inform potential development of the Site.

The proposed development site lies approximately 0.5km to the northeast of the centre of Tetbury. The 1.2ha area is bounded by Cirencester Road to the northwest and Springfields to the southwest.

The site is situated on the outskirts of the Medieval core of Tetbury. A number of Mesolithic, Iron Age and Romano-British findspots have been recorded within and around the town and recent investigations on the north side of Tetbury have revealed previously unknown prehistoric and Romano-British remains.

Nine trial trenches were excavated but no archaeological deposits, features or finds were identified.

The results may indicate that the proposed development site has not been occupied nor used for arable agriculture throughout its history. However, the uniformity of deposit depth and composition could also suggest that this land was reduced to natural deposits and made up again with topsoil in order to landscape the grounds for the existing properties.

It is considered that the aims and objectives of the excavation have been achieved and that the results are probably representative of the archaeological potential of the proposed development area as a whole.

The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code **100070**.

The project archive will be deposited with the Gloucester City Museum in due course under an accession number to be confirmed. An OASIS form will be completed at the time of deposition.



The Dormers, Cirencester Road Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd and Wessex Archaeology is grateful in this regard. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful to Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council for his assistance.

The fieldwork was directed by Neil Dransfield, assisted by Michael Keech. The report was prepared by Andrea Burgess with illustrations by Linda Coleman. Richard O'Neill managed the project on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.



The Dormers, Cirencester Road Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd (hereafter 'the Client') to undertake an archaeological evaluation at The Dormers, Cirencester Road, Tetbury, Gloucestershire (NGR 389762 193632; hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was conducted to inform potential development of the Site on the advice of the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council Archaeological Service (GCCAS).
- 1.1.3 A programme of geophysical survey and evaluation was initially recommended by GCCAS, however the Client advised that initial geophysical survey was not practical given the size and current condition of the Site.
- 1.1.4 The trial trenching evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2013) approved by the Client and GCCAS.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is centred on NGR 389762 193632 and lies approximately 0.5km to the northeast of the centre of Tetbury (**Figure 1**). The Site is bounded by Cirencester Road to the northwest and Springfields to the southwest. The overall area of the proposed new development is c.1.2ha; buildings in the southeast are to be retained.
- 1.2.2 There is a tree-lined driveway leading through the Site to the main house. The land to the east of the driveway is open ground with low vegetation whilst that to the west and south of the driveway is covered by grass and trees.
- 1.2.3 The Site is located at 122m aOD and the geology comprises limestone of the Forest Marble Formation (British Geological Survey online).



2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Summary

2.1.1 The Site is situated on the outskirts of the Medieval core of Tetbury. A number of Mesolithic, Iron Age and Romano-British findspots have been recorded within and around the settlement.

2.2 Prehistoric to Romano-British

2.2.1 A Scheduled bowl barrow and an undesignated prehistoric sub-rectangular enclosure are located approximately 0.8km north of the Site.

2.2.2 The Scheduled Tetbury Camp, the possible site of an Iron Age hillfort or Medieval Manor House, lies approximately 0.85km southwest of the Site.

2.2.3 Recent investigations on the north side of Tetbury have revealed previously unknown prehistoric and Romano-British activity. Archaeological work on land adjacent to Quercus Road, only 250m north of the Site, revealed a later prehistoric and Roman settlement.

2.3 Medieval to Post-medieval

2.3.1 Tetbury was a Saxon monastic foundation and site of a short-lived 13th century abbey. Earthen defences of post-Conquest date have been recorded in the town. Tetbury is recorded in the Domesday survey of AD1086 as a village of 56 households with 10 acres of meadow and one mill (Open Domesday Book online).

2.3.2 The town became an important market for wool and yarn during the Middle Ages. Numerous listed buildings and monuments relating to Medieval and Post-medieval period are situated from 0.5km to the southwest of the Site.

2.3.3 Outside of the town boundaries, a holy well is situated 0.5km to the west of the Site and areas of ridge and furrow lie to the southeast and west of Broadfield Farm.

2.4 19th century to Modern

2.4.1 A number of listed buildings dating to the 19th century are recorded within Tetbury, including the site of a station for the former Tetbury branch line to the south of the Site, which opened in 1889 and closed in 1964. The line passed along the River Avon to the south of the Site.

2.4.2 There are several WWII defensive and military structures within the Tetbury area, including a depot to the north side of Cirencester Road opposite the Site, and tank obstacles 0.8km east of the Site at Little Larkhill Farm.

2.5 Recent investigations in the area

2.5.1 No previous archaeological investigations have been carried out within the Site.



3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The general aims of the project are

- to identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits within the Site;
- to determine the extent, condition, character, significance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered;
- to accurately record any revealed archaeological deposits;
- to recover artefacts and environmental samples as appropriate;
- to prepare a comprehensive archive, record and report of any archaeological deposits disturbed by the Site works;
- to aid in the production of a mitigation strategy for the Site (if necessary).

3.2 Fieldwork

3.2.1 Details of the methodology employed can be found in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2013). The evaluation was carried out in accordance with this and with industry best practice as outlined in guidelines issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a, 2008b and 2010).

3.2.2 The evaluation was to comprise nine trenches set out in accordance with the agreed plan by means of a RTK GPS system. Once excavations commenced the site conditions (unmapped services and property boundaries) dictated that two trenches should be moved and three had to be reduced in length. The actual trench locations were surveyed and tied into the Ordnance Survey grid to an accuracy of within 0.1m (**Figure 1**). The final trench dimensions are also presented in **Appendix 1**.

3.2.3 Topsoil was removed using a mechanical excavator (JCB) fitted with a flat bladed ditching bucket, working under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Overburden was removed in a series of level spits down to the upper archaeological horizon or the level of the natural geology, whichever was reached first. Any revealed deposits were hand cleaned, excavated and recorded in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's standard guidelines.

3.3 Recording

3.3.1 All trenches and any archaeological features or deposits encountered were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. Spot heights were calculated in metres relative to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places.

3.3.2 Photographs were taken as necessary to produce a photographic record consisting of 35mm monochrome prints and colour transparencies. Digital images were also taken.

3.4 Specialist strategies

3.4.1 Specialist strategies for artefact treatment and environmental sampling were detailed in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2013) but were not required during fieldwork.



4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following is a summary of the information held in the archive. The trench locations are shown on **Figure 1** and the complete stratigraphic sequence for each trench is summarised in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Trenches 1-9

4.2.1 The excavation of all nine trenches revealed the same soil profile across the Site. This comprised 0.35m of topsoil directly overlying natural silty-clay deposits (**Plates 1 and 2**).

4.2.2 Despite consultation of service plans and pre-excavation scanning, a modern service (probably a low pressure gas main) was observed in Trench 8. Therefore this trench could not be excavated to reveal natural deposits along its full length.

4.2.3 No archaeological features or deposits were observed in any of the trenches and no artefacts were recovered.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Conclusions

5.1.1 No archaeological features or artefacts were identified during the evaluation, despite careful examination of the trenches and the spoil.

5.1.2 The absence of residual or unstratified finds could indicate that the Site has not been occupied nor used for arable agriculture throughout its history. However, the uniformity of deposit depth and composition could indicate that this area was reduced to natural deposits and made up again with topsoil in order to landscape the grounds for the existing properties.

5.1.3 It is considered that the aims and objectives of the excavation have been achieved and that the results are probably representative of the archaeological potential of the proposed development area as a whole.

6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Archive and curation

6.1.1 The complete Site archive will be prepared following the standard procedures for the transfer of archaeological archives to Gloucester City Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (UKIC 2001; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007). The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code **100070**.

6.1.2 The project archive will be deposited with the Gloucester City Museum in due course under an accession number to be confirmed. An OASIS form will be completed at the time of deposition.



6.2 Copyright

- 6.2.1 This report, and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable 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 the report.
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7 REFERENCES

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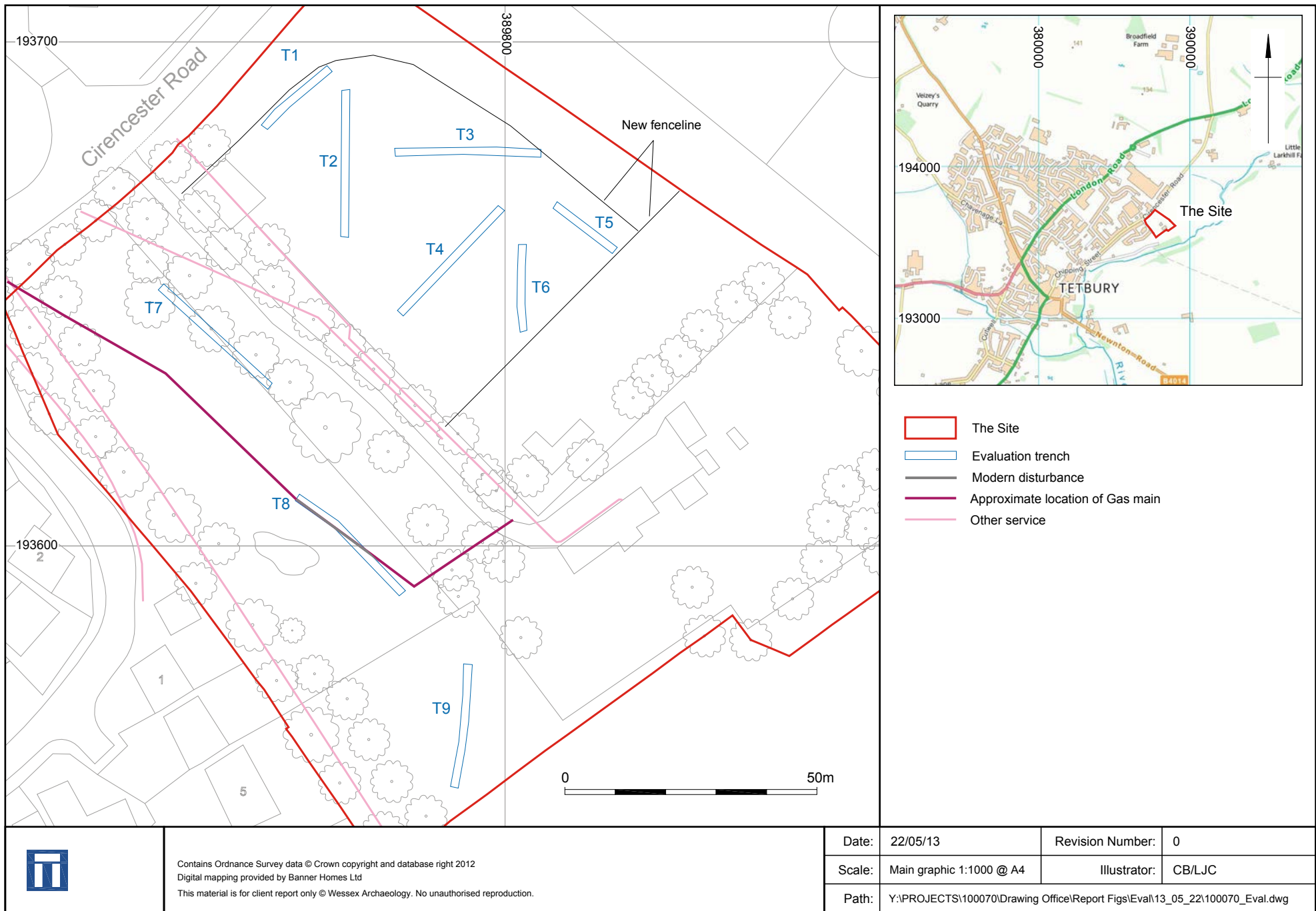
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APPENDIX 1

Context data

Context	Description	Depth BGL (m)
Trench 1 (15m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.44m
101	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay (40:60) with frequent roots in upper layer and occasional bioturbation throughout	0- 0.35m
102	Natural: Moderately compact mid brownish orange silty clay with occasional rough sub-angular sandstone blocks <200mm	0.35+
Trench 2 (30m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.40m
201	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay (40:60) with dense roots in upper layer and occasional bioturbation throughout	0- 0.35m
202	Natural: Moderately compact mid orange brown silty clay with sparse small sub-angular flecks of sandstone	0.35+
Trench 3 (25m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.40m
301	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay with dense roots and occasional bioturbation	0- 0.35m
302	Natural: Moderately compact mid orange brown silty clay with occasional small patches of degraded sandstone <100mm	0.35+
Trench 4 (30m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.42m
401	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay with dense roots and occasional bioturbation	0- 0.37m
402	Natural: Moderately compact mid orange brown silty clay with occasional small patches of degraded sandstone	0.37+
Trench 5 (15m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.40m
501	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay with frequent roots in upper layer and occasional bioturbation throughout	0- 0.34m
502	Natural: Moderately compact mid orange brown silty clay with sparse small sandstone sub-angular pieces	0.34+
Trench 6 (20m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.37m
601	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay (40:60) with frequent roots in upper layer and frequent bioturbation throughout	0- 0.34m
602	Natural: Moderately compact mid brownish orange silty clay with occasional medium sized sub-angular pieces of sandstone	0.34+
Trench 7 (30m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.40m
701	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay with dense roots in upper layer and frequent bioturbation throughout. Dense large tree roots throughout	0- 0.32m
702	Natural: Moderately compact mid brownish orange silty clay with occasional medium sized sub-angular pieces of sandstone	0.32+
Trench 8 (30m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.41m
801	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay with roots and bioturbation throughout	0- 0.37m
802	Natural: Moderately compact mid brownish orange silty clay with mid size sandstone brash from bedrock	0.37+
Trench 9 (25m x 1.8m)		Max Depth: 0.21m
901	Topsoil: Mid brownish grey moderately compact silty clay (40:60) with frequent roots	0- 0.20m
902	Natural: Moderately compact mid brownish orange silty clay and frequent large patches of broken and degraded brash	0.20+



Site and trench location

Figure 1

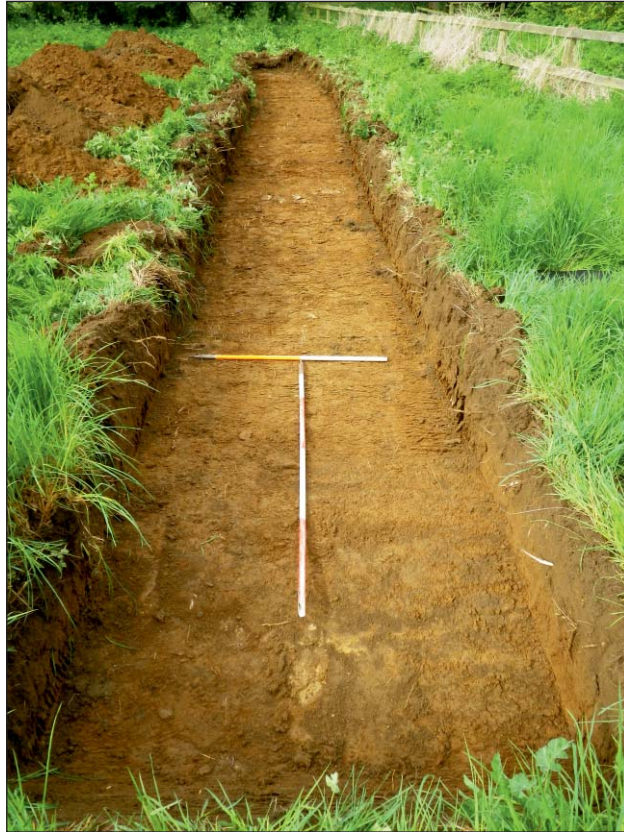



Plate 1: Trench 1



Plate 2: Representative section in Trench 1

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salisbury rochester sheffield edinburgh



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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