

Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

RJR Developments Ltd.

Date: 05/02/2026

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Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Archaeological and historical background	3
3. Methodology	4
4. Results.....	6
5. Conclusions.....	7
6. References.....	8
Figures and plates	9
Appendix A: Context catalogue	14
Appendix B: OASIS data collection form	15

List of Figures

Figure 1: site location

Figure 2: excavation location and pit section

List of Plates

Plate 1: section across pit

Plate 2: general view of building footprint, looking southeast (2 x 1m scales)

Plate 3: general view of building footprint, looking east (2 x 1m scales)

Plate 4: general view of building footprint, looking north (2 x 1m scales)

Executive summary

Cura Terrae was commissioned by RJR Developments Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to a former Enterprise training Centre, Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham S60 5PZ (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on National Grid co-ordinate 443192 387781 (Fig.1).

The monitoring was carried out on foundation works measuring c.12m long by 10m wide.

The sequence of deposits was consistent throughout the excavated area with a natural clay deposits and bedrock found at an approximate depth of 0.05m, overlain by a thin layer of soil. The only archaeological remains found were a sub rectangular pit that contained fragments of post-medieval pot and glass.

The lack of evidence pre-dating the post-medieval period within the monitored area indicate that this work has little potential to inform any regional research objectives as expressed in the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework.

1. Introduction

Project background

- 1.1.1 Cura Terrae was Commissioned by RJR Developments Ltd (hereafter ‘the Client’) to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to the former Enterprise Training Centre, Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham S60 5PZ (hereafter “the Site”). The Site is centred on National Grid co-ordinate 443192 387774 (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological watching brief was actioned as part of a planning application (ref RB2023/0598) submitted to Rotherham Metropolitan Council, under the terms of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) agreed by the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (Cura Terrae, 2025).

Location, topography and geology

- 1.1.3 The Site is located near the centre of the village of Treeton to the south of Rotherham and east of Sheffield, South Yorkshire, on the east side of Church Lane. Existing, refurbished buildings, that are part of the same overall development are located to the north and east (fronting Front Street). A further unrelated property fronting Church Lane is located immediately to the south of the development. The boundary to Church Lane is formed by an extant stone wall.
- 1.1.4 The Site lies at c.62 m aOD. The bedrock geology of the Site consists of Pennine Middle Coal Measures Formation – sandstone, a sedimentary bedrock formed between 318 and 309.5 million years ago during the Carboniferous period (BGS 2025).

2. Archaeological and historical background

- 2.1.1 The following information is based on an assessment of the historic and archaeological background of the Site by South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS) and supplemented by information derived from the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) as Posted on the Heritage Gateway and other online sources.

Prehistoric and Romano-British

- 2.1.2 Prehistoric flints and a neolithic axe have been recorded c.1km north-east of the site along with some geophysical evidence of enclosures a similar distance to the east. A small number of Roman coins were found in a field c.800m north-east of the site near a Roman road, some Roman pottery has also been found c.1.4km to the east of the site. These finds indicate a low possibility that finds of these dates may be found at the Site.

Medieval

- 2.1.3 No finds or features of early medieval date have been found in the area, though there are records of potentially medieval cruck barns in the vicinity. The proximity of St Helen's Church, dating to the 12 Century, indicates that the site was located near to, or within the historic core of the village. This suggested a medium to high possibility of finds or features of this date being present on the Site.

Post-medieval and modern

- 2.1.4 The wider area was the centre of concentrated industrial activity in the post-medieval and early modern periods. The South Yorkshire HER records an 18th-century glassworks with a surviving glassworks' cone at Catcliffe c.1 km to the north-west of the Site. A colliery was opened in Treeton in 1875, which closed in 1990. No industrial activity has been identified on the Site.
- 2.1.5 A level, hard surface multi-sport court is shown occupying the Site up until c.2020, this appears to have been cut into the site and removed most of the overlying soils prior to the current development.

3. Methodology

3.1 General

3.1.1 As the appointed contractor, Cura Terrae ensured that all work was undertaken by experienced staff operating in accordance with established industry standards and guidance (see below).

3.1.2 Cura Terrae is a ClfA Registered Organisation.

3.2 Standards

3.2.1 The archaeological monitoring conformed to the current national and regional guidance and standards as set out in:

- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide (Historic England 2015a)
- Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (ClfA 2020a)
- Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (ClfA 2020b)
- Code of Conduct (ClfA 2022)
- Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording (ClfA 2023a),
- Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording (ClfA 2023b)

3.3 Monitoring location

3.3.1 The Archaeological watching brief was carried out on the rectangular raft foundation footprint of the structure and measured c.12m by 10m.

3.4 Excavation method

3.4.1 The ClfA standard for archaeological monitoring and recording (ClfA 2023a) was employed for the work.

- 3.4.2 The area of the watching brief was mechanically stripped to an average depth of 0.05m. All mechanical stripping was conducted with a toothless ditching bucket and was monitored by an appropriately qualified archaeologist.
- 3.4.3 All Overburden was removed in successive level spits down to the required construction depth.
- 3.4.4 Spoil derived from machine stripping was scanned for finds retrieval.

3.5 Recording method

- 3.5.1 All archaeological deposits were recorded using continuously numbered contexts in a pro-forma recording system in accordance with industry standards. The written record was hierarchically based and centred on the context record. Each context record fully described the location, extent, composition and relationship of the subject.
- 3.5.2 A drawn record of the site was made at an appropriate scale.
- 3.5.3 A photographic record of the Site was taken using digital photography at a minimum resolution of 10 megapixels.
- 3.5.4 Data management, recovery and recording levels were appropriate to the stratified deposits under investigation.

3.6 Finds collection and recording

- 3.6.1 No finds of archaeological interest were recovered, the post-medieval pot sherd and modern glass in the pit fill (104) were noted for dating purposes but not retained.

3.7 Environmental sampling

- 3.7.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were observed during the watching brief.

3.8 Human remains

- 3.8.1 No human remains were observed during the monitoring works.

3.9 Treasure

- 3.9.1 No items classified as treasure were encountered during the monitoring works.

4. Results

- 4.1.1 The monitoring covered one building footprint that measured approximately c.12m by 10m.
- 4.1.2 The natural geology (102) was present at an average depth of 0.05m below the existing site ground level. This comprised a light yellowish brown, firm naturally occurring silty clay, but in many places a shaley bedrock was also evident.
- 4.1.3 An irregular sub-rectangular pit (103) cut the natural clay (102) on the east side of the stripped area. It was filled with a dark reddish brown, friable silty clay (104). The pit had a maximum depth of 0.38m and contained one fragment of post-medieval pottery and two pieces of post-medieval/modern glass, these were not recovered but confirmed the relatively recent date of the feature.
- 4.1.4 The overlying soil (101) had an average depth of 0.05m.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1.1 The archaeological watching brief has successfully met the aims and objectives of the project, as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Cura Terrae 2025). The monitoring of the area has recorded one post medieval pit type feature.
- 5.1.2 The pit was identified cut into the natural deposit exposed by machine cleaning. Post-medieval pottery and glass were found within the fill, indicating that it was relatively recent and of little archaeological interest.

5.2 Assessment of the results against the original expectations

- 5.2.1 The results of the watching brief do not reflect the original expectations for this area as no medieval remains were found despite the site being close to the centre of the medieval village.
- 5.2.2 The lack of archaeological remains pre-dating the post-medieval period within the monitored area indicates that this work has little potential to inform any regional research objectives as expressed in the South Yorkshire Historic Environment Research Framework (see: <https://researchframeworks.org/syrf/late-medieval/#section-9>)

5.3 Archiving

- 5.3.1 The Witten, drawn and Photographic records are currently held by Cura Terrae at Barnard Castle, Co. Durham
- 5.3.2 Archiving work, including preparation of the digital archive for deposition will be carried out in accordance with local policy, and national professional standards and guidelines.
- 5.3.3 An online OASIS data collection form has been initiated (OASIS ID: curaterr1-540333; Appendix B). Upon completion of the project, all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed. This will include an uploaded PDF version of the final report. Once the report is uploaded, it will become a public document.
- 5.3.4 All digital data resulting from the project will be archived within the report and uploaded to ADS via OASIS following completion of the works.
- 5.3.5 If required a copy of the report will be deposited with the Clifton Park Museum.

6. References

British Geological Survey (2025). Geology of Britain Viewer. Available at <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). (2020a). Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials. Available at <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). (2020b). Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives. Available at <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>.

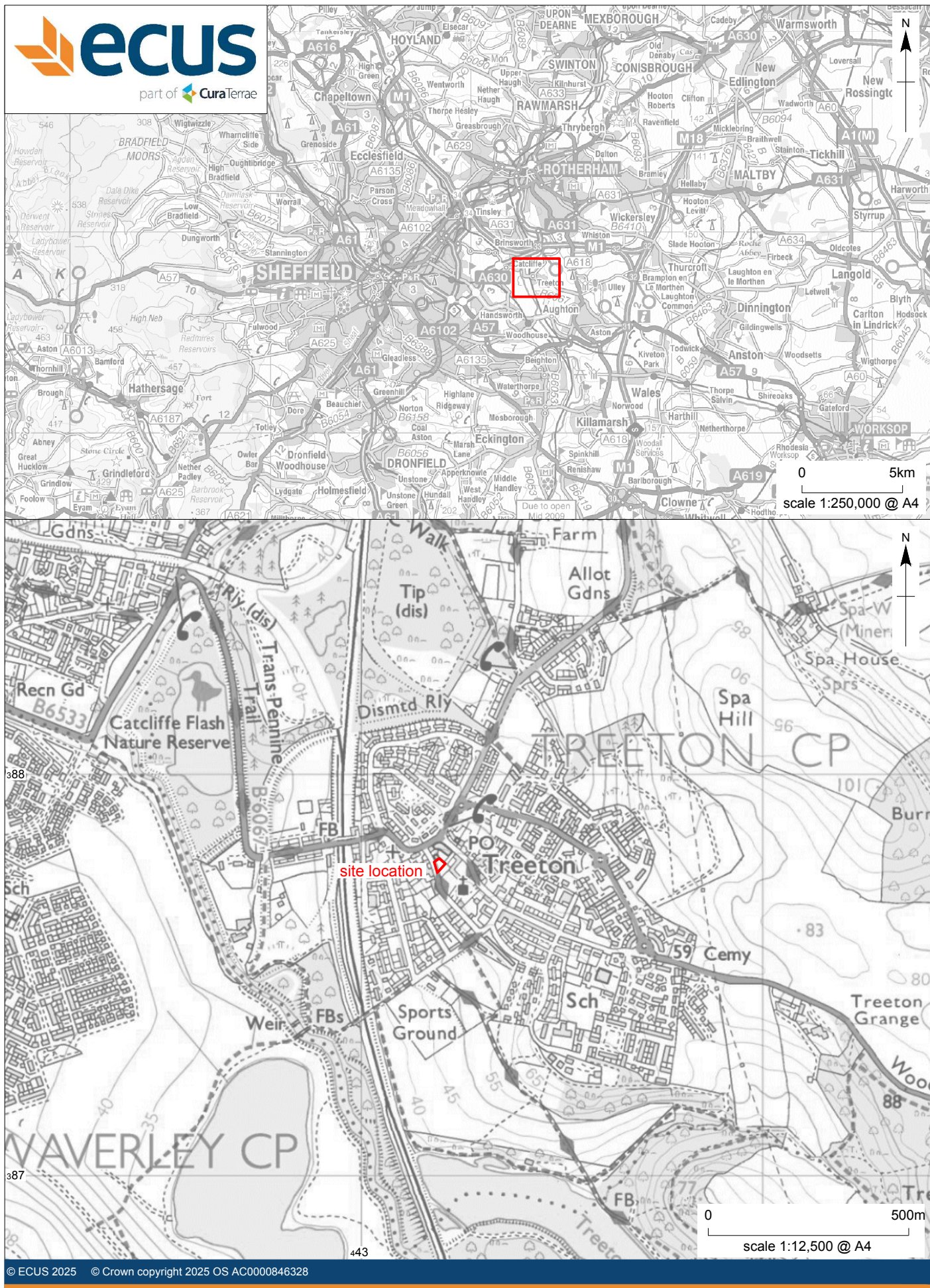
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). (2023a). Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording. Available at <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). (2023b). Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording. Available at <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>.

Cura Terrae (2025) Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief.

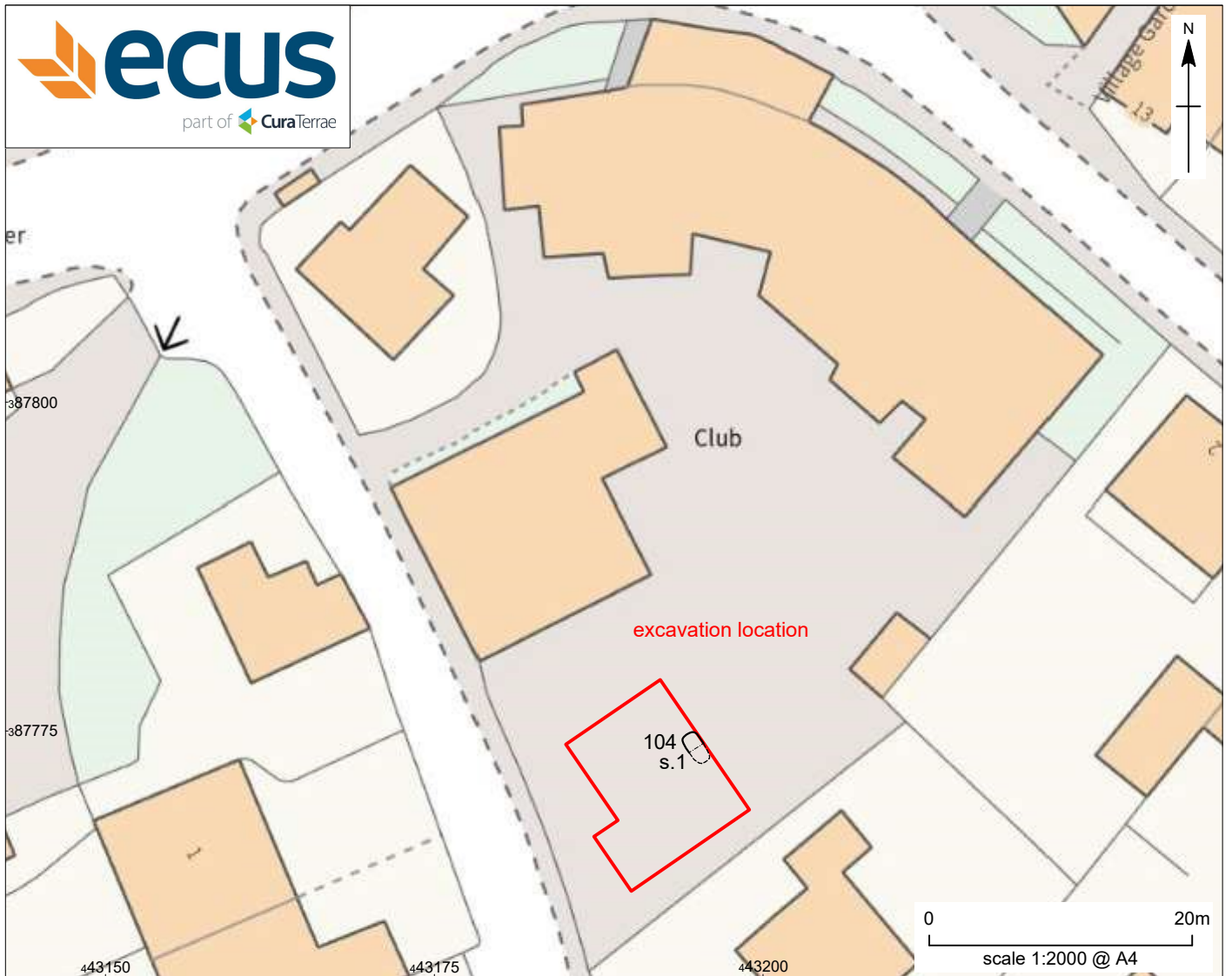
South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS). Archaeological Watching Brief Standards & Guidance. Available at https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-11/SYAS_WB_Standards.pdf.

Figures and plates

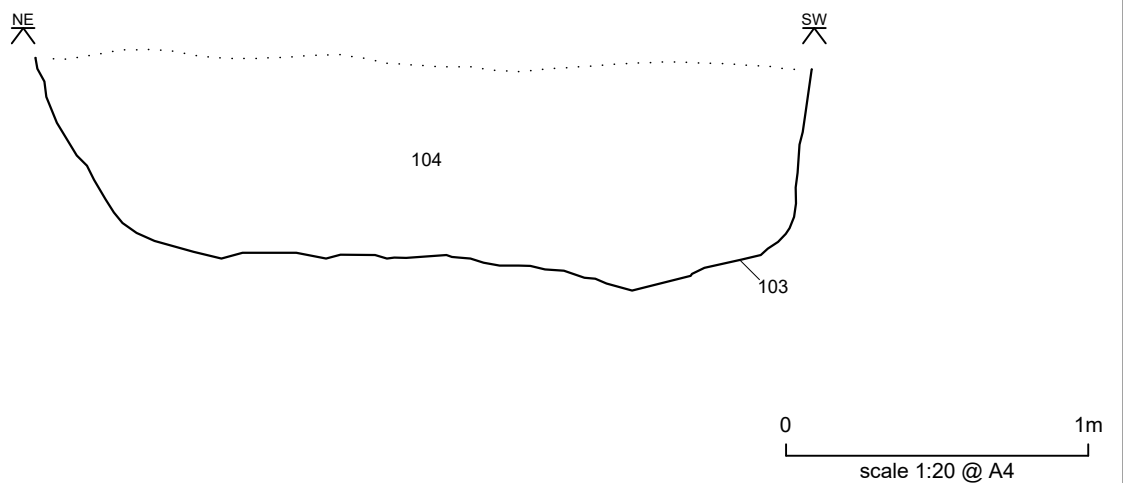


Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham: Site location

Figure 1



Section 1





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section across pit

Plate 1



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general view of building footprint, looking southeast (2 x 1m scales)

Plate 2



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general view of building footprint, looking east (2 x 1m scales)

Plate 3



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general view of building footprint, looking north (2 x 1m scales)

Plate 4

Appendix A: Context catalogue

Context	Trench	Type	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
101	1	Deposit	Dark, blackish brown clayey silt.	Subsoil	0.05 (avg.)
102	1	Deposit	Fragmented buff sandstone in a light yellowish brown silty clay matrix.	Natural	>0.38
103	1	Fill	Dark reddish brown friable silty clay, with frequent small angular buff sandstone fragments. Contained frequent rooting and one sherd of Post-medieval pot and two fragments of modern glass.	Fill of Post-medieval pit.	<0.38
104	1	Cut	Sub rectangular, steep sided cut with flattish irregular base, oriented north west by south east. Approximately 2.5m by 1.3 wide and 0.38m deep.	Pit of uncertain purpose.	<0.38

Appendix B: OASIS data collection form

OASIS Summary for curaterr1-540333

OASIS ID (UID)	curaterr1-540333
Project Name	Watching Brief at Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham S60 5PZ, United Kingdom
Sitename	Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham S60 5PZ, United Kingdom
Sitecode	24445
Project Identifier(s)	24445
Activity type	Watching Brief
Planning Id	RB2023/0598
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Cura Terrae
Project Dates	21-Jan-2026 - 21-Jan-2026
Location	Church Lane, Treeton, Rotherham S60 5PZ, United Kingdom NGR : SK 43219 87698 LL : 53.3843699046911, -1.351694328553094 12 Fig : 443219,387698 NGR : SK 43190 87774 LL : 53.385052, -1.352115 12 Fig : 443190,387774
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Rotherham Local Authority District : Rotherham Parish : Treeton
Project Methodology	Watching brief during machine excavation of building footprint, followed by hand excavation.
Project Results	An irregular sub-rectangular pit was observed cutting the natural on the eastern side of the stripped area, this was filled with a dark greyish brown, friable silty clay (104). It had a maximum depth of 0.38m and contained one fragment of post-medieval pottery and two pieces of post-medieval/modern glass, these were not recovered but confirmed the relatively recent date of the feature.
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation RJR Developments Ltd
HER	South Yorkshire Archaeology Service - noRev - LITE
Person Responsible for work	Damien Ronan
HER Identifiers	
Archives	