

Stonehouse Court Hotel Stonehouse Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Cedar House Hotel Company Ltd

CA Project: 5884
CA Report: 16248

May 2016



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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Stonehouse Court Hotel
Location:	Stonehouse, Gloucestershire
NGR:	SO 7998 0507
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	9 May 2016
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Museum in the Park, Stroud
Site Code:	SCHS 16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2016 at Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. One trench was excavated.

Late post-medieval/modern disturbance, most probably associated with localised gravel extraction, tree throws and or garden features, was identified throughout the trench. No features pre-dating this modern activity were identified.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Cedar House Hotel Company Ltd at Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SO 79987 05076; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken in support of an application to be made to Stroud District Council (SDC) for the construction of a new building for additional bedrooms and a spa/gym within the hotel grounds. It was recommended by Charles Parry, Archaeologist, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), the archaeological adviser to SDC.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a *brief* for archaeological evaluation (GCC 2015) prepared by Charles Parry and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)* produced by CA (2016) that was approved by Mr Parry. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014).

The site

- 1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 180m² in extent and currently comprises an open lawn area within the grounds of the hotel. The site is bounded to the north and west by the hotel grounds, to the east by Church Lane and residential properties and to the south by the graveyard of the Parish Church of St Cyr. The site lies at approximately 30m AOD and is flat.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2016). Natural gravels, presumed to be terrace gravels associated with the River Frome, were recorded within the trench.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Prehistoric and Roman occupation of the Frome Valley is well attested, although no remains of this date are known from the site itself. Roman pottery has previously been recovered in the adjacent churchyard, and may indicate nearby settlement.
- 2.2 The site is located within the historic core of medieval Stonehouse. The name of the settlement, first recorded in 1086, is likely to derive from a manor house that probably stood on the site of the later Stonehouse Court, and was the focus of the

earliest settlement (VCH 1972, 268). The extant Stonehouse Court is a gabled Elizabethan mansion although it has been altered by 20th-century renovations (Verey and Brooks 2002). The exact location of the original manor building and any ancillary buildings are unknown.

2.3 The Parish Church of St Cyr was originally founded in the 12th century, although, with the exception of the tower, the standing buildings are a predominantly a 19th-century rebuild. The church building is located 70m south of the proposed development area, with its associated graveyard extending as far as the current site's southern boundary. The 1839 Tithe Map shows the site to be located within the lawns of Stonehouse Court, with the graveyard in its current location to the south, suggesting that the boundary between the church and manor/court lands has remained static throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods.

2.4 The main focus of the later medieval settlement migrated to the north of the manor house, along a road running north towards Gloucester (VCH 1972, 268); although there is evidence for a possible site of a deserted medieval village in the immediate vicinity of Stonehouse Court and the church (Aston and Viner 1981, 28).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 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 *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). This information will enable SDC 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).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of a single trench, measuring 30m in length and 1.8m in width, in the location shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The trench was set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.

- 4.2 The trench was 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*.
- 4.3 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*. No deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. The site archive will be deposited with Museum in the Park, Stroud, but the recovered post-medieval/modern artefacts will not be retained. 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.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2 & 3)

- 5.1 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 respectively.
- 5.2 Natural geological substrate 1002, comprising terrace gravels, was typically encountered 0.35m below the present ground level (bpgl). It was sealed by silty gravel subsoil 1001, which in turn had been cut by a series of post-medieval/modern pits (pits 1003, 1005, 1007, 1009 and 1011; see Fig. 2 for locations and extent). These pits were irregular in plan, varied in size (the largest, pit 1011, measured at least 11.5m in length and approximately 1.05m in depth) and contained post-medieval and modern artefacts. All were sealed by topsoil.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Artefactual material was hand-recovered from five deposits (all pit fills). The recovered material dates to the post-medieval/modern periods. Quantities of the

artefact types recorded are given in Appendix B. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. Pottery fabric codes are equated to the Gloucester pottery type series as defined by Vince (unpublished), where possible. The finds are of minimal archaeological significance and will not be retained.

Pottery: Post-medieval/modern

- 6.2 A total of 11 sherds (372g) of pottery from this date range was recovered from five deposits. In terms of edge abrasion and surface preservation, condition is good to very good, and the average sherd weight is high (74g).
- 6.3 Three post-medieval ware types are present: unglazed earthenware (TF50), which dates to the mid 16th to 18th centuries; Staffordshire mottled brown-glazed earthenware (TF74, early 18th to early 19th centuries); yellow slipware (TF72); and tin-glazed earthenware (TF62). The latter two types are found in Gloucestershire from the late 17th to 18th centuries.
- 6.4 Pottery of modern date consists of: flowerpot (TF63, 19th to 20th centuries) and transfer-printed refined whiteware (TF71). The whiteware includes two joining, full profile sherds from a James Keiller marmalade jar which dates to after 1862. The base features the maker's mark for Maling pottery in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

Ceramic building material

- 6.5 A small fragment of ceramic building material, in a moderately worn condition, was recorded in fill 1008 of pit 1007.

Glass

- 6.6 Fill 1010 of pit 1009 produced a fragment of glass from the base of a wine or spirits bottle of post-medieval date.

Clay tobacco pipe

- 6.7 A fragment from the bowl of a clay tobacco pipe was also retrieved from pit fill 1010. It is broadly dateable to the late 16th to late 19th centuries.



7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the site (see *Archaeological Background*; above), no archaeological features pre-dating the later post-medieval/modern period were identified. Although the site falls within the original, historic core of Stonehouse, it has most probably formed part of the grounds of Stonehouse Court, and possibly the earlier manor house, for much of the medieval and post-medieval period.
- 7.2 The function of the post-medieval/modern pits remains undetermined. Small scale, localised gravel extraction cannot be overlooked, although no evidence for quarrying is recorded on any of the consulted cartographic sources. The 1884 First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) does record trees in the approximate location of the trench, that were absent from subsequent imprints. It is therefore possible that some of the pits may alternatively represent either tree planting holes or other garden features, or evidence for the removal of the trees in the late 19th century.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Sausins, assisted by Sam Bateman. The report was written by Daniel Sausins. The finds report was written by Jacky Sommerville. The illustrations were prepared by Sam O'Leary. The archive has been compiled by Daniel Sausins, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

9. REFERENCES

Aston, M and Viner, L 1981 'Gloucestershire Deserted Villages' in *Glevensis* **15**, 22–29

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

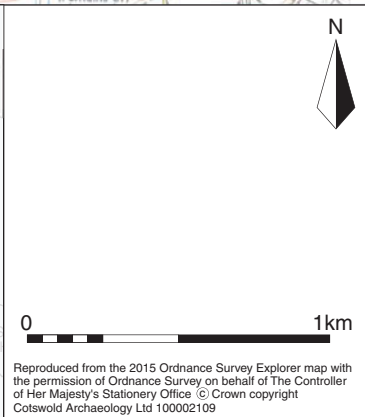
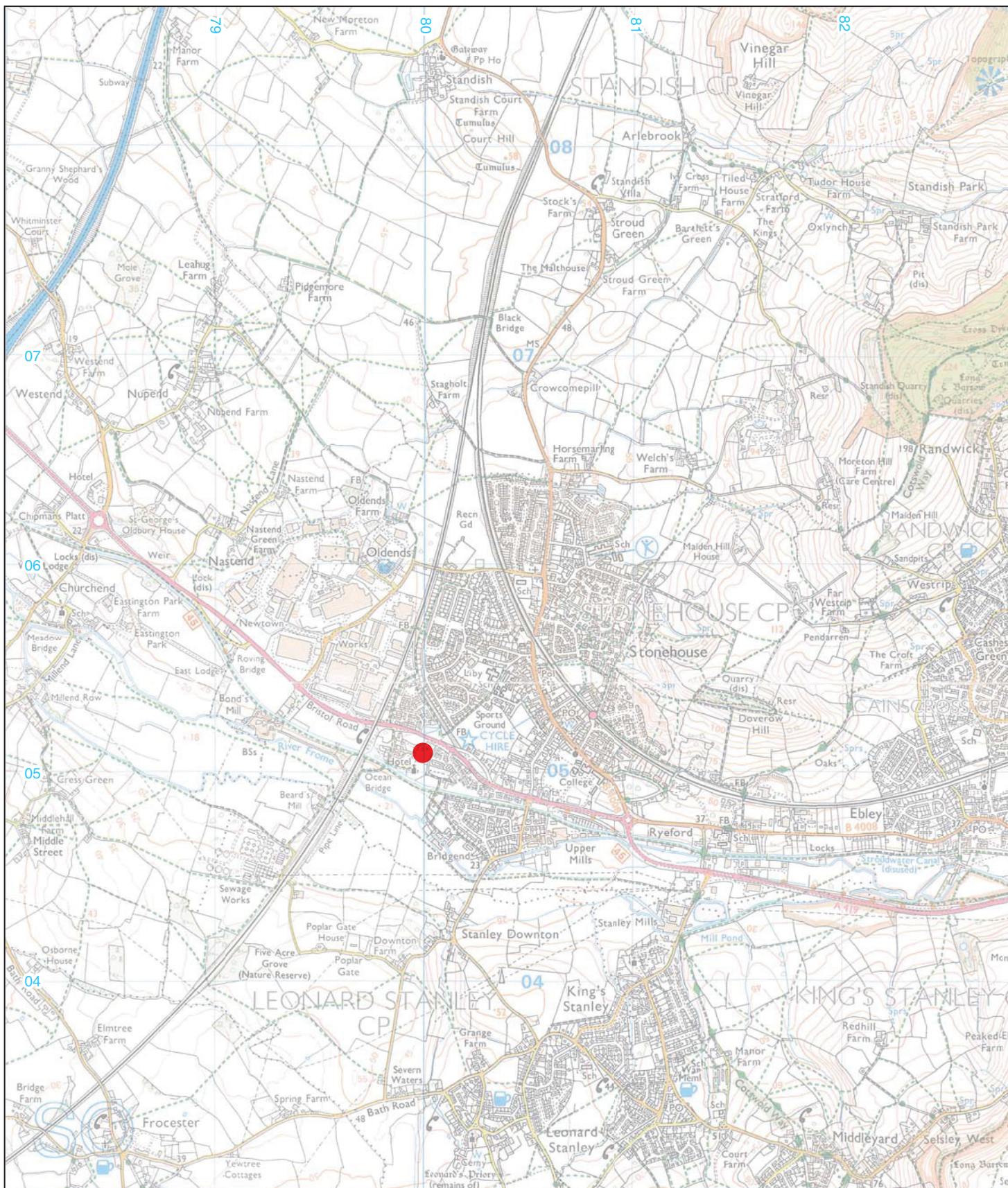
Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	1000	Layer		Topsoil	Mid red-brown silty clay			0.21	
1	1001	Layer		Subsoil	Light red-brown silty gravel			0.17	
1	1002	Layer		Natural substrate	Light yellow sand and gravel				
1	1003	Cut		Pit	Irregular in plan, unexcavated	>2.3	>1.8		
1	1004	Fill	1003	Pit fill	Loose mid brown-grey clay silt and yellow gravel with pottery, window glass and CBM	>2.3	>1.8		LC19
1	1005	Cut		Pit	Irregular in plan, unexcavated	>2.1	>1.3		
1	1006	Fill	1005	Pit fill	Mid brown-grey clay with stone rubble, CBM and metal pipework	>2.1	>1.3		C19-C20
1	1007	Cut		Pit	Irregular in plan, unexcavated	>3.5	>1.1		
1	1008	Fill	1007	Pit fill	light brown-grey clay silt with loose, clean gravel, stone, CBM, window glass and pottery	>3.5	>1.1		MC16-C18
1	1009	Cut		Pit	Irregular in plan, unexcavated	>4.6	>1.8		
1	1010	Fill	1009	Pit fill	Mid brown-grey silt clay mixed with brown clay with stone, CBM and pottery	>4.6	>1.8		LC17-C18
1	1011	Cut		Pit	Irregular in plan and profile	>11.5	>1.8	1.04	
1	1012	Fill	1011	Pit fill	Mixed yellow brown and grey-brown clay silt with gravel, stone, CBM and pottery	>11.5	>1.8	1.04	EC18-C19

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
1004	Modern pottery	Transfer-printed refined whiteware	TF71	4	257	LC19
1006	Modern pottery	Flowerpot	TF63	2	7	C19-C20
1008	Post-medieval pottery Post-medieval ceramic building material	Unglazed earthenware	TF50	1	45	MC16-C18
		Fragment		1	8	
1010	Post-medieval pottery Post-medieval pottery Post-medieval glass Clay tobacco pipe	Yellow slipware	TF72	1	42	LC17-C18
		Tin-glazed earthenware	TF62	2	6	
		Bottle		1	17	
		Bowl		1	2	
1012	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Staffordshire Mottled brown-glazed ware	TF74	1	15	EC18-EC19

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2016 at Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. Late post-medieval/modern disturbance, most probably associated with localised gravel extraction, tree throws and or garden features, was identified throughout the trench. No features of archaeological interest were identified.	
Project dates	9 May 2016	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Not known	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Stonehouse Court Hotel, Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	180m ²	
Site co-ordinates	SO 79987 05076	
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	Daniel Sausins	
MONUMENT TYPE	none	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	none	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	n/a	n/a
Paper	Museum in the Park, Stroud	Trench sheet, photo register
Digital	Museum in the Park, Stroud	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 <i>Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 16248		




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PROJECT TITLE

Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse
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FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	5884	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	LM	DATE	17/05/2016	1
APPROVED BY	CB	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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- site boundary
- evaluation trench
- post-medieval / modern



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PROJECT TITLE
 Stonehouse Court Hotel, Stonehouse Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location showing identified pits

DRAWN BY SO	PROJECT NO. 5884	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY LM	DATE 17/05/2016	2
APPROVED BY CB	SCALE@A3 1:500	

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Trench 1, looking south-east



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Trench 1 photograph

DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	5884	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	LM	DATE	17/05/2016	3
APPROVED BY	CB	SCALE@A4	N/A	

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