

**LAND AT 74A ESTCOURT ROAD  
GLOUCESTER  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**NGR: SO839196**

**ON BEHALF OF D2B DESIGNS**



**Report No. 973**

**June 2014**



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES**



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**Quality Assurance**

This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with AMS's Quality Procedures (BS EN ISO 9001: 2008)

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## **SUMMARY**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 74A Estcourt Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire at NGR: SO839196. The brief was to observe the excavation of footings for two-storey extensions to the side and rear of the existing building. These works were commissioned by Graham Barker-Dench of D2B Designs.

The watching brief observed the mechanical excavation of two footing trenches, which penetrated into the natural geology. The natural geology showed no sign of having been disturbed. No archaeological features were present in either footing. The only find was a sherd of red-slipped *terra sigillata* pottery from the subsoil of footing 2. The sherd was too small to permit identification of the vessel type and is insufficient to date the subsoil with any confidence.

Apart from the sherd, the watching brief revealed no finds or features that pre-dated the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## 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.

### *BGL*

Below Ground Level

### *CBM*

Ceramic building material.

### *DMV*

Deserted Medieval Village

### *LOE*

Limit of excavation

### *Medieval*

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* 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.

### *OS*

Ordnance Survey.

### *Post-medieval*

The period from *c.* AD 1500 onwards.

### *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.

### *Romano-British*

Term used to define the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated AD 43 to *c.* AD 410.

**Land at 74A Estcourt Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief**

*Saxon*

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 74A Estcourt Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire at NGR: SO839196 (Figures 1 and 2).
- 1.2 The brief was to observe the excavation of footings for two-storey extensions to the side and rear of the existing building (Figure 3). These works were commissioned by Graham Barker-Dench of D2B Designs.
- 1.3 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2014). The WSI conformed to the principles of NPPF (2012), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008) and the brief issued by Andrew Armstrong (2014), Archaeologist for Gloucester City Council.
- 1.4 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief and evaluation and it complies with the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage, 2006).

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located to the south of Estcourt Road (A38) in a quadrilateral garden plot, laid to turf, in an area of residential housing. The house is located to the west of the plot and is orientated northwest-southeast.
- 2.2 The site's bedrock geology is *Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (undifferentiated)* with superficial deposits of *Cheltenham Sand and Gravel*.
- 2.3 Planning permission (Ref: 14/00130/FUL) had been granted *inter alia*, for the construction of two-storey extensions to the side and rear of the existing property.
- 2.4 Condition 6 attached to the planning application by the Gloucester City Archaeologist stated that no development would take place until a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (a "watching brief") during groundworks related to the development proposal had been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.5 The site is located within the general area of a Roman cemetery, which extends from Estcourt Road north into the area of Gambier Parry Gardens. A number of Roman burials were excavated to the north and east of the site in 1940 and it was considered likely that Roman burial activity extended within the footprint of the proposed development. In 1988, Roman material was recovered from a possible gravel pit at 64 Estcourt Road, to the west of the site, at 0.6m below ground level (BGL). A Roman pit at a depth of 0.55m

BGL was identified to the east of the site at number 90 during a watching brief in 1989.

- 2.6 The main archaeological potential of the site was, therefore, for the presence of evidence relating to the Roman period, potentially including inhumation burials. This did not prejudice the watching brief against features and finds associated with other periods.

### **3 AIMS**

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits.

- 3.2 These aims were achieved through the 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 characterize 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 to attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefactual, ecofactual 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 was present.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 All intrusive groundworks (Figure 3) were carried out under the constant direction of the attending archaeologist and were recorded in order to identify archaeological finds and deposits. Both the non-significant overburden and the footing trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator using a toothless grading bucket.

- 4.2 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 Prior to the commencement of the watching brief a 0.40 m layer of a dark brown to black, friable sandy-silt topsoil had been removed. The topsoil (101) was observed to contain fragments of china and CBM.



- 5.2 Two right-angled footing trenches 0.60 m wide and 1.0 m deep were excavated as shown on Figure 3.
- 5.3 **Footing 1:** At the limit of excavation (LOE) the footing trench cut through a natural deposit of gravelly, sandy-clay to a depth of between 0.45 and 0.65 m. A subsoil (102) was present above the natural, which consisted of a dark brown-orange, friable, sandy clay, between 0.30 and 0.50 m deep. A 0.05 m layer of topsoil (101) was present above the subsoil.
- 5.4 **Footing 2:** At the LOE, the footing trench cut through a natural deposit of gravelly, sandy-clay to a depth of 0.20 m. The subsoil (102) observed in footing 1 was also present in footing 2 and was 0.70 m deep. A 0.10 m deposit of topsoil (101) was above the subsoil.
- 5.5 A small sherd of red-slipped pottery and a few fragments of animal bone were found in the subsoil of footing 2.

## 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The watching brief observed the mechanical excavation of two footing trenches in advance of the construction of two-storey extensions to the side and rear of the existing property at 74A Estcourt Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire.
- 6.2 The footing trenches penetrated into the natural geology, which showed no sign of having been disturbed.
- 6.3 The subsoil in footing 1 was devoid of finds, but the sherd of red-slipped pottery recovered from the subsoil of footing 2 was Roman *terra sigillata* (“Samian Ware”) pottery, which was imported into Britain between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. The sherd was too small to permit identification of the vessel type and its presence was insufficient to date the subsoil with any confidence.
- 6.4 The topsoil contained fragments of china and CBM, indicating that it had been disturbed. Other than the sherd of *terra sigillata*, the watching brief revealed no finds or features that pre-dated the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 6.5 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Gloucester City Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

## 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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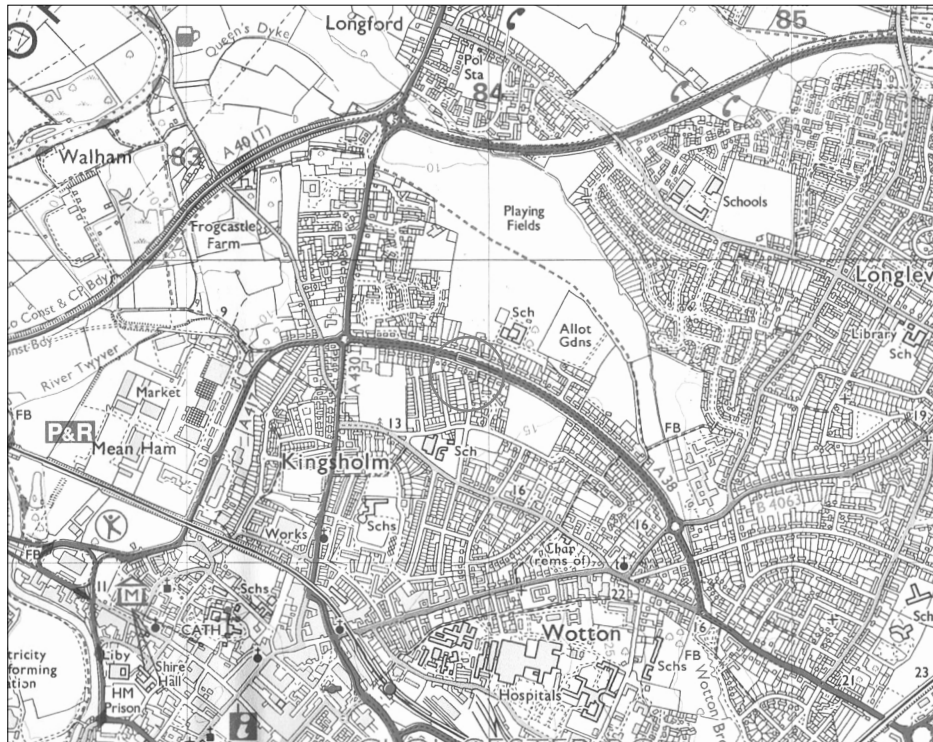
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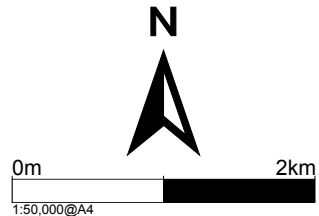
## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Graham Barker-Dench of D2B Designs and Andrew Armstrong of Gloucester City Council for their assistance during the course of this project.

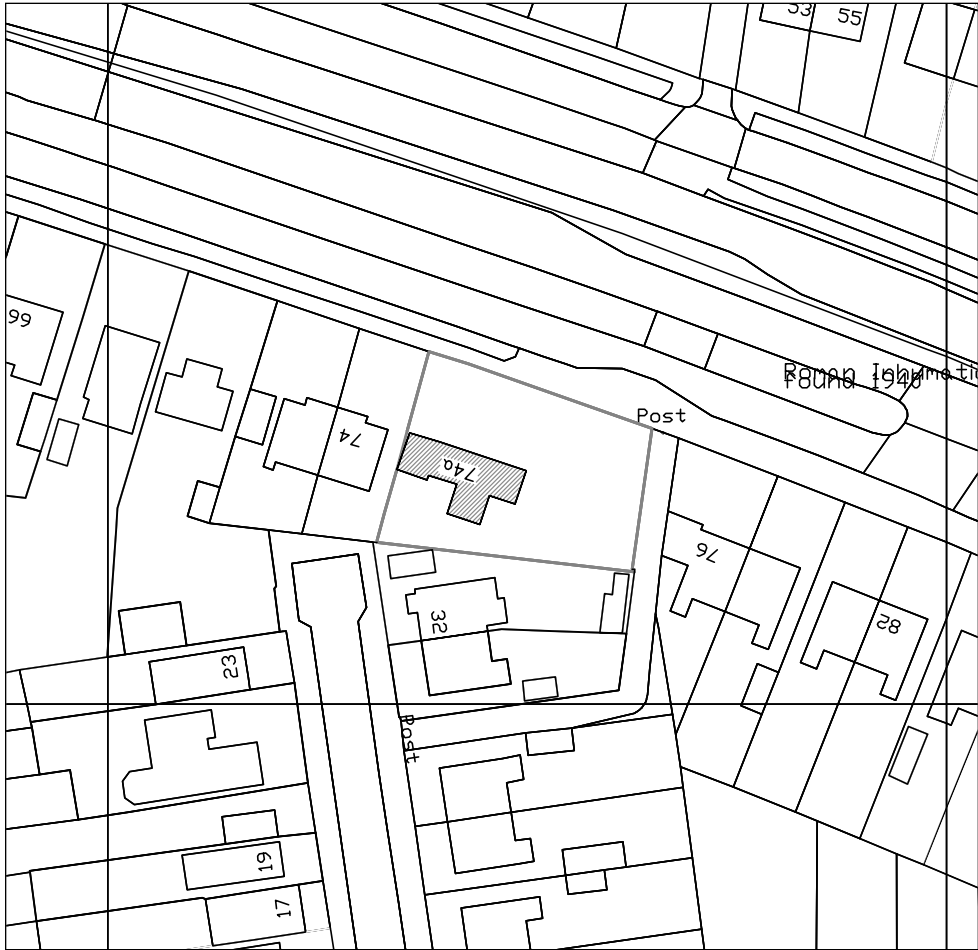


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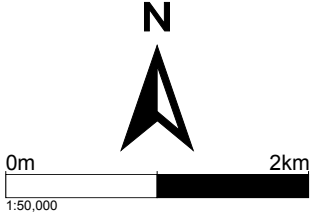


**FIGURE 1: Site Location**

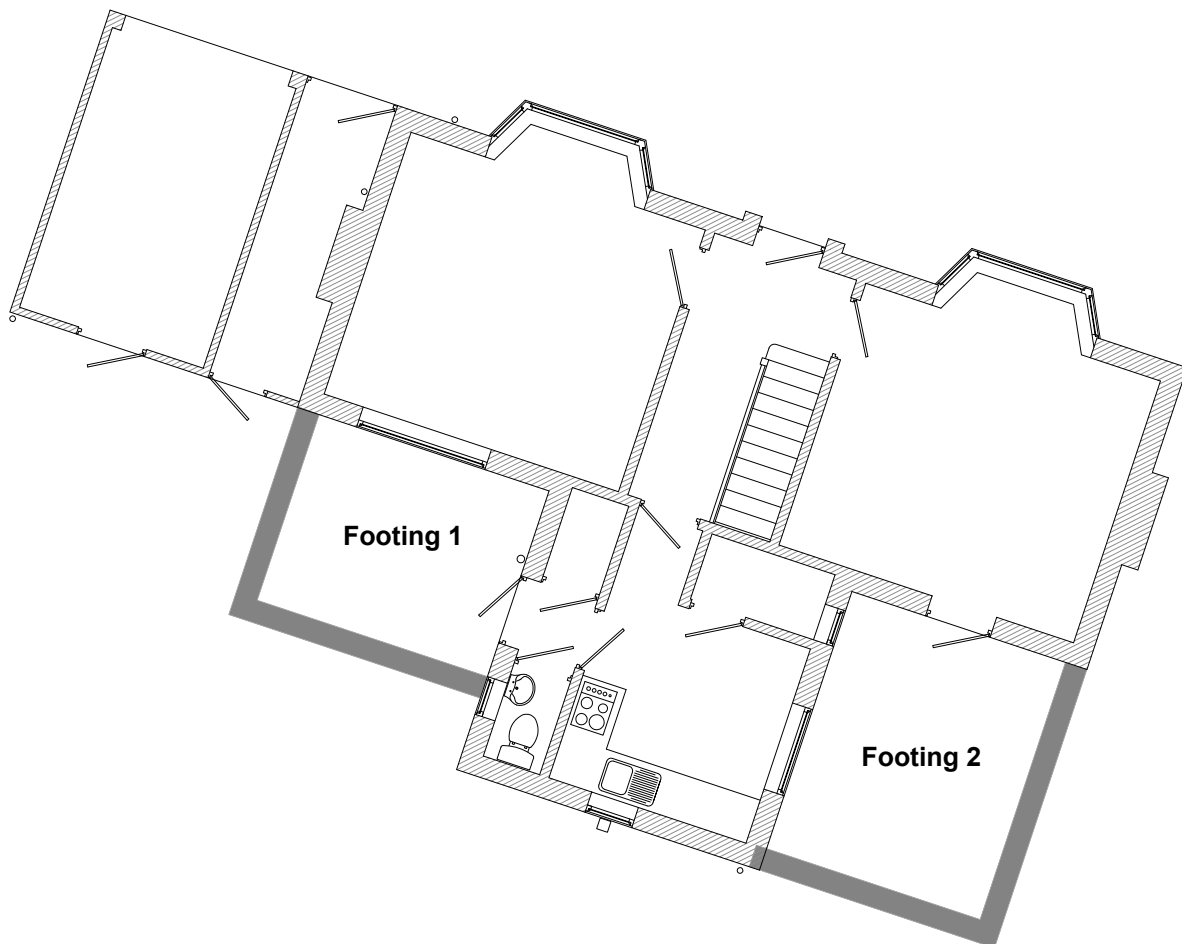


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**Site Code:**  
**Accession Code:**



**FIGURE 2: Site Plan**



Site Code: ERG14  
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N

FOOTINGS

0m 4m

1:100@A4

**FIGURE 3: Plan of Footings**