

Archaeological Observation

**37 Broad Street
Newent
Gloucestershire**

NGR: SO 7220 2587

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGY

PO Box 36
Leominster
Herefordshire
HR6 0YQ

Tel: 01568 760453

E-mail: enquiries@borderarchaeology.com

Technical Services

Chapel Walk
Burgess Street
Leominster
Herefordshire
HR6 8DE

Tel: 01568 610101

Tel/fax: 01568 616900

E-mail: borderarch@btconnect.com

Contents

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1. | NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY | 3 |
| 2. | INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| | 2.1 Soils & Geology | 4 |
| 3. | HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND | 5 |
| 4. | METHODOLOGY | 6 |
| 5. | ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION | 7 |
| 6. | CONCLUSION | 10 |
| 7. | COPYRIGHT | 10 |
| 8. | BIBLIOGRAPHY | 10 |

Report specification:

Archaeological observation & draft report: Will Logan BA

Report editing: George Children MA

Approved: Neil Shurety

1. Non Technical Summary

Border Archaeology carried out archaeological observation of groundworks relating to proposed development at the rear of No 37 Broad Street, Newent. These works comprised the excavation of two trenches measuring 3.6m northwest/southeast and 0.7m northeast/southwest to a depth of approximately 1.1m.

Historic maps relating to the area show a series of property boundaries running northeast to the rear of Broad Street and these probably delineate medieval burgage plots. The 1840 Tithe map indicates buildings either within or close to the site and meadowland adjoining it to the northeast. The 1880, 1900 and 1925 OS plans shows no development on the site with the latter indicating the position of the present access road.

The archaeological observation revealed no significant structures, features or deposits.

2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by David Champion & Associates 9 Brunswick Square Gloucester on behalf of Mr A Creese to carry out archaeological observation of groundworks in regard of alterations and conversions of existing outbuildings at 37 Broad Street Newent Gloucestershire (NGR: SO 7220 2587) (Planning Ref: DF9134/C* P0324/05/FUL).

Copies of this report will be submitted to the client, Charles Parry (Senior Archaeological Officer Gloucestershire County Council) and the county Sites & Monuments Record.

2.1 Soils & Geology

The Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983) classifies Newent as an unsurveyed urban area; however, the surrounding soils comprise typical brown earths of the BROMSGROVE series (541b) and stagnogleyic argillic brown earths of the HODNET series (572c). The former consist of well-drained, reddish coarse loamy soils, mainly over soft sandstone, but deep in places. Associated fine loamy soils have slowly permeable subsoils and are prone to slight seasonal waterlogging with some risk of water erosion. The underlying geology in these areas consists of Permo-Triassic and Carboniferous sandstone and siltstone. The HODNET soils comprise reddish fine and coarse loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging with some similar well-drained reddish fine loamy soils. Permo-Triassic and Carboniferous reddish mudstone, siltstone and sandstone underlie these soils.

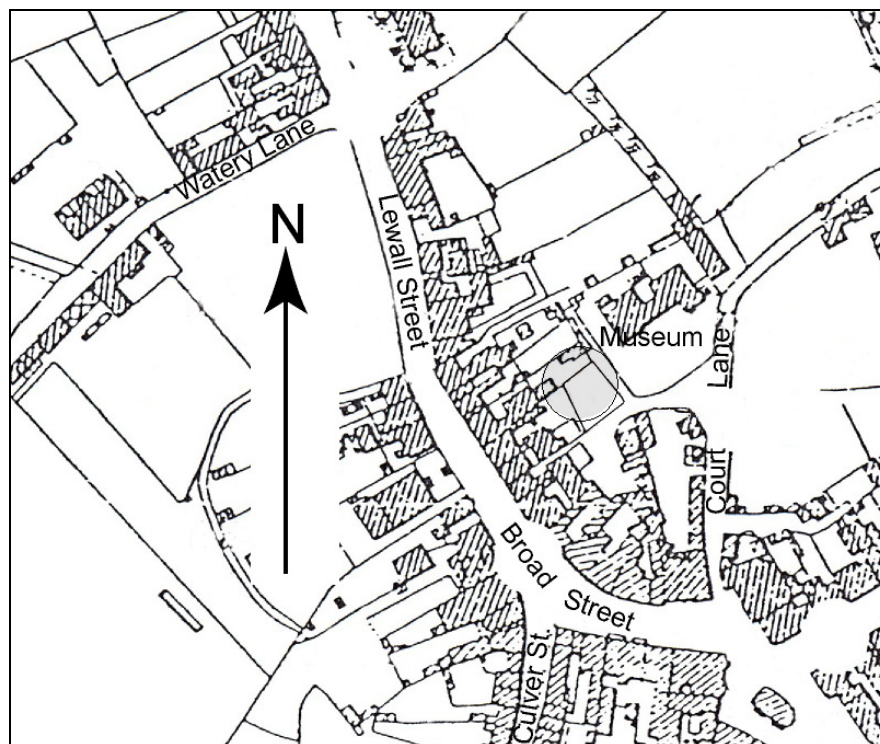


Fig. 1: Site location map

3. Historical & Archaeological Background

The site lies off Court Lane to the rear of Broad Street (**Fig. 1**). The remains of Newent Priory, a Norman foundation, lie to the NE beyond the 19th century former police station and courthouse, the site of a medieval tithe barn.

The place-name 'Newent' appears in Domesday Book as *Noent* and it is recorded that St Mary's Church of Cormeilles held the manor and that its value was 100 shillings. The entry refers to the granting of the manor and church of St Mary to Cormeilles Abbey under a gift confirmed by William the Conqueror. The record states that Earl Roger of Hereford 'gave it to this church for his father's soul, with King William's assent'. Henry IV suppressed the priory in 1411 and in 1441 it was granted to Fotheringay college, Northamptonshire; no remains survive above ground.

An archaeological evaluation carried out in 1990 between Lewall Street and Old Maid's Walk revealed no evidence relating to the priory. A section through an apparently medieval earthwork in 1997-8 revealed a sequence of bank deposits that could not be securely dated. It is believed that the priory fishponds lie in the vicinity of Newent Lake, an ornamental feature created during construction of Newent Court in the 1820s. The lake is marked 'Fish Pond' on the 1902 Ordnance Survey town plan and as 'Pond' on the 1840 Tithe map. Possibly associated with the priory was the timber-framed tithe barn that stood on the site of the 19th century police station.

St. Mary's church, which has a 150ft high spire on a 14th century tower, was a place of worship in Anglo-Saxon times and lies to the E of Court Lane. A 9th century cross shaft discovered in the churchyard in 1907 may be of Northumbrian provenance. An 11th century stone tablet inside the church depicts the 'harrowing of Hell' on one side and a bishop on the other and may have been used as a portable altar. A number of tombs in the churchyard date from the 17th century.

To the SE of the site lies the Market Square located on the edge of the historic core of Newent. From the N end of the square, Broad Street runs W before swinging N towards Lewall Street and High Street, while Court Lane runs N and then E. Broad Street contains a number of post-medieval buildings of Grade II Listed status together with several dating from the late medieval period.

Of note is No.1 Broad Street, a Grade II* Listed Building of 15th century date with late 17th/early 18th and mid 19th century additions. The property, part of which is now a Costcutter store, stands on the corner of Broad Street and Court Lane, close to the Market Square. Opposite No. 1 and adjacent to the Market House (1688) is the Red Lion Hotel, a property of early to mid 19th century date. Further along Broad Street to the N stands No 14, a 15th century (1465) three-storey house and shop with 19th and 20th century alterations. A watching brief carried out in 1991 during refurbishment of the property revealed no significant archaeological deposits. An evaluation carried out on a garage site to the E of Court Lane indicated that medieval and earlier deposits had been destroyed during the 19th century.

The site appears to be in line with property boundaries to the rear of Nos. 31, 33 and 35, on the eastern side of Broad Street. Nos. 31 and 33 together comprise a Grade II Listed 16th century house and shop (now a shop only), with 18th and 20th century alterations. The property consists of a timber-framed frontage and stone rear wall under a tiled roof,

with much internal framing surviving. The first floor is jettied with frame exposed. The building was originally one room deep but was subsequently extended by one room over the width of the rear. The adjacent property, No 29, comprises an 18th century house and shop.

The map evidence clearly shows property boundaries running NE from the rear of Broad Street. These boundaries, which are present on the 1880 OS plan and can also be discerned on later maps, probably delineate a series of medieval burgage plots. The site itself is almost exactly twice the width of neighbouring plots, suggesting the incorporation of two adjacent burgages. Indeed, the line of the original boundary can still be traced as far as the present access road that runs along the western edge of the site. The 1840 Tithe map indicates buildings either within or close to the site and meadowland adjoining it to the NE. The 1880, 1900 and 1925 OS plans shows no development on the site with the latter indicating the position of the present access road.

4. Methodology

The aim of the programme of archaeological observation was to locate and record any archaeological deposits revealed during the course of the groundworks and to confirm that no impact on the archaeological resource occurred without recording.

Trenching was excavated under archaeological supervision using a machine and toothless bucket and all spoil was examined for artefacts.

Written, graphic and photographic records were made for all works using *pro forma* recording sheets in accordance with archaeological practices set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994; revised 2001).

A temporary benchmark with a value 31.89m OD was established on the site.

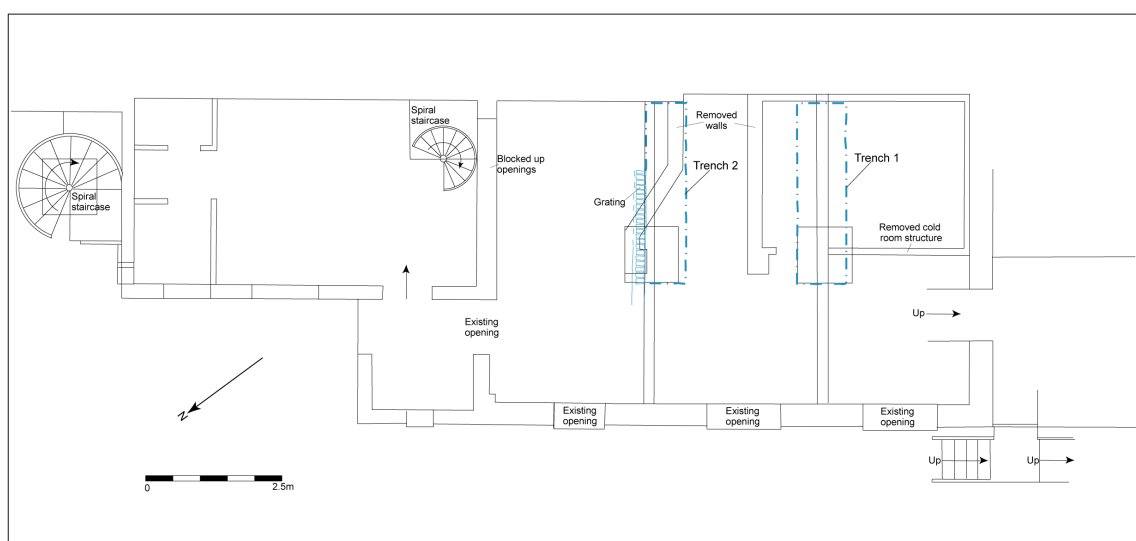


Fig. 2: Plan showing location of trenches

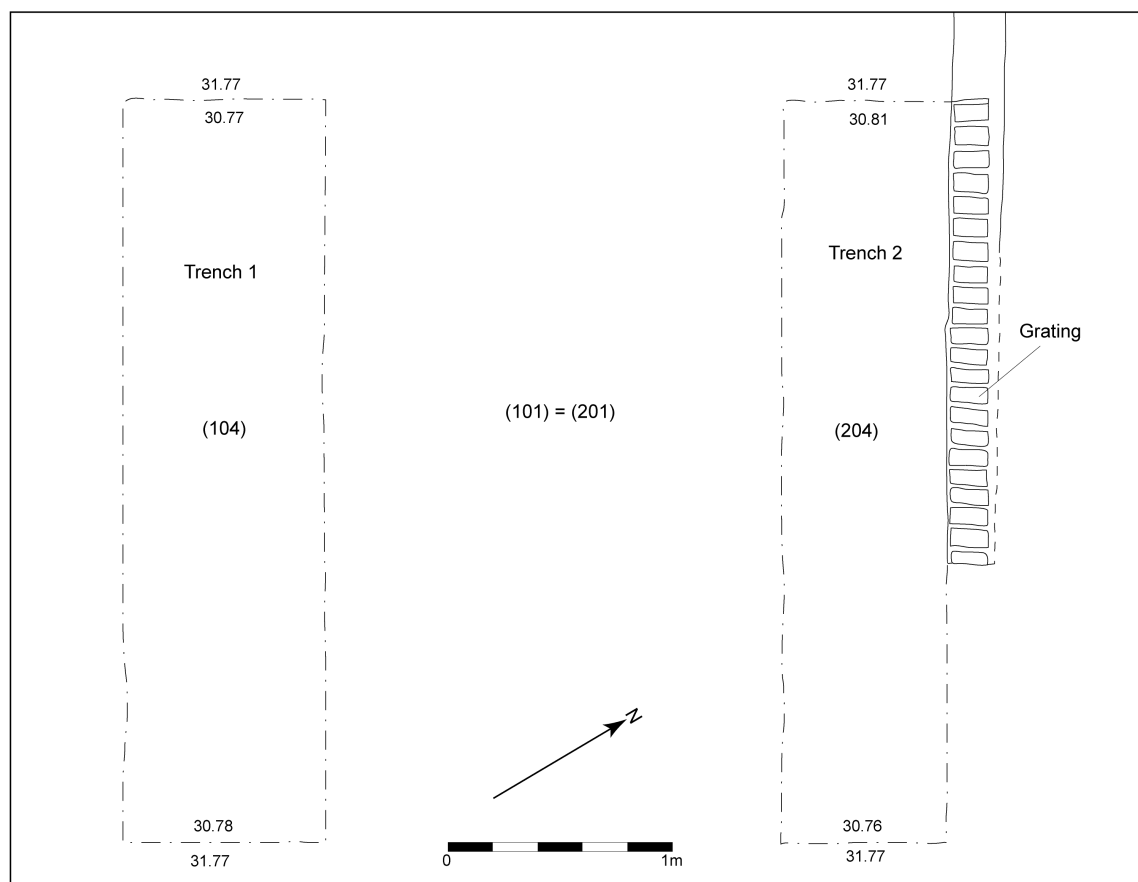


Fig. 3: Plan of Trenches 1 & 2

5. Archaeological Observation

Two trenches measuring approximately 3.6m NW/SE x 0.7m NE/SW x c.1.1m were excavated within a modern concrete floor surface located to the rear of No 37 Broad Street (**Figs. 1, 2 & 3**).

Underlying the concrete (101) within Trench 1 was a probable modern consolidation deposit (102) intended to level the ground surface, comprising a loosely compacted, yellowish-grey sandy clay with frequent small stones and concrete fragments.

Underlying (102) was a redeposited subsoil (104) consisting of loosely compacted reddish-brown coarse sandy clay containing moderate small and medium angular stones, moderate CBM fragments and occasional 18th and 19th century pottery fragments. Cutting (104) was [105], associated with a possible wall foundation and filled by a loose yellowish-brown sandy deposit containing frequent unbonded brick and brick fragments (103) (**Plate 1; Fig. 4**).

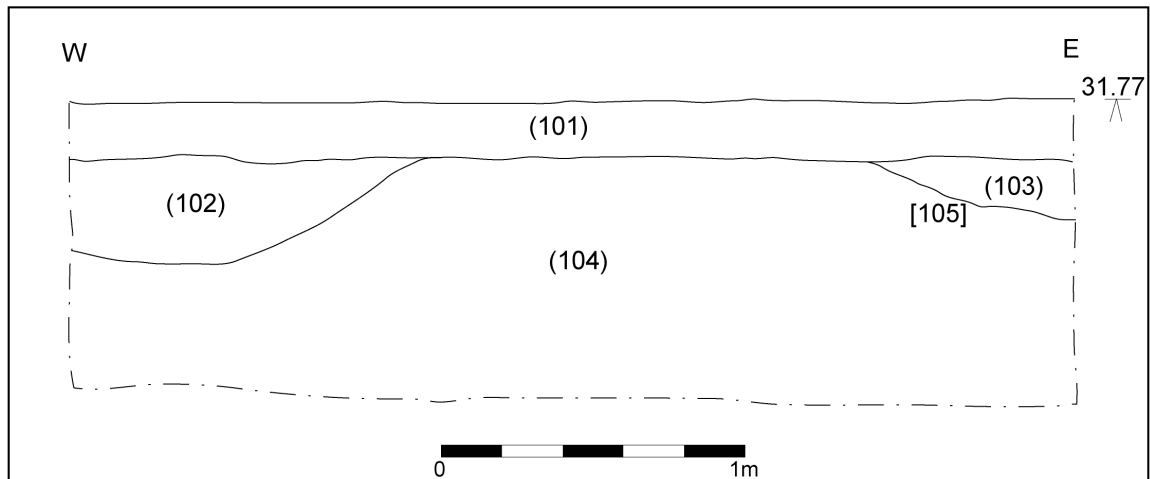


Fig. 4: S-facing section of Trench 1



Plate 1: View N showing section of Trench 1

Underlying the concrete floor surface (201) within Trench 2 (**Plate 2; Fig. 5**) was a deposit of sub-base material comprising loosely compacted concrete rubble (202). Beneath this was a loosely compacted dark brown sandy silt clay (203) overlying redeposited subsoil comprising loosely compacted dark reddish-brown coarse sandy silt with frequent small and medium angular stones, CBM fragments and 18th/19th century pottery fragments (204).

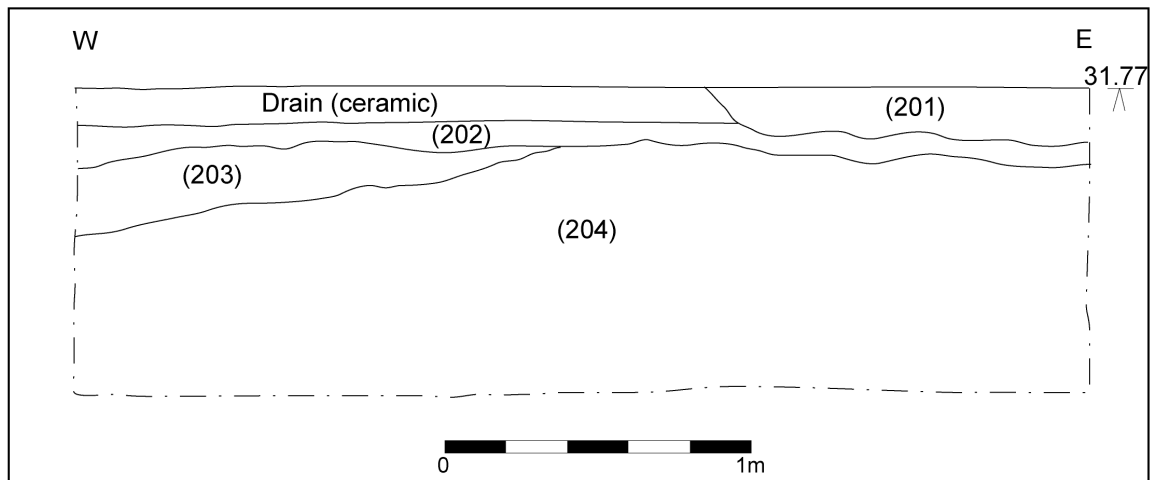


Fig. 5: S-facing section of Trench 2



Plate 2: View N showing section of Trench 2

6. Conclusion

Two trenches measuring approximately 3.6m NW/SE x 0.7m NE/SW x c.1.1m were excavated to the rear of No 37 Broad Street. The archaeological observation revealed no significant structures, features or deposits.

7. Copyright

Border Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of the report by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

8. Bibliography

Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record: SMR Printout

National Monuments Record Centre, Swindon: NMR Printout

Page, W. (ed.), 1907, *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire, Volume 2*, London

Pearce, D. et al., 2003, *Chapters in Newent's History*, Newent

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983 Sheet 5, South-West England, 1:250,000

Verey, D. & Brooks, A., 2002, *The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire 2 – The Vale & The Forest of Dean*, Yale

.