

**Wyevale Garden Centre,  
Binfield,  
Berkshire**  
*Archaeological Evaluation*



for  
RPS Consulting Services Ltd

on behalf of  
Spitfire Bespoke Homes

CA Project: AN0014  
CA Report: AN0014\_01

July 2019



# Wyevale Garden Centre, Binfield, Berkshire

## Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: AN0014  
CA Report: AN0014\_01



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A	25/6/19	Emily Troake	Ray Kennedy	Internal Review	General Edit	Richard Greatorex

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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Land at Wyevale Garden Centre
<b>Location:</b>	Wyevale Garden Nursery, Binfield, Berkshire
<b>NGR:</b>	485219 171271
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	17-20 June 2019
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	(ref: 18/01168/FUL)
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	Currently stored in Cotswold Archaeology's Andover office
<b>Site Code:</b>	VAGA19

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in June 2019 at Wyevale Garden Nursery, Binfield. Ten trenches were excavated.

The trenches were distributed across the proposed development in order to assess the archaeological potential across as wide an area as possible. Four of the trenches contained archaeological features with the remainder of the trenches archaeologically sterile. The archaeological evidence was concentrated to the south of the site including a ditch of medieval date, along with the remains of the post-medieval wall and associated ditch. To the east of the site, a marsh/pond was identified.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for RPS Consulting Services Ltd on behalf of Spitfire Bespoke Homes at Wyevale Garden Nursery, Binfield, Berkshire centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 485219 171271 (see Figure 1).
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken to examine the potential presence of below ground archaeological features. Planning application (ref: 18/01168/FUL) has been made to Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) for the development of 29 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space and car parking following demolition of existing garden centre buildings. The archaeological advisor to BFC has recommended that an archaeological evaluation is carried out.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by Roland Smith. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014). It was monitored by Roland Smith, including site visits on 18 June 2019.

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 2.07ha, and currently comprises of the former Wyevale garden centre buildings, car park and associated infrastructure. The garden centre closed in February 2019. A large brick wall surrounds the northern and eastern edges of the Site which in turn is surrounded by a dense belt of trees. The Site lies at approximately 49m aOD (above Ordnance Datum) at the western boundary, sloping downwards to approximately 46m aOD at the eastern boundary.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as London Clay – clay silt and sand formed approximately 48 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period. No superficial deposits are recorded, although deposits of alluvial clay, silt, sand and gravel are recorded immediately to the east, likely associated with The Cut watercourse (BGS Online 2019). Geotechnical investigations on Site, comprising the excavation of five boreholes and five hand-excavated pits encountered London Clay at depths of 0.3-0.7m, below topsoil and made ground layers (Aviron, 2018).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This section presents a summary of the archaeological background as outlined in the Desk-Based Assessment produced by CgMs Heritage (CgMs, 2018).

### ***Prehistoric***

- 2.2 Flint scatters dating from the Mesolithic period were recorded c. 810m south-west from the Site during an archaeological excavation at Park Farm.
- 2.3 Evidence of activity during the Neolithic period within the wider environs of the site, is provided by a find spot of an axe head at an unspecified location within Binfield parish.
- 2.4 A horseshoe-shaped enclosure was recorded during an archaeological evaluation, c. 690m south from the Site, dated to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, with two ditches nearby also dated to this period.
- 2.5 Fieldwalking exercises undertaken by the East Berkshire Archaeological Society to the east, south and north-west of the Site have recorded numerous find spots of prehistoric worked and struck flint, although they have not been more closely dated.
- 2.6 The Iron Age is represented by an area of settlement identified c. 700m south of the Site, during an archaeological excavation in 1995. This small, rural settlement was comprised of four roundhouses, several enclosures, and pit clusters, in addition to numerous other associated postholes, pits and curvilinear and linear gullies. The south-west of the settlement was occupied by large, shallow, sub-circular enclosures with no internal features, which may represent livestock enclosures. The finds assemblage presented three ceramic phases at the site: Middle Iron Age, Late Iron Age, and Early Romano-British “Belgic” and late 1st century.

### ***Romano-British***

- 2.7 The Site is situated some distance from all known Roman settlements and roadways. Occupation activity of the preceding Iron Age rural settlement to the south continued into the Roman period, as suggested by the presence of Roman pottery identified in features. Further find spots of Roman pottery, comprising individual sherds and scatters, have been recorded within the vicinity of the Site, between

375m and 1km to the south-west, south, and east, occasionally within features associated with Iron Age pottery and construction. In addition, a Roman steelyard weight was encountered c. 690m east from the Site and an Iron Age/Roman copper alloy pin c. 700m to the south.

### ***Anglo-Saxon and medieval***

- 2.8 Binfield is not mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Survey. The location of the later settlement was at the time situated equidistant between the three medium-sized settlements of Easthampstead to the south, Warfield to the east, and Whistley to the north-west. The name “Binfield” is believed to have stemmed from the Old English beonet + feld, meaning “open land where bent-grass grows”, and is first mentioned as Benetfeld in 1160.
- 2.9 The Stag and Hounds public house, situated c. 120m west from the Site, is believed to have originated in the 14th or 15th century, although it was extensively altered and extended in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. The centre of the royal Windsor Forest was said to be marked by the 800 year old Centre Elm, which once stood outside of the Stag and Hounds. The All Saints Church, situated c. 1km north-east from the Site, is mostly of mid- 19th construction, but retains some medieval architectural elements. Mention is made in 1870-72 that the church dates from the reign of Edward III (1313-1377).
- 2.10 An incomplete 14th or 15th century book clasp was recovered from a field c. 740m north of the Site.
- 2.11 Fieldwalking undertaken by the East Berkshire Archaeological Society has recorded numerous find spots of medieval pottery to the south, east, and north-west of the Site, usually as single sherds and more rarely as scatters. Find spots such as these are not necessarily indicative of occupation, and may be associated with manuring practices.

### ***Post-medieval and modern***

- 2.12 The Stag and Hounds public house is believed to have been in use as a royal hunting lodge during the early post-medieval period, used by Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, and converting to a coaching inn in 1727.

- 2.13 The present Binfield Manor (Grade II Listed) was constructed c. 150m south-east from the Site in 1754, on the opposing bank of The Cut, as a country retreat for William Pitt the Elder. The Site once lay within the grounds owned by the manor, although this does not necessarily suggest a significant archaeological potential. Rocque's Map of 1761 depicts the study site in a triangular enclosed field, with The Cut to the east, the Reading to Windsor road to the south and the settlement of Binfield to the west, its dwellings dispersed along a collection of minor roads.
- 2.14 The 1809 Ordnance Survey map suggests the Site to be occupied by a laid out geometrical garden, otherwise surrounded by agricultural fields. This use is further supported by the 1837 Binfield Parish Tithe Map and accompanying Apportionments List, which detail the Site as a garden owned by Lady Frances Anne.
- 2.15 The First Edition 1871 Ordnance Survey depicts the southern half of the Site occupied by an orchard, and the northern half as gardens crossed by paths. The house at the centre of this arranged landscape, and the line of trees screening the property from the road, suggest a private plot, laid to gardens and orchards, rather than agriculture. The boundary wall for these gardens and orchards, has been retained as the north, western and eastern boundaries of the Site.
- 2.16 By the end of the 19th century, the Site has been slightly rearranged, with trees or orchards occupying the site south of a north-east/south-west divide, and new structures built close to the existing house and along the northern boundary. Further rectangular structures had been built to the west of the main house by 1912 and the Site remained in this layout until the 1960s or 70s, until the construction of the garden centre and nursery.
- 2.17 A small number of undated ditches and furrows were recorded during an archaeological evaluation in 2017 at the former Blue Mountain golf course, between 450m and 1.1km south from the Site. The alignment of these features, in comparison with current field boundaries and mapped 19th century boundaries, suggested contemporaneity (CgMs 2018).

### 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 the Roland Smith of Berkshire Archaeology archaeological advisor to Bracknell Forest Council 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 10 trenches all of which were 2m wide in the locations shown on the attached plan (Figure 2). **Trenches 2, 3, 6, 8 and 9** were all 30m long and excavated in the originally planned locations. **Trench 1** and **4** were moved to avoid trees; **Trench 5** was shortened to avoid services, whilst **Trenches 10 and 7** were shortened to avoid spoil heaps. 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*.
- 4.2 All 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*.
- 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* and, 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 Andover. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner, the artefacts and site archive will be kept at the CA Andover office until a suitable museum can be found to take them. If the modest assemblage of artefacts does not merit retention, the archive will be deposited digitally with a trusted digital repository, such as the Archaeological Data Service, with the approval of the relevant museum. 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 (FIGURES 2-6)

- 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 The natural geological substrate was broadly similar throughout site and consisted of a yellow brown with bands of blue grey clay sand with common flint gravels revealed at an approximate depth of 0.68m below present ground level (bpgl). In **Trenches 1-4** and **8**, this is overlain by made ground consisting of grey/brown silt/clay with occasional modern waste inclusions including CBM and an average thickness of 0.42m. Whilst in **Trenches 6-7** and **9-10** this is overlain by subsoil comprising grey/brown clay/silt with flint gravel inclusions and an average thickness of 0.18m. In all trenches except **Trench 1**, this was sealed by a modern tarmac and aggregate layer averaging 0.37m thick. **Trench 1**, was sealed by a layer of mid-yellow/brown clay/silt topsoil at 0.14m thick.
- 5.3 **Trenches 1-4, 6** and **7** were devoid of any archaeological features.

### ***Trench 5 (Figures 2)***

- 5.4 The Southern half of **Trench 5** exposed a possible pond or marsh/bog deposit (**501**) below and possibly truncated by tarmac and aggregate and covering the natural. It consisted of blue/grey silty/clay and measured 5.5m in length in excess of 0.35m deep and is most likely part of deposit **905** found in the **Trench 9**.

### ***Trench 8 (Figures 2 & 4)***

- 5.5 Ditch **803** ran across the eastern half of **Trench 8** on a northwest/southeast alignment. It had steep straight sides and measured 0.91m wide and 0.58m deep.



The base was not reached due to localised flooding. It contained a single fill of secondary silting (**804**) comprising grey/brown silt/clay which was very compact, and contained medieval pottery, and ceramic building material that is medieval, or post-medieval in date.

### ***Trench 9 (Figures 2 & 5)***

5.6 The southern end of **Trench 9** exposed a large construction cut **902** which contained a brick wall **903** 0.80m in width (3 courses deep) by at least 0.50m in depth constructed of un-frogged bricks and chalk mortar on an east/west alignment. The construction cut is also filled with a single secondary silting comprising of mid blue/grey silt/clay from which post medieval CBM was recorded. The wall is visible on all the maps from the Ordnance Survey Map of 1871 to the Ordnance Survey Map of 1960.

5.7 Located in the northern end of **Trench 9** was a blue/grey silt/clay deposit (**905**) measuring 15m long and 1m deep possibly from a pond or marsh and is probably part of deposit **501** found in the **Trench 5**. The deposits Post medieval glass, clay pipe and CBM was recorded from this deposit.

### ***Trench 10 (Figs 2 & 6)***

5.8 Construction cut **1003** was exposed in the western end of **Trench 10** on an east-west alignment. It contained wall **1005** made from 3 courses of un-frogged bricks and chalk mortar measuring 0.90m in width and at least 0.70m in depth, as well as a secondary silting of grey/yellow/brown clay/silt (**1004**).

## **6. FINDS**

6.1 Artefactual material recovered from the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and discussed further below. All finds have been recorded directly to an MS Excel spreadsheet.

### **Pottery**

6.2 A small assemblage of five sherds (71g) was recovered from two deposits. Ditch **803** (fill **804**) produced two quartz-rich sherds of probable medieval date and two sherds of glazed earthenware, of mid-16th to 18th century date. The latest material

comprises a sherd of modern flowerpot, recovered from wall construction cut **1003** (fill **1004**).

### **Other Finds**

- 6.3 A small group of ceramic building material was recovered from ditch **803** (fill **804**), comprising mostly flat tile and including peg tile, of medieval or post-medieval date.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

- 7.1 The archaeological features were concentrated to the south of the site in **Trenches 8, 9 and 10**. The wall with associated ditch recovered in **Trench 9 & 10** is visible on all the maps from the Ordnance Survey Map of 1871 to the Ordnance Survey Map of 1960. The date of the creation of this wall is likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly when the land had a house and was used as an orchard as seen on the OS maps.
- 7.2 The ditch exposed in **Trench 8**, diverges from the alignment of the wall and associated ditch, and runs on a northwest/southeast alignment. The fill contained finds dating it to the medieval period. While its function is uncertain it is likely agricultural in nature.

## **8. CA PROJECT TEAM**

Fieldwork was undertaken by Emily Troake, assisted by Katherine Hebbard and Joe Whelan. The report was written by Emily Troake. The illustrations were prepared by Amy Wright. The archive has been compiled by and prepared for deposition by Richard Paxford. The project was managed for CA by Oliver Good.

## **9. REFERENCES**

Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England (APABE) 2017 *Guidance for best practice for the treatment of Human remains excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*.

Aviron Associates Ltd, 2018, *Phase II Geo-Environmental Risk Assessment: Wyevale Garden Centre, Forest Road, Binfield, RG42 4HA*

British Geological Survey (BGS) 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer*  
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 7 March 2019

CgMs Heritage (CgMs) 2018, *Wyevale Garden Nursery, Binfield, Berkshire. Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*

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



## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt, loose with common rooting	23	2	0.14
1	101	Layer		Made ground	Dark grey brown clay silt, friable with modern rubbish including plastic and brick and glass	23	2	0.66
1	102	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow sandy clay with occasional gravel	23	2	>0.11
2	200	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	29	2	0.34
2	201	Layer		Made ground	Blue grey brown silty clay with modern CBM	29	2	0.52
2	202	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown and blue grey clay silty sand with abundant gravel	29	2	>0.12
3	300	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	34	2	0.38
3	301	Layer		Made ground	Dark grey black clay, friable with modern contamination	34	2	0.38
3	302	Layer		Natural	Mid yellow brown clay gravel	34	2	>0.05
4	400	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	22	2	0.25
4	401	Layer		Made ground	Grey brown silty clay with modern CBM	22	2	0.36
4	402	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown clay sand with flint gravel	22	2	>0.09
5	500	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	11	2	0.8
5	501	Layer		Pond	Blue grey silty clay with post medieval CBM	11	2	0.3
5	502	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown clay silt sand with flint gravel	11	2	>0.1
6	600	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	30	2	0.24
6	601	Layer		Subsoil	Grey brown clay silt	30	2	0.2
6	602	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown and blue grey sandy clay with occasional flint gravel	30	2	>0.16
7	700	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	19	2	0.33
7	701	Layer		Subsoil	Grey brown clay silt with common flint gravel	19	2	0.2
7	702	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown sandy clay with abundant flint gravel and blue grey clay bands	19	2	>0.12
8	800	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	29.4	2	0.3
8	801	Layer		Made ground	Blue grey silty clay with CBM fragments	29.4	2	0.2
8	802	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown and blue grey sandy silty clay with common flint gravels	29.4	2	>0.27
8	803	Cut		Ditch	Linear with straight steep sides on NW-SE alignment. Base not reached	>2	0.91	>0.58
8	804	Fill	803	Secondary fill	Grey brown silty clay, very compact	>2	0.91	>0.58
9	900	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	30	2	0.38
9	901	Layer		Subsoil	Grey brown clay silt	30	2	0.19
9	902	Cut		Ditch/construction cut	Linear construction cut for wall and associated ditch on e-w alignment	>0.2	1.4	>0.5
9	903	Struct		Wall	Brick wall in south of trench, 3 courses wide with chalk mortar, unfrogged handmade bricks on E-W alignment	>2	0.8	>0.5
9	904	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown clay silt sand with blue grey clay and abundant gravels	30	2	>0.24
9	905	Layer		Pond/marsh	Blue grey silty clay former marsh/bog in north of trench with post medieval CBM	>15	2	>0.63
9	906	Fill	902	Fill of ditch/construction cut	Mid blue grey silty clay, friable with post med CBM	>0.2	>0.35	>0.5
10	1000	Layer		Tarmac	Modern tarmac with aggregate	24	2	0.5

10	1001	Layer		Subsoil	Grey brown silty clay	24	2	0.15
10	1002	Layer		Natural	Yellow brown and blue grey clay sand with occasional flint gravel	24	2	>0.55
10	1003	Cut		Ditch/construction cut	Linear construction cut for wall and associated ditch on E-W alignment with brick wall immediately to the north	>8	0.9	>0.70
10	1004	Fill	100	Fill of ditch/construction cut	Grey yellow brown clay silt with flint gravel and charcoal flecks	>8	0.9	>0.70
10	1005	Struct		Wall	Brick wall in south of trench, 3 courses wide with chalk mortar, unfrogged handmade bricks on E-W alignment	>8	0.8	>0.7

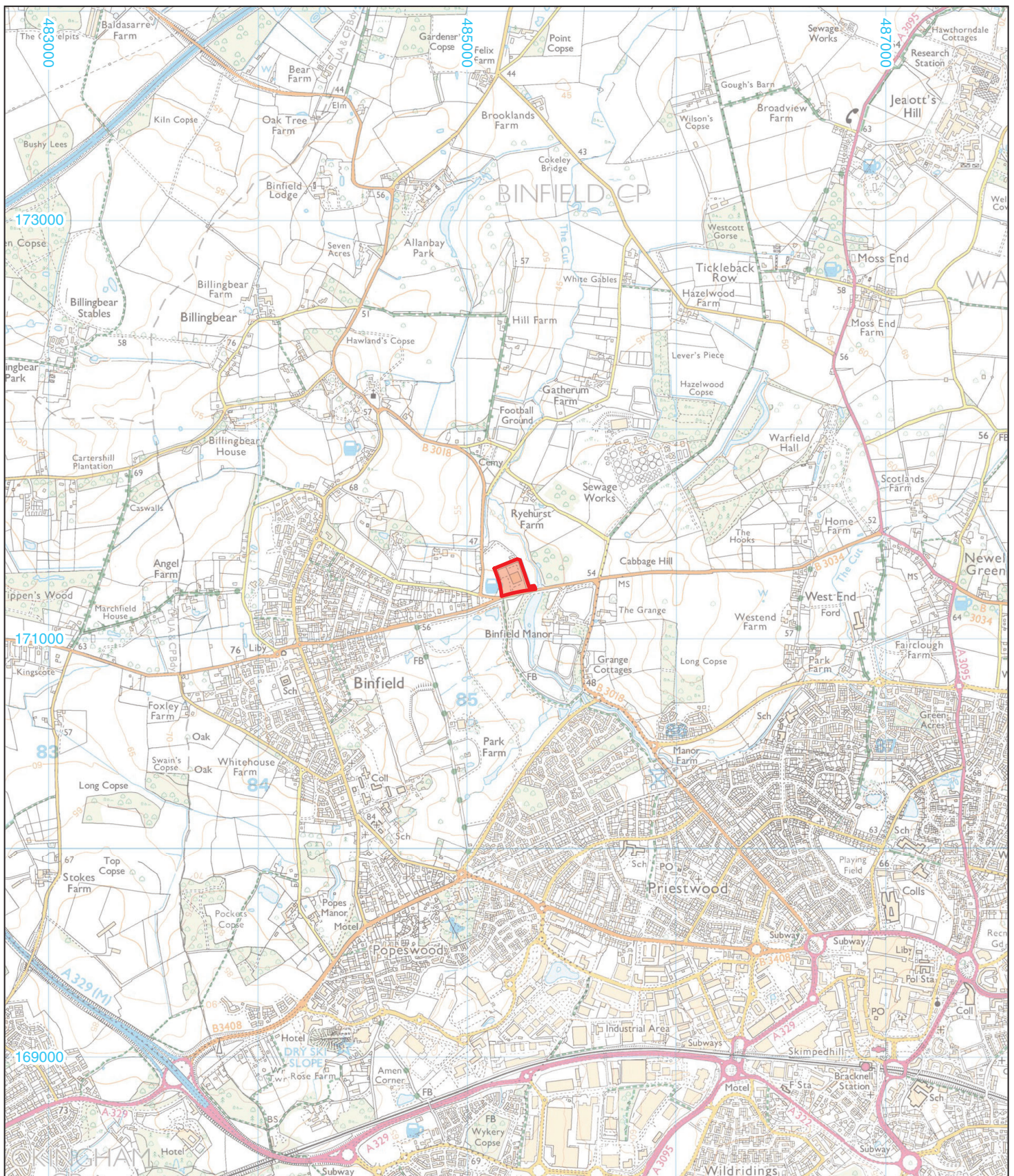
## APPENDIX B: FINDS CONCORDANCE

Context	Class	Description	Fabric Code	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Spot-date
804	CBM	inc. peg tile		22	1239	-
804	post-medieval pottery	glazed earthenware	GEW	2	13	MC16-C18
	medieval pottery	quartz-rich bodysherds	Qz	2	20	
1004	modern pottery	flowerpot		1	38	C20-C21

**APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Land at Wyevale Garden Centre	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in June 2019 at Wyevale Garden Nursery, Binfield. Ten trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The trenches were distributed across the proposed development in order to assess the archaeological potential across as wide an area as possible. Four of the trenches contained archaeological features with the remainder of the trenches archaeologically sterile. The archaeological evidence was concentrated to the south of the site including a ditch of medieval date, along with the remains of the post-medieval wall and associated ditch. To the east of the site, a marsh/pond was identified.</p>	
Project dates	17 – 20 June 2019	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work		
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Land at Wyevale Garden Centre, Binfield, Berkshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	485219 171271	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Oliver Good	
Project Supervisor	Emily Troake	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		Context sheets, matrices
Digital		Database, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2019 <i>Wyevale Garden Nursery, Binfield, Berkshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i>. CA typescript report <b>AN0014_1</b></p>		





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**PROJECT TITLE**  
**Wyevalle Garden Centre, Binfield, Berkshire**

**FIGURE TITLE**  
**Site location plan**

0 1km

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<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<b>ET</b>	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	<b>1:25,000</b>

**FIGURE NO.**

**1**





- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (excavated/unexcavated)
- Structure
- Deposit
- Modern
- Field drain
- Section location



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PROJECT TITLE  
Wyevale Garden Centre, Binfield,  
Berkshire

FIGURE TITLE  
Trench location plan

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Trench 1, looking north-east (1m scales)



Trench 4, looking south-east (1m scales)



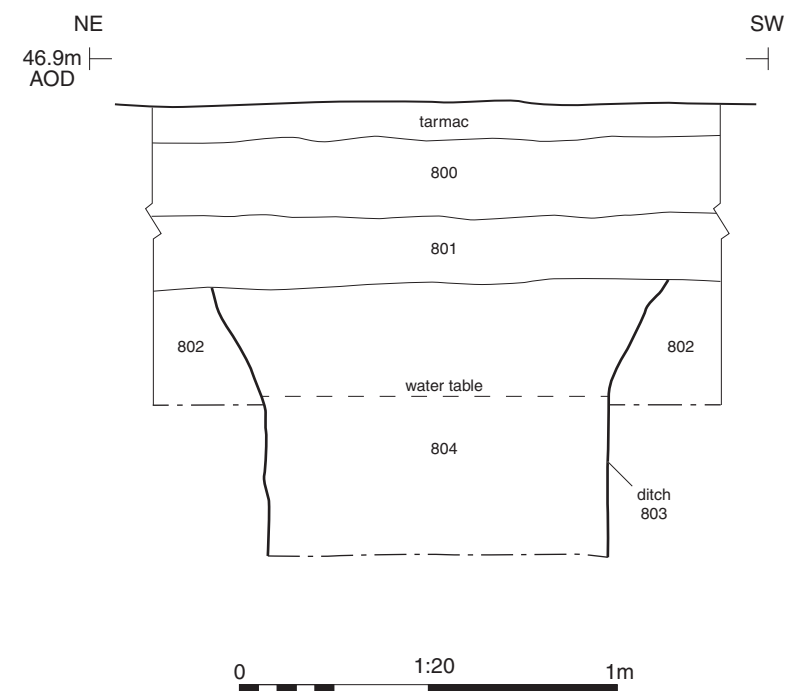
Trench 7, looking south-west (1m scales)





Trench 8, looking north-east (1m scales)

# Section AA



Ditch 803, looking south (1m scale)



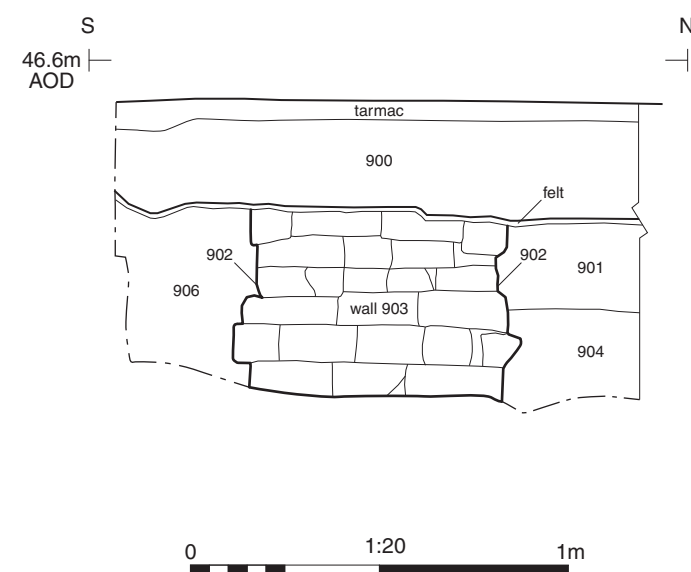


Trench 9, looking north (1m scales)



Section of wall 903, looking west (1m scale)

Section BB



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PROJECT TITLE

Wyevale Garden Centre, Binfield,  
 Berkshire

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 9 section and photographs

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FIGURE NO.  
**5**





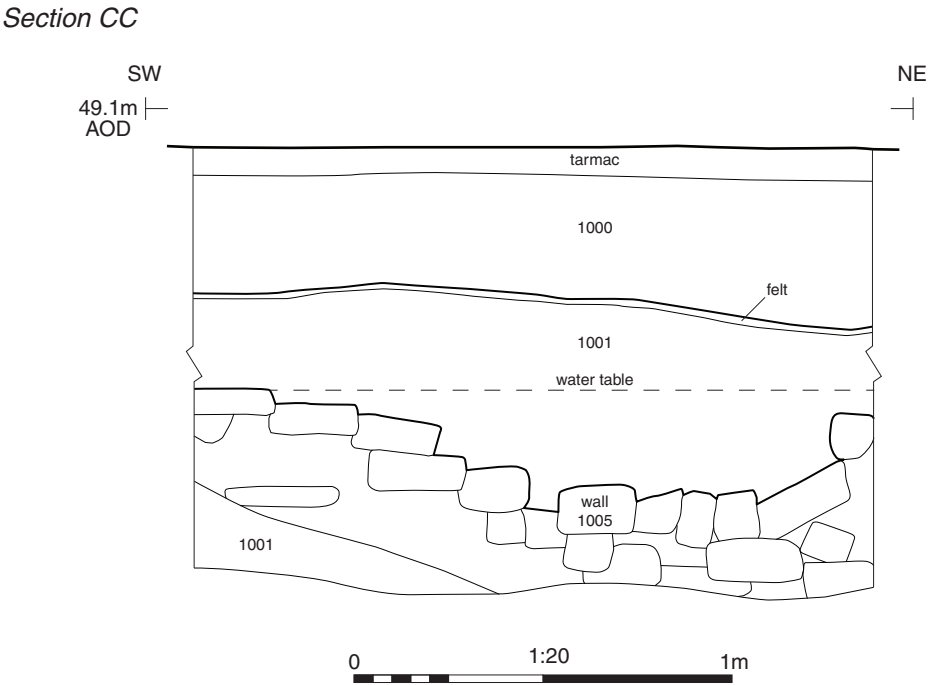
Trench 10, looking north-east (1m scales)



Wall 1005, looking north-east (0.5m scale)



Section of wall 1005, looking north-west (0.5m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE  
 Wyevale Garden Centre, Binfield,  
 Berkshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 10 section and photographs**

DRAWN BY CHECKED BY APPROVED BY	AW DJB ET	PROJECT NO. DATE SCALE@A3	AN0019 03.07.19 1:20	FIGURE NO. <b>6</b>
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