

Purple Zone Wapping Wharf Bristol

Archaeological Watching Brief



for:
Balfour Beatty plc

CA Project: 6663
CA Report: 6663__1
OASIS ID: cotswold2-319895

October 2020



Purple Zone Wapping Wharf Bristol

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Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	22 October 2020	Jessica Cook	Laurent Coleman	External review	–	Richard Young

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e. enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk				

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf
Location:	Bristol
NGR:	358564 172107
Type:	Watching brief
Date:	15 June to 15 August 2018 and 21 to 22 September 2020
Planning Reference:	Bristol City Council Planning Ref: 11/01842/R
OASIS ID:	cotswold2-319895
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives
Accession Number:	BRSMG: 2018.55
Site Code:	WWPB18

Between June and August 2018 and in September 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at the Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol.

A small number of structural remains were uncovered during the works, some of which clearly related to the use of the site as the gatehouse for the New Gaol (constructed in the early 19th century). These remains comprised a substantial stone-built drain extending from the rear of the gatehouse, most likely representing a continuation of a feature uncovered during previous works, and a cobbled surface at the entrance to the gatehouse.

Other structural features recorded included a stone box drain later covered by a small square structure, a stone pier base, two short stretches of east/west modern walling and several modern refuse pits, potentially relating to the occupation of the site by the Harbour Railway between 1895 and 1970.

No artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Between June and August 2018 and in September 2020, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol (centred at NGR: 358564 172107; Fig. 1). This watching brief was undertaken at the request of Balfour Beatty plc.
 - 1.2. The Purple Zone (Fig 2, inset) forms part of a larger development area at Wapping Wharf, for which planning consent was granted by Bristol City Council (BCC) (BCC Planning ref 11/01842/R) for a mixed purpose development, conditional (no 29) on a programme of archaeological works.
 - 1.3. The archaeological investigation of the wider development area was initiated by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) in accordance with an overarching site *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI), prepared by BaRAS (2016), following a *Brief for archaeological investigation* (BCC 2007) defined by Bob Jones (City Archaeologist, Bristol City Council), the archaeological advisor to BCC. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) prepared by CA (2018), conforming to the WSI prepared by BaRAS (2016) and approved by Bob Jones.
 - 1.4. The watching brief was also in line with *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014; updated June 2020), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).
- The site**
- 1.5. The watching brief site was situated within the 'Purple' Zone as identified within the BaRAS WSI (2016) and is part of one of the original three areas for archaeological investigation as set out in the BCC *Brief* (2007). The site comprised part of the Wapping Wharf construction site and was bounded to the south by Cumberland Road. The site lies at approximately 8m AOD.
 - 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Redcliffe Sandstone Member - sandstone of the Triassic Period, overlain by superficial tidal flat deposits - clay and silt of the Quaternary Period (BGS 2018). A previous evaluation of the site

identified a Late Pleistocene sandstone cliff to the north-east of the watching brief area, the projected northern extent of which runs along the northern limit of Blocks D and E (CA 2004).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The entire development site has previously been the subject of a desk-based assessment (Leech 2003) and several phases of archaeological fieldwork (BaRAS 2003, 2014, CA 2004, CA 2016 and 2017). The following is a summary of the principal results of those investigations as they pertain to the Purple Zone area.
- 2.2. The site is located within the City Docks Conservation Area, on the south bank of the River Avon. Throughout the medieval period the area surrounding the site is thought to have been utilised mainly as pasture within an area known as Addercliff, which formed part of the estates of St Augustine's Abbey (now Bristol Cathedral), approximately 500m to the north-west.
- 2.3. Shipbuilding on undeveloped land on the south bank of the Avon started in a piecemeal fashion from the later 17th century. A dry dock with associated buildings had been constructed in Wapping Wharf, to the north-east of the Purple Zone, by 1714. A drawing by Nicholas Pocock of c. 1760 indicated a number of residential buildings in the vicinity of the dry dock; however Jessop and White's plan of 1792 depicts no buildings within the Red Zone at that time.
- 2.4. The New Gaol was constructed at Wapping Wharf between 1816 and 1820 and was rebuilt in 1831 following riots. The Purple Zone is located within the Gaol's perimeter wall and overlies the location of the prison blocks. The layout of the prison blocks is depicted in Ashmead's plan of 1854.
- 2.5. Use of the Gaol ceased in 1878, the land was bought by the GWR in 1883 and sidings had been constructed by 1903 (2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map). This involved the demolition of most of the prison, apart from the eastern lobe of the prison wall, the gatehouse and the eastern radial cell block which survived in a ruinous condition until the 1920s (CA 2018).
- 2.6. Three trenches forming part of the archaeological evaluation of Wapping Wharf fell wholly or partly within the Purple Zone watching brief area (Trenches 11, 13 and

149; CA 2004). These trenches identified brick-built walls and of probable 19th-century date, together with modern surfaces.

2.7. Archaeological excavation within the Red Zone (immediately to the north-east of the Purple Zone; Fig 2) was recently undertaken by CA. This confirmed historic cartographic evidence for a sequence of harbour-side development at the site during the post-medieval and modern periods. Evidence was found for a number of residential and industrial plots associated with the nascent shipbuilding activity in 18th century as depicted on a map of 1802. These appear to have been demolished in the early 19th century and replaced by a large building at the east of the excavation area. This building was itself enlarged and renovated in the latter part of the 19th century, before being demolished during the 20th century, to be replaced by a Weighing Machine and an adjoining building belonging to the Harbour Railway (CA 2016).

2.8. Subsequent archaeological watching brief within the Purple Zone identified a large stone-built drain running below (and broadly contemporary with) the gatehouse of the New Gaol and a concrete plinth and narrow stone wall (of 19th-century date) in the northern part of the site. Historic Building Recording of the gatehouse and part of the New Gaol Perimeter Wall was also undertaken (CA 2017).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1. The general objectives of the watching brief were:

- to monitor the development groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits/features thus revealed;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated project archive and a report setting out the watching brief results and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. The watching brief comprised the observation by a competent archaeologist of all intrusive groundworks associated with the proposed development. These works included ground reduction to the north of the southern site boundary to remove the surcharge from the existing boundary wall (Fig 2). Non-archaeologically significant deposits were removed by the contractors under archaeological supervision. Where mechanical excavators were used, these were equipped with a toothless bucket.

-
- 4.2. Archaeological features/deposits were investigated, planned and recorded 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.
 - 4.4. CA will make arrangements with Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives (BRSMG: 2018.55) for the deposition of the project archive, including a digital archive. The archives will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated June 2020).
 - 4.5. A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-9)

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the watching brief results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.

Geology

- 5.2. The natural geological substrate consisted of dark red sand. It was revealed within **Trenches 1 to 3**. This was overlain by a made ground deposit, again identified in **Trenches 1 to 3**, which contained large quantities of CBM fragments and modern materials as well as flagstone paving slabs within **Trench 2**. The natural substrate was not reached during investigations within **Trenches 4 and 5**.

Trench 1

- 5.3. No significant archaeology was revealed in Trench 1. Three small sub-circular or sub-oval possible refuse pits and two service trenches were identified. The pits **102**, **104** and **106** contained dark brown silty clay fills with inclusions of CBM, charcoal and modern material, and measured on average >4m long by 0.5m wide with depths between 0.3m and 0.7m. The service trenches **108** and **110** contained sandy fills with brick inclusions and measured on average >4m long by 0.5m wide by 0.4m deep.

Trench 2

- 5.4. A circular stone pier base **203** measuring 0.65m in diameter, within a construction cut **205** that was not visible in plan, was identified cutting into the natural red sand geology (Fig 9). A modern wall **200**, comprised of ashlar limestone blocks with fittings for iron railings, at the northern limit of the trench and adjacent to the rear of the gaol gatehouse was also recorded.

Trench 3

- 5.5. A stone lined box drain **302**, with two branches 302.1 and 302.2 and a central area of stone standing, was identified (Fig 6). The construction cut for the drain **305** was not visible in plan but the feature clearly truncated the natural red sand geology. The drains measured 0.3m in width and 0.2m in depth and were aligned north-west/south-east with a curving edge at the northern side of 302.1. A brick lined silt trap (302.3) and an upright sluice stone were present at the western end of 302.2 (Fig 7).
- 5.6. A small rectangular stone structure **301** measuring 2.7m in length and 1.4m in width had been constructed directly above drain **302**. The structure contained internal stone paving slabs, although its function was unclear. The modern wall, extant in Trench 2, was also present in this trench (wall **300**).

Trench 4

- 5.7. A cobbled surface **401** in front of the entrance to the gaol gatehouse was recorded prior to its removal during ground reduction works (Fig 8). The surface was comprised of roughly dressed sandstone blocks, measuring on average 15mm in length by 14mm in width and 12mm in depth. Large stones measuring on average 91mm in length by 34mm in width and 14mm in depth were present at the east and west ends of the surface. The surface had been truncated by a line of concrete posts and a service trench.
- 5.8. Underlying surface **401** was a bedding layer **402** comprised of mixed redeposited natural red sand with frequent sandstone, chalk, lime and charcoal flecks throughout.

Trench 5

- 5.9. A drain or sewer **500** comprising walls constructed from roughly faced stone blocks, measuring 0.3m in width, a stone base, and associated capping stones **502**, was

uncovered extending from under an archway at the rear of the gaol gatehouse and continuing northwards (Fig 5). The top of the covering stones was approximately 2.6m below the gatehouse floor and the drain was approximately 0.8m wide internally, 1.4m wide in total and 1.8m deep. It extended for at least 4.3m and was clearly on the same north/south alignment as the large stone-built drain recorded during previous watching brief works (Fig 2; CA 2017). This drain was approximately 10m to the north of **500** and the two were either part of the same feature or at least coterminous and likely related. A brick wall **501** extending across the width of the drain was present immediately north of the gatehouse. A ceramic drainpipe was visible at the base of the drain and extending through wall **501**. This pipe was not fully uncovered due to safety considerations but appears to be the same as, or similar to, the ceramic pipe recorded in the centre of the drain uncovered to the north.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1. No artefactual material pre-dating the later 20th century was observed during the archaeological recording, and none was recovered.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. The large stone drain in Trench 5, at the rear of the gaol gatehouse, was almost certainly related to the drain identified during previous works (CA 2017), and quite possibly a continuation of this feature. This drain would have served as a major, if not the main, drain leading out of the gaol towards the New Cut of the River Avon to the south. The drain was probably constructed at the same time as the New Gaol in the early 19th century. The internal width of approximately 0.8m, would have allowed access into the drain, for maintenance and clearing. The ceramic pipe present at the base of the drain was a later addition, dating to the mid to late 19th century, when the use of such drain pipes became more widespread, following the Public Health Act of 1849.
- 7.2. The only other feature identified during these works that clearly related to the use of the site as the New Gaol, was the cobbled surface, and associated bedding layer, located at the entrance to the gatehouse.
- 7.3. The box drain located in Trench 3, to the west of the gatehouse, was not as substantial as the large drain uncovered in Trench 5 and was clearly not part of the

same structure, although its drainage function was evident. The date of the feature is unclear and it could potentially have been in use during the occupation of the site by the Harbour Railway from the late 19th century, although its location in close proximity to the gaol gatehouse would potentially suggest it was broadly contemporary with the main north/south drain.

7.4. The function and date of the stone pier base in Trench 2 and the square stone structure, constructed above the box drain, in Trench 3 are also unclear, whilst the possible refuse pits uncovered in Trench 1 were clearly of modern date, as evidenced by the plastic and other modern material present within the fills.

7.5. The east/west walls within Trenches 2 and 3 are located between the northern end of the curvilinear perimeter walls and the rear of the gatehouse. They are of relatively modern date and do not appear on the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey Plan of 1898-1939. By the time of the 1947-1965 edition Ordnance Survey Plan, the former New Gaol site had been subject to ground reduction right up to the rear of the former gatehouse and northern end of the curvilinear perimeter walls. Although not indicated on any later plans, it is possible that these short stretches of east/west walling are relatively contemporary with this ground reduction and were intended to prevent or limit access to the ruined gaol gatehouse from the Harbour Railway site.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

8.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Noel Boothroyd, assisted by Joe Price. This report was written by Jessica Cook. The report illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The project archive has been compiled by Noel Boothroyd and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Laurie Coleman.

9. REFERENCES

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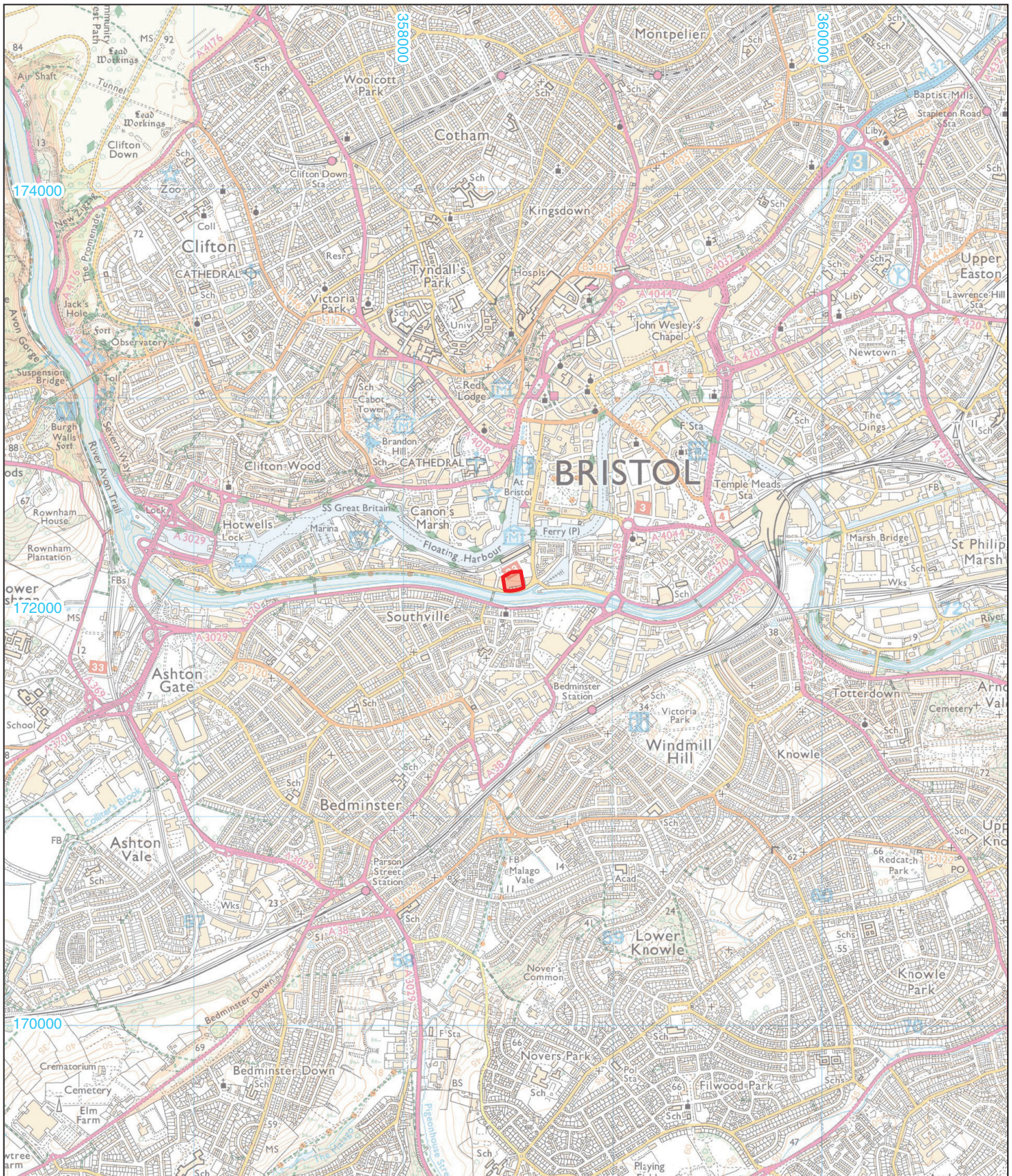
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		Made ground	Made ground rich in CBM, plastic and modern material	>22	>4	0.1	
1	101	Fill	102	Pit	Dark brown silty clay with frequent charcoal, CBM and modern material inclusions	>4	2	0.7	
1	102	Cut		Pit	Cut of sub-circular or sub-oval pit, possible refuse pit	>4	2	0.7	
1	103	Fill	104	Pit	Dark brown silty clay with frequent charcoal, CBM and modern material inclusions	>4	0.5	0.4	
1	104	Cut		Pit	Cut of sub-circular or sub-oval pit, possible refuse pit	>4	0.5	0.4	
1	105	Fill	106	Pit	Dark brown silty clay with frequent charcoal, CBM and modern material inclusions	>4	0.4	0.3	
1	106	Cut		Pit	Cut of sub-square or sub-rectangular pit, possible refuse pit	>4	0.4	0.3	
1	107	Fill	108	Linear	Modern cable trench fill	>4	0.6	0.45	
1	108	Cut		Linear	Cut of north-south cable trench	>4	0.6	0.45	
1	109	Fill	110	Linear	Friable sandy silt with frequent brick inclusions. Modern trench fill	>4	0.5	0.4	
1	110	Cut		Linear	Cut of north-south modern trench	>4	0.5	0.4	
1	111	Layer		Alluvium	Red sand with mottled patches of purple sandy silt				
2	200	Masonry		Wall	Coursed ashlar blocks on rough uncoursed foundations. Modern stone wall with settings for Iron railings		0.3	0.75	
2	201	Layer		Made ground	Made ground including flagstone paving			1	
2	202	Layer		Natural	Dark red sand				
2	203	Masonry	204	Structure	Stone pier base	0.65	0.65		
2	204	Cut		Construction cut	Square construction cut for 203. Truncates 202	0.65	0.65		
3	300	Masonry		Wall	Coursed ashlar blocks on rough uncoursed foundations. Modern stone wall with settings for Iron railings	7.8	0.3	0.75	
3	301	Masonry		Structure	Rectangular stone structure with internal paving. Constructed directly above 302	2.7	1.4		
3	302	Masonry	305	Drain	Curvilinear stone box drain, north-west/south-east. 0.7m bgl. Comprised of stone and brick linings with a light grey mortar bond with charcoal and chalk inclusions. Set onto a stone standing and containing an upright sluice stone at western end				
3	303	Layer		Made ground	Made ground deposit			0.13	

3	304	Layer		Natural	Dark red sand			>0.7	
3	305	Cut		Construction cut	Curvilinear construction cut for 302				
4	401	Masonry		Surface	Cobbled surface of roughly dressed limestone blocks. Average size 15mm x 14mm x 12mm with larger stones on average 91mm x 34mm x 14mm at east and west ends	17.5	4.5	0.4	
4	402	Layer		Surface	Mixed redeposited natural red sands with frequent sandstone, chalk, lime and charcoal flecks throughout. Bedding layer for 401	17.5	4.5	0.4	
5	500	Masonry		Drain	Stone block linear north-south drain, same as feature identified in previous works	>4.3	0.8	>0.8	
5	501	Masonry		Drain	Brick wall running east-west within drain 500	0.8	0.2		
5	502	Masonry		Drain	Stone slab covering drain 500. Internal void				

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol	
Short description	<p>Between June and August 2018 and in September 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at the Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol.</p> <p>A small number of structural remains were uncovered during the works, some of which clearly related to the use of the site as the gatehouse for the New Gaol (constructed in the early 19th century). These remains comprised a substantial stone-built drain extending from the rear of the gatehouse, most likely representing a continuation of a feature uncovered during previous works and a cobbled surface at the entrance to the gatehouse.</p> <p>Other structural features recorded included a stone box drain later covered by a small square structure, a stone pier base, two short stretches of east/west modern walling and several modern refuse pits, potentially relating to the occupation of the site by the Harbour Railway between 1895 and 1970.</p>	
Project dates	June 2018 – September 2020	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	Desk Based Assessment (Leech 2003) 2003/2004/159 HBR and Watching Brief (CA 2017) 17121	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Old City Gaol, Cumberland Road, Wapping Wharf, Southville, Bristol, City of Bristol, BS1	
Study area (m ² /ha)	0.03 ha	
Site co-ordinates	358564 172107	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Bristol City Council	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology Bristol and Region Archaeological Services	
Project Manager	Laurie Coleman	
Project Supervisor	Noel Boothroyd	
MONUMENT TYPE	Drain Post-medieval	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	
Paper	Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives BRSMG: 2018.55	Context Records, Plans, Report
Digital	Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives BRSMG: 2018.55	Digital photos, Report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2020 <i>Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA typescript report 6663_1		



 Site boundary

0  1km

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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

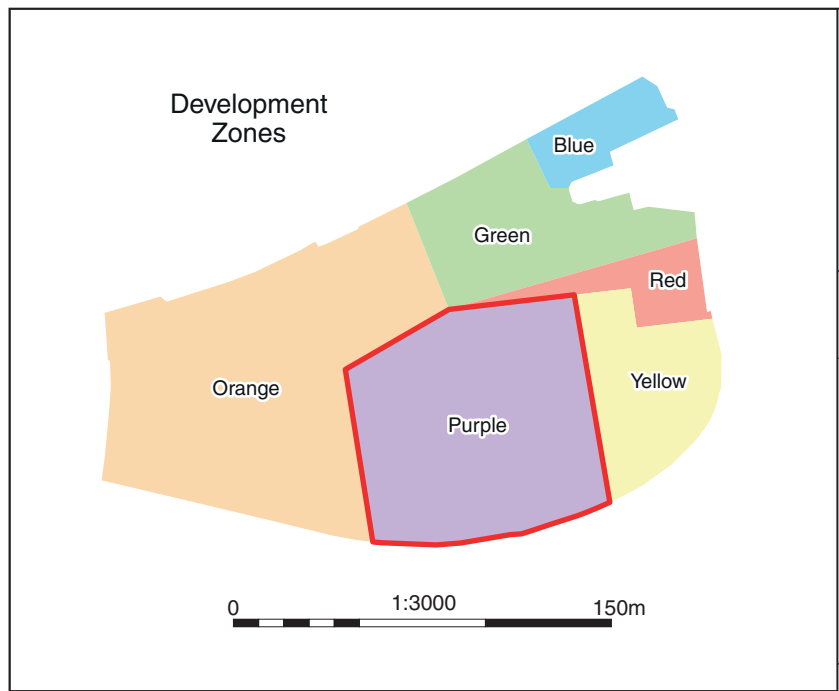
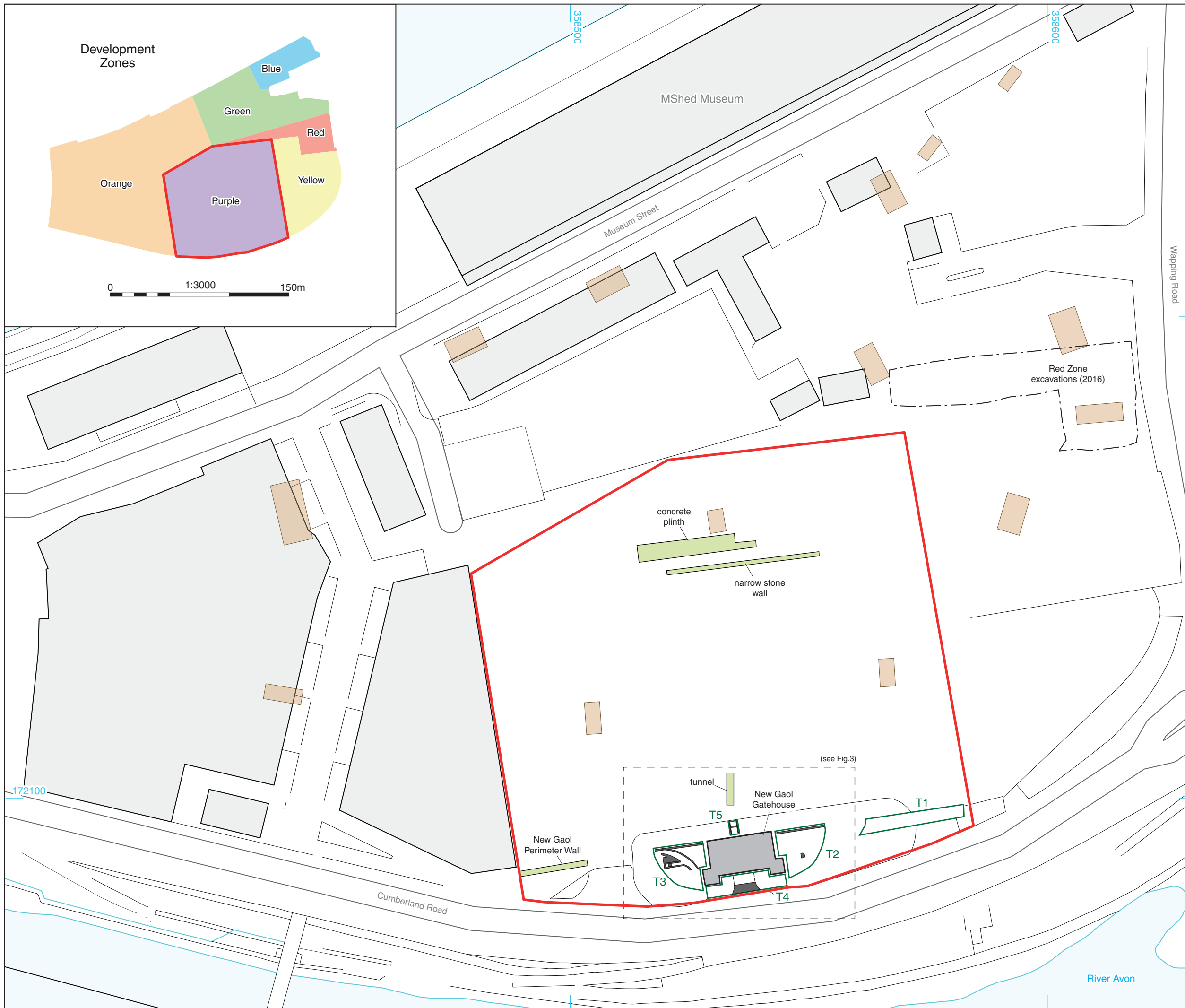


Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 573970
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
Suffolk 01449 900120
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

DRAWN BY EE	PROJECT NO. 6663	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY DJB	DATE 13/10/2020	1
APPROVED BY LC	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	



- Site boundary
- Observed groundworks
- Previous excavation area
- Previous watching brief feature (CA 2017)
- Previous evaluation trench (CA 2004)
- Structural feature



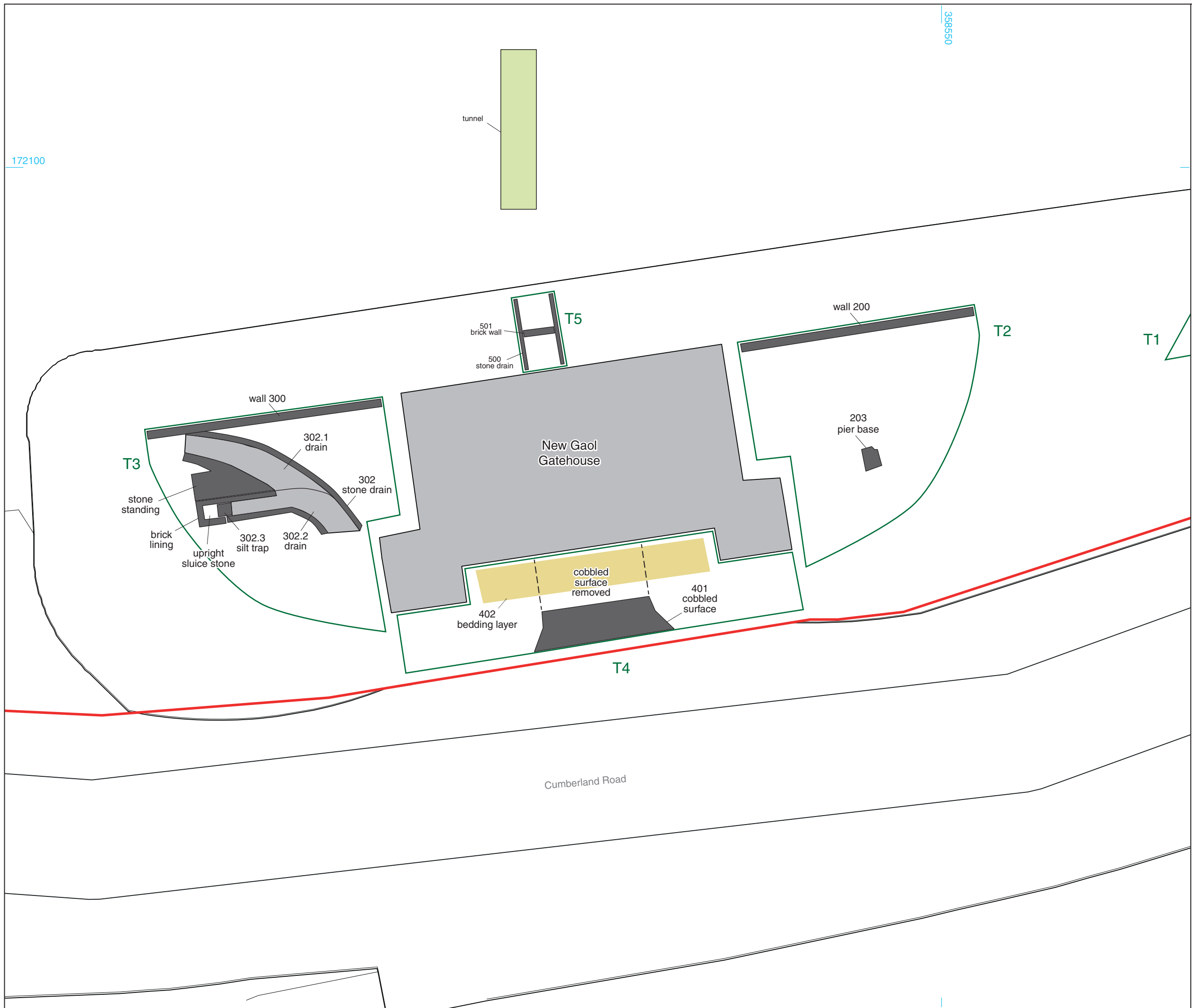
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[Cirencester 01285 771022](tel:01285771022)
[Exeter 01392 573970](tel:01392573970)
[Milton Keynes 01908 564660](tel:01908564660)
[Suffolk 01449 900120](tel:01449900120)
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE
Feature location plan

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	6663	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	13/10/2020	2
APPROVED BY	LC	SCALE@A3	1:750 / 1:3000	



172100

358650



- Site boundary
- Observed groundworks
- Previous watching brief feature (CA 2017)
- Structural feature
- Layer



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 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE
**Structural features plan
 (Trenches 2, 3, 4 and 5)**

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	6663	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	13/10/2020	3
APPROVED BY	LC	SCALE@A3	1:100	



4

General site shot showing Trench 3 and gaol gatehouse, view south-east



5

Stone drain 500 and brick wall 501, view south towards the gaol gatehouse



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 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 573970
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 Suffolk 01449 900120
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Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 13/10/2020
 APPROVED BY LC SCALE@A4 NA

FIGURE NO.

4 & 5



6

Drain 302, view west (scale 0.5m)



7

Close up of sluice stone and silt trap in drain 302, view south (scale 0.3m)



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 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 573970
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Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

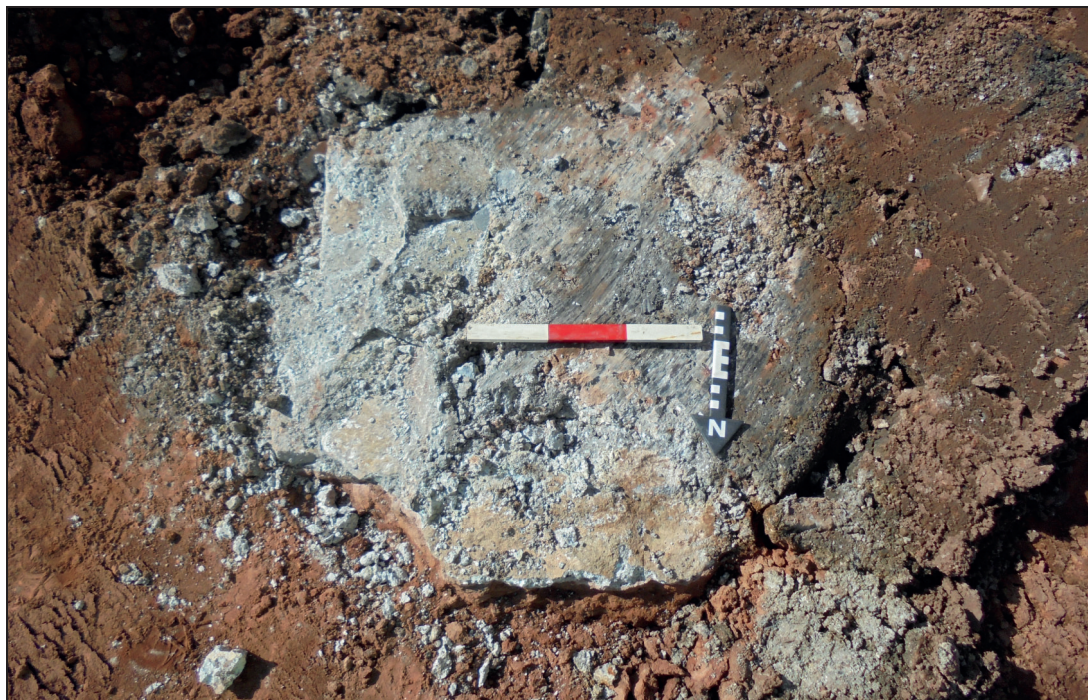
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FIGURE NO.

6 & 7



Cobbled surface 401, view west



Pier base 203, view south (scale 0.3m)



Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 573970
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 Suffolk 01449 900120
 w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

Purple Zone, Wapping Wharf, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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FIGURE NO.

8 & 9

Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11
Kemble Enterprise Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

Exeter Office

Unit 1, Clyst Units
Cofton Road
Marsh Barton
Exeter
EX2 8QW

t: 01392 573970

Milton Keynes Office

Unit 8 - The IO Centre
Fingle Drive, Stonebridge
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK13 0AT

t: 01908 564660

Suffolk Office

Unit 5, Plot 11, Maitland Road
Lion Barn Industrial Estate
Needham Market
Suffolk
IP6 8NZ

t: 01449 900120

e: enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

