

**24 CHESTER CRESCENT,  
CIRENCESTER,  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

**NGR: 402704.201587**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**



August 2015  
Report No. 1072

**Quality Assurance**

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## SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 by Foundations Archaeology on land at 24 Chester Crescent, Cirencester (NGR: 402704.201587). The work was commissioned by Russell Blackaller.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of one test pit to enable an assessment of archaeological potential, prior to the determination of a development planning application.

The archaeological evaluation identified the presence of a probable Roman archaeological soil horizon at a depth of 1.10m (107.78m OD) from the Modern ground surface. This was overlaid by Post-medieval or later layers.

A small assemblage of Roman and Post-medieval pottery, along with fragments of clay smoking pipe, glass, bone, oyster shell and vitrified material were present within the test pit.

## 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 *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.

### *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.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at 24 Chester Crescent, Cirencester (NGR: 402704.201587). The project was commissioned by Russell Blackaller in response to a condition, which required a programme of archaeological works in advance of the determination of a development planning application for a proposed single storey building (**Planning Reference: 15/01348/FUL**).
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2015). The WSI was prepared in accordance with the standard brief issued by Gloucestershire County Council, the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists - CIfA (2014).

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site of the proposed development occupies the northeast end of the garden of 24 Chester Crescent, as shown in Figure 2. At the time of the fieldwork the proposed development area comprised a garage and a shed, with a small area of open garden and decking to the northwest and west respectively.
- 2.2 The site lies within the curtilage of the Roman town of *Corinium Dobunnorum* in *Insula VI*, which was adjacent to the southeast end of the Forum. The site is situated outside of the related Scheduled Monument.
- 2.3 A detailed archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken in order to inform the WSI. This assessment indicated that there was a high potential for the presence of Roman remains within the site. This did not prejudice the works against features relating to other periods.

## 3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the evaluation 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 specific objectives:
  - i) to define, identify and record any 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) where possible 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;

v) to define any research priorities that may be relevant should further field investigation be required.

#### **4 METHODOLOGY**

4.1 A single test pit was excavated, as shown in Figure 2. The excavation was undertaken manually, by archaeologists. Spoil heaps were visually scanned for artefacts.

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 A full stratigraphic description of all contexts identified in the course of the project is listed in Appendix 1, along with a report on the recovered pottery in Appendix 2 and a list of miscellaneous finds in Appendix 3. A summary discussion is given below:

5.2 Soil layer (108), which was present 1.10m (107.78m OD) below the Modern ground surface, represented the stratigraphically earliest deposit within the test pit. It contained a small amount of Roman pottery and CBM and therefore probably represented the top of archaeologically significant deposits. This was overlaid by a series of Post-medieval or later layers (104-107), one of which (105), comprised a probable former floor surface. Roman pottery present in layer (107) was present as residual material within a later deposit. Layer (103) represented a buried former topsoil, which was overlaid by Modern paving layers (101) and (102).

#### **6 CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 The archaeological evaluation identified the presence of a probable Roman archaeological soil horizon at a depth of 1.10m (107.78m OD) from the Modern ground surface. This was overlaid by Post-medieval or later layers.

6.2 A small assemblage of Roman and Post-medieval pottery, along with fragments of clay smoking pipe, glass, bone, oyster shell and vitrified material were present within the test pit.

6.3 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with the Corinium Museum in Cirencester. A short note will be submitted for publication in the Transactions of the

Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2014. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished.

Foundations Archaeology. 2015. *24 Chester Crescent, Cirencester: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished.

## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Russell Blackaller of 24 Chester Crescent and Charles Parry of Gloucestershire County Council for their assistance during the course of the project.

**APPENDIX 1: The Stratigraphic Data**

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				<b>TP 1: 1.6 by 1.6m</b>		
101	1.6	1.6	0.06	Modern ground surface; paving slabs.	102	na
102	1.6	1.6	0.09	Layer; yellow sand (bedding layer for paving slabs).	103	101
103	1.6	1.6	0.28	Layer; dark grey brown loose clay silt. Former topsoil, which contained frequent roots.	104	102
104	1.6	1.5	0.06	Layer; pale grey loose gritty mortar, which contained occasional CBM.	105	103
105	1.6	1.5	0.03	Layer; tarmac/vitrified material. Probable former floor surface.	106	104
106	1.6	1.5	0.23	Layer; pale to mid grey compact gritty mortar and rubble, which contained frequent chalk lumps and occasional CBM fragments. Possible bedding layer for surface 105.	107	105
107	1.6	1.5	0.4	Layer; dark grey brown gritty compact silt, which contained occasional CBM, occasional Tarmac pieces and occasional chalk fragments.	108	106
108	1.6	0.8	0.35	Layer; mid brown friable silt, which contained occasional pieces of chalk. Not fully excavated.	?	107



## APPENDIX 2: The Pottery

By Jane Timby

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of a modest assemblage of 27 sherds of pottery weighing 377 g dating to the Roman and Post-medieval periods.
- 1.2 Accompanying the pottery are seven fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing 112 g, similarly including Roman and later material.
- 1.3 The assemblage was scanned to assess its likely chronology and quantified by count and weight for the recorded contexts. The resulting data is summarised in Table 1.
- 1.4 Pottery was recovered from just four contexts. The overall quality of the later material was quite good giving an overall average sherd weight of 13.9 g. The Roman sherds were less well preserved and show more edge abrasion.

### 2 Roman

- 2.1 Fourteen Roman sherds were recovered from contexts (107) and (108). Although none of the sherds are featured, the presence of two sherds of Oxfordshire colour-coated ware would indicate a date from the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century into the 4<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.2 Other wares present include four North Wiltshire grey wares; two sherds of Dorset black burnished ware jar imported from Poole Harbour, Dorset; two sherds of South-west white-slipped ware; one local grey ware and one local micaceous, oxidised ware.

### 3 Post-medieval

- 3.1 The remaining 13 sherds date to the Post-medieval/ Modern period. These include glazed red earthenware, including the rims from a large bowl or pancheon, and a jug; unglazed flower-pot; English stoneware and industrial fine white earthenware (china) with blue and white transfer decoration.
- 3.2 Most of the wares suggest a 19<sup>th</sup> century currency.

### 4 Ceramic building material

- 4.1 The seven fragments of CBM include four pieces of likely Roman date, including a piece of roofing tile (*tegula*) and three fragments of post-Roman date.

## 5 Summary and potential

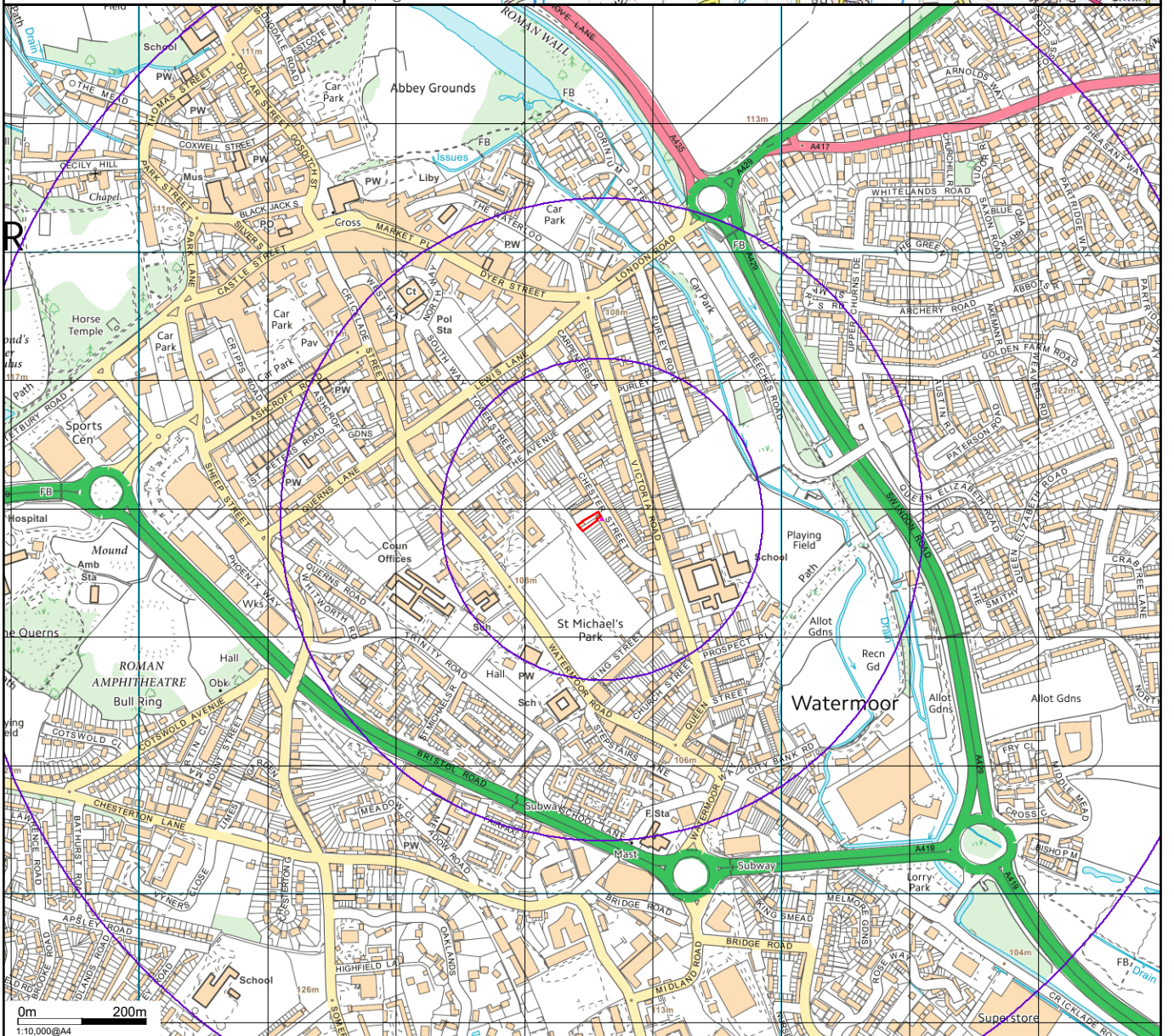
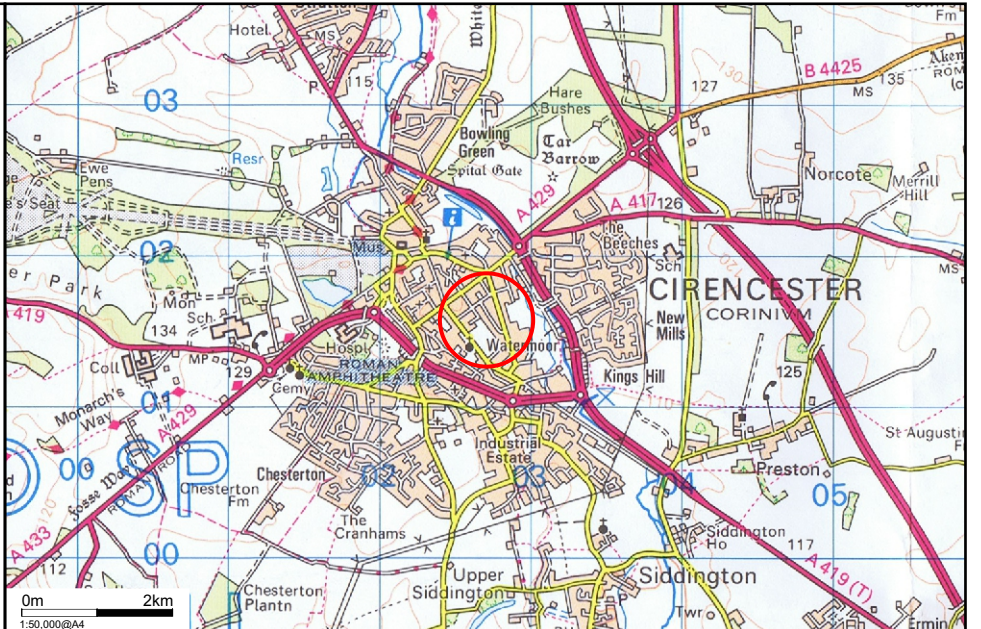
- 5.1 Of the four contexts containing pottery, three produced Post-medieval finds and only one, context (108), is potentially late Roman.
- 5.2 The profile of the assemblage is entirely that to be expected from a substantial settlement such as Cirencester, which was receiving a wide variety of pottery from various sources. The small size of the group precludes the usefulness of further work.

Table 1

<b>Cxt</b>	<b>Roman</b>	<b>Pmed</b>	<b>Ro CBM</b>	<b>Pm CBM</b>	<b>Tot No</b>	<b>Tot Wt</b>	<b>Date (tpq)</b>
103	0	4	0	3	7	102	Pmed
106	0	6	0	0	6	208	Pmed
107	6	3	0	0	9	51	Pmed
108	0	0	3	0	3	64	Roman
108	8	0	0	0	8	59	1C3-C4
us	0	0	1	0	1	5	?Roman
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>489</b>	

**APPENDIX 3: Miscellaneous Finds**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Glass</b>	<b>Bone</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
103	x 6	x 2	vitriified material x 1 , clay pipe x 1
106	x 8	x 3	clay pipe frag x 10, oyster shell x 1
107		x 3	clay pipe frag x 1
108		x 2	



 Site Outline






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**Site Code: CCC15**  
**Accession Code:**  
**FIGURE 1: Site Location**



Site Code: CCC15  
Accession Code:

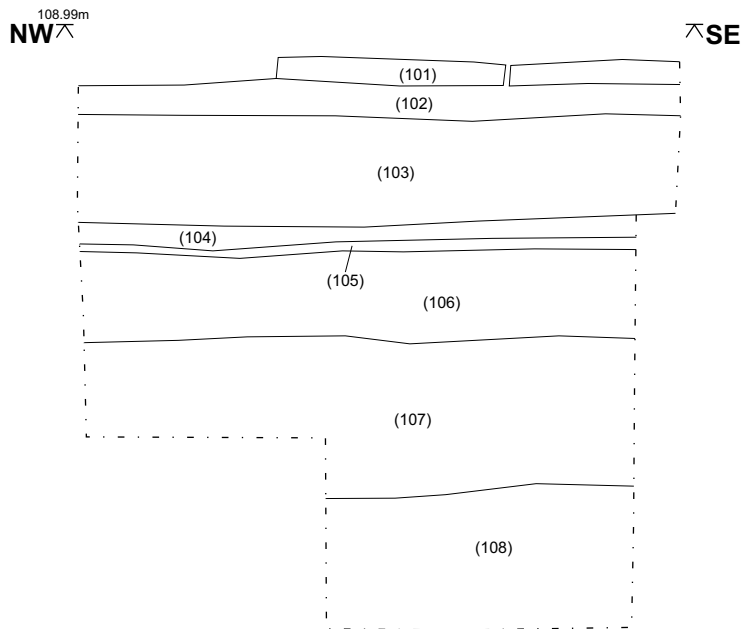



-  PLOT OUTLINE
-  DEVELOPMENT AREA
-  TEST PIT 1

0m  20m  
1:500

**FIGURE 2: Test Pit 1 Location**

**TEST PIT 1: SOUTHWEST FACING SECTION**



<b>Site Code: CCC15</b> <b>Accession Code:</b>
0m  1m 1:20
<b>FIGURE 3: Test Pit 1 Section</b>