

2-6 Philip Street, Bedminster, Bristol

NGR ST5879071745

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

Bristol HER number 24825

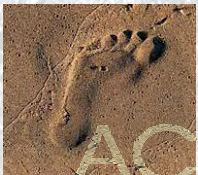
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Prepared by:  
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On behalf of:  
Mr Shafiq Ahmed

Document No: ACW227/2/0

Date: November 2009



archaeology

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# **2 – 6 PHILIP STREET, BEDMINSTER, BRISTOL**

## **(ST5879071745)**

### **Results of an archaeological trench evaluation**

#### **Bristol HER number 24825**

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### **Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation for a proposed development at 2 – 6 Philip Street, Bedminster, Bristol (ST5879071745), was carried out by AC archaeology during November 2009. The evaluation consisted of two trenches, one located close to the Philip Street frontage and one positioned centrally within the confines of the site. Both trenches revealed a substantial depth of relatively recent modern deposits, comprising infilling and other disturbance. Some of this activity appears likely to be associated with the infilling of cellars associated with the 19th century terraced houses present on the site up until the mid 20th century. The creation of cellars to a depth of approximately 2m appears to have removed any potential archaeological deposits on the site.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** This report sets out the results of an archaeological evaluation at 2 – 6 Philip Street, Bedminster, Bristol (NGR ST5879071745). The location of the site is shown on Fig.1.
- 1.2** The work, carried out by AC archaeology during November 2009, was commissioned by Pegasus Planning Group, on behalf of Mr Ahmed, the site owner. It was undertaken in order to provide supporting information for a proposed planning application to Bristol City Council (BCC) for the construction of residential flats on the site. The investigations have been approved by the City Archaeologist, advisor to BCC.
- 1.3** The proposed development area covers around 135m<sup>2</sup> and comprises an area of slightly raised hard standing (concrete) on one half of the site, with the remaining area gravel scalping. The site lies at approximately 8.7mOD with the underlying geology comprising alluvial clays overlying Triassic Mudstone.

## **2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** There is no evidence for prehistoric occupation within the vicinity of the site, but the modern A38 along East Street is believed to follow the line of a Roman road between Chew and Almondsbury. Romano-British finds have been recovered from Redcliff Street, 600m north of the site.
- 2.3** During the Saxon and medieval periods the site lay on the north-east edge of the extent of settlement. Bedminster is first mentioned in Domesday Book in 1086. The name of East Street probably refers to the position of the pre-enclosure medieval field pattern. Pottery dating from as early as the 11th century AD has been found on sites in the vicinity. Documentary evidence suggests that there was settlement along the west side of East Street as early as AD1306, at least as far as Brightbow Bridge (HER ref 5881), less than 50 north of the site.
- 2.4** The earliest cartographic evidence dates to the late 18th century and shows the site as farmland on the east side of the Malago river, south of a tributary stream. By 1828 this stream may have been culverted, and certainly by 1854 when the Ashmead plan shows the north side of a culvert running along the Philip Street frontage of the site. At this date the site has been developed and occupied by three terraced houses. These survived until the mid twentieth century when it is believed they were damaged by enemy action (BCC Officer's report; planning application no 07/01276/F). At least one building survived the war as consent was granted in 1947 for no. 6 to be used as a builder's store.) The properties were replaced by commercial premises after the 1970s. These were removed within the last decade.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1** The investigation was undertaken in response to a brief provided by the Bristol City Archaeologist and in accordance with a project design prepared by AC archaeology (Cox 2009) which was approved prior to commencement on site. The position of the trenches as excavated is shown on Fig.1.
- 3.2** The evaluation comprised the machine excavation of two trenches. Trench 1 had plan dimensions of 5 x 2m and was positioned near the frontage of Philip Street. Trench 2, positioned centrally and on an area of concrete floor slab, was initially

broken out by a mechanical breaker prior to excavation. All deposits from both trenches were removed by mechanical excavator, using a wide toothless bucket under the control and direction of the Site Archaeologist. Stripping ceased at the level at which natural subsoil was exposed.

- 3.3** Due to restricted space resulting from the large volume of spoil created from Trench 1, the second trench, Trench 2 was reduced in length from 5m to 3m. This was agreed on site with the City Archaeologist.
- 3.4** All deposits revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. Detailed sections or plans were produced at 1:20. All site levels relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 3.5** The archive has been prepared using the site code ACW 227.

## **4. RESULTS**

### **Trench 1** (Location Fig. 1; Section Fig. 2; Plate 1)

- 4.1** This trench was approximately northeast-southwest aligned and measured 5 x 2m in plan and positioned on level ground. A maximum depth of 1.8m was excavated through modern demolition levels which lay directly above a truncated subsoil and themselves which were cut by a large pit (F12). Feature F12 contained a series of thick lenses of demolition material including ash, mortar and brick rubble; the base of the feature was not revealed as it was cut through the subsoil below the base of the trench. Modern wall foundations (21 & 22), formed of several courses of mortared brick/stone were revealed directly below the ground surface. The general layer sequence for this trench is described in Table 1.

**Table 1: General depositional sequence in Trench 1**

Context No	Depth b.g.s.	Description	Interpretation
10	0 - 350mm	Thin layer of scalping directly overlying a mixed layer comprising generally of mortar and brick and stone rubble,	Surface make-up overlaying demolition layer. Modern
11	350 - 900mm	Mixed layer of silty clay containing mortar, stone and brick rubble.	Demolition layer – modern
13	900mm – 1.3m	Greyish brown silty clay containing occasional brick pieces.	Fill of modern pit F12
14	1.3 – 1.6m	Grey silty clay containing mortar and occasional brick pieces.	Fill of modern pit F12
15	1.6 -1.8m	Light grey clayey silt.	Fill of modern pit F12
16	1.8 -1.9m	Greenish brown cassy clayey silt.	Fill of modern pit F12
17	1.9m+	Mixed black brown ashy silt.	Fill of modern pit F12
18	1 – 1.6m	Dark greyish brown silty clay containing charcoal, brick, slate and stone pieces	Infilling layer – post-med / modern
19	1.6 – 1.8m	Light grey ash and mortar.	Infilling layer – post-med / modern
20	1.8m+	Reddish brown clay	Natural subsoil



**Plate 1: Trench 1 view from the south**

## 4.2 Trench 2 (Location Fig. 1; Plate 1)

This trench was approximately northwest-southeast aligned and measured 3 x 2m in plan and positioned on level ground. A maximum depth of 2m was excavated before natural subsoil was revealed. The trench was cut through part of a concrete floor slab and foundation, as well as a sequence of deposits ranging from mixed black/brown ash and redeposited natural clay to a light grey ash and mortar. Other modern disturbance included deep plumbing associated with a former toilet. These deposits also represent demolition levels and infilling layers and appear to be part of the same deep sequence recorded in Trench 1.



**Plate 2: Trench 2 view from the north**

## 5. DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The evaluation has provided no evidence for pre-modern archaeological deposits on the site. The depth of modern building debris suggests that an extensive cellar(s) once existed on the site, presumably associated with the 19th century terraced houses. There was no evidence for cellar floors and it is assumed that they were

formed directly onto the truncated clay subsoil. The cellars are therefore likely to have substantially removed any pre-existing archaeological deposits that pre-dated the nineteenth century.

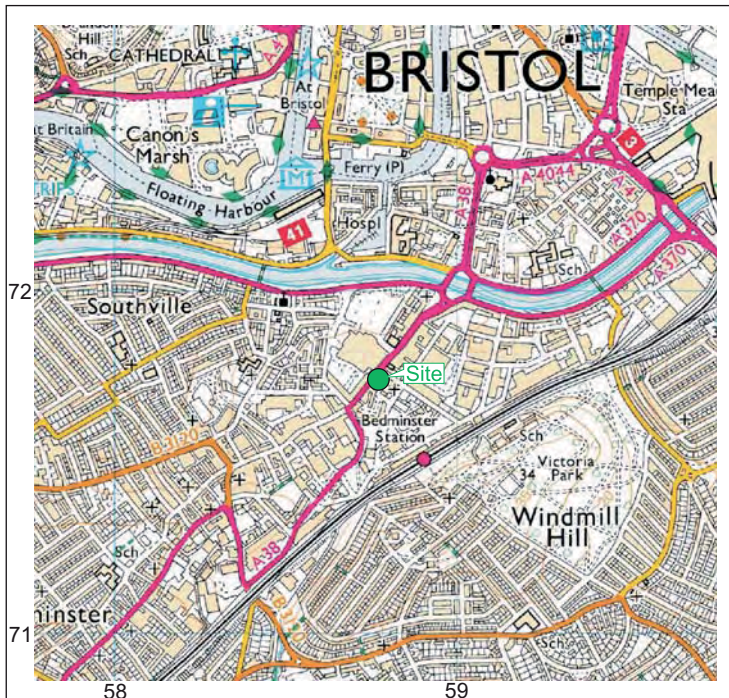
- 5.2** The cellars have been infilled with a succession of layers of building debris (TR1; layers 18-20) which have in turn been cut into by an extensive pit. This pit is unlikely to represent a bomb crater, nor is there evidence to suggest extensive burning caused by an incendiary device. Ceramic artefacts were noted and comprised 19th / 20th century earthenwares and slipware pottery, none of which was retained.

## **6. REFERENCES**

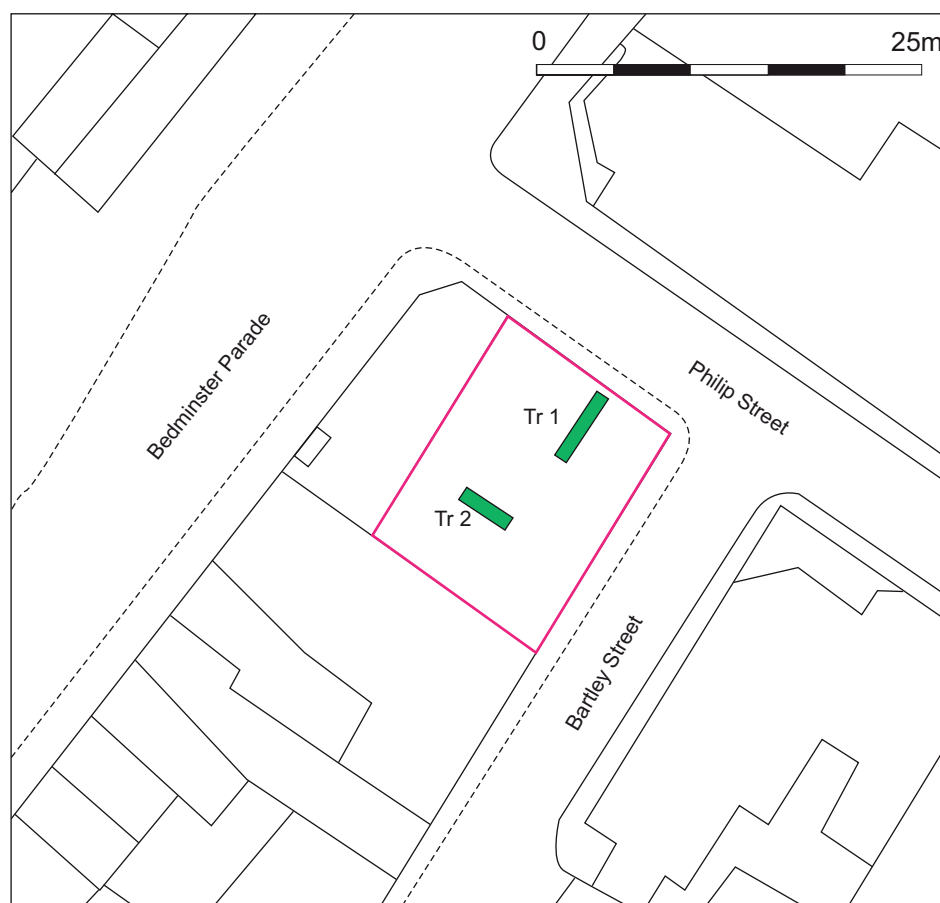
BaRAS 2004, '*An Archaeological Desktop Study of land at Nos 2 – 6 Philip Street, Bedminster, Bristol*'. Bristol & Region Archaeological Services Report no 1362/2004; BSMR No.22003, unpublished report for Mr Ahmed

Cox, P. W., 2009 '*2 – 6 Philip Street, Bedminster, Bristol (NGR ST5879071745): Project Design for archaeological evaluation*'. Unpublished document prepared on behalf of Mr Shafiq Ahmed, ref ACW227/1/0

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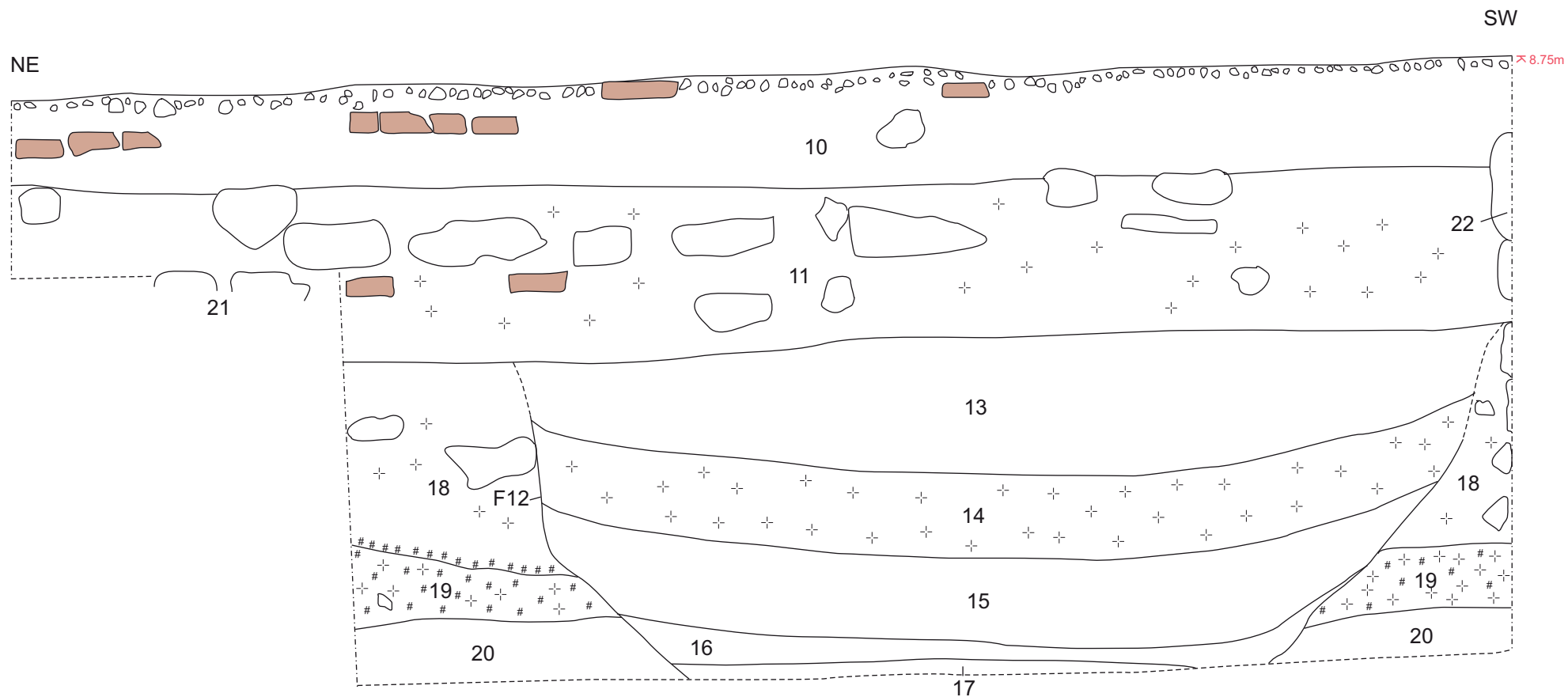


PROJECT

6 Philip Street, Bedminster

TITLE

Fig. 1: Proposed trench locations



PROJECT

6 Philip Street, Bedminster

TITLE

Fig. 2: Section of Trench 1



AC archaeology



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