

Huntington Courtyard Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

for Huntington Antiques Ltd

> CA Project: 3385 CA Report: 11081

> > March 2011

Huntington Courtyard Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 3385 CA Report: 11081

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date	31 March 2011
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date	18 April 2011
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Huntington Courtyard
Location:	Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire
NGR:	SP 1912 2568
Туре:	Evaluation
Date:	29 to 30 March 2011
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Corinium Museum
Site Code:	HAS 11

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2011 at Huntington Courtyard, Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. A total of four trenches, each measuring 1.5m in length and 1.5m in width, was excavated within the proposed development area.

The earliest feature encountered consisted of a circular pit which contained most (30 fragments) of a pottery vessel from the Late Bronze Age. Two undated pits were also identified, sealed beneath 18th/19th-century layers.

Evidence for medieval activity was restricted to a single pit, containing 12th to 14th-century pottery, as well as residual pottery. Late post-medieval and modern deposits were identified within all of the trenches at depths of between 0.6 and 0.95m below the modern ground surface.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2011 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Huntington Antiques Ltd at Huntington Courtyard, Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SP 1912 2568; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken following an application to Cotswold District Council (CDC) for development at the above site.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation* (GCC 2011) issued by Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), the archaeological advisors to CDC, and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2011) and approved by Mr Parry. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991), and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The site is situated in the western part of Stow-on the-Wold, within a courtyard, bounded to the north by commercial properties and to the south, east and west by properties and associated gardens fronting Sheep Street (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 231m AOD on flat ground.
- 1.4 The development area is approximately 500m², and comprises a tarmacadam yard utilised for car-parking.
- 1.5 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Chipping Norton Limestone Formation from the Bathonian stage of the Middle Jurrassic period. The natural geological substrate, comprising limestone brash was encountered within all trenches.

Archaeological background

1.6 Research indicates that the current site lies immediately to the south of the historic core of Stow-on-the-Wold. Since the 19th century it has been postulated that

prehistoric defences, possibly representative of a hill-top enclosure, occupy much of the locally high ground later occupied, at least in part, by the medieval and later town. The prehistoric enclosure is believed to have been recorded as Maethelgares Byrig (Maethelgar's fortified place) in a 10th century Anglo Saxon charter. Possible defensive ditches, one of which contained a single sherd from a Bronze Age, post-Deverel Rimbury style, jar have been identified at Ellacott, Camp Gardens and possibly at The Surgery, Well Lane. These features are considered to represent the northern part of the perimeter of the hill-top enclosure in a review of the evidence (Parry 1999, 81-2). The current site lies outside, and to the south, of the postulated hill-top enclosure (Parry 1999, 77 fig. 1).

- 1.7 The proposed development area lies *c*. 100m to the east of the Fosse Way Roman road. No definite Romano-British features have been located within the town, however a north-south orientated inhumation burial thought to date to the Roman or Early Saxon period was found on the north-east side of The Square during the latter part of the 19th century (Royce 1861).
- 1.8 The nearby settlement of Maugersbury probably pre-dated Stow-on-the-Wold and took its name from *Maethelgares Byrig*. Stow itself is first mentioned in 1086 as *Edwardstow* or *Stow St Edward* (probably after Edward the martyr). A *port* or market was granted in 1107 (Leech 1981) and the location and organisation of the town suggested a considered attempt to exploit the commercial possibilities of a major road junction. The town grew rapidly during the medieval period and Sheep Street, which was probably not part of the original plan, was built up at this time as a minor route (Leech 1981). In the early 17th century, Sheep Street was known as Back Street suggesting that it formed the southern extent of the settlement at that time.

Archaeological objectives

1.9 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist CDC in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

1.10 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of four trenches, each measuring 1.5m in length and 1.5m in width, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The

4

positions of Trenches 1 and 4 were revised from those agreed in the WSI due to the presence of buried services. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) coordinates using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2009).

- 1.11 Modern hardstanding and associated sub-base was mechanically removed. All underlying deposits were thereafter excavated by hand to the top of significant archaeology or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.12 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003), however, no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (2010).
- 1.13 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Corinium Museum, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-6)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B. Details of the relative heights of the principal deposits and features expressed as metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) appear in Appendix C.
- 2.2 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was identified within each of the trenches. The natural limestone substrate was overlain by a former cultivation soil that in turn was sealed by a buried former topsoil. Both deposits contained large quantities of 18-19thcentury material was retrieved, as well as residual medieval pottery, and were sealed by modern make-up/levelling layers and tarmac.

Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)

2.3 Natural limestone substrate, 108, was encountered 0.72m below present ground level (bpgl, 230.49m AOD). It was cut by a steep-sided, feature, 106, interpreted as either a robber trench or a ditch. Its fill, 107, contained six sherds of 18th-century pottery, five fragments of clay pipe stem, as well as ceramic building material and three sherds of residual medieval pottery. It was overlain by post-medieval cultivation deposit 105, that in turn was overlain by former topsoil deposit 104. Modern bedding layers 103, 102 and 101, were sealed by tarmac, 100, which formed the current ground surface.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 4)

2.4 Natural limestone substrate, 206, was encountered 0.7m bpgl (230.57m AOD). In the southwestern part of the trench, it was overlain by deposit 205 which contained a single sherd of 12th to 14th-century pottery. This was in turn sealed by buried topsoil 204. This was in turn overlain by a series of modern make-up/levelling layers (203, 202, 201) for modern tarmac surface 200.

Trench 3 (Figs 2 & 5)

2.5 Natural limestone substrate, 310, was encountered 0.74m bpgl (230.48m AOD). It was cut by two sub-oval pits, 306 and 308, neither of which contained any dateable finds although fill 307 within pit 306, did contain a single piece of animal bone. Both pits were sealed by cultivation soil 305, that was overlain by spread of small limestone fragments, 304, at the eastern side of the trench. Overlying deposits 304 and 305 was former topsoil deposit 303 that was overlain by a series of modern make-up/levelling layers (302 and 301) for modern tarmac surface 300.

Trench 4 (Figs 2 & 6)

2.6 Natural limestone substrate, 412, was encountered 0.6m bpgl (230.66m AOD) and was cut by two pits, 406 and 410. The single fill, 411, of pit 410 contained most of an ovoid jar of post-Deverel-Rimbury plainware (30 sherds), dating to the Late Bronze Age. The single fill 407, of pit 406, contained 14 sherds of 12th to 13th-century pottery. Both pits were sealed by former cultivation soil 405. This was overlain at the eastern side of the trench by spread of stones, 404, interperated as a continuation of the same deposit identified in Trench 3 (304), and is thought to represent a gravel path. This was in turn overlain by a series of modern make-up/levelling layers (403, 402, 401) which comprised sand and gravel layers. This was sealed by tarmac 400.

The Finds Evidence

2.7 Artefactual material, comprising pottery ranging in date from late prehistoric to modern, ceramic building material, clay tobacco pipe, iron nails, modern glass, slate and burnt stone were recovered from 13 deposits, together with quantities of animal bone and oyster shell (Appendix B).

Pottery

- 2.8 Late prehistoric pottery, totalling 30 sherds and representing a single substantially complete vessel was recovered from deposit 411 (fill of pit 410). This vessel is identified as an ovoid jar, in a calcite-tempered fabric, belonging to the post-Deverel-Rimbury plainware tradition. It is undecorated, but features the roughened 'finger-wiped' surface often characteristic of this style and is dateable to the Late Bronze Age, probably the 12th to 10th centuries BC. Material of comparable date, although dissimilar in fabric, has previously been noted from excavations at Camp Gardens, Stow-on-the Wold (Woodward 2000, 83).
- 2.9 Medieval pottery was recorded from four deposits. Material which may be stratified comes from deposit 205 and fill 407 within pit 406: residual sherds were recorded from deposits 105 and 107. The fabrics identified (Appendix B) appear to be typical for the North Gloucestershire area and include types from local sources and regional imports, the latter most probably from Warwickshire and North Wiltshire. Most material probably dates to the 12th to 14th centuries. The forms noted were a jar with 'developed' everted rim in unsourced sandy coarse fabric, and a jar with simple everted rim in Cotswold type oolitic limestone-tempered fabric from deposit 205. From deposit 407 (fill of pit 406) two sherds in Warwickshire whiteware, including a bodysherd from a glazed jug bodysherd with rilled decoration to its shoulder were recovered. From the same deposit a jar with applied strip in a sandy coarseware fabric was also noted. The date suggested for this group is from the 12th to 13th centuries. The pottery fabrics and forms are comparable with other medieval assemblage from nearby Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire (McSloy 2007, 24–34).
- 2.10 Pottery of post-medieval and modern date was recovered from nine deposits and comprised sherds of glazed earthenware, Malvernian red ware, Cistercian ware, Staffordshire yellow slipped ware, Nottingham stoneware, mottled brown earthenware, refined whiteware, white salt glazed stoneware, pearl ware and creamware. A sherd of Frechen stoneware imported from Germany, was also recovered from deposit 107 (fill of ditch 106). Most material dates to the 18th to 19th

centuries, although some types including Cistercian ware and Malvernian red ware are earlier (15th or 16th century) and are re-deposited.

Animal bone by Andy Clarke

2.11 Animal bone was recovered from six deposits dating from the 12th to 13th centuries to the 19th century, together with one undated context. The assemblage was, on the whole, in a good state of preservation with rare occurrences of canid gnawing and infrequent modern breakage. The species identified were cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse, chicken and bantam. The species identified are all common in assemblages dated to the medieval period and beyond.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The earliest feature encountered was circular pit 410, within trench 4, which contained a partially intact, post-Deverel Rimbury, ovoid jar, dated to the Late Bronze Age. Ditches previously identified to the north-east of the site, are interpreted as belonging to a prehistoric defensive enclosure, contained a comparable sherd of Late Bronze Age pottery (see section 2.8). The pit identified in the current evaluation is broadly contemporary with the putative enclosure and suggests that Late Bronze Age activity extends further to the south-west than previously identified. No further prehistoric activity was identified during trial trenching.
- 3.2 The evidence for medieval activity comprised a single pit (406), from which pottery dated to the 13th to 14th centuries was recovered. The primary function of the pit was not identified, but the secondary use was probably as a rubbish pit, within the back of former medieval burgage plots fronting Church Street to the north. Two undated pits were also identified, sealed beneath cultivation deposit, 305, giving a *terminus ante quem* of the 18th century and may be broadly contemporary.
- 3.3 Steep sided feature, 106, contained 18th-century pottery and is interpreted as either a robber trench or a ditch. However, the base of the feature was not reached, and its exact function could not be determined. The feature does not respect the alignment of the former medieval burgage plots or current street system.
- 3.4 Reworked deposits 105, 205, 305, and 405 appear to represent an 18th to 19thcentury cultivation soil, which may have truncated any earlier features or deposits to

the level of the underlying natural. The only features which pre-date this deposit were observed cutting the natural geological substrate. Above this cultivation deposit lay probable gravel pathway, 304 and 404, identified in trenches 3 and 4. Although undated artefactually, the deposit is situated between two layers dated from the 18th to 19th centuries. The pathway follows the same orientation as the current plot boundaries, which probably originated in the medieval period.

3.5 Late post-medieval/modern deposits were identified within all of the trenches from depths of between 0.45 and 0.6m below the modern ground surface (*c.* 231.2m AOD)

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Stuart Joyce, assisted by Jay Wood and Christopher Watts. The report was written by Stuart Joyce. The finds report was written by Angela Aggujaro and the illustrations were prepared by Jon Bennett. The archive has been compiled by Stuart Joyce, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. **REFERENCES**

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Tren	ch 1					
No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
100	Deposit	Tarmac			0.08	Modern
101	Deposit	Hardcore below 100			0.08	Modern
102	Deposit	Hardcore below 101			0.1	Modern
103	Deposit	Hardcore below 102			0.17	Modern
104	Deposit	Buried topsoil			0.14	C18- 19th
105	Deposit	Former cultivation soil			0.3	C18- 19th
106	Cut	Ditch cut			0.48	
107	Deposit	Single fill of ditch 106	1		0.48	C18th
108	Deposit	Natural geological substrate			-	

Trench 2

11010							
No.	Туре	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Spot-	
			(m)	(m)	(m)	date	
200	Deposit	Tarmac			0.08	Modern	
201	Deposit	Hardcore below 200			0.07	Modern	
202	Deposit	Hardcore below 201			0.21	Modern	
203	Deposit	Hardcore below 102			0.17	Modern	
204	Deposit	Buried topsoil			0.18	C19th	
205	Deposit	Former cultivation soil			0.12	C12- 14th	
206	Layer	Natural geological substrate			-		

Trench 3

TICH	511.0					
No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
300	Deposit	Tarmac			0.08	Modern
301	Deposit	Hardcore below 300			0.08	Modern
302	Deposit	Hardcore below 301			0.24	Modern
303	Deposit	Buried topsoil			0.26	C19th
304	Deposit	Stone path			0.28	
305	Deposit	Former cultivation soil			0.24	C18- 19th
306	Cut	Cut of pit	0.56	0.39	0.1	
307	Deposit	Single fill of pit 306	0.56	0.39	0.1	
308	Cut	Cut of pit		0.48	0.14	
309	Deposit	Single fill of pit 308		0.48	0.14	
310	Layer	Natural geological substrate				

Trench 4

, HER						
No.	Туре	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Spot-
			(m)	(m)	(m)	date
400	Deposit	Tarmac			0.04	Modern
401	Deposit	Hardcore below 400			0.06	Modern
402	Deposit	Hardcore below 401			0.16	Modern
403	Deposit	Buried topsoil			0.2	C19th
404	Deposit	Stone path			0.16	P-MED
405	Deposit	Former cultivation soil			0.36	C18- 19th

406	Cut	Cut of pit		0.6	0.52	
407	Deposit	Fill of pit 406		0.6	0.52	C12- 14th
408	Cut	Cut of pipe trench				
409	Deposit	Fill of modern pipe trench 408, 0.075m cast iron pipe				
410	Cut	Cut of pit	0.4	0.28	0.14	
411	Deposit	Single fill of pit 410	0.4	0.28	0.14	LBA
412	Layer	Natural geological substrate				

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

	t Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
104	Animal bone: Cow-size, Sheep-size	2		C18-C19
	Clay tobacco pipe	5	14	
	Post-medieval/modern pottery: Mocha ware, glazed earthenware, mottled brown earthenware, refined whiteware, Staffordshire slipped trailed ware.			
	Iron nail	1	10	
	Oyster shell	2	9	
105	Animal bone: Cattle, Sheep/goat, Pig, Chicken, Bantamm Cow-size, Sheep- size			C18-C19
	Medieval pottery: Minety ware, oolithic limestone-tempered fabric	5	61	
	Clay tobacco pipe	2	3	
	Glass	2	66	
	Ceramic building material	1	48	
	Iron nail	1	6	
	Post-medieval/modern pottery: Cistercian ware, white salt glazed stoneware, glazed earthenware, Malvernian red ware			
	Burnt stone	2	65	
	Animal bone	14	83	
407	Clay tobacco pipe	5		040
107	Medieval pottery: oolithic limestone-tempered fabric	3		C18
	Post-medieval/modern pottery: Frechen stoneware, glazed earthenware	6		
	Ceramic building material	1	33	
	Animal bone	9	70	
	Clay tobacco pipe	5	17	
	Oyster shell	1	3	
004	Medieval/post-medieval glass vessel	5	6	010
204	Post-medieval/modern pottery: refined whiteware, unglazed earthenware	4		C19
	Clay tobacco pipe	3	8	
	Glass	2	10	
	Iron nail	1	3	
005	Slate	1	13	
205 303	Medieval pottery: Minety ware, oolithic limestone-tempered fabric, unsourced sandy unglazed fabric Post-medieval/modern pottery: refined whiteware	5		C12-C14 C19
304	Animal bone	1	30	
305	Post-medieval/modern pottery: refined whiteware, glazed earthenware, white salt glazed stoneware			C19
	Clay tobacco pipe	2	3	
	Burnt flint	1	31	
	Animal bone: Sheep-size	1	1	
307	Animal bone: Cow-size	1	26	
403	Post-medieval/modern pottery: refined whiteware	1	1	C19
404	Ceramic building material	1		POST MED/ MOD
405	Animal bone: Sheep/goat, Horse, Sheep-size	9		C19
	Post-medieval/modern pottery: Staffordshire yellow slipped ware, porcelain, refined whiteware, mottled brown earthenware, Cistercian ware, Nottingham stoneware, pearl ware, creamware		560	
	Clay tobacco pipe	7	21	
	Iron nail	3		
	Ceramic building material	3	45	
	Glass: green and transparent bottle glass	5	73	
	Slate	1	4	
	Burnt stone	2	25	

Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
407	Animal bone: Cattle	1	8	C12-C13
	Medieval pottery: unsourced sandy glazed fabric, Minety ware, Warwickshire whiteware glazed, Warwickshire whiteware unglazed.	14	399	
	Animal bone	2	10	
	Iron nail	1	12	
	Oyster shell	1	4	
411	Prehistoric pottery: calcite-tempered fabric Post-Deverel-Rimbury plainware	30	1924	LBA

APPENDIX C: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES

Levels are expressed as metres below current ground level and as metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), calculated using Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS.

	Trench 1	Trench 2	Trench 3	Trench 4
Current ground level	0.00m	0.00m	0.00m	0.00m
	(231.21m)	(231.27m)	(231.22m)	(231.26m)
Top of archaeological feature	0.71m (230.50m)	N/A	0.73m (230.47)	0.58m (230.68m)
Natural substrate	0.72m	0.70m	0.74m	0.60
	(230.49m)	(230.57m)	(230.48)	(230.66m)
Limit of excavation	1.48m	0.70m	0.88m	1.10m
	(229.75m)	(230.57m)	(230.34m)	(230.16m)

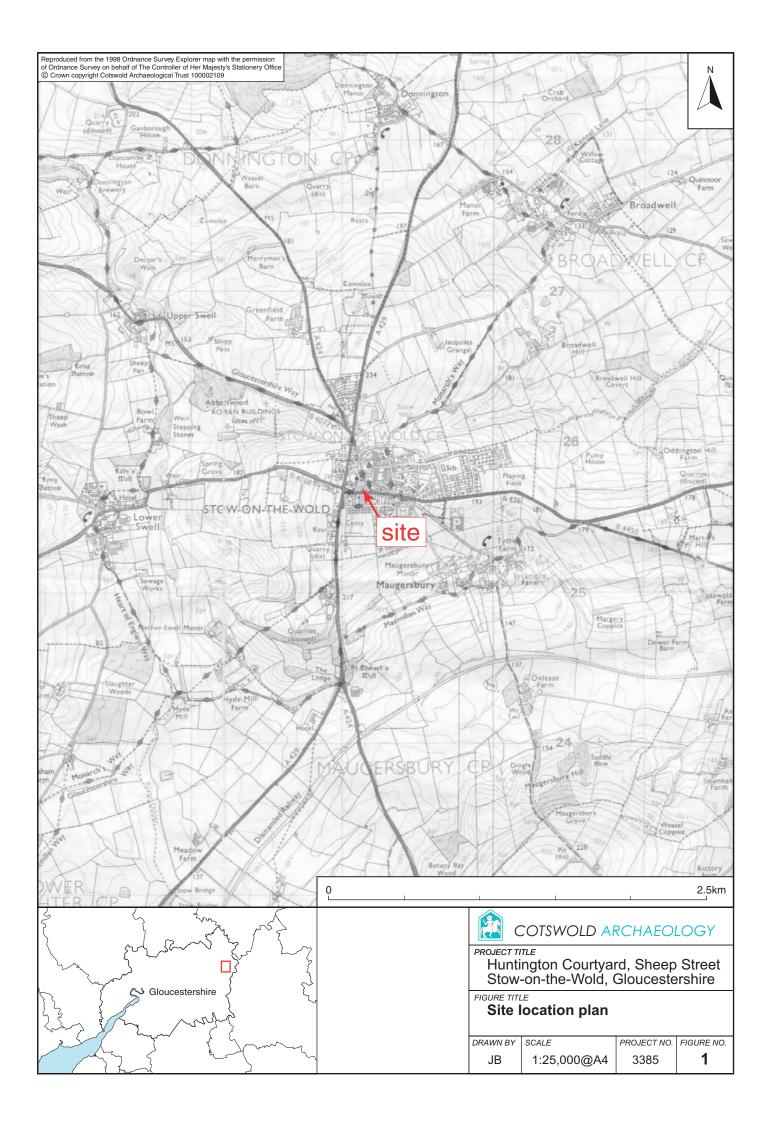
Upper figures are depth below modern ground level; lower figures in parentheses are metres AOD.

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

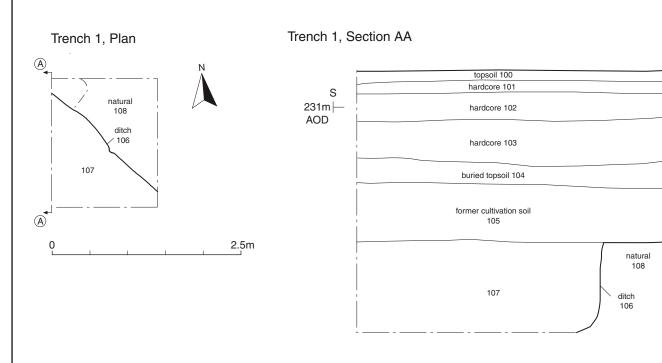
PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name	Gloucestershire	eet, Stow-on-the-Wold,	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2011 at Huntington Courtyard, Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. A total of four trenches, each measuring 1.5m in length and 1.5m in width, was excavated within the proposed development area. The earliest feature encountered consisted of a circular pit identified, which contained most (30 fragments) of a pottery vessel from the Late Bronze Age. Two undated pits were also identified, sealed beneath 18th/19th-century layers. Evidence for medieval activity was restricted to a single pit, containing 12th to 14th-century pottery, as well as residual pottery. Late post-medieval and modern deposits were identified within all of the trenches at depths of between 0.6 and 0.95m below the modern ground surface.		
Project dates	29 to 30 March 2011		
Project type	Archaeological evaluation		
Previous work	Unknown		
Future work	Unknown		
PROJECT LOCATION			
Site Location	Huntington Court, Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire		
Study area (M ² /ha)	500m ²		
Site co-ordinates	SP 1912 2568		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology		
Project Brief originator	Gloucestershire County Council		
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology		
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman		
Project Supervisor	Stuart Joyce		
MONUMENT TYPE	None		
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	Post Deverel Rimbury Plainware ovoid ja	r (partial)	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content	
Physical	Corinium Museum	Ceramics, animal bone, clay pipe, glass	
Paper	Corinium Museum	WSI, pro forma registers, recording forms and photographs	
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photographs	
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	1		

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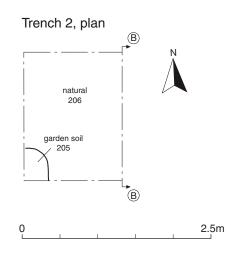
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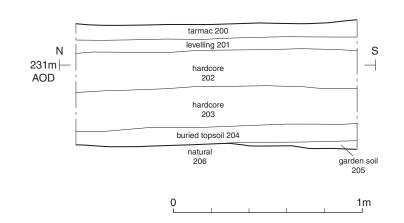
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Trench 1, looking south (scale 1m)



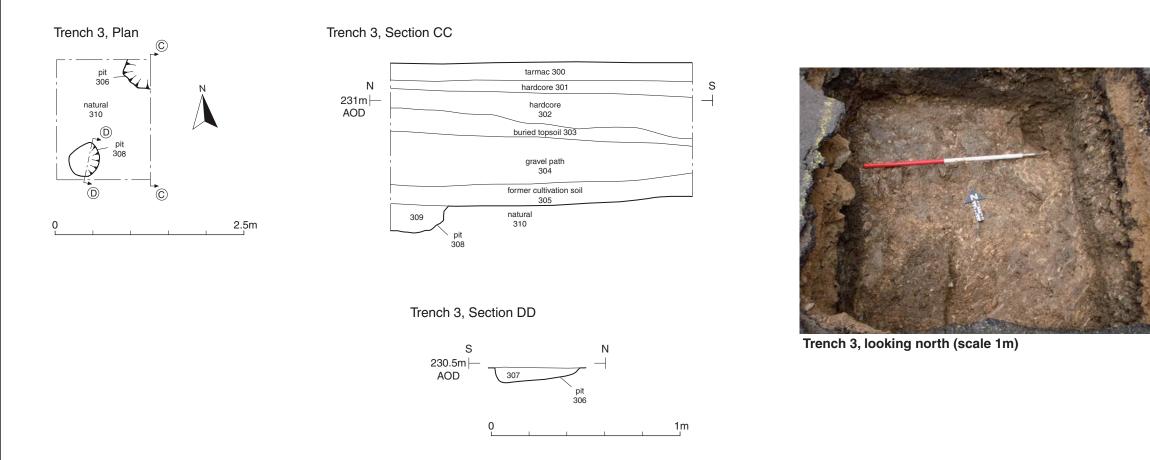
Trench 2, section BB





Trench 2, looking north (scale 1m)

PROJECT TI Hunti Stow FIGURE TITI	ington Courtya -on-the-Wold, (ches 1 and 2; photographs	rd, Sheep Glouceste	Street ershire



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