

**LAND AT MATSON LANE,
GLOUCESTER.**

NGR: SO 848 151

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



July 2013
Report No. 899

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

On the 20th June 2013 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Matson Lane, Gloucester, (NGR: SO 848 151). The project was commissioned by PJO Architects on behalf of Gloucester Sport and Leisure Ltd.

The project comprised the excavation and recording of two trenches across the proposed development area.

The evaluation identified that the area had been subjected to truncation across the entire evaluated area. No intact buried soils were present in either of the trenches and the site contained large dumps of modern material which had been deposited in order to form a level terrace.

No archaeological finds or deposits were present within the evaluated area. The archaeological potential of the site is therefore considered low.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between AD 1066 and AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43, traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; *Iron Age* – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 until AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in June 2013 on land at Matson Lane, Gloucester (NGR: SO 848 151). The project was commissioned by PJO Architects on behalf of Gloucester Sport and Leisure Ltd.
- 1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2013). The fieldwork was undertaken in compliance with *IfA Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (2008) and *Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: Archaeological Evaluation: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological evaluation and conforms to the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage 2006).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission is being sought for the erection of three residential dwellings as well as associated access and parking facilities on land currently used as a car park to the north of the Gloucester Ski and Snowboard Centre.
- 2.2 In accordance with the NPPF (2012), the Gloucester City Archaeologist advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation was to be undertaken in order to inform a proposed development application.
- 2.3 The underlying geology of the site is on the border between two geological formations: Blue Lias Formation And Charmouth Mudstone Formation and Dyrham Formation - Siltstone And Mudstone (Geology of Britain Viewer, BGS - <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).
- 2.4 The proposed development site is located to the south of the historic core of Matson, although Matson Lane itself originated during the Medieval period. A Medieval well (Red Well) is located only 10m to the west of the site. The main archaeological potential of the site was, therefore, for the presence of evidence relating to the Medieval period. This did not, however, prejudice the evaluation against features and finds associated with other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains. This would allow reasonable

planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.

3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

i) To define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;

ii) To attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;

iii) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;

iv) To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Two 20m by 1.8m trenches were to be excavated across the proposed development area, as shown in Figure 2. Due to the deep unstable Modern deposits in Trench 1, the width of this trench was reduced to approximately 1.6m and baulks were left *in-situ* at regular intervals along its length in order to reduce the potential for collapse.

4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of the archaeological deposits or the underlying natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a 360° tracked mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were visually scanned for finds.

4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

5.1 **Trench 1** measured 20m long by approximately 1.60m wide. Natural deposits were encountered at an average depth of 1.90m (103.45m OD) below the current ground level and comprised a stained grey/green clay brash. The natural deposits were overlain by a mixed Modern deposit of dark brown/black soils (103), up to 1.62m thick, which contained frequent inclusions of brick, concrete and plastic. This was sealed by a re-deposited layer of yellow plastic clay (102), up to 0.24m thick. This was overlain by a

layer of Modern pink and grey gravel (101), which averaged 0.15m thick. No archaeological finds or features were present within this trench.

- 5.2 **Trench 2** measured 20m long by 1.80m wide. Natural deposits were encountered at a depth of 1.32m (104.496m OD) below the current ground level at the southeastern end and 0.15m (105.995m OD) at the northwestern end of the trench. The natural deposits comprised a yellow brown clay brash with occasional outcrops of limestone. The natural at the southeastern end of the trench was overlain by a green clay silt levelling deposit (204), up to 0.30m thick, which contained occasional Modern detritus throughout and appeared to follow the natural slope of the hill for a length of approximately 13 metres. Layer (204) was sealed by (203), a clinker layer up to 0.33m thick, which extended from the southeastern end of the trench for a length of approximately 6m. This and part of (204) was then sealed by (202), a re-deposited layer of yellow plastic clay up to 0.50m thick, which extended from the southeastern end of the trench for a length of approximately 9m. Layer (202) and the remaining 7m of natural deposits at the northwestern end of the trench were sealed by a levelling layer of Modern pink and grey gravel (201), which ranged in depth from 0.15m to 0.34m thick. Layers (201) and (202) were equivalent to layers (101) to (102) in Trench 1. No archaeological finds or features were present within this trench.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1 No archaeological artefacts or features were identified within either of the two trenches. The evaluation has identified that the site had been previously stripped down to the natural deposits, which may have truncated any potential archaeological deposits within this area. The site had subsequently been backfilled with Modern deposits in order to produce a relatively level terrace, albeit with a slope of 1m from NW-SE, for the car park. The trenches were surveyed and levelled using a Topcon GRS1.
- 6.2 The archaeological potential for the site within this stripped area is considered low.
- 6.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Gloucester Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

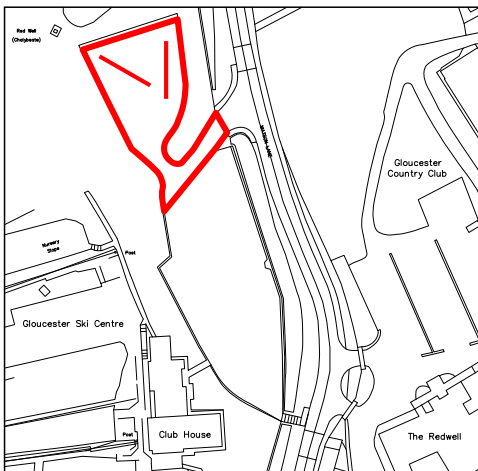
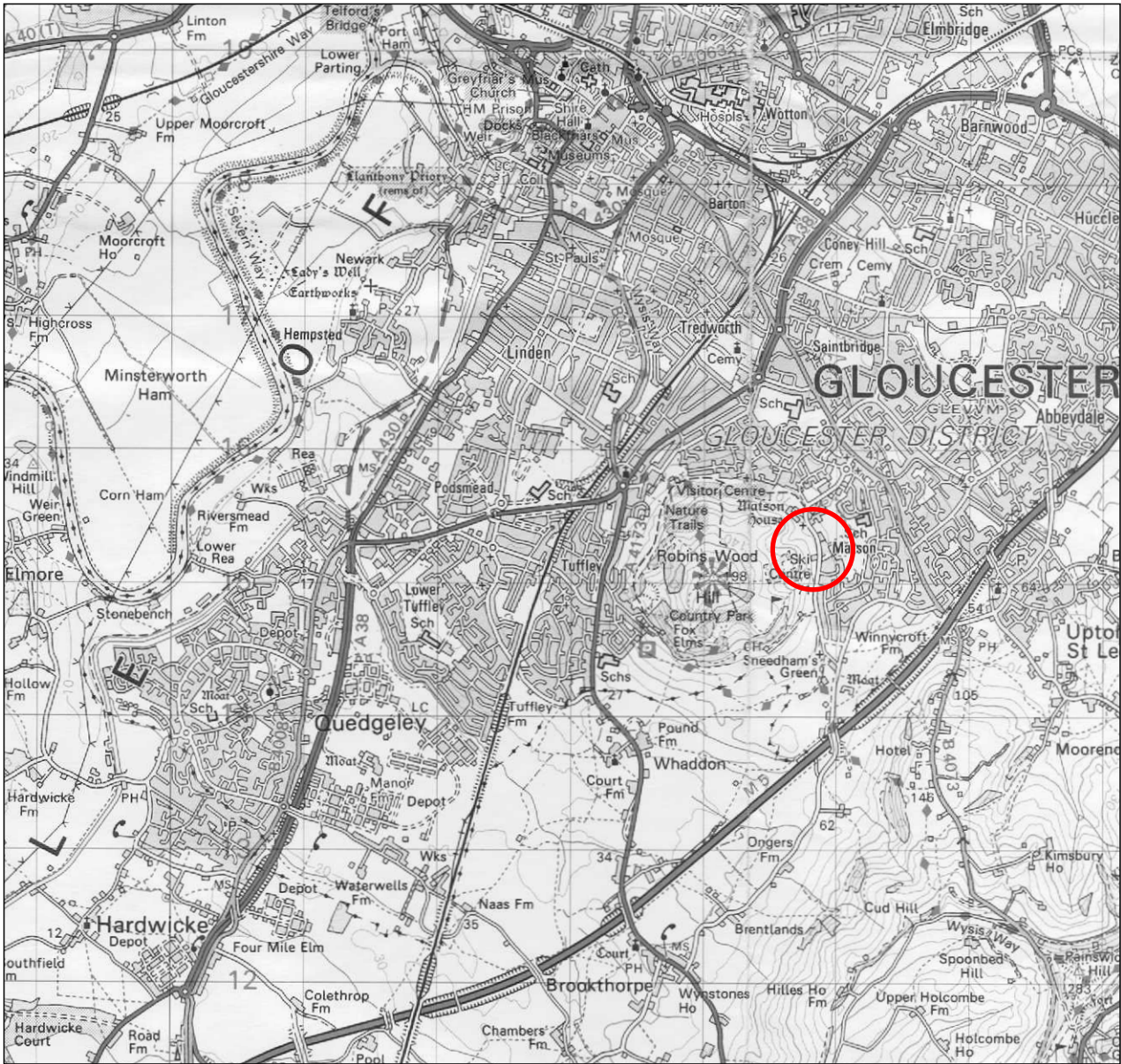
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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Site Code: MLG13
Accession Code:

 Site Outline

 Trench



FIGURE 1: Site Location



Site Code: MLG13

Accession Code:



 TRENCH LOCATION

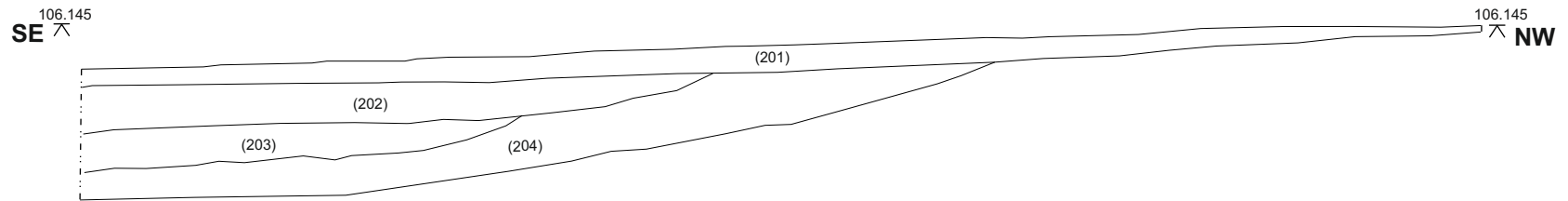
1 TRENCH NUMBER


0m 10m

1:200@A4

FIGURE 2: Trench Locations

NORTHEAST FACING SECTION TRENCH 2



Site Code: MLG13 Accession Code:
0m 4m  1:100
FIGURE 3: Trench 2 Section