

**Cravens Yard
Church Street Centre
Evesham
Worcestershire**

Archaeological Evaluation



for:
TSH Builders Limited

on behalf of:
Clevebury Developments Limited

CA Project: CR1313
CA Report: CR1313_1
HER Ref: WSM78610

April 2023



Cravens Yard Church Street Centre Evesham Worcestershire

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A	6 April 2023	Christopher Leonard	Steven Sheldon	Draft	–	Alex Thomson

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre
Location:	Evesham, Worcestershire
NGR:	404242 243538
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	6 March 2023
Planning reference:	Wychavon District Council ref: 20/01349/FUL
WHER reference:	WSM78610
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Worcestershire Museums and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Site Code:	CRA 23

In March 2023, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre, Evesham, Worcestershire. A total of three trenches were excavated.

The evaluation revealed a similar stratigraphic sequence of relict soils sealed by modern hardstanding and rubble in all three trenches. No archaeological features or deposits were identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In March 2023, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre, Evesham, Worcestershire (centred at NGR: 404242 243538; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for TSH Builders Limited, on behalf of Clevebury Developments Limited.
- 1.2. Wychavon District Council (WDC) has granted planning permission for the construction of four residential dwellings (planning ref: 20/01349/FUL). Condition 4 of this planning permission required the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with an approved *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI).
- 1.3. This evaluation was in part retrospective, in that the ground works for the dwellings have been completed and the houses themselves constructed, and its scope was determined by Aidan Smyth, Archaeology and Planning Advisor, WDC, during correspondence with CA. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a WSI prepared by CA (2023) and approved by Mr. Smyth.
- 1.4. The evaluation was also undertaken in line with the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014; updated October 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 development site is approximately 0.086ha in extent and lies to the west of Church Road and to the south of Bridge Street. The site was formerly occupied by a joiner's yard and currently comprises a construction site. The site is bounded to the north, east and south by residential or commercial properties; to the west, the site is bounded by a public footpath and open green space. The site lies at approximately 30m AOD and is broadly flat.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation, which formed in the Triassic and Jurassic eras (BGS 2023). This is overlain by Wasperton Sand and Gravel Member, which formed

in the Quaternary period (ibid.). The natural substrate, comprising compact yellow brown sand and gravel, was identified in all of the excavated trenches.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The site has been subject to a brief heritage statement, which was primarily focused on the now-demolished structures within the development area (Healy 2020). The following is a summary of information taken from this assessment along with any pertinent publicly available information.

Prehistoric and Roman

2.2. The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) records no prehistoric or Roman remains within the site itself, although limited evidence of early prehistoric (Palaeolithic to Neolithic) activity is recorded in the wider area. Where found, evidence of early prehistoric activity primarily comprises lithic scatters and cropmarks seemingly representative of transient occupation of the floodplains and gravels found in low-lying areas along the River Avon, in which the current site is situated.

2.3. More widespread evidence of later prehistoric activity is recorded within the immediate vicinity of the site, with an Iron Age settlement, comprising an enclosure and associated occupation activity, being identified c. 130m to the south-east of the site (Wainwright 2001). Further possible prehistoric or Roman activity is recorded with a number of potential enclosures, seemingly representing prehistoric/Roman settlements or agricultural field systems, having been identified during a cropmark survey as part of the Gloucestershire National Mapping Programme (NMP), c. 750m to the south-east of the site.

Early medieval and medieval

2.4. Evesham Abbey was founded in 701 AD by the Bishop of Worcester on the bend of the River Avon at its confluence with the River Isbourne, c. 260m to the north-west of the site. The town later developed around the Abbey and was later recorded as '*Eveshonne*' in the Domesday Book of 1086 (Mills 1998).

2.5. A series of Saxon-Norman features, including pits and ditches of 10th to 12th-century date, were identified c. 75m to the south of the current site during an archaeological evaluation (CA 1993). These features appeared to relate to activity predating the establishment of medieval tenement plots, which began to be laid out in Evesham in

the late 11th or early 12th century when Evesham appears to have developed into a substantial medieval town (Dalwood, *et al.* 2005).

- 2.6. The site itself lies immediately to the rear of a series of previously identified medieval tenement plots (HER WSM17306 and WSM20780) that front onto Port Street, a main throughfare which lay within the historic core of Evesham (Dalwood, *et al.* 2005). The access road located to the east of the site extends into a north/south aligned row of previously recorded tenement plots (HER WSM20780).

Post-medieval and modern

- 2.7. Occupation of the tenement plots to the north and east of the site continued into the post-medieval and modern periods. The 1884 First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Map shows the site as being enclosed ground containing trees, possibly an orchard, to the rear of tenements on Port Street and Church Street. The 1938 edition of OS mapping indicates that the site had been occupied by workshop buildings by this time and these remain essentially unchanged on all subsequent editions of the OS mapping.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date and state of preservation. This information will enable WDC to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage asset conservation and the development proposals, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2021).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 3 trenches, as detailed below (Fig. 2):
- Trench 1: 4.2m long x 1.8m wide
 - Trench 2: 6.5m long x 1.8m wide
 - Trench 3: 5.5m long x 1.8m wide

-
- 4.2. The trenches were located to provide a representative sample of the undeveloped parts of the site. Trenches 1 and 3 were reduced in length from that indicated in the WSI, due to proximity to standing walls and a recently installed drainage service, with the approval of Mr. Smyth.
- 4.3. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica GPS. Overburden was stripped from the trenches by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate.
- 4.4. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.5. 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*, but no deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.6. CA will make arrangements with Worcestershire Museums for the deposition of the project archive. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).
- 4.7. 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

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.
- 5.2. No archaeological features or deposits were identified in any of the evaluation trenches and a similar sequence of soils overlaying the natural geological substrate was revealed in each trench.

Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 5.3. The natural geological substrate, 103, comprising compact yellow brown sand and gravel was encountered at 0.94m below present ground level (bpgl; 28.71m aOD). It was overlain by a layer of subsoil, 102, measuring up to 0.5m in thickness, which was in turn sealed buried topsoil, 101, measuring up to 0.25m in thickness. The buried topsoil was sealed by modern rubble/aggregate, 100, which formed the current ground surface.

Trench 2 (Fig. 4)

- 5.4. In this trench the natural substrate, 203, was revealed at 0.69m bpgl (28.8m aOD). It was overlain by subsoil, 202, which was 0.42m thick and in turn covered by a thin (0.05m thick) layer of buried topsoil 201. The modern ground surface, 200, was 0.22m thick.

Trench 3 (Fig. 5)

- 5.5. The natural sand and gravel, 303, was encountered at 0.86m bpgl (28.69m aOD). It was covered by a 0.41m thick layer of subsoil (302), 0.03m of buried topsoil 301 and 0.42m of modern ground surface 300.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see *Archaeological Background* above), no archaeological features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the evaluation. The presence of stratified soil layers across the site indicates that any potential archaeological remains have not been truncated and removed by modern activity on site; any such truncation being limited to the partial removal of the topsoil (201/301) in Trenches 2 and 3.

- 6.2. It therefore appears probable that the site was located on undeveloped land to the rear of the known medieval tenement plots fronting onto Church Street and Port Street and remained undeveloped through the post-medieval period.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Gary Baddeley and Christopher Leonard. This report was written by Christopher Leonard. The report illustrations were prepared by Li Sou. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon.

8. REFERENCES

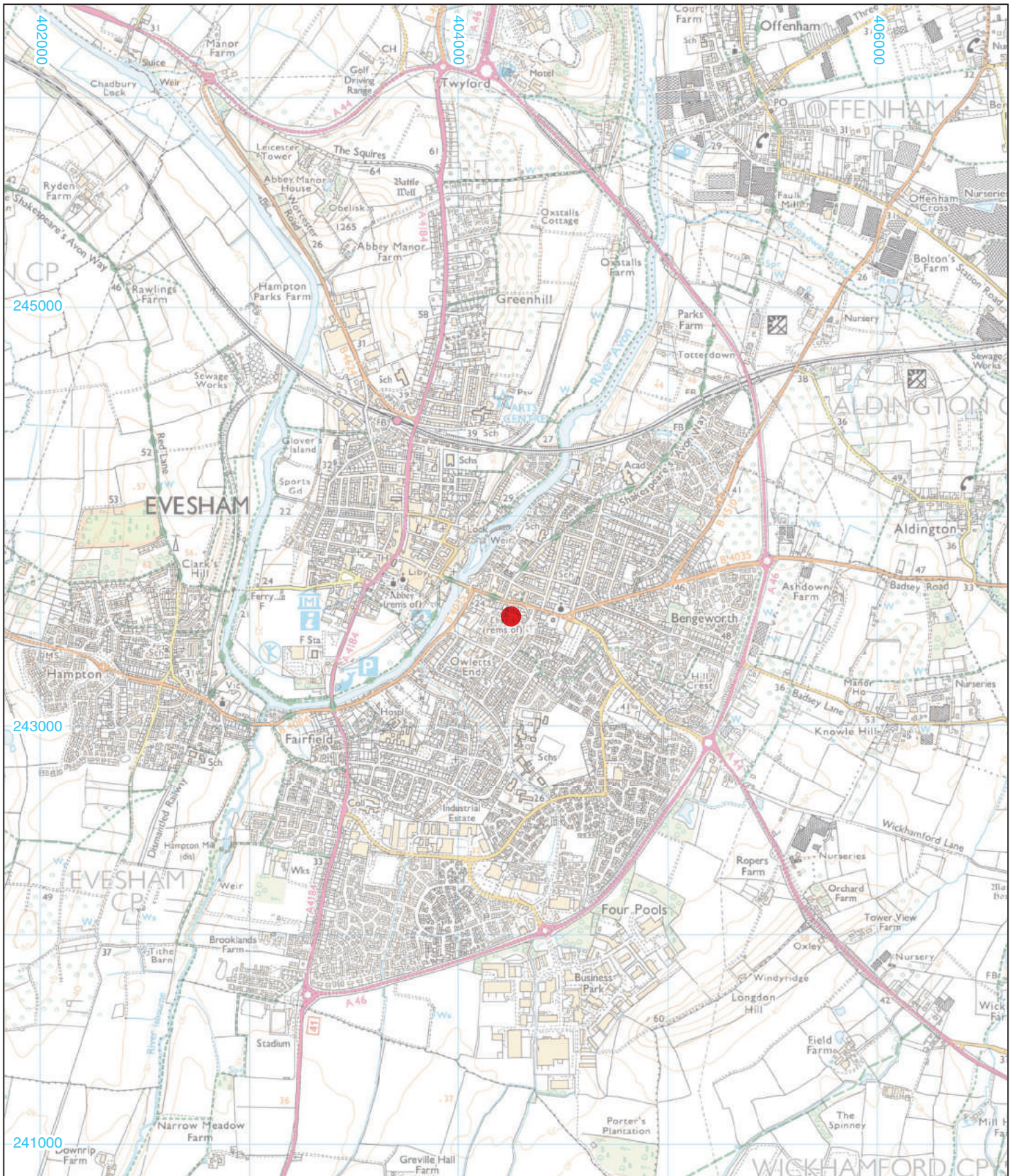
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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context	Type	Interpretation	Description	Depth (m)
1	100	Layer	Ground surface	Crushed rubble hardstanding	0.19
1	101	Layer	Remnant Topsoil	Dark yellow brown sandy silt	0.25
1	102	Layer	Subsoil	Mid yellow brown sandy silt	0.5
1	103	Layer	Natural	Yellow brown sand and gravel	
2	200	Layer	Topsoil	Same as 100	0.22
2	201	Layer	Remnant Topsoil	Same as 101	0.05
2	202	Layer	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.42
2	203	Layer	Natural	Same as 103	
3	300	Layer	Topsoil	Same as 100	0.42
3	301	Layer	Remnant Topsoil	Same as 101	0.03
3	302	Layer	Subsoil	Same as 102	0.41
3	303	Layer	Natural	Same as 103	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre, Evesham, Worcestershire	
Short description	<p>In March 2023, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre, Evesham, Worcestershire. A total of three trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The evaluation revealed a similar stratigraphic sequence of relic soils sealed by modern hardstanding and rubble in all three trenches. No archaeological features or deposits were identified.</p>	
Project dates	6 March 2023	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Evesham, Worcestershire	
Study area (m ² /ha)	0.086ha	
Site co-ordinates	404242 243538	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon	
Project Supervisor	Christopher Leonard	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive:	Content:
Physical	Worcestershire Museums	-
Paper	Worcestershire Museums	Trench recording forms, photographic registers
Digital	Worcestershire Museums/ Archaeology Data Service	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2023 <i>Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre, Evesham, Worcester: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report CR1313_1		



 Site boundary

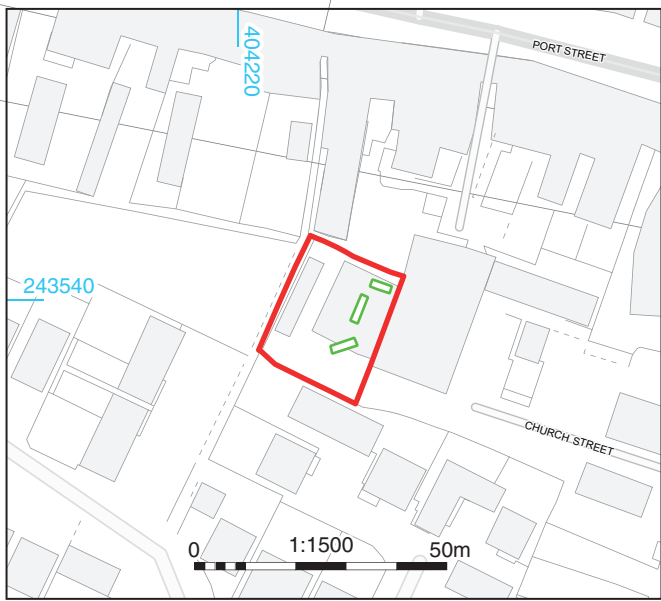
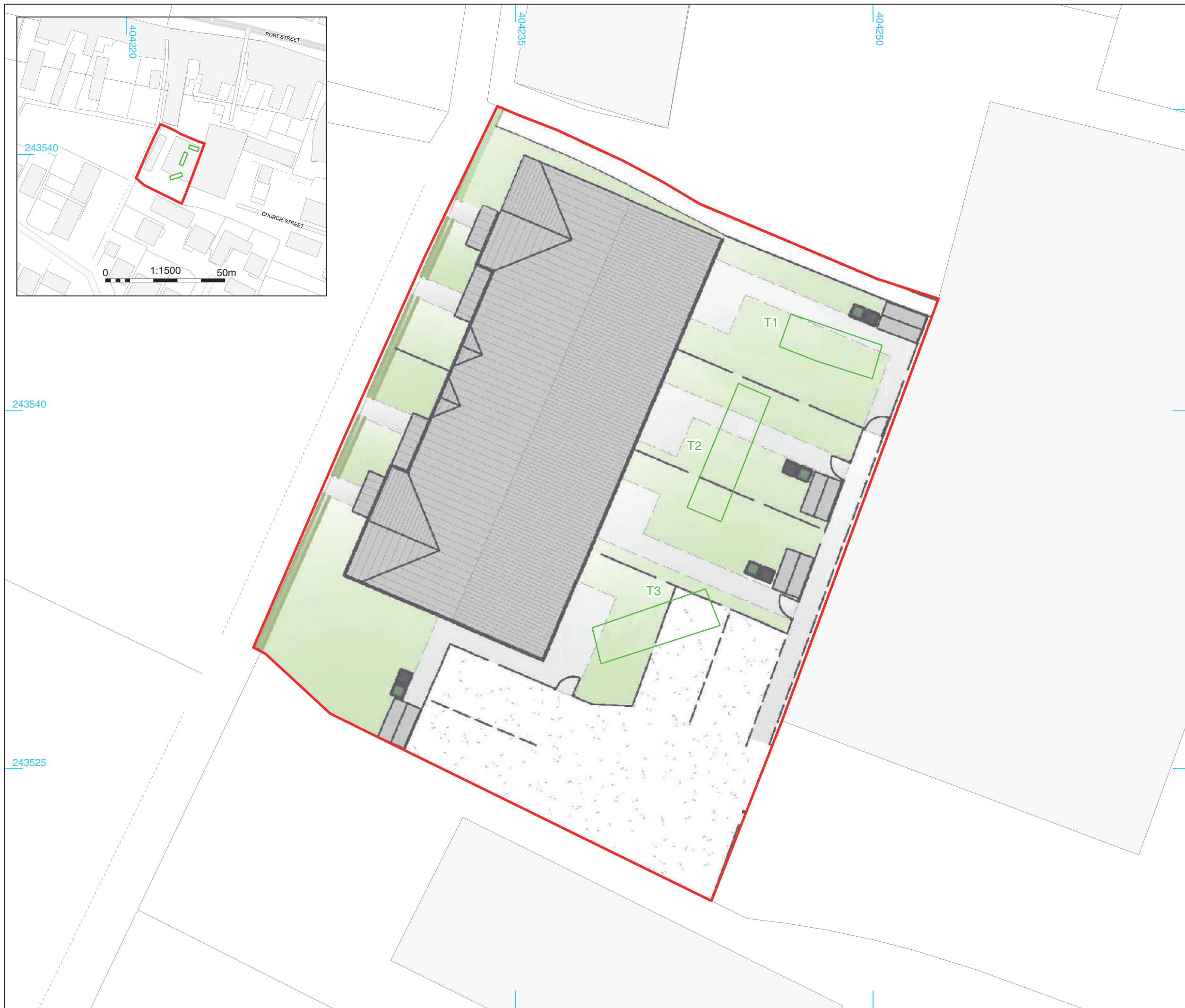


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PROJECT TITLE
 Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY LZS	PROJECT NO. CR1313	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY DJB	DATE 20/03/23	1
APPROVED BY SS	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	



- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench



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PROJECT TITLE
 Cravens Yard, Church Street Centre,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan

DRAWN BY	LZS	PROJECT NO.	CR1313	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	20/03/23	2
APPROVED BY	SS	SCALE@A3	1:150, 1:1500	



Trench 1 post-excavation, looking west (scale 0.5m)



Trench 1 section, looking south (scale 0.5m)



Trench 2 post-excavation, looking south (scale 0.5m)



Trench 2 section, looking east (scale 0.5m)



Trench 3 post-excavation, looking north-east (scale 0.5m)



Trench 3 section, looking north-west (scale 0.5m)

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