



323 Passage Road, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



South Gloucestershire Planning Application Ref: PT16/4433/F
Ref: 1106460.01
April 2017



**323 Passage Road,
Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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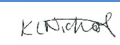
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323 Passage Road, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Contents

Summary	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 Project Background.....	4
1.2 The Site.....	4
1.3 Archaeological Background.....	4
<i>Prehistoric</i>	4
<i>Romano-British</i>	5
<i>Saxon and Medieval</i>	5
<i>Post-Medieval and Modern</i>	5
2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	6
3 METHODOLOGY.....	6
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS.....	7
4.1 Introduction	7
4.2 Stratigraphic sequence.....	7
5 RESULTS	7
6 STORAGE AND CURATION	7
6.1 Museum	7
6.2 Preparation of Archive.....	7
6.3 OASIS.....	7
6.4 Security Copy.....	8
6.5 Copyright.....	8
7 REFERENCES.....	8
8 APPENDIX 1: TRENCH TABLES.....	10

Figures

Figure 1: Site Location and Trench Plan

Plates

Cover: Overall shot of site looking north-west

Plate 1: East facing representative section of Trench 6 (with 0.50 m scale)



323 Passage Road, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by Yew Tree Property Developments to undertake an archaeological watching brief in support of a Planning Application (ref. PT16/4433/F) for the erection of a detached dwelling and garage with associated infrastructure, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 357013 180084.

The fieldwork was undertaken on the 30th, 31st March and 3rd April 2017. It involved the monitoring of foundation trenches. No archaeological deposits were revealed during the groundworks.



323 Passage Road, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Yew Tree Property Developments for commissioning the project, and Paul Driscoll (South Gloucestershire County Archaeological Officer) for his advice throughout the project.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Kerrie Birnie. This report was compiled by Michael Fleming with illustrations by Karen Nichols. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Kirsty Nichol.



323 Passage Road, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) has been commissioned by Yew Tree Property Developments (hereafter 'the client'), to carry out an Archaeological Watching Brief on land at 323 Passage Road, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). Planning permission has been granted for the erection of a detached dwelling and garage with associated infrastructure (South Gloucestershire Planning Reference PT16/4433/F).

1.1.2 The fieldwork, which was undertaken on the 30th and 31st March and 3rd April 2017, comprised monitoring of the excavation of footings associated with the construction of a detached dwelling and garage. The trenches were excavated using a one tonne rubber-tracked excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site is part of the garden of the detached residential dwelling of No. 323 Passage Road, which lies on a roughly triangular plot of land at the junction of the southbound carriageway of the A4108 (Cribbs Causeway) and the northern end of Passage Road, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 357013 180084 (**Figure 1**). To the east is the recent residential development of Hazel Brook Gardens and to the south is the adjoining property of 321 Passage Road.

1.2.2 The solid geology comprises Mercia Mudstone Group (marginal Facies) Conglomerate (BGS 2017). The Henbury Trym water course flows north-east to south-west immediately to the west of the Site.

1.2.3 Ground level within the Site is fairly level at an approximate height of 41.2 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the Site is drawn from the results returned from a search of the South Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (SGHER), which was undertaken in March 2017. There are no scheduled monuments or designated heritage assets within the boundaries of the Site.

Prehistoric

1.3.2 A number of sites of Prehistoric date are known in the surrounding area. These include an important cave site known locally as Pen Park Hole, situated approximately 2.5 km to the south-east. A concentration of Iron Age activity has also been recorded at Cribbs Causeway Retail Park (WA 2007).

Romano-British

- 1.3.3 The Site is located on the presumed line of a Roman Road running from Sea Mills to Gloucester (SGHER 11108). Further west is the line of a second potential Roman Road (SGHER 5162, also orientated south-west to north-east) which has been identified from a series of field boundaries running parallel to the A4018. Substantial Romano-British ditches were also excavated during an evaluation to the south-east of the Site (SGHER 20412, WA 2016).

Saxon and Medieval

- 1.3.4 The Site lies within the historic Parish of Henbury to the west of the former village of Charlton. Henbury was granted to the See of Worcester by the King of Mercia in the late 7th century AD. It is mentioned in a charter of Alfred c. 883 AD (WA 2007). The Domesday Survey lists Henbury Parish within the Bentry (Bernitrev) Hundred in the Great Manor of Westbury on-Trym, comprising 50 hides held by St Mary's of Worcester (ibid).
- 1.3.5 There are two areas of medieval settlement recorded in close proximity to the site. The SGHER records that the village of Charlton (SGHER 9724) was cleared in 1948 for the construction of the Filton Airport runway. RAF aerial photography shows earthworks on the west side of Fishpool Lane (SGHER 2983) and traces of ridge and furrow field systems to the south-east. The earthworks were partly excavated in 1986 with the earliest structures found to date from the 11th to the 14th centuries with a much later 18th-century phase following a gap in occupation. A UAV survey of the earthworks was undertaken in 2015.
- 1.3.6 Earthworks to the south of the Site (SGHER 2984), appear to represent a number of enclosures surrounded by ridge & furrow on either side of the A4108 immediately north of the road bridge over the railway. Road improvements in the 1960s destroyed what might be considered as the principal settlement areas associated with the ridge and furrow. An evaluation carried out in 1993 revealed a small cobbled yard, of probable 14th-15th-century date together with major field boundaries.

Post-Medieval and Modern

- 1.3.7 The Site of Cribbs Farm is recorded on the 1880s published edition Ordnance Survey Map to the north-east of the Site (SGHER 20011). Its associated record (SGHER 14344) and an area identified further to the north-east show the approximate locations of Post-Medieval settlement, depicted as core settlement on the Avon Historic Landscape Survey (Chapman 1998). The sites may have had medieval origins.
- 1.3.8 There are two entries for the 19th century on the SGHER. The first is a small derelict stone-built barn (SGHER 13890) of probable 19th-century date, located adjacent to the presumed course of the Roman road (to the north-east of the Site). The second, Berwick Lodge (SGHER 4375), lies to the north-west. The gardens here are considered to be a typical 19th-century example of a formal garden with walks leading to the ancient woodland of Haw Wood, overlooking the Severn Estuary.
- 1.3.9 The nearby Filton-Avonmouth Railway Line (SGHER 16323) opened in 1910. It was a single line track with stations at Filton Platform, Chitterling Halt and Henbury. Henbury Railway Station (SGHER 5050) opened the same year, eventually closing in 1965. The SGHER also holds records for the station buildings (SGHER 18721) and a War Memorial on the opposite side of Station Road (SGHER 15071).
- 1.3.10 Study of the Ordnance Survey Maps up to 1938 show the Site to have once been open fields adjacent to the road. A small speculative housing estate associated with Passage

Road had been constructed by the time that the 25" Ordnance Survey Map was published in 1938.

- 1.3.11 To the north-west of the Site a cluster of WWII monuments have been noted (Richards 1981). An anti-aircraft gun battery (SGHER 5943) is recorded, as well as two fuel storage facilities which probably have military origins (SGHER 19163 and 19164).
- 1.3.12 More modern records on the SGHER include the M5 Motorway (SGHER 17098) which was constructed between 1969 and 1970 as well as a piece of public art entitled 'Earth Sculpture' (SGHER 18523) on Lysander Road, Cribbs Causeway.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 With due regard to the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), the principle aim of the archaeological work was to identify and record the archaeological resource within the Site boundaries using appropriate methods and practices, and in compliance with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of ClfA.
- 2.1.2 The aim of the works was to determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the Site and establish the significance, nature and extent of these remains. The results of the watching brief will inform the Local Planning Authority in regard to a decision as to any future archaeological mitigation related to the Site.
- 2.1.3 In furtherance of the project aim, the following objectives were defined:
 - *To allow the preservation by record of archaeological deposits in advance of development;*
 - *to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard;*
 - *to confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;*
 - *to determine or confirm the approximate extent of any remains;*
 - *to determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains;*
 - *to determine the degree of complexity of stratigraphy present;*
 - *to prepare a report on the results of the watching brief.*

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with the approved *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WA 2017). The monitored groundworks comprised the excavation of building foundation trenches within the proposed development area (**Figure 1**).
- 3.1.2 Foundation trenches were excavated using a one tonne rubber-tracked excavator fitted with a grading bucket. All mechanical excavation was monitored by an experienced WA archaeologist. All excavated deposits were scanned for artefacts.
- 3.1.3 All potential archaeological features and deposits were assigned a unique context number. A representative sample of deposits were hand-cleaned appropriately in order to ascertain their character, and were fully recorded using WA's *pro forma* record sheets.
- 3.1.4 A photographic record was created using a digital camera fitted with a 16 megapixel image sensor. Particular attention was taken to record a representative sample of exposed



deposits and trench locations to provide a full record of both the original and final condition of the excavated trenches.

- 3.1.5 The South Gloucestershire County Archaeological Officer (SGCAO), Paul Driscoll, was kept informed of the progress of the fieldwork throughout the project.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The results of the watching brief are summarized below. Full context descriptions are provided in Appendix 1. Trench locations are shown on **Figure 1**.

4.2 Stratigraphic sequence

- 4.2.1 Topsoil (recorded as contexts 101, 201, 301, 401, 501, 601, 701) was excavated to its maximum depth of 0.20 m below current ground level (bgl) which was consistent across the Site. The topsoil overlay a mixed soil-horizon indicative of previous disturbance or landscaping episode (102, 202, 302, 402, 502, 602, 702) that extended from 0.20 m to 0.30 m bgl, which in turn directly overlay the natural geology (203, 303, 403, 503, 603, 703) recorded at varying depths between 0.30 m to the maximum foundation depth of 0.70 m bgl. A representative section of the stratigraphy is recorded in **Plate 1**.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1.1 The deposits that were exposed in the foundation trenches suggest that the area may have been cleared and re-landscaped using an imported topsoil when the present housing was constructed. No secure archaeological deposits were discovered during the groundworks, and no artefacts were recovered from any of the trenches.

6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Museum

- 6.1.1 The project archive of primary site records will be deposited with Bristol City Museum and Art Galley as the designated repository where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or Development Control within the planning process.

6.2 Preparation of Archive

- 6.2.1 The complete project archive which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, no artefacts were recovered during the course of the watching brief. The archive will be prepared for the Museum Service under a unique accession number (tbc) and follow nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014b; Brown 2011).
- 6.2.2 The Site archive will be temporarily retained at Wessex Archaeology (Bristol Office) until deposition of the archive can be arranged using a unique site code of **116460**.

6.3 OASIS

- 6.3.1 An OASIS online record has been created for the work and key fields in regard of the watching brief has been entered under OASIS ID **wessexar1- 280570**. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Historic Environment Record. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report.

6.4 Security Copy

- 6.4.1 In line with current best practice (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.

6.5 Copyright

- 6.5.1 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. Bristol Historic Environment Record will however, be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003*.

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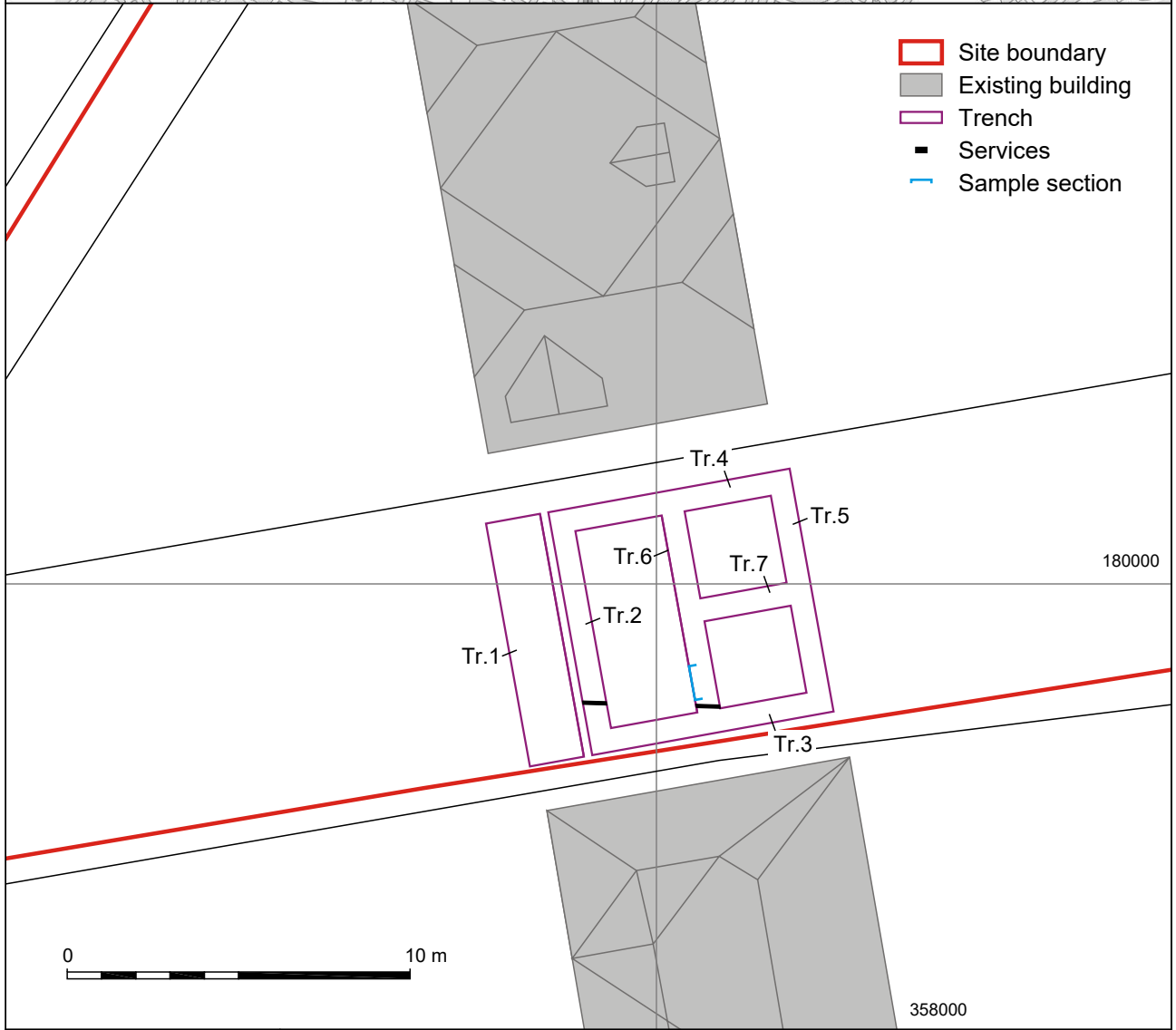



8 APPENDIX 1: TRENCH TABLES

Trench 1 7.20 m x 1.60 m x 0.30 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
101	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.20
102	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.20 – 0.30+
Trench 2 7.20 m x 0.68 m x 0.70 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
201	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.11
202	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.11 – 0.31
203	Natural	Mid-red-brown clay	0.31 - 0.70+
Trench 3 9.00 m x 0.68 m x 0.70 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
301	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.20
302	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.20 – 0.30
303	Natural	Mid-red-brown clay	0.30 - 0.70+
Trench 4 9.00 m x 0.68 m x 0.70 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
401	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.20
402	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.20 – 0.30
403	Natural	Mid-red-brown clay	0.30 - 0.70+
Trench 5 5.00 m x 0.68 m x 0.70 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
501	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.20
502	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.20 – 0.30
503	Natural	Mid-red-brown clay	0.30 - 0.70+
Trench 6 6.00 m x 0.68 m x 0.70 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
601	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.20



602	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.20 – 0.30
603	Natural	Mid-red-brown clay	0.30 - 0.70+
Trench 7 4.50 m x 0.68 m x 0.70 m			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
701	Topsoil	Mid-grey-brown silt-loam	0 - 0.20
702	Subsoil	Mid-yellow-brown silt-loam	0.20 – 0.30
703	Natural	Mid-red-brown clay	0.30 - 0.70+




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Site location

Figure 1



Plate 1: East facing representative section of Trench 6 (with 0.50 m scale)

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