



making sense of heritage

Manston House, Manston Sturminster Newton, Dorset

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Planning Reference: 2/2012/1519/PLNG-2/2012/1520/PLNG
Ref: 89220.03
July 2014



**Manston House, Manston
Sturminster Newton, Dorset**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Manston House, Manston Sturminster Newton, Dorset

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Manston House, Manston Sturminster Newton, Dorset

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Johnston Cave Associates acting on behalf of Mr and Mrs Swire to undertake an archaeological watching brief during a proposed development at Manston House, Manston, Sturminster Newton, Dorset. The fieldwork consisted of an archaeological watching brief which monitored excavation of foundation trenches for new extension and a hand dug cable trench in the churchyard. The fieldwork was undertaken on two separate occasions between May 2013 and April 2014.

The watching brief has indicated the presence of another structure to the south of the 17th century wing of the house. The slight misalignment may suggest it pre-dates the 1690 building and indeed there are no indications of any original entrances within the south wall to suggest that it communicated with a more southerly wing. It seems likely therefore that these walls are of the pre-1690 house, mentioned in 1635, which was subsequently demolished. However, no positive dating evidence could be obtained for the structure.

The depth at which the river terrace deposits were encountered would seem to suggest that the ground originally sloped down to the river from a point further to the east and that the current level promontory may be partially an artificial construction.

The cable trench in the churchyard was dug in direct proximity to the existing graves, yet no archaeological remains were recorded and no finds retained. This is due to relative small depth of the trench and the fact that ground was previously disturbed.



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Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Johnston Cave Architects on behalf of Mr and Mrs Swire and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to David Rhodes in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Shaun Jack (R Moulding & Co) for all his assistance on site and acknowledge Steve Wallis (Dorset County Council Archaeological Advisor).

The watching brief was undertaken by Naomi Brennan and Piotr Orczewski. This report was written and compiled by Naomi Brennan and Piotr Orczewski. The illustrations were prepared by Karen Nichols. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Damian De Rosa and Gareth Chaffey.



Manston House, Manston Sturminster Newton, Dorset

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Johnston Cave Associates acting on behalf of Mr and Mrs Swire to undertake an archaeological watching brief during a proposed development at Manston House, Manston, Sturminster Newton, Dorset, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 38515, 25650 (hereafter 'the Site') (**Figure 1A**).

1.1.2 Conditional planning permission (2/2012/1519/PLNG) and Listed Building Consent (2/2012/1520/PLNG) has been granted for the demolition of the single and two-storey southern extensions and the erection of a two-storey extension in its place, in addition to internal and external alterations on the Grade II Listed Manston House (LB 1110437).

1.1.3 Although there is no condition relating to archaeology attached to the approved planning permission and listing building consent, in the outline schedule of work submitted with the application suggested the following course of action:

It is proposed that an accredited archaeologist be employed to undertake a watching brief during the excavations phase of the works (when foundation trenches are being dug and ground levels reduced to suit the footprint of the new extension). The brief will include the recording of any significant deposits revealed so that the findings may be catalogued for further investigation as may be necessary. During this process, the local authority will be notified of the commencement date for this phase of the works and kept abreast of any findings.

1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the evaluation (WA 2013) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology and submitted to, and approved by, the County Archaeologist at Dorset County Council (DCC) prior to the start of the fieldwork. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (as amended in 2008).

1.1.5 Accordingly a watching brief was carried out in this part of Site on the 21st-23rd May 2013 during the excavation of foundation trenches. Subsequently on 31st March and 1st April continuous archaeological presence was also maintained during hand excavation of cable trench located in the churchyard.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 Manston House is a Grade II Listed Building that is located to the south of the village of Manston and just under 2.5km east of Sturminster Newton. The Site lies within a rural setting and lies adjacent to the parish church of St Nicholas, which dates to the early 13th century. The Site is accessed from a minor road that leads south from the B3091 to the north and the western boundary is formed partly by the River Stour.



- 1.2.2 The Site lies at a height of c. 45m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), though the river is several metres below this level.
- 1.2.3 The underlying bedrock is listed as the Kimmeridge Clay Formation with superficial deposits of river terrace sand and gravel (BGS). However, given its close proximity to the present day river channel there are likely to be localised deposits of alluvium.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 A detailed Statement of Significance (AHC 2012) of the Site has been prepared, which sets out in detail the historical background of the Site. The Statement of Significance (AHC 2012) has been further supported by a Design and Access Statement (JCA 2012). A brief summary of the historical background set out in these documents is presented below. Further background has also been sourced from the Heritage Gateway (<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>), which has provided information from sites and events listed on the Dorset Historic Environment Record (DHER) and English Heritage Pastscape (EHP) (<http://www.pastscape.org.uk>).

2.2 Historical background

- 2.2.1 The Grade II Listed Manston House (Listed Building (LB) 1110437) is 17th century in origin and is principally a two storey house with the main range dating from 1857 following the loss of most of the earlier buildings through a fire. In the southern area of the house part of the earlier 17th century wing is retained and subsequent additions have been made in the 19th and 20th centuries. As well as the fire recorded in 1857, there are a number of references to floods affecting the house throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.
- 2.2.2 There is thought to have been a substantial manor house on or close to the site of the present Manston House on the bank of the River Stour since at least the time of Domesday. Directly to the east of the Site is the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Nicholas (LB 1110434), the earliest fabric of which dates to the early 13th century. The combination of a church and manor house in direct proximity to each other is a good indication that a medieval predecessor could survive below or in proximity to the current Manston House. The remaining 17th century fabric is thought to date to c. 1690 but there are references to a house in 1635 which is subsequently believed to have been demolished.
- 2.2.3 Further evidence for medieval activity within the wider vicinity of the Site is indicated by the identification of medieval earthworks to the north-east of the Site (EHP monument no. 883870), and to the south-west on the opposite side of the River Stour at Hammoon (EHP monument no. 887752). There is also evidence for medieval ridge and furrow (DHER 2034009 A to C) providing an indication of agricultural practises being undertaken near to the Site, at the centre of which may have been a manor house.
- 2.2.4 Within the grounds of the Site are a series of Grade II Listed Buildings, comprising a stable block, which dates to the late 18th/ early 19th century, and adjoining crematorium (LB 1171706) dating to 1882, a mausoleum completed in 1877 (LB 1324516), and to the north of the Site lies The Lodge, which dates to the mid-19th century. The crematorium was added by the then owner of Manston House, Captain Thomas Hanham.



3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The objective of the watching brief was to record, as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, nature, character and relationships of any surviving archaeological remains observed during the excavation of the foundations for the new extension.
- 3.1.2 Specifically, the watching brief sought to determine in particular the presence of any features, deposits and/or dating material, which may relate to earlier phases of the current Grade II listed building and/or evidence for a possible medieval manor house pre-dating the current Grade II listed buildings 17th century construction. The watching brief located within the churchyard also aimed to identify any human remains or unmarked graves.

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 The full detailed methodology of the archaeological works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2013) and is summarized below.
- 3.2.2 A continuous archaeological presence was maintained during the excavation of the foundation trenches for the new extension. Due to Health and Safety considerations no access could be granted within the excavation trenches and so all measurements and recording were undertaken from the ground surface. While all attempts were made to ensure that accurate observations were made, the restrictions mean that some approximation is present in the data set.
- 3.2.3 Continuous archaeological presence was also maintained during hand excavation of the cable trench located in the churchyard.
- 3.2.4 All archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Archaeological features and deposits were hand-drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.
- 3.2.5 A full photographic record was compiled using digital images. The record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features, finds excavated, and the site as a whole. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 3.2.6 Site survey was carried out using a Leica Viva series GNSS unit using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30 mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.
- 3.2.7 A unique site code **89220** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Foundation trenches

- 4.1.1 The groundworks for the new extension encompass an area measuring approximately 14m by 9m and thus cover an area slightly larger than the footprint of the previous extensions (**Figure 1B**). Due to the underlying geology, which was alluvium on the western side of the Site (**106**) and river terrace deposits on the eastern side of Site (**107**), the foundations were required to be much deeper than originally planned and were generally between 1.9-2.0m in depth. This meant that the trenches were not safe for

access and so all recording and observation was undertaken from the trench top. Full details of the stratigraphic sequence can be found in **Appendix 1**.

- 4.1.2 The river terrace deposits **107** were first encountered in the central part of the Site where they lay at the limit of excavation. However towards the eastern and northern areas of Site they were encountered at increasingly shallow depths and by the south-east corner of the house were at only 1.0m below reduced level (**Plate 1**). The variation in the depth at which the natural geology was reached suggests that the original ground surface sloped from the north-eastern part of Site down to the river. Today the house stands on a fairly level promontory above the river and it may well be that this is partly artificially created.
- 4.1.3 Within the western part of the Site a stone built north-north-west – south-south-east aligned wall **104** was observed (**Plates 2 and 3**). This wall lay at a depth significantly below the current ground surface and is slightly misaligned with the adjacent 17th century wing (**Figure 1B**). Although of a similar, no doubt local stone to the 17th century wing it appeared to be constructed using more roughly shaped blocks than the fine ashlar stone work utilising in the upstanding remains (**front cover**). Given the shallow footings observed for the upstanding remains it seems unlikely that **104** only represents the foundation level. No construction cut for the wall could be seen and it apparently lay above a thin alluvial deposit **105**, which in turn overlay alluvium **106**. Abutting the wall was a dark, slightly mixed deposit **103**.
- 4.1.4 Another wall **108**, of largely identical construction was observed on a north-east – south-west alignment, potentially forming an internal division to the east of wall **104** (**Figure 1A; Plates 4 and 5**). The base of this wall was at a slightly shallower depth, perhaps supporting the idea that this is an internal division. At the north-east end of the wall a possible south-east return was observed though this had been largely truncated away by modern disturbance. In one section, adjacent to wall **108** but above layer **103** was a possible surface deposit **109** (**Plate 5**).
- 4.1.5 Although no clear variation of deposits on opposing sides of wall sections could be seen within the presumed building footprint a different deposition sequence was observed on the western side of wall **104**, adjacent to the river (**Plate 6**). Here a mixed sandy layer **116** was seen to overlie the alluvial layer **105**, in which fragments of stone could be seen perhaps indicative of construction or demolition. Above this was a layer of re-deposited river terrace material **116** which either may suggests natural but substantial flooding or a deliberate made ground.
- 4.1.6 Overlying the site was a layer **102**; this deposit appeared to represent a potentially levelling episode potentially prior to the construction of the previous modern extensions. Within and cutting through it were a number of obviously modern utilities and areas of disturbance. Of particular note was a largely, deep and vertically sided cut (**112**) seen in the south-eastern part of the Site. This was filled with a clay-rich homogeneous deposit, suggesting that it had been deliberately backfilled. The exact nature of the feature was not determined as it was mostly only visible in section.
- 4.1.7 Also within the south-eastern part of the Site was red brick structure **111** (**Plate 7**). Nothing is shown on any of the historic mapping in this position, which in modern times was within a terraced area. It would seem to be most likely a cellar potentially of a similar date to the other outbuildings (late 18th/ early 19th century); its absence of the Ordnance Survey mapping may suggest that there was little or no above ground structure or that it pre-dates the First Edition map and was abandoned when the walled terrace (already shown on this edition) was constructed.



4.2 Churchyard

- 4.2.1 The groundworks in the churchyard comprised the hand excavation of a cable trench for the electrical cable (**Figure 1C, Plate 8**). The trench measured approximately 20m in length, 0.25m wide and was 0.5m deep. Up to 0.2m of disturbed topsoil characterised by a brownish grey alluvial sandy clay, was recorded. No archaeological evidence was recorded within the trench.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

- 5.1.1 Within deposit **102** frequent oyster shell was noticed as well as occasional fragments of animal bone (thought to largely comprise pig, sheep and cattle). As this deposit was not securely dated and likely to be post-medieval in date the presence of this material was noted in the field but was not collected for further analysis. The widespread presence of this domestic refuse material within this deposit suggests it may have moved and redistributed from its original location. Rare oyster shell was also observed in layer **103**.
- 5.1.2 Only a single sherd of pottery was located during the watching brief, apparently from deposit **103**, and was a sherd of modern refined whiteware.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 The watching brief has indicated the presence of another structure to the south of the 17th century wing of the house, as suggested by wall **104**. The slight misalignment may suggest it pre-dates the 1690 building and indeed there are no indications of any original entrances within the south wall to suggest that it communicated with a more southerly wing. It seems likely, therefore, that these walls are of the pre-1690 house, mentioned in 1635, which was subsequently demolished however no positive dating evidence could be obtained for the structure.
- 6.1.2 The depth at which the river terrace deposits were encountered would seem to suggest that the ground originally sloped down to the river from a point further to the east and that the current level promontory may be partially an artificial construction.
- 6.1.3 The trench in the churchyard was dug in direct proximity to the existing graves, yet no archaeological remains were recorded and no finds retained. This is due to the relatively small depth of the trench and the fact that ground was previously disturbed.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Archive

- 7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the fieldwork be deposited with the Dorset County Museum currently under the project code **89220**. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project.
- 7.1.2 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records and graphics, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Dorset County Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2011).
- 7.1.3 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an



uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

7.2 Copyright

7.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

7.2.2 This report 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. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

7.3 Security Copy

7.3.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of a pdf/a file, which will form part of the project archive.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

Asset Heritage Consulting, 2012, *Statement of Significance in regard of Manston House, Manston, Dorset*, reference 9107

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Wessex Archaeology, 2013, *Manston House, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10
1EX: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*,
reference T16992.01



9 APPENDIX 1: STRATIGRAPHIC SUMMARIES

brl= below reduced level, approximately 0.75m below ground and floor level

Foundation Trenches			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
101	Layer	Demolition/ current levelling of site, moved and re-levelled during current groundworks. Pale yellow-brown sandy silt loam. 40% stone rubble, sub-angular – angular, 2-30cm. 10% red brick rubble, angular, <1-10cm. Very mixed. Overlies 113 and 114.	0.00-0.50 brl
102	Layer	Possible levelling or made ground. Mid grey-brown silty clay to mid grey silty clay. 1% stone, sub-rounded – sub-angular, <1-2cm. Fairly homogeneous. Rare charcoal flecks. Occasional oyster shell and animal bone. Fairly compact. Overlies 109 and 110.	0.30-0.90 brl
103	Layer	Dark grey to dark grey-black silty clay. <1% stone, sub-rounded, <1-2cm. Rare oyster shell. Fairly homogeneous. Compact. Some bioturbation. Apparently abuts 104 and 108.	0.60-1.80 brl
104	Structure	Stone built north-north-west – south-south-east aligned wall. Sub-squared limestone blocks, possible rubble core and foundation. Bonding agent not clear but may be mid yellow clay. Coursing unknown but varied size of blocks suggests uncoursed or random coursed. No construction cut visible. Overlies 105.	0.50-1.80 brl
105	Layer	Mid grey silty clay, possible alluvial. No visible inclusions. Homogeneous. Compact. Overlies 106.	0.80-1.10 brl
106	Layer	Alluvium. Mid brown silty clay. No visible inclusions. Homogeneous. Compact. Overlies 107.	1.20-2.20 brl
107	Natural	River terrace gravels, natural geology. Mid yellow-orange sandy gravel. Sub-angular- -sub-rounded, <1-3cm gravel in sharp sand and clay.	1.00+ brl
108	Structure	Stone built north-east – south-west aligned wall. Sub-squared limestone blocks, possible rubble core. Bonding agent not clear but may be mid yellow clay. Coursing unknown but varied size of blocks suggests uncoursed or random coursed. No construction cut visible. Overlies 105.	0.50-1.20 brl
109	Layer	Possible surface adjacent to wall 108. Mid yellow clay. Only small portion seen in section. Overlies 103.	0.50-0.60 brl
110	Layer	Re-deposited natural, possible flooding event or made ground. Mid orange yellow sandy gravel and clay. See in western part of Site only. Compact. Fairly homogeneous. Overlies 116.	0.80-1.40 brl
111	Structure	Red brick structure, possible cellar. Pale yellow grey mortar, regular jointing. Infilled with 114. Not fully seen in plan but likely rectangular. Fill of construction cut 115.	0.40-2.00 brl
112	Cut	Vertical, straight sided cut. Not seen in plan. Filled with 113. Cuts 102.	0.50-2.00 brl
113	Deposit	Fill of 112. Mid grey to mid blue-grey clay. No visible inclusions. Compact. Likely deliberate backfill.	0.50-2.00 brl
114	Layer	Infilling of brick structure 111. Mid brown grey silty clay loam. Slightly mixed, some bioturbation.	0.40-2.00 brl
115	Cut	Construction cut for brick structure 111. Not really seen but assigned for stratigraphic purposes.	0.40-2.00 brl
116	Layer	Possible levelling. Mid yellow-brown sandy silt loam. Mixed with diffuse mid grey patches. 2% stone, sub-angular, 2-10cm. Fairly compact. Overlies 105.	1.20-1.50 brl



10 APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: wessexar1-186157

Project details

Project name	Manston House, Manston, Dorset
Short description of the project	<p>Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Johnston Cave Associates acting on behalf of Mr and Mrs Swire to undertake an archaeological watching brief during a proposed development at Manston House, Manston, Sturminster Newton, Dorset. The fieldwork consisted of an archaeological watching brief which monitored excavation of foundation trenches for new extension and a hand dug cable trench in the churchyard. The fieldwork was undertaken on two separate occasions between May 2013 and April 2014. The watching brief has indicated the presence of another structure to the south of the 17th century wing of the house. The slight misalignment may suggest it pre-dates the 1690 building and indeed there are no indications of any original entrances within the south wall to suggest that it communicated with a more southerly wing. It seems likely therefore that these walls are of the pre-1690 house, mentioned in 1635, which was subsequently demolished. However, no positive dating evidence could be obtained for the structure. The depth at which the river terrace deposits were encountered would seem to suggest that the ground originally sloped down to the river from a point further to the east and that the current level promontory may be partially an artificial construction. The cable trench in the churchyard was dug in direct proximity to the existing graves, yet no archaeological remains were recorded and no finds retained. This is due to relative small depth of the trench and the fact that ground was previously disturbed.</p>
Project dates	Start: 21-05-2013 End: 01-04-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	2/2012/1519/PLNG - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2/2012/1520/PLNG - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	89220 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition



Project location

Country	England
Site location	DORSET NORTH DORSET MANSTON Manston House, Manston, Sturminster Newton, Dorset
Postcode	DT10 1EX
Study area	0 Hectares
Site coordinates	ST 381625 114985 50.8990952386 -2.87944316867 50 53 56 N 002 52 46 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 45.00m Max: 46.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Johnston Cave Associates
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Damian de Rosa
Project supervisor	Naomi Brennan
Project supervisor	Piotr Orczewski
Type of sponsor/funding body	Architects
Name of sponsor/funding body	Johnston Cave Associates

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Dorset County Museum
Digital Archive ID	89220
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Dorset County Museum

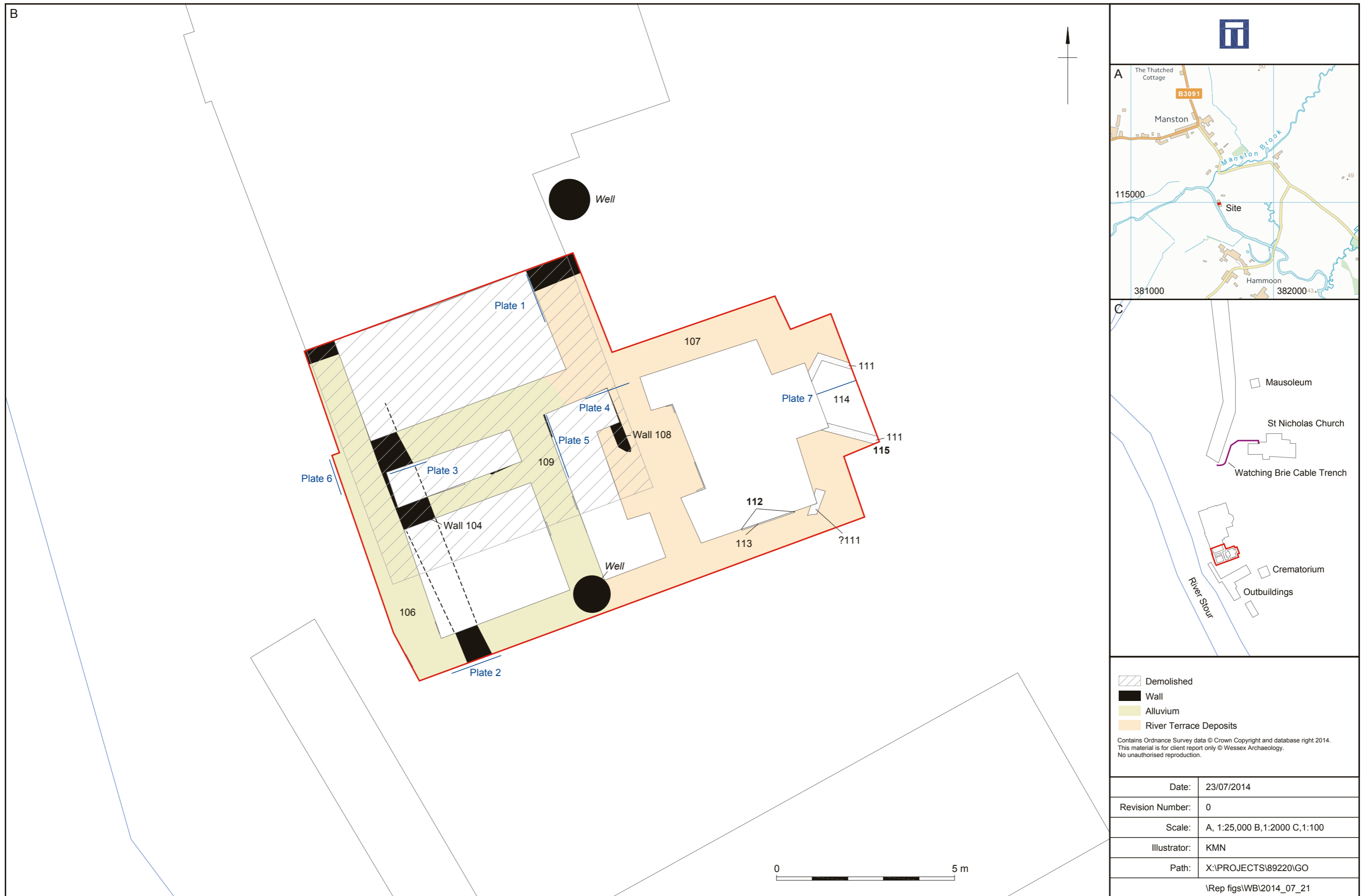


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Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "

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Entered on 30 July 2014



Site location and results of extension work

Figure 1



Plate 1: Footing adjacent to south-east corner of existing building, view from north-east



Plate 2: Wall 104 at south-west corner of site, view from north-west


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Plate 3: North-west facing section through wall 104 and adjacent deposits



Plate 4: Wall 108, view from north-west


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Plate 5: South-west facing section of wall 108 and layer 109



Plate 6: North-east facing section of deposit sequence adjacent to river



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Plate 7: Brick structure 111, view from north-west



Plate 8: Hand excavation of cable trench in the churchyard

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