

**LAND AT 21 CORINIUM
GATE, CIRENCESTER.**

NGR: SP 02707 02086

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CGC14Wb

January 2015 Report
No. 1031
Author: N. Moakes



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

Between 18th December 2014 and 12th January 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 21 Corinium Gate, Cirencester (NGR: SP 027 020) during site reduction and the excavation of footings for the construction of a single storey garage. The work was commissioned by Clark and Maslin on behalf of Mr Ian Jones.

The 'natural' alluvial layer was encountered at an average depth of 1.05m from the Modern ground surface. This was overlaid by a layer of intact soil which contained Modern brick fragments. The uppermost deposits consisted of Modern dumped material to a depth of approximately 0.6m below the Modern ground surface, which were overlaid by the tarmac driveway. All layers were significantly disturbed by Modern services in the northern and southern corners of the new footings.

The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that no archaeological features or deposits were present within the excavated area. However, as the excavation did not penetrate through the alluvial deposits the negative result cannot be taken as a reflection of the archaeological potential for the site.

This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works. A short note will be submitted to a relevant archaeological journal and an OASIS form will be created. The project archive will be submitted to the appropriate museum.

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.

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.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between 18th December 2014 and 12th January 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 21 Corinium Gate, Cirencester (NGR: SP 027 020) during the excavation of footings for the construction of a single storey garage (Planning Ref: 14/02586/FUL). The work was commissioned by Clark and Maslin on behalf of Mr Ian Jones.
- 1.2 This project was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Foundations Archaeology (2014) which was written in compliance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2011).
- 1.3 The project was undertaken in accordance with CIfA Codes of Practice. Foundations Archaeology is a registered archaeological organisation and is certified to BS EN ISO 9001: 2008 for quality assurance in the provision of archaeological services.
- 1.4 This document presents the findings of the archaeological works and complies with the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage, 2006).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It was proposed to construct a single-storey garage at the front of 21 Corinium Gate (Figure 2).
- 2.2 The site is located within the extent of Corinium Roman Town Scheduled Monument (SM Ref. 1003426) and the proposed development works are situated to the southwest of the postulated course of the Roman town-wall and associated ramparts. Therefore Scheduled Monument Consent was required prior to any works. This was received on 11th August 2014 under Reference S00089972.
- 2.3 Previous investigations on the line of the rampart by Cotswold Archaeology to the northwest (18 Corinium Gate; 1999, 2000 and 2006) and approximately 60m to the southeast (10 Corinium Gate; 2011) have revealed Roman rampart deposits, situated directly beneath Modern topsoils, at depths as little as 0.10m below Modern ground. A test-pit in the rear garden of 16 Corinium Gate by Foundations Archaeology in 2013 identified probable Roman rampart material at a depth of 0.90m below the Modern ground level. The rampart was directly overlaid by Post-medieval or Modern dumped levelling layers, some of which were possibly deposited during the groundworks associated with the construction of 16 Corinium Gate.
- 2.4 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site by Foundations Archaeology in September 2014. The results indicated that the area appeared to have been heavily disturbed by Modern construction, most likely during the development of Corinium Gate in the 1970s and did not recover any evidence for archaeologically significant activity. Although the evaluated area showed

Land at Corinium Gate, Cirencester: Archaeological Watching Brief

significant signs of Modern disturbance, a layer of 'natural' alluvium was encountered at a depth of 1m from the Modern ground surface. The results of the evaluation indicated that, should the maximum depth of any foundations or services associated with the proposed development be restricted to <1m, the potential to impact on archaeologically significant deposits would be low-negligible. Excavations in excess of 1m retained a limited potential to impact on archaeologically significant features.

- 2.5 The site lies approximately 75m to the southwest of the known rampart deposits, close to the River Churn, which lies only 15m further southwest. Development works within the site clearly had the potential to impact upon buried archaeological deposits relating to intramural activity.
- 2.6 An archaeological assessment indicated that there was limited potential for archaeologically significant deposits and features of Roman date for any excavations in excess of 1m. This did not prejudice the watching brief against the recovery of finds or features relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological recording were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- 3.3
 - 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) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 All intrusive groundworks were monitored and recorded in order to identify archaeological finds and deposits. Groundworks were carried out under the constant direction of the archaeologist. Where machine excavation was required, this was used only for the removal of non-significant overburden. Plant used was suitable for the task and was equipped with a **toothless grading bucket**, as appropriate.
- 4.2 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual. These methods are outlined in detail in the Written Scheme of Investigation.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A total of 22m of footings, 0.45m in width, were excavated under constant archaeological supervision. The maximum depth of the footings was 1.65m. The lowest deposit comprised mid grey plastic sandy clay alluvium (107), up to 0.40m thick, which contained occasional charcoal flecks. This was overlaid by (106), dark brown-black clay silt, up to 0.40m thick, which contained frequent charcoal and Modern brick fragments. This was in turn overlaid by up to three layers of Modern dumped material, with a total thickness of 0.66m. These varied in order and extent across the study area and constituted mixed deposits of dark grey clay, sand and gravel with large pieces of Cotswold stone (>0.40m) and breezeblock inclusions. The dumped material was sealed by a tarmac drive (101), up to 0.11m thick.
- 5.2 The internal area of the extension footings was reduced by 0.36m. The lowest deposit within this area was the mixed Modern dumped material identified within the footings.
- 5.3 In addition to the groundworks associated with the construction of the new extension, a pit which measured 1.25m by 1.35m was dug to expose electricity and gas services. The total depth from Modern ground for this work was 0.75m. The lowest deposit present comprised a dark grey-black sandy clay fill up to 0.42m thick. This was overlaid by yellow-beige gravel, up to 0.33m thick, which was in turn sealed by the tarmac drive.
- 5.4 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the watched area.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that no archaeological features or deposits were present within the excavated area. However, as the excavation did not penetrate through the alluvial deposits the negative result cannot be taken as a reflection of the archaeological potential for the site.
- 6.4 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with the appropriate museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2011. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Reading.

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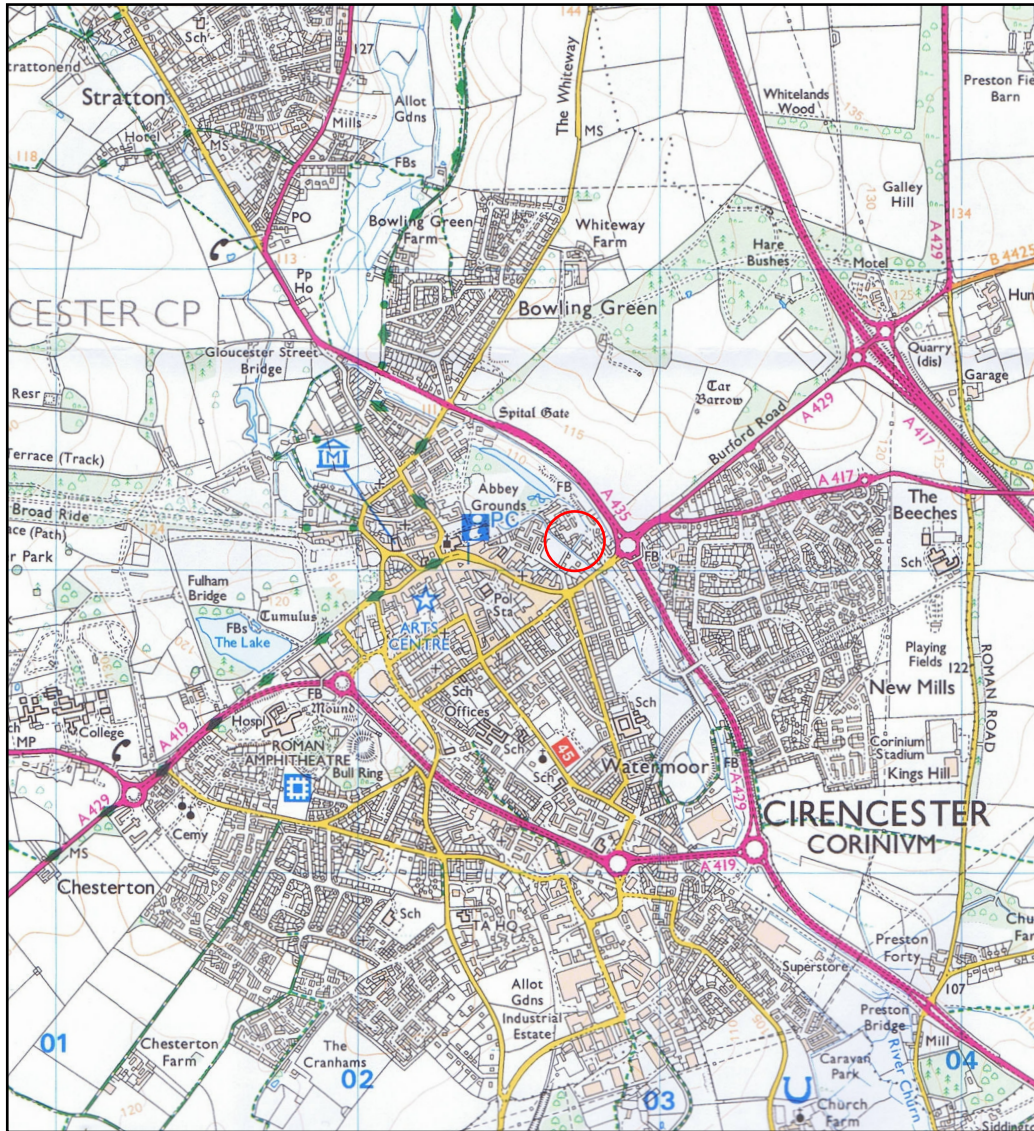
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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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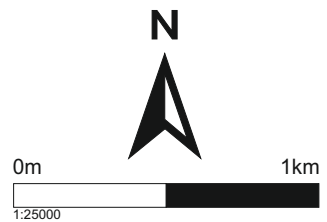
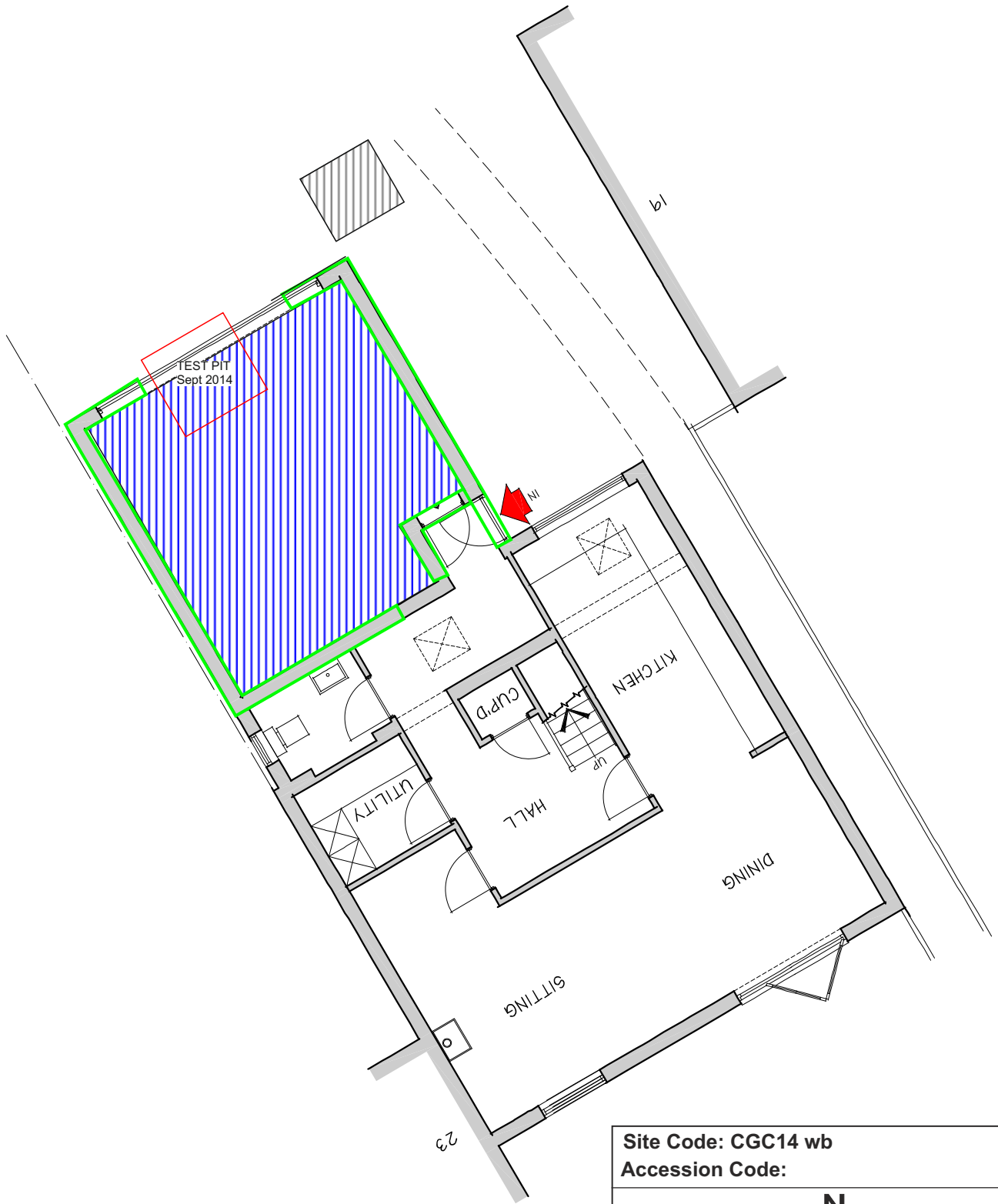


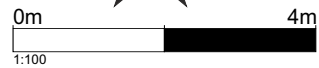
FIGURE 1: Site Location



Site Code: CGC14 wb

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-  REDUCED AREA
-  EXCAVATED FOOTINGS
-  SERVICE INVESTIGATION PIT

FIGURE 2: Watching Brief Plan