

**RACKHAMS CIRENCESTER
MARKET PLACE
CIRENCESTER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

For

KINGS STURGE AND BBA ARCHITECTS

on behalf of

HOUSE OF FRASER (STORES) LTD

CA PROJECT: 2758
CA REPORT: 08252


DECEMBER 2008



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date	17 December 2008
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date	18 December 2008
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signed	
date	13 January 2009
issue	01

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Summary

Project Name: Rackhams Cirencester
Location: Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire
NGR: SP 0242 0208
Type: Evaluation
Date: 11-17 December 2008
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Corinium Museum, Cirencester
Site Code: RAK08

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2008 at Rackhams Cirencester, Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Three trenches were excavated.

The earliest deposit encountered was 'dark earth' identified in trench 3 (along The Waterloo frontage) at approximately 0.80m below present ground level (110.24m AOD). The deposit contained late medieval pottery and tile and was sealed by a post-medieval demolition deposit. The latter was overlain by a cobbled surface, probably representing a former yard or street, within which a post setting and possible beam slot were observed.

Within the two trenches excavated adjacent to the churchyard, demolition deposits, containing 17th/18th-century artefacts, overlain by modern topsoil were identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2008 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Kings Sturge and BBA Architects on behalf of House of Fraser (Stores) Ltd at Rackhams Cirencester (centred on NGR SP 0242 0208; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application for the replacement of the existing storage facilities with a single storey building.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2008) that was approved by Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), archaeological advisor to Cotswold District Council. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995) and the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

The site

- 1.3 The proposed development area comprises a car park fronting The Waterloo to the south-east, and a narrow corridor of derelict land to the north-west. The remainder of the application area is currently occupied by the existing store room facilities. Two evaluation trenches, 1 and 2, were located in the corridor of derelict land, whilst trench 3 was located within the car park (Fig. 2).
- 1.4 The site is relatively flat and lies at between 110-111m AOD. The underlying solid geology of the area, mapped as Forest Marble of the Middle Jurassic Era (BGS 1946), was not encountered during the evaluation.

Archaeological background

- 1.5 The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential being situated within the core of the Roman and medieval town. In particular, the application area lies on or adjacent to the postulated alignment of a Roman street (Street J, Holbrook and Pamment Salvatore 1998, Fig 7) that divided Insulae XXIII from XXIV. Archaeological observations throughout Dyer Street and Market Place during sewer

replacement works in the mid 1970s identified Roman street surfaces at depths of 0.2m below the present ground level (bpgl), with contemporary structural remains buried beneath 'dark earth' deposits at 1.2m+ bpgl, although adjacent to the current site the 'dark earth' was observed to depths of 2m bpgl (CA 2000).

- 1.6 Medieval deposits and features are less well attested within the archaeological record of Cirencester, although the site's location to the rear of the Market Place and adjacent to the burial ground of the parish church (St John Baptist) would suggest a high potential for the survival of medieval deposits.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.7 The objectives of the evaluation are to provide data on the date, character, quality, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits within the study area in order that an informed decision on their importance in a local, regional or national context can be made. This information will clarify whether any remains are of sufficient importance to warrant consideration for preservation *in situ*, or alternatively form the basis of mitigation measures that may seek to limit damage to significant remains.

Methodology

- 1.8 The fieldwork comprised the hand-excavation of three trenches each measuring 1.5m in length and 1.5m in width, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The location of trench 2 was altered slightly from that agreed in the WSI due to the presence of dense scrub and debris.
- 1.9 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 CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995).
- 1.10 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Corinium Museum, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 2.1 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. Details of the relative heights of the principal deposits and features expressed as metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) appear in Appendix C.

Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.2 The earliest deposit encountered in trench 1 was demolition deposit 102, revealed 0.8m below present ground level (bpgl). It comprised an ashy-mortar matrix with frequent large limestone fragments from which sherds of 18th-century pottery and fragments of clay pipe were recovered. This was overlain by a further demolition deposit, 101, that comprised silty-sand containing abundant small limestone fragments, charcoal flecks and greyish white mortar flecks. This deposit was sealed by topsoil 100.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.3 The earliest deposit encountered in trench 2 was demolition deposit 203, revealed at a depth of 0.85m bpgl. It comprised a light grey ashy mortar matrix with frequent large limestone fragments, and correlates closely to deposit 102, identified within trench 1. It was overlain by demolition deposit 202 that itself correlated with deposit 101 identified within in trench 1 and may represent part of the same demolition event. Both deposits were overlain by re-worked garden soil 201 that was in turn sealed by topsoil 200.

Trench 3 (Figs 2 & 4)

- 2.4 The earliest deposit encountered in trench 3 was 'dark earth' 304, identified 0.8m bpgl (and at least 0.4m in thickness), from which 14th/15th-century pottery and tile were recovered. This was overlain by demolition deposit 303 from which 17th-century artefacts were recovered, which was in turn sealed by surface 302.
- 2.5 The full extent of surface 302 was not revealed as it continued beyond the limits of the current excavation. It was constructed from a single layer of angular limestone blocks, bonded by mid grey clay. A possible beam slot and square post setting were

identified cutting the surface. It was overlain by modern rubble deposit 301 and tarmac surface 300.

The Finds and Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

- 2.6 Quantities of pottery, clay tobacco pipe, ceramic building material, animal bone and metalwork were recovered from 'dark earth' layers and demolition deposits (Appendix B). Pottery types have, where possible been matched to the Cirencester Post-Roman Pottery type series (Ireland 1998). Clay pipe bowls have been matched to Oswald's simplified typology (Oswald 1975).
- 2.7 A total of 13 sherds of pottery were recovered (136g), of which the majority consisted of post-medieval types. Two sherds of Roman pottery recovered from demolition deposits 102 and 203 represent residual finds. Medieval pottery (4 sherds, 18g) and tile (4 sherds, 76g) were recovered from the 'dark earth' deposit 304. Identifiable fabrics are mainly local Minety type ware (TF 200) and forms are identifiable as glazed jugs and also ridge tile fragments characteristic of 14th to 15th-century dating. The remaining pottery consisted of post-medieval types (7 sherds, 54g) and included mottled brown glazed ware, English porcelain, Frechen stoneware (TF 216), Cistercian type (TF 208) and local glazed earthenwares (TF 243).
- 2.8 A total of six pieces of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from demolition deposits 102 and 203, including four spurred bowls. Three bowls (two from 102 and one from 203) are characteristic of Oswald's type 20, dating to c. 1690-1730. One example, from deposit 102, is consistent with Oswald's type 21, dating to c.1700-40. Of note from deposit 102 was a maker's mark reading 'ED HIGG ENS'. Pipes displaying this mark are frequently found in Salisbury and Cirencester and are consistent in form with late 17th-century dating. Ed(ward?) Higgens is believed to have worked in Cirencester until he moved to Salisbury in 1698 where he is known to be working at least until 1710 (Wilkinson and Peacey, 1998, 95).
- 2.9 A total of 70 fragments of animal bone were recovered from deposits 303 and 304 (demolition and 'dark-earth' deposits respectively). The species identified were red deer, cattle, sheep/goat and pig. More fragmented pieces were classified by size; cow-sized, sheep-sized, goose-sized and chicken-sized categories were present. Butchery was evident on the bones as was occasional gnawing by dogs.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The stratigraphic sequence identified during the course of the evaluation indicates that a 'dark earth' deposit survives in trench 3 at a depth of 0.80m below the modern ground surface. This was sealed by post-medieval demolition deposit 303 and surface 302. The full extent and function of surface 302 remains undetermined due to its limited exposure within trench 3. However, it may be interpreted as a post-medieval yard surface in all likelihood associated with former tenement buildings fronting the Market Place.
- 3.2 The earliest deposits encountered in trenches 1 and 2, 102 and 203, respectively represent post-medieval demolition deposits and may form part of the same deposit.
- 3.3 No evidence for the presence of the postulated Roman road was identified during the course of the evaluation.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Steven Sheldon, assisted by Kathy Aston and Ashley Strutt. The report was written by Steven Sheldon. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Steven Sheldon, and prepared for deposition by Kathryn Price. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1946 *Geological Survey of England and Wales*, Sheet 235, Cirencester, 1 inch to 1 mile

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2000 *Cirencester Traffic and Environment Plan: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*. CA typescript report **001239**

CA 2008 *Rackhams, Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation. Written Scheme of Investigation*.

Ireland, C.A., 1998 *The Pottery* in Wilkinson, D. and McWhirr, 98–140

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1 110.58m AOD

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.21m	
101	Layer	Mid greyish brown silt sand, contains frequent limestone rubble and mortar inclusions. Probable demolition deposit	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.40m	
102	Layer	Light grey ash/mortar, frequent large limestone fragments and charcoal flecks. Probable demolition deposit.	>1.5m	>1.5m	>0.79m	C18

Trench 2 110.60m AOD

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Topsoil	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.20m	
201	Layer	Mid-dark brown silt sand, sparse charcoal and greyish white mortar flecks throughout. Probable re-worked garden soil.	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.22m	
202	Layer	Mid greyish brown silt sand, contains frequent limestone rubble and mortar inclusions. Probable demolition deposit	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.45m	
203	Layer	Light grey ash/mortar, frequent large limestone fragments and charcoal flecks. Probable demolition deposit.	>1.5m	>1.5m	>0.33m	C17-C18

Trench 3 111.04m AOD

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Tarmac	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.10m	
301	Layer	Compact limestone and red brick rubble. Bedding deposit for 300.	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.30m	
302	Layer	Cobbled surface. Probably representing rear of post medieval tenement plot or yard.	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.10m	
303	Layer	Mid greyish brown silt sand. Abundant small limestone fragments, possible demolition deposit or levelling layer for 302.	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.30m	C17
304	Layer	Heavily re-worked homogenous 'dark earth' deposit	>1.5m	>1.5m	0.40m	C14-C15

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS*Concordance*

Context	Artefact type	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
102	Post-medieval pottery: mottled brown glazed ware, English porcelain	2	30	C18
	Roman pottery: BB1	1	5	LC17
	Clay tobacco pipe: Oswald type 20, Oswald type 21.	4	63	
	Stamp. ED HIGGENS.			
203	Roman pottery: BB1	1	29	C17-C18
	Clay tobacco pipe: Oswald type 20.	1	16	
303	Post-medieval pottery: local glazed earthenware, Frechen, mottled brown glazed ware, Cistercian type	5	54	C17
	Ceramic building material: brick	3	23	
	Iron: nails	2	34	
	Animal bone; red deer, cattle, sheep/goat, pig, cow-sized, sheep-sized	37	901	
304	Medieval pottery: Minety	4	18	C14-C15
	Ceramic building material: Minety tile	4	76	
	Iron: nails, strip	3	67	
	Animal bone; cattle, sheep/goat, pig, cow-sized, sheep-sized, goose-sized, chicken-sized	33	365	

APPENDIX C: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES

Levels are expressed as metres below current ground level and as metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), calculated using the benchmark located at 3 Dollar Street (111.60m AOD).

	Trench 1	Trench 2	Trench 3
Current ground level	0.00m (110.58m)	0.00m (110.60m)	0.00m (111.04m)
Top of 'dark earth'	N/A	N/A	0.80m (110.24m)
Limit of excavation	1.40m (109.18m)	1.20m (109.40m)	1.20m (109.84m)

Upper figures are depth below modern ground level; lower figures in parentheses are metres AOD.

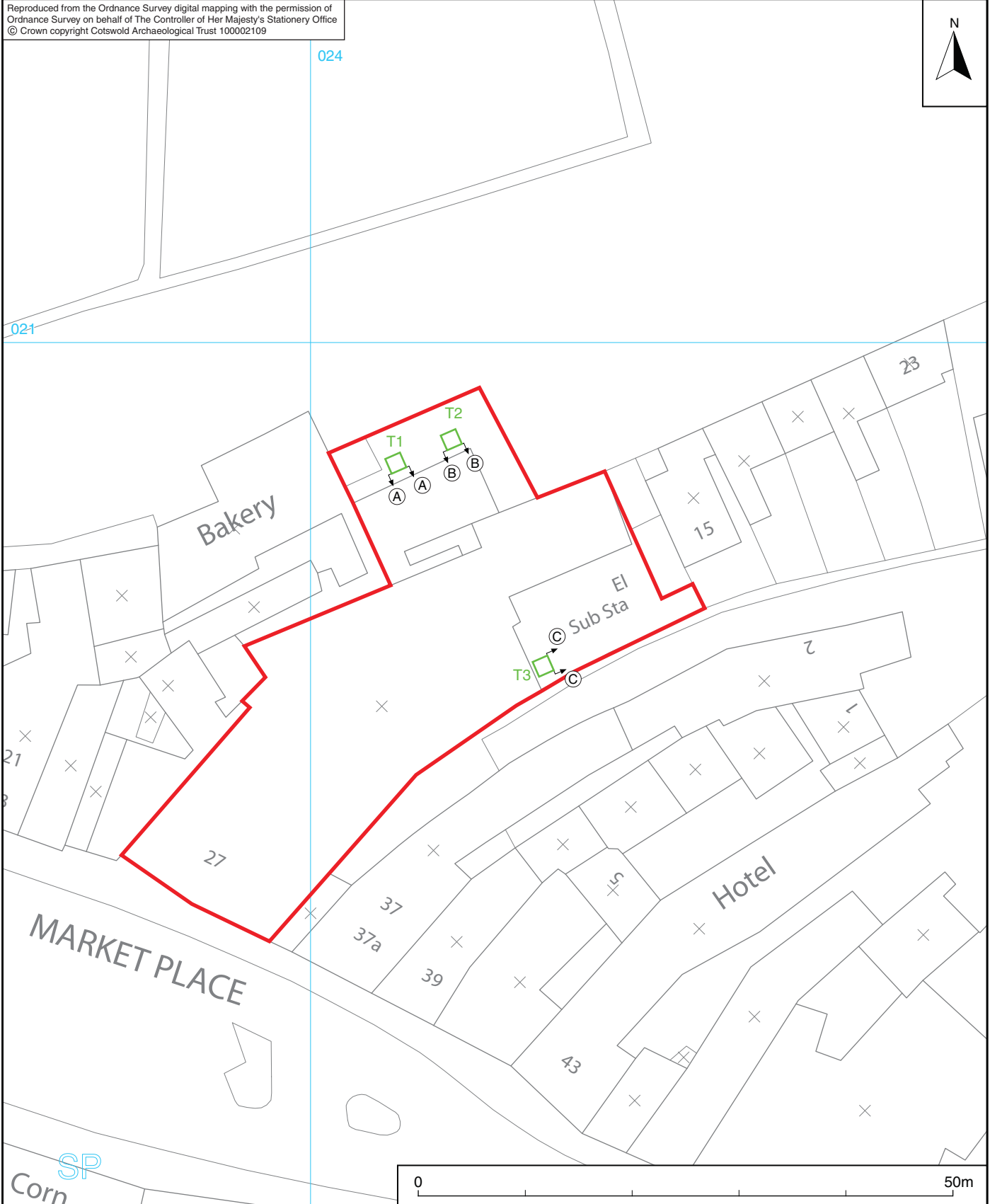
APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Rackhams Cirencester, Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2008 at Rackhams Cirencester, Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Three trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The earliest deposit encountered was 'dark earth' identified in trench 3 (along The Waterloo frontage) at approximately 0.80m below present ground level (110.24m AOD). The deposit contained late medieval pottery and tile and was sealed by a post-medieval demolition deposit. The latter was overlain by a cobbled surface, probably representing a former yard or street, within which a post setting and possible beam slot were observed.</p> <p>Within the two trenches excavated adjacent to the churchyard, demolition deposits, containing 17th/18th-century artefacts, overlain by modern topsoil were identified containing 17th/18th-century artefacts, overlain by modern topsoil.</p>	
Project dates	11-17 December 2008	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Field Evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Rackhams Cirencester, Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	1250m ²	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 0242 0208	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	Steven Sheldon	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Corinium Museum	Ceramics, animal bone and clay pipe
Paper	Corinium Museum	Context sheets, trench record sheets, section drawings, colour/black and white photographs and negatives, drawing register, spot dating sheet
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 <i>Rackhams Cirencester, Market Place, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 08252		

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 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
PROJECT TITLE Rackhams Store, Market Place Cirencester, Gloucestershire			
FIGURE TITLE Site location plan			
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COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Rackhams Store, Market Place
Cirencester, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Trench location plan

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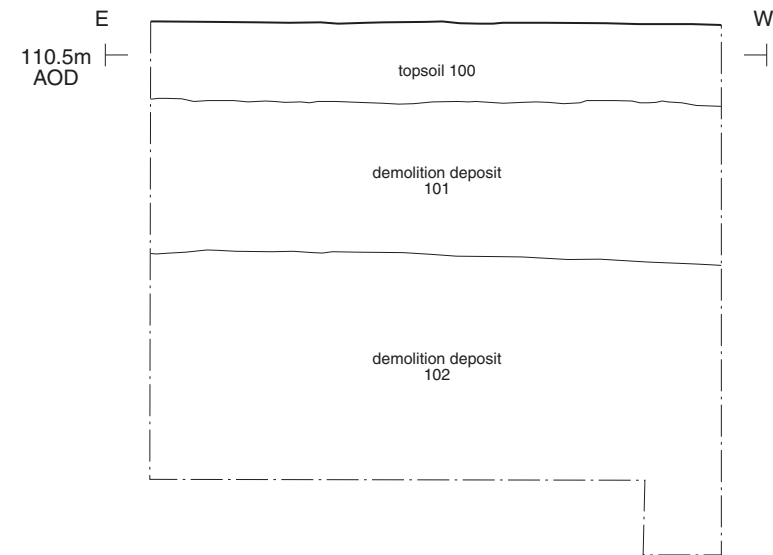
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FIGURE NO.

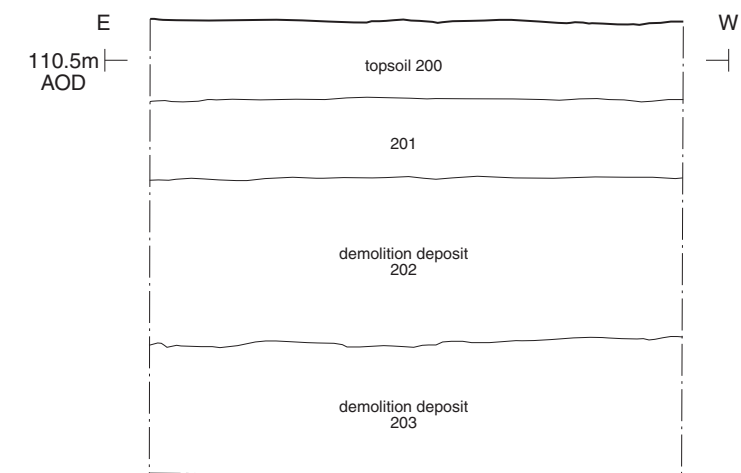
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Trench 1; section AA



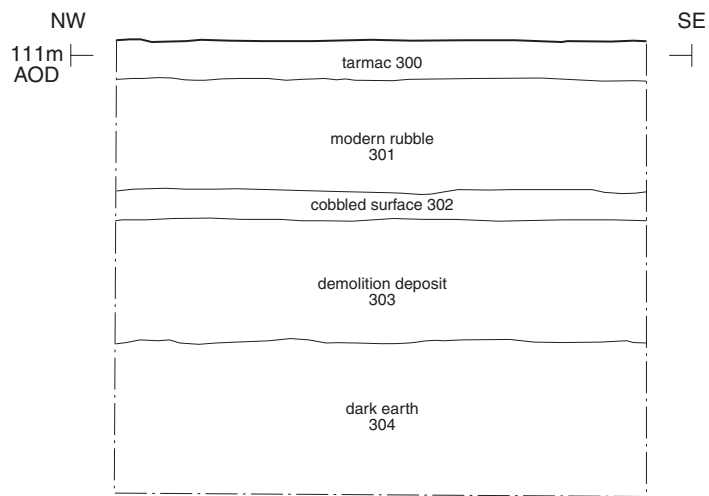
Trench 1, looking south

Trench 2; section BB

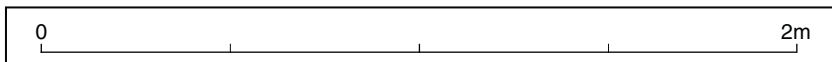


Trench 2, looking south

Trench 3; section CC



Trench 3, looking east



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Rackhams Store, Market Place
Cirencester, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 3; section and photograph

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FIGURE NO.

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