

Croft House
Priory Road
Ilchester
Somerset

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING &
RECORDING

REPORT

July 2019

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Looking after the past, today...





Croft House
Priory Road
Ilchester
Somerset


for

C1 project code: C1/AMR/19/CIY

Mr and Mrs M Krsmanovic

REPORT

Prepared by	Tara Fairclough & Richard McConnell
Date	25/07/19

Approved by	Richard McConnell
Signed	
Date	25/07/19

Issue	01
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PROJECT DETAILS

Client project/scheme ref.	N/A
Planning Application ref.	18/03077/HOU
Local Planning Authority	South Somerset District Council
Scheduled Monument Consent ref.	N/A
Historic Environment Record ref.	41231
Collecting Museum	South West Heritage Trust
Museum accession number	TNCM 11/2019
OASIS reference	contexto1-346112

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Front cover image: aerial view of the Site ©Google Inc.

Summary

Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of granting planning permission for the construction of a single and two storey rear extension at Croft House, Priory Road, Ilchester, Somerset. The project has been commissioned by Mr and Mrs M Krsmanovic.

The Site was located within the known footprint of the Roman town of Lindinis as well as being within the Anglo-Saxon burh and closely adjacent to the medieval core of Ilchester. There have been numerous finds of various periods in this part of the town and a number of archaeological interventions have been undertaken nearby which confirmed the potential for archaeological features and deposits to be present within the Site.

Despite the high archaeological potential, no evidence was encountered during monitoring of groundwork excavations. Indeed, a single re-worked soil in excess of 1m deep was the only deposit recorded in the foundation trenches. This is likely to reflect episodes of historic landscaping or more recent levelling relating to the construction of the existing modern house.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of granting planning permission (planning reference: 18/03077/HOU) for the erection of a single and two storey rear extension at Croft House, Priory Road, Ilchester, Somerset (the 'Site') (**Figure 1**). The project has been commissioned by Mr and Mrs M Krsmanovic.
- 1.2 The monitoring and recording was requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), South Somerset District Council (SSDC) on the advice of the county Historic Environment Service (HES), South West Heritage Trust (SWHT). In a reply to an email consultation request from the Planning Case Team on 30 October 2018, Mr Steven Membery, Senior Historic Environment Officer, South West Heritage Trust stated:
- "The site lies within the Roman/Saxon and medieval town and is very close to the two Scheduled areas of the town. It is also within the original Roman fort area. Therefore, it is very likely that archaeological remains relating to this occupation will be impacted by this proposal. For this reason, I recommend that the applicant be required to provide archaeological monitoring of the development and a report on any discoveries made as indicated in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 199)."*
- 1.3 The programme of archaeological works will comprise four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy (Randall 2019); archaeological monitoring and recording; post-excavation and report production (this document); and archive preparation and deposition.
- 1.4 The requirement follows advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 199 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (DCLG 2018).

2. The Site

- 2.1 The Site (centred on NGR ST 352092 122815) covers c. 900 square metres and is located in the north-west corner of the historic town of Ilchester, with the High Street and main through route of Market Place a short distance to the east (**Figure 1**). The Site is bound to the west by Priory Road with an access path to the north, and further residential buildings and gardens to the east and south. The Site is largely situated on level ground at an average height of c. 13m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The recorded geology is Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (undifferentiated) - Mudstone and Limestone, Interbedded. The drift geology is Head - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel (BGS 2019). The soils are characterised as slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (CSAIS 2019).
- 2.2 The Site is located within the known footprint of the Roman town of *Lindinis* as well as being within the Anglo-Saxon *burh* and adjacent to the medieval centre of Ilchester. It is situated equidistantly between the two western portions of the Scheduled areas of the Roman town (**HER Ref. 1006155**) and lay within the area of the early Roman fort (**HER Ref. 55892**). The western suburbs of the Roman town (**HER Ref. 55873**) spread outwards from this area. Romano-British pottery kilns and burials (**HER No. 53031**) were located immediately to the west of the Site. In addition, the 13th-16th century Augustinian Whitehall nunnery (**HER Ref. 53046**) was situated immediately to the east of the Site, much of the fabric of which is now incorporated into an 18th century Grade II Listed Castle Farm (**HER Ref. 1345746**). In addition, a sheepwash is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map to the east of Priory Road (**HER No. 14748**) within the western part of the Site.
- 2.3 There have been numerous archaeological finds from various periods in this part of Ilchester and a number of archaeological interventions undertaken. In the area immediately to the north of the Site building foundations, possibly medieval (**HER Ref. 55890**), were noted during the construction of the water pumping station. Archaeological evaluation trenches excavated adjacent to this, and to the west of the Site in 1985 (**HER Ref. 55871**) identified prehistoric activity as well as a 1st century Roman military phase; deposits generally dating to the Romano-British period; and some relating to subsequent periods. One of the evaluation trenches was situated in the western part of the Site over the line of both the Roman town defences and the fort ditch (Leach and Ellis 1991). Not surprisingly, excavation located the ditch and bank of the 1st century AD fort as well as occupation evidence relating to the subsequent Roman town and succeeding

periods. The post medieval features were encountered at c. 0.35m below the contemporary ground surface, while medieval and earlier deposits were observed between c. 0.90m and c. 3m below the surface. Further trenches to the west, situated in Great Yard (**HER Ref. 55872**), also produced several phases of Romano-British deposits. Given the density of previously identified archaeological remains in the surrounding area dating to various periods, there was considerable potential for further multi-period features and deposits on this Site.

3. Archaeological aims and research objectives

3.1 Archaeological investigation in the area of the Site had the potential to address Research Aims 34 and 35 of the South West Archaeological Research Framework (Webster 2008, 287), namely 'Improve our understanding of early Roman urban settlement', and 'Develop our understanding of early medieval settlement' The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring were to:

- identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during groundworks;
- determine the character of the archaeological remains, where present;
- recover environmental information, which may provide further information relating to the local historic environment of the area;
- provide sufficient information to enable further mitigation strategies to be determined, where appropriate

3.2 The research objectives were to:

- characterise any evidence specifically relating to the Roman fort and town , Saxon burh, nunnery and medieval town of Ilchester.

4. Methodology

4.1 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (December 2014) and in accordance with the *Somerset Archaeological Handbook* (2017). C1 adhered to the *Code of Conduct* of the CIfA (1985, rev. 2000, 2014), and *Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA, 2014, rev. 2015) at all times. The fieldwork methodology is summarised below.

4.2 C1 gave notification of the commencement of the works to the HES but it was not deemed necessary for a representative to visit the Site and monitor archaeological fieldwork. However, monitoring will continue until the deposition of the Site archive.

4.3 Prior to the commencement of Site works, the excavation methodology was agreed between those responsible for carrying out the groundworks and C1 to ensure that all parties were aware of the monitoring requirements. The works comprised the removal of an existing conservatory and patio before the machine excavation of two foundation trenches measuring a total of 16.60m long, 0.45m wide and extending to a depth of 1m.

4.4 An archaeologist was on Site to monitor all specified groundworks with the aim of identifying and recording any archaeological features/deposits present. All groundworks were carried out with a machine fitted with a 0.45m wide toothless grading bucket.

4.5 By default, core details of the deposit sequence across the Site were recorded using C1 *pro-forma* profile forms in digital format using iPad mini tablets. The frequency with which profiles were recorded was based on any variation of the deposit sequence. Soil colours were logged using a Munsell soil colour chart. Spoil was examined for the retrieval of artefacts. A photographic record of the monitoring and recording was carried out and involved the sole use of digital images. The photographic record included working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5. Results

- 5.1 The deposits encountered during the investigation are described below. Context numbers for layer and fill numbers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (1-002). Deposit colours were matched on Site against a Munsell soil colour chart and described below with their Munsell hue and reference, e.g. very dark grey (10YR 3/1).
- 5.2 One profile was logged during monitoring of groundworks which recorded the only deposit observed; a thick (in excess of 1m) topsoil/garden soil (100) comprising a very dark grey brown (10YR 3/2) compacted silty clay with moderate lias stone fragments. No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

6. The finds

- 6.1 No finds were observed or recovered during archaeological monitoring.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

- 7.1 Despite the high archaeological potential, no evidence was encountered during monitoring of groundwork excavations. The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1887 shows the area of Site as being part of a formal garden. It is likely that the single re-worked soil deposit observed during the monitoring programme reflects episodes of historic landscaping or more recent levelling relating to the construction of the existing modern house.

8. Archive

- 8.1 The NPPF requires that an archaeological archive arising from development works is made publicly accessible (para. 199). The archive comprises two parts: the paper/digital archive including site records and images; and the artefact/ecofact assemblage.

Paper/digital archive

- 8.2 Where archaeological features/deposits are recorded, the archive generated from this usually comprises site records, drawings and photographs either in paper format or born-digital data. Within three months of the conclusion of a project this is normally transferred into the care of a Trusted Digital Repository such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) as scanned paper records or native born-digital data. The digital archive will be compiled in accordance with the standards and requirements of the ADS, as set out on their website.
- 8.3 As no archaeological evidence was encountered, all relevant data has been incorporated into this assessment report and the paper/digital archive will be stored on the C1 cloud storage server or discarded.

Physical archive

- 8.4 The artefact/ecofact assemblage is the legal property of the landowner (excluding any items that fall under The Treasure Act 1996). However, it is usual practice for the landowner to transfer ownership of this assemblage to a receiving institution (usually a museum) once it has been fully assessed and/or analysed. Receiving institutions store the assemblage and make it publicly accessible. Alternatively, the landowner can choose to keep the assemblage but arrangements must be made to ensure its long-term curation and public accessibility in accordance with NPPF.

- 8.5 On this occasion, there is no physical archive to deposit.

Dissemination: report

- 8.6 Copies of the report will be submitted to the following:
- client and/or agent
 - the HES so that it can be included as part of the county Historic Environment Record (HER)
 - the ADS, via OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations – <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>)

Dissemination: publication

- 8.7 By default, a short entry will be prepared for publication in the summary section of the next county archaeological journal or equivalent periodical.

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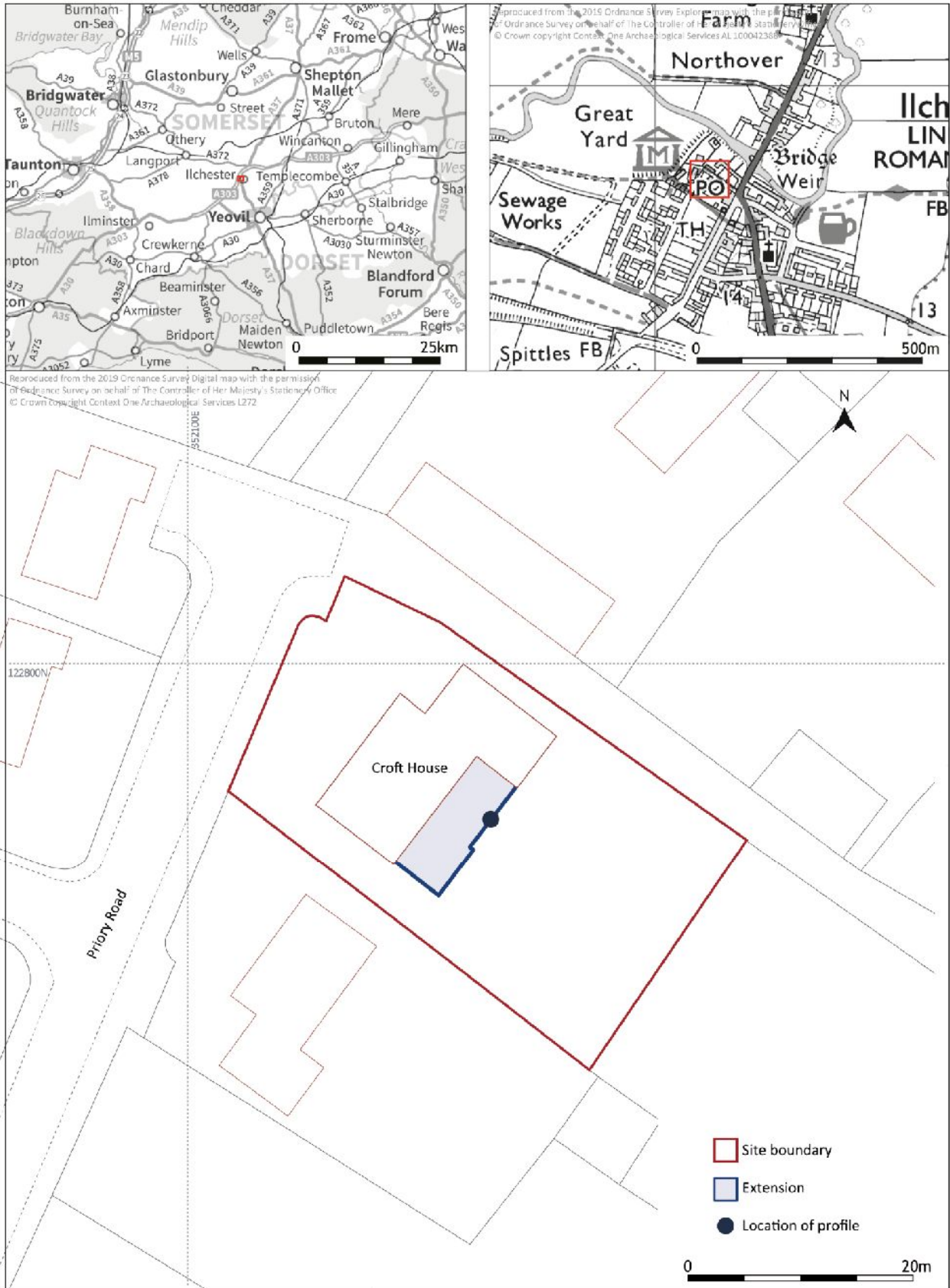


Figure 1. Site setting, location of extension and profile



Plate 1. General view of the excavated foundation trenches from the south (no scale)

Hillside : Hunger Hill : East Stour : Gillingham : Dorset : SP8 5JS

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