

**Mead Road Play Area
Mead Road
Gloucester**

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Gloucester City Council


CA Project: 5050
CA Report: 14441

September 2014

Mead Road Play Area
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Gloucester

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 5050
CA Report: 1441

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- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
Fig. 2 Trench location plan showing identified features (1:250)
Fig. 3 Photograph: Trench 2, looking north

SUMMARY

Project Name:	Mead Road Play Area
Location:	Mead Road, Gloucester
NGR:	SO 8637 1653
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	23 September 2014
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery
Site Code:	MRD 14

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in September 2014 at Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester. Two trenches were excavated.

Evidence of medieval and/or post-medieval agricultural practice, comprising the ploughed-out/truncated remains of ridge and furrow cultivation, was identified in Trench 2. All identified furrows contained post-medieval artefacts. No further archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the archaeological evaluation.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In September 2014 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Gloucester City Council at Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester (centred on NGR: SO 8637 1653; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application that is being submitted to Gloucester City Council (GCC).

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a *brief* for archaeological evaluation (GCC 2014) prepared by Andrew Armstrong, Gloucester City Archaeologist, the archaeological advisor to GCC, and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2014) that was approved by Mr Armstrong. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2009), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (1996), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006).

The site

1.3 The proposed development area comprises a broadly triangular parcel of land approximately 0.2ha in extent, that forms an area of public open space immediately east of Mead Road, Gloucester. It is bound by properties fronting Morwent Close to the north, by further open space to the east and by retail properties to the south-west.

1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone Formations of the Rhaetian to Pleinsbachian geological era (BGS 2014). The natural substrate, comprising mid brown-orange clay with frequent bands of gravel and patches of grey-blue clay, was identified in both of the excavated trenches.

Archaeological background

1.5 The proposed development area lies in an area of known archaeological potential, although no archaeological findspots or features are known from within the site itself.



- 1.6 Iron Age settlement in the wider vicinity of the current site is known from previous archaeological works at Abbeymead (Atkin and Garrod 1987). In the Roman period the current site lay in the hinterland of the major Roman town of *Glevum* (Gloucester). Evidence for a possible 1st-century Roman farm site with associated pits and ditches has previously been identified 60m to the north-east (Gloucester City Historic Environment Record (HER) 1346).
- 1.7 Historic mapping indicates that from at least the latter part of the 19th century until the last quarter of the 20th century the current site lay within agricultural land.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.8 The objectives of the evaluation are to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2009). This information will enable GCC to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

Methodology

- 1.9 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of two trenches, each measuring 20m in length and 1.8m in width, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Both trenches were moved slightly from their original positions due to their proximity to trees. The trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2012).
- 1.10 Both trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon 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* (2013).

- 1.11 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). No deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (1995).
- 1.12 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Gloucester Museum & Art Gallery. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS. 2 AND 3)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A, with a concordance of the finds contained in Appendix B.
- 2.2 The natural substrate, comprising mid brown-orange clay with frequent bands of gravel and patches of blue grey clay, was exposed in both of the excavated trenches at a depth of between 0.42m and 0.6m below present ground level. The upper surface of the exposed natural substrate exhibited evidence of having been heavily disturbed by modern activity, presumably relating to the construction of nearby houses.
- 2.3 In Trench 1, the natural substrate was immediately sealed by a modern make-up deposit containing frequent ceramic building material (CBM) fragments, plastic and metal. This was in turn sealed by modern topsoil and turf. In Trench 2, the natural substrate was cut by three parallel, north-west/south-east aligned plough furrows. These measured up to 2.8m in width, a maximum of 0.2m in depth, with each containin small quantities of post-medieval artefactual material. The fills of the furrows were subsequently sealed by a modern make-up deposit containing frequent CBM fragments, plastic and metal. This was in turn sealed by modern topsoil and turf.
- 2.4 No further features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified during the course of the evaluation.

The finds

- 2.5 No dateable material that certainly pre-dated the post-medieval period (c. 1550–1750) was recovered during the current works, consequently none of the finds will be retained.
- 2.6 A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recorded from furrow fill 206. It consists of a bodysherd in a red-firing earthenware with internal clear lead glaze that probably dates to the later 17th or 18th centuries. Other dateable material consists of brick/tile fragments of post-medieval type from furrow fills 204 and 206, and a ceramic drain fragment of likely modern date from furrow fill 208. A lump of blue/green glass waste from fill 204 is typical of material recorded from manufacturing sites dating across the later 17th to 19th centuries.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Evidence of medieval and/or post-medieval agricultural practice, comprising the ploughed out/truncated remains of ridge and furrow field systems, was identified in Trench 2.
- 3.2 The lack of *in situ* soils and the presence of demonstrably modern dumped deposits sealing the natural clays in both of the excavated trenches, coupled with the modern disturbance noted at the surface of the natural substrate, suggests that the area had been previously stripped, presumably during the construction of nearby housing. Such activity would have truncated archaeological deposits throughout the site and may have removed shallow/ephemeral features had they existed.
- 3.3 No further archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the archaeological evaluation, and despite the visual scanning of spoil, no finds of archaeological significance were recovered.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Steven Sheldon, assisted by Sara-Jayne Boughton. The report was written by Steven Sheldon. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled by Steven Sheldon, and

prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. REFERENCES

Atkin, M & Garrod, A.P, 1988 Archaeology in Gloucester, 1987, in *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, **106**, 209-18.

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2014 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 24 September 2014

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 *Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

GCC (Gloucestershire City Council) 2014 *Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester: Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

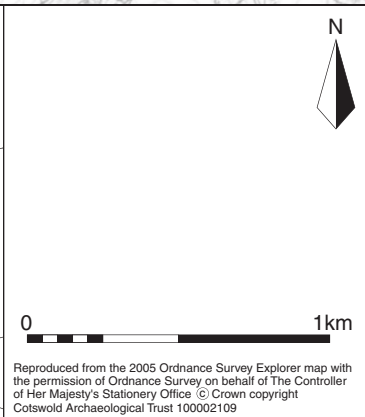
Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sand silt	>20	>1.8	0.19	
1	101	Layer		Modern Make-up	Mixed grey brown sand and clay with frequent modern CBM, plastic and metal inclusions throughout	>20	>1.8	0.23	
1	102	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid brown orange clay with frequent bands of gravel and patches of grey blue clay	>20	>1.8	>1	
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sand silt	>20	>1.8	0.28	
2	201	Layer		Modern Make-up	Mixed grey brown sand and clay with frequent modern CBM, plastic and metal inclusions throughout	>20	>1.8	0.32	
2	202	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid brown orange clay with frequent bands of gravel and patches of grey blue clay	>20	>1.8	>0.5	
2	203	Cut		Furrow	Furrow	>1.8	2.6	0.16	
2	204	Fill	203	Fill	Mid to dark brown clay silt with frequent charcoal inclusions	>1.8	2.6	0.16	
2	205	Cut		Furrow	Furrow	>1.8	2.8	0.2	
2	206	Fill	205	Fill	Mid to dark brown clay silt with frequent charcoal inclusions	>1.8	2.8	0.2	
2	207	Cut		Furrow	Furrow	>1.8	2.8	N/A	
2	208	Fill	207	Fill	Mid to dark brown clay silt with frequent charcoal inclusions	>1.8	2.8	N/A	

APPENDIX B: FINDS CONCORDANCE

Context	Description	Count	Weight(g)	Spot-date
204	Ceramic building material: brick/tile	3	5	pmed
	Glass waste	1	21	
	Fired clay	1	2	
	Marine shell: oyster	1	2	
206	Post-medieval pottery: glazed earthenware	1	6	pmed
	Ceramic building material: brick; flat tile	2	426	
	Marine shell: oyster	1	23	
208	Ceramic building material: pipe/land drain fragment	1	14	Pmed/mod

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester	
Short description (<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in September 2014 at Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester. Two trenches were excavated.</p> <p>Evidence of medieval and/or post-medieval agricultural practice, comprising the ploughed-out/truncated remains of ridge and furrow cultivation, was identified in Trench 2. All identified furrows contained post-medieval artefacts. No further archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the archaeological evaluation.</p>	
Project dates	23 September 2014	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.2ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SO 8637 1653	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Gloucester City Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	Steven Sheldon	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery	CBM, clay pipe, oyster shell, pottery
Paper	Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery	Trench recording forms, photographic register
Digital	Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 <i>Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road, Gloucester: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 14441		





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PROJECT TITLE
 Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road
 Abbymead, Gloucester

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 5050	DATE 30/09/2014	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY AO	REVISION 00	
APPROVED BY LM	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	1

Reproduced from the 2005 Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright Cotswold Archaeological Trust 100002109



- site
- evaluation trench
- furrow
- modern



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PROJECT TITLE
 Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road
 Abbeymead, Gloucester

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan showing
 identified features

PROJECT NO.	5050	DATE	30/09/2014	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	AO	REVISION	00	2
APPROVED BY	LM	SCALE@A3	1:250	

P:\5050 Mead Road Play Area Mead Road Abbeymead Gloucester Glos EVAL\Illustration\Drafts\5050 Mead Road Play Area Fig 02.dwg

SO



3

3 Trench 2, looking north (1m scales)



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PROJECT TITLE

Mead Road Play Area, Mead Road
 Abbymead, Gloucester

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

PROJECT NO.	5050	DATE	30/09/2014	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	AO	REVISION	00	3
APPROVED BY	LM	SCALE@A4	N/A	