

**LAND AT 96 DEAN'S WAY,
GLOUCESTER,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

NGR: 383376.219608

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



December 2015
Report No. 1094



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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Author: R. King BA MCIfA

Date: 4th December 2015

Approved: T. Michaels BSc ACIfA

QA Checked: D. King BA MCIfA

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SUMMARY

On 30th of September 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a side and rear extension to a residential dwelling on land at 96 Dean's Way, Gloucester (NGR: 383376.219608). The project was commissioned by Rebecca Hopkins.

The watching brief comprised the monitoring of the excavation and in-fill of foundation trenches for rear and side extensions to the existing property.

No significant features were identified during the course of the watching brief, although a layer containing Roman pottery was present immediately above the natural sand and gravel deposits.

The watching brief has yielded evidence for Roman activity within the site area, which warrants a short publication note in TBGAS.

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 the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* 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.

Roman

The period traditionally dated between AD 43 and *circa* AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 30th September 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a side and rear extension to a residential dwelling on land at 96 Dean's Way, Gloucester (NGR: 383376.219608). The project was commissioned by Rebecca Hopkins.
- 1.2 The project was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), produced by Foundations Archaeology (2015). The works were carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) and *Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission was granted for the construction of a single-storey side and rear extensions to an existing dwelling at 96 Dean's Way (**Ref 15/00382/FUL**). These works had the potential to impact upon buried archaeological deposits, therefore, in accordance with NPPF12, a requirement for a programme of archaeological works was attached to the planning permission.
- 2.2 The site is located in an area of high archaeological potential. A desk-based assessment of a nearby site (102 Dean's Way) by Foundations Archaeology (2014) indicated that Iron Age deposits of the Dubonni tribe have been uncovered within 100m of the study area. The site is likely to be located within the northwestern quadrant of an early Roman legionary or vexillation fortress and is also within an area of known Roman inhumations. The area to the southeast is currently scheduled as the site of the Saxon period Kingsholm Palace (Ref 1002074).
- 2.3 An evaluation undertaken at 102 Dean's Way in March 2014 by Foundations Archaeology identified Roman archaeological soil horizons and a possible bank of re-deposited natural, which also probably dated to the Roman period. These deposits were sealed by a substantial layer of subsoil, which suggested that any buried archaeological deposits were well-preserved. The pottery assemblage dated to the early Roman period, specifically to the pre-Flavian period and was thus contemporary with the occupation of the Roman fortress at Kingsholm. A subsequent watching brief at the same site in December 2014 revealed a series of late Iron Age or early Roman pits and ditches and finds included metal-working waste and disarticulated human bone.

- 2.4 The main archaeological potential of the current site was, therefore, for the presence of further evidence relating to the Roman period, potentially including inhumation burials and/or industrial activity. 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 by the pursuit of the following objectives:
- i) To identify, define and record any archaeological deposits 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, with a view to determining the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present and to 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 The foundation trenches were excavated to a depth of approximately 1m by use of a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket; although a toothed bucket was utilised to remove shallow pre-existing concrete foundation material adjacent to the rear of the house. All mechanical excavation was undertaken whilst under constant archaeological direction. Given the limited size of the area exposed and the nature of the basal deposits, all footings trenches were roughly hand-cleaned by the monitoring archaeologist.
- 4.2 Identified archaeological features were to be manually excavated and recorded, or noted and recorded in plan only, should Health & Safety restrictions apply. All archaeological excavation and recording was undertaken by Roy King BA. MCIFA.

- 4.3 Spoil tips were scanned for finds, both visually and by use of a metal detector. All recovered archaeological artefacts were allocated a context reference number and retained. Modern artefacts were noted and discarded.
- 4.4 All excavation and recording was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the watching brief is given in Appendix 1. A specialist reports on the recovered pottery, is presented in Appendix 2. A summary of the results is given below:
- 5.2 Visibility conditions at the level of the top of the natural deposits were very good; however, visibility above the level of the natural varied from moderate to poor.

Rear Extension

- 5.3 The stratigraphically earliest deposit comprised a mottled bright orange brown natural sand, which was present at an average depth of 0.9m (10.55m OD) below the top of the foundation trenches, which represented either a natural slope or shelving truncation rising up to the southeast of the existing house. Natural sands were only encountered at the formation limit of the footing trench in the southeastern corner of the extension but were not otherwise exposed. A hand-excavated sondage revealed natural sands at a maximum depth of 1.5m in the northwestern corner adjacent to the house. The natural was overlaid by mixed orange-grey sand layer (103), up to 0.6m thick adjacent to the house, which thinned to 0.3m to the southeast. Pre-existing concrete foundations (102) measuring 0.25m thick were present immediately adjacent to the house, which were cut into (103), these were removed using a toothed bucket. Deposits (102) and (103) were sealed beneath a black humic silty sand garden soil (101) between 0.5-0.7m thick.
- 5.4 No features were identified within the foundation trenches excavated for the rear extension, although a small assemblage of Roman pottery and tile was recovered from layer (103).

Side Extension

- 5.5 The same mixed orange-grey sand layer (202), previously identified in the rear extension as (103) was present at a depth of 0.95-1m (10.25m OD) from the Modern ground surface. This layer was overlain by the black humic silty sand garden soil (201), which was visible in the rear extension as (101).

- 5.6 No archaeological features were identified in the footings trench for the side extension. Five large sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the interface between (201) and (202), all probably originating from the same vessel. The size and condition of these sherds suggest that they represent a primary deposit.

Artefacts

- 5.7 The artefacts recovered during the site works included a small Roman pottery assemblage, which was dominated by early Roman wares.

Environmental Evidence

- 5.8 No suitable deposits for environmental sampling were identified during the course of the project.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No archaeological features were identified during the course of the watching brief, although a small assemblage of Roman pottery was recovered from the surface of a mixed orange-grey sandy deposit (103), with several sherds from layer (202). Layer (103)/(202) appears to correspond to a layer identified elsewhere in this part of Gloucester as the top of Roman deposits (Andrew Armstrong pers. com. in relation to a similar layer at 102 Dean's Way). The presence of large sherds of well-preserved pottery would indicate the presence of Roman activity in the near vicinity, even without the previously identified features less than 20m to the northeast at 102 Dean's Way. All of the pottery associated with the archaeological deposits in the eastern half of the site was pre-Flavian, similar to the material recently recovered from 102 Dean's Way. The generally well-preserved nature of the pottery further suggests that the Roman layer was probably related to military activity associated with the early fort, rather than being a later layer containing residual material.
- 6.2 The thinning of layer (103) to the southeast may indicate either truncation, or that it represents material levelling a natural slope. The limited sample size precludes sufficient evidence to make a decision in this regard.
- 6.3 The watching brief has yielded significant evidence for Roman activity within the site which warrants a short publication note in TBGAS.
- 6.4 The pottery assemblage is entirely consistent with that to be expected from the Kingsholm area and does not warrant further analysis. The pottery should be retained with the archive, at the discretion of Gloucester City Museum.
- 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 report,

which will combine the results of the desk-based assessment, previous evaluation and the current project, will be submitted for publication in TBGAS and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Andrew Armstrong of Gloucester City Council and Rebecca Hopkins for their help during the course of the project.

APPENDIX 1: The Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION
101	-	-	0.5-0.7	Garden soil; black humic silty sand
102	0.6	0.4	0.25	Pre-existing concrete footings adjacent to house
103	-	-	0.3-0.6	Layer of mottled orange grey sand
201	-	-	0.95-1	Garden soil; black humic silty sand
202	-	-	Over 0.1	Layer of mottled orange grey sand

APPENDIX 2: The Pottery

By Jane Timby

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The watching brief resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of 25 sherds of pottery weighing 1280 g dating to the pre-Flavian period. Pottery was recovered from three defined contexts, all layers.
- 1.2 The condition of the Roman material was moderately good with some large fresh sherds. The overall average sherd weight is extremely high at 51.2 g suggesting minimal disturbance.
- 1.3 For the purposes of the assessment the pottery assemblage was briefly scanned to assess its likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. The resulting data is summarised in Table 1.

2 Roman

- 2.1 The complete assemblage dates to the early Roman period, specifically to the pre-Flavian period and is thus contemporary with the occupation of the Roman military fortress at Kingsholm.
- 2.2 The group comprises a mixture of imported continental types, Kingsholm military-type wares and Severn Valley ware.
- 2.3 Imports include nine sherds of amphora; eight from Baetica, southern Spain from a container used to transport olive oil and one fragment of possible Spanish amphora used to transport fish products.
- 2.4 The Kingsholm wares embrace a range of fabrics considered to be made in the area by the army in the Neronian period. These include Gloucester type fabrics TF 24, 213 and 39.
- 2.5 Severn Valley wares are well-represented and include five sherds from a grey, charcoal-tempered (TF 17) storage jar from (102); two further sherds from (103) N and one smaller sherd of oxidised early Severn Valley ware (Glos TF 11D).

3 Summary and further work

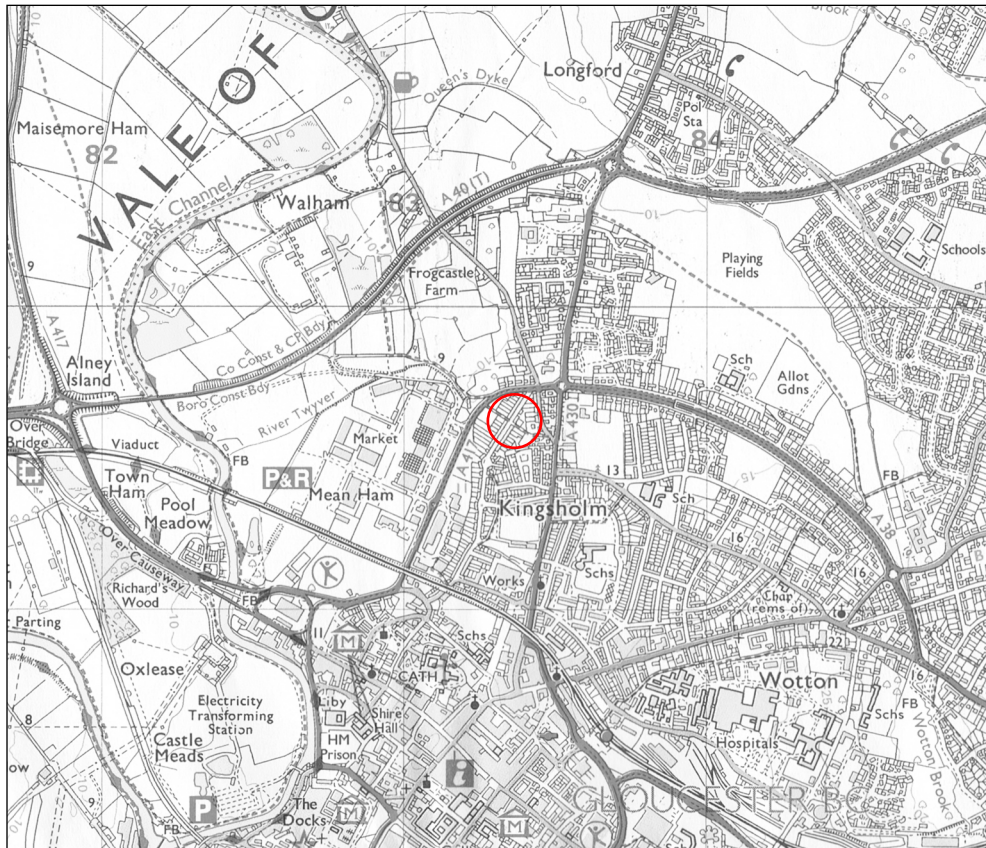
- 3.1 The pottery assemblage recovered is entirely typical of that to be expected from the Kingsholm area and complements that from other recent work undertaken in Deansway, as well as the material from the nearby 1972 excavations (Hurst 1985) considered to lie with the area of the early Roman fortress.
- 3.2 The assemblage is too small to warrant further work but adds to the gazetteer of finds already documented from this area.

Reference

Hurst, H R, 1985, *Kingsholm*, Gloucester Archaeological Reports Vol 1

Table 1:

Cxt	Kingsholm fabrics	SVW	amphora	other	Tot No	Tot Wt	Date
103 N	2	3	0	1	6	77	pre-Flav
103 SE	5	0	9	0	14	686	pre-Flav
202	0	5	0	0	5	517	C1
TOTAL	7	8	9	1	25	1280	



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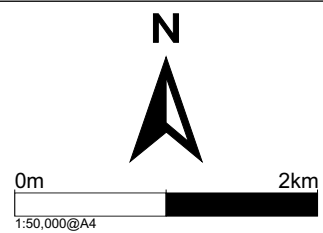
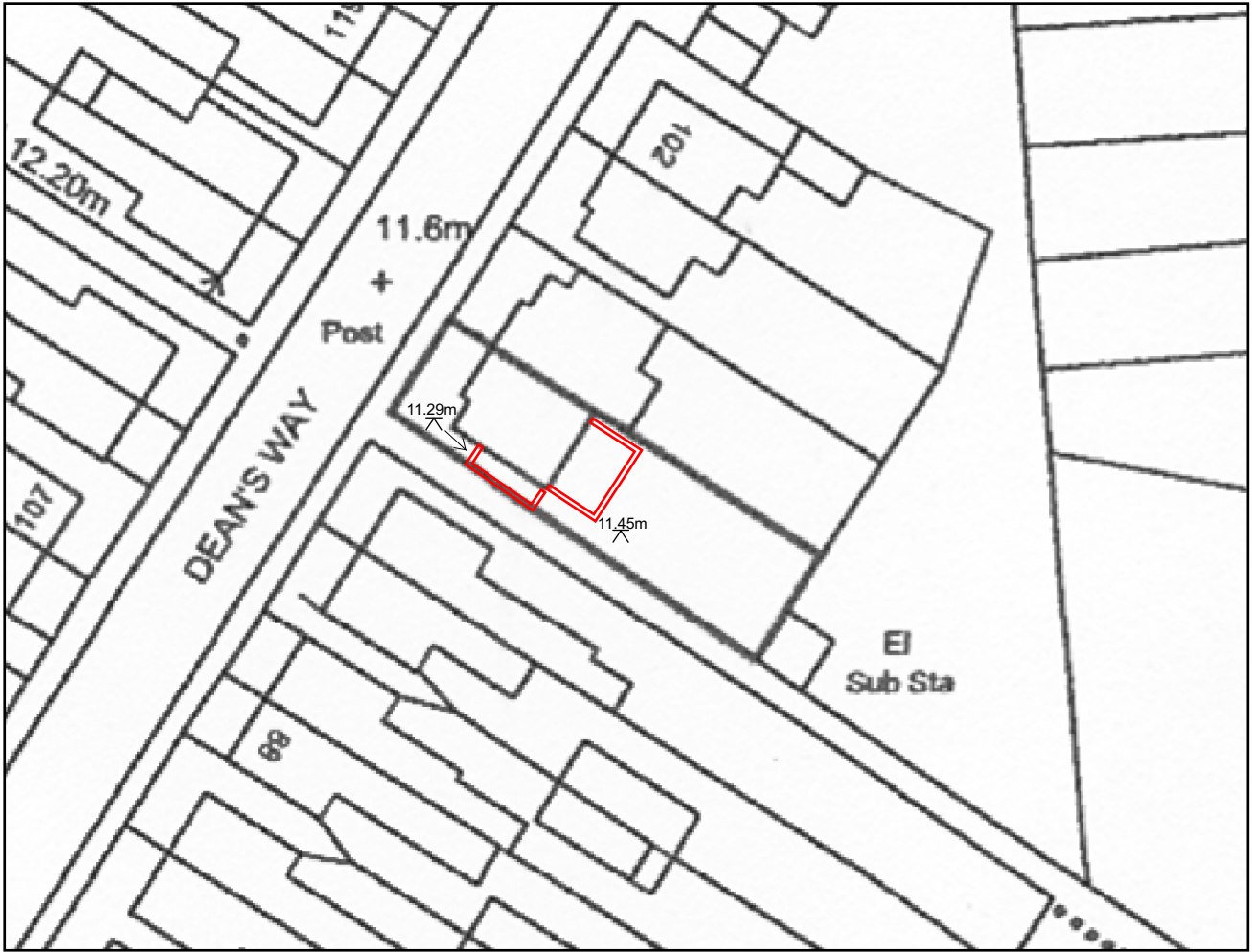


FIGURE 1: Site Location



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 FOUNDATION
 TRENCHES



FIGURE 2: Site Plan