



Gloucestershire

COUNTY COUNCIL

Archaeological Watching Brief at

*Wotton Lawn Hospital
Horton Road
Gloucester
Gloucestershire*

Prepared for

²gether NHS Trust



*Nick Witchell
Archaeology Service
Environment Directorate*

© Gloucestershire County Council 2009

Site details

Report title: Archaeological Watching brief at Wotton Lawn Hospital
Site address: Wotton Lawn Hospital, Horton Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire
OS NGR: 384454 218753
Site type: Watching Brief
Clients: 2gether NHS Foundation Trust
GSMR No: 33448
Date of fieldwork: 14/05/2009 – 03/07/2009
Recipient museum: Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery
Archived finds: No
Author: Nick Witchell
Date of Report: September 2009

Contents

	page
1 Introduction	2
2 Site location (see Figure 1).....	2
3 Archaeological, historical and cartographic background	2
4 Purpose of the monitoring.....	3
5 Methodology	3
6 Results	4
7 Conclusions	4
8 References.....	5

Figures

Figure 1: Location of site.

Figure 2: Plan of monitored excavations.

Summary

Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service (GCCAS) were commissioned by 2gether NHS Foundation Trust, to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring at Wotton Lawn Hospital, Horton Road Gloucester, Gloucestershire; The monitoring recorded two undated postholes and a post-medieval ditch.

1 Introduction

1.1 Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service (GCCAS) were commissioned by Debbie Armstrong (2gether NHS Foundation Trust) to undertake archaeological monitoring (referred to as a 'watching brief') during the groundwork phase for the construction of a detached single storey extension at Wotton Lawn Hospital, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) 384454 218753. The archaeological watching brief was carried out as a condition attached to the planning permission (08/01594/FUL) which was recommended by the Historic Environment Manager of Gloucester City Council. The Roman road of Ermin Street lies to the north of the site, while excavations along London Road have revealed extensive evidence of Roman activity.

1.2 Archaeological recording on site was carried out in accordance with the brief issued by the Historic Environment Manager of Gloucester City Council (Smith 2009). The watching brief was carried out within the guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) 'Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief' (IfA 2008). The Archaeology Service is a Registered Organisation of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA RO 42).

1.3 Nick Witchell (GCCAS Senior Archaeological Assistant) undertook the archaeological monitoring between 14/05/2009 and 03/07/2009. Paul Nichols (GCCAS Senior Project Officer) managed the project.

2 Site location (see Figure 1)

2.1 The site lies to the east of Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and to the south of London Road and is situated on the northeast side of the Wotton Lawn building complex. The site is geologically located on Cheltenham Sand and Gravel which overlie the Blue Lias Clay Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2008). The site lies just outside, and to the south of the London Road Conservation Area.

3 Archaeological, historical and cartographic background

3.1 The following information is taken from the written scheme of investigation (Williams 2009) which draws on information from Gloucester City Historic Environment Record and Gloucestershire County Council Sites and Monuments Record (GSMR).

3.2 The site of Wotton Lawn Hospital lies south of the projected line of Ermin Street Roman road which is thought to have connected the fort at Kingsholm to the fort of Leaholme in Cirencester (GSMR 7542).

3.3 There has been limited archaeological work undertaken within the site, but the surrounding area, especially London Road, has been subject to numerous archaeological investigations.

3.4 A number of Roman burials were recorded during watching briefs at Wotton Pitch, 140m north of the site (GSMR 11478).

3.5 St Mary Magdalen's Chapel, a former leper hospital, lies 180m northwest of the development area. Roman burials were found here, in the graveyard of the leper church, in 1856 (GSMR 14098).

3.6 Work was undertaken at 110 London Road, which lies 213m northwest of the site. Observations were made in foundation trenches for extensions into the rear of the existing back garden. Sherds of mid - 1st century pottery were recovered from part of an undefined large pit feature. There was no evidence to suggest the Wotton Roman burial ground extended into this area (GSMR 14695).

3.7 Construction of new almshouses at St Margaret's Hospital, 330m west of the site, uncovered a number of Roman burials (GSMR 14460). The excavation of service trenches revealed an extensive metal surface, extending 14m south of London Road. On the fringe of this surface, and probably contemporary with it, were five cremation pits, dated to the late 1st to 2nd Century. The site had been ploughed in the medieval period, truncating these features.

3.8 Cartographic evidence

The First, Second and Third Edition Ordnance Survey Maps (OS 1884-86, OS 1902 and OS 1923) show the site lying to the south of Wotton House as an area of open park land. The Ordnance Survey map of 1936 (OS 1936) shows no change to the site but Wotton House has been developed to become a large building complex, a more recent Ordnance Survey map (OS 1960) shows the site as being used as a sports playing field.

4 Purpose of the monitoring

In the IfA document referred to at 1.2 above:

"The definition of an archaeological watching brief is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is the possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive."

"The purpose of a watching brief is to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works" (IfA 2008).

5 Methodology

5.1 The monitored groundworks are shown on Figure 2 and were as follows:

- An initial ground level reduction was carried out across the site, to a standard level of 24.52m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) a depth of between 0.15 and 0.25m below ground level (bgl).
- The excavation of a complex foundation layout was carried out (designed to minimise impact on protected trees on site). These foundations measured between 0.60m-0.75m in width and were excavated to a depth of between 1.70 m and 2.20m bgl.
- Three 3.50m square trenches were excavated to a depth of 2m bgl, a height of 22.52m aOD, to allow for the installation of a system of soakaways. This work included the excavation of trenching to link two of the soakaways, which was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.70m bgl, a height of 22.82m aOD.

5.1.1 Further excavation for internal walls and drainage, was carried with excavation no deeper than 0.10m below the ground reduction level of 24.52m. Following initial monitoring it was clear that this phase of the work would not impact upon archaeological deposits.

5.2 All deposits were recorded on a pro-forma context sheet. A site location plan indicating north and based on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map was prepared (see Figure 1). A digital photographic record of the investigations was completed, illustrating details and the general context of the principal features.

5.3 The site archive is presently being stored at Shire Hall, Gloucester under a unique site code (GSMR 33448) issued by the County Sites and Monuments Record Officer. It is intended that it will eventually be deposited with Gloucester City Art Gallery and Museum for long-term storage.

6 Results

The results of the monitoring are outlined below, with the deposits discussed in stratigraphic order starting with the earliest. Cut numbers are shown in square brackets [], all other context numbers are shown in rounded brackets ().

The natural geological deposits of yellow sand and gravels (103) were encountered at a depth of between 0.30m and 0.55m below ground level, a height of between 24.22m aOD and 23.97m aOD. Three archaeological features were recorded cutting the natural geological deposits (103), and comprised two undated post holes and a post-medieval linear ditch (See Figure 2). The ditch [104] was orientated northwest to southeast and was only partially exposed in the ends of three foundation trenches. Where the ditch was revealed it measured at least 0.80m in width and up to 0.40m in depth; Ditch [104] contained a single fill of dark grey, silty clay and limestone gravel (105) from which several small fragments of post-medieval pottery were recovered.

Two isolated post holes were revealed by the excavations, neither of these post holes contained datable finds. Post hole [106] was sub circular in shape and measured 0.35m in length and 0.30m in width; it was cut into the natural gravel to a depth of 0.19m and was filled by mid reddish brown silty clay (107). Post hole [106] was fully excavated, but no datable artefacts were recovered. Post hole [108] was circular in shape and measured 0.24m in diameter, it was relatively shallow and measured a maximum of 0.14m in depth, and was filled by mid brown sandy clay (109) which contained infrequent flecks of charcoal, but no datable finds.

Sealing deposit (107) was a subsoil deposit of light brown silty clay (102), which measured up to 0.25m in depth; this deposit was only observed as being present on the eastern half of the site. Sealing fills (105) and (109) was a deposit of light grey silty clay and limestone gravel (101), which measured up to 0.30m in depth and was present over the western half of the site, this distinction between subsoil deposits (102) and (101) may represent an earlier boundary between agricultural and non-agricultural use of the land. Overlying deposits (102) and (101) was a mixture of dark grey topsoil and modern hardcore levelling (100) these modern deposits appear to represent landscaping of the area to create a garden space following the construction of the main Wotton Lawn building complex.

7 Conclusions

A complex foundation layout was excavated during the construction work and although this impacted on a large area of the site, the foundation trenches were limited to a maximum of 0.75m in width and exposed a relatively small amount of the total site area. The monitoring recorded the presence of a post-medieval boundary ditch and two undated post holes; the fragmentary nature of the excavations means it is impossible to say whether the post holes are part of more extensive activity. It could be seen during excavation that areas close to the main Wotton Lawn building complex had been heavily landscaped and truncated; this appears to have happened during construction of the main building.

8 References

British Geological Survey (BGS)	2008	British Geological Survey data held on County Council GIS.
Institute for Archaeologists (IfA)	2008	<i>'Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief'</i> . Institute for Archaeologists. London.
Ordnance Survey	1886	Ordnance Survey County Series Map, First Edition. Landmark Digital Data held on County Council GIS.
Ordnance Survey	1902	Ordnance Survey County Series Map, Second Edition. Landmark Digital Data held on County Council GIS.
Ordnance Survey	1922	Ordnance Survey County Series Map, Third Edition. Landmark Digital Data held on County Council GIS.
Ordnance Survey	1936	Ordnance Survey County Series Map, Fourth Edition. Landmark Digital Data held on County Council GIS.
Ordnance Survey	1960	Ordnance Survey County Series Map. Sixth Edition. Landmark Digital Data held on County Council GIS.
Smith, J	2009	Brief for archaeological monitoring and recording, Wotton Lawn Hospital, Gloucester.
Williams, B	2009	Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Wotton Lawn Hospital, Gloucester. Unpublished GCCAS report.

Nick Witchell
Senior Archaeological Assistant
Gloucestershire County Council
Shire Hall, Westgate Street Gloucester GL1 2TH
Email: Nick.Witchell@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Telephone: 01452426707

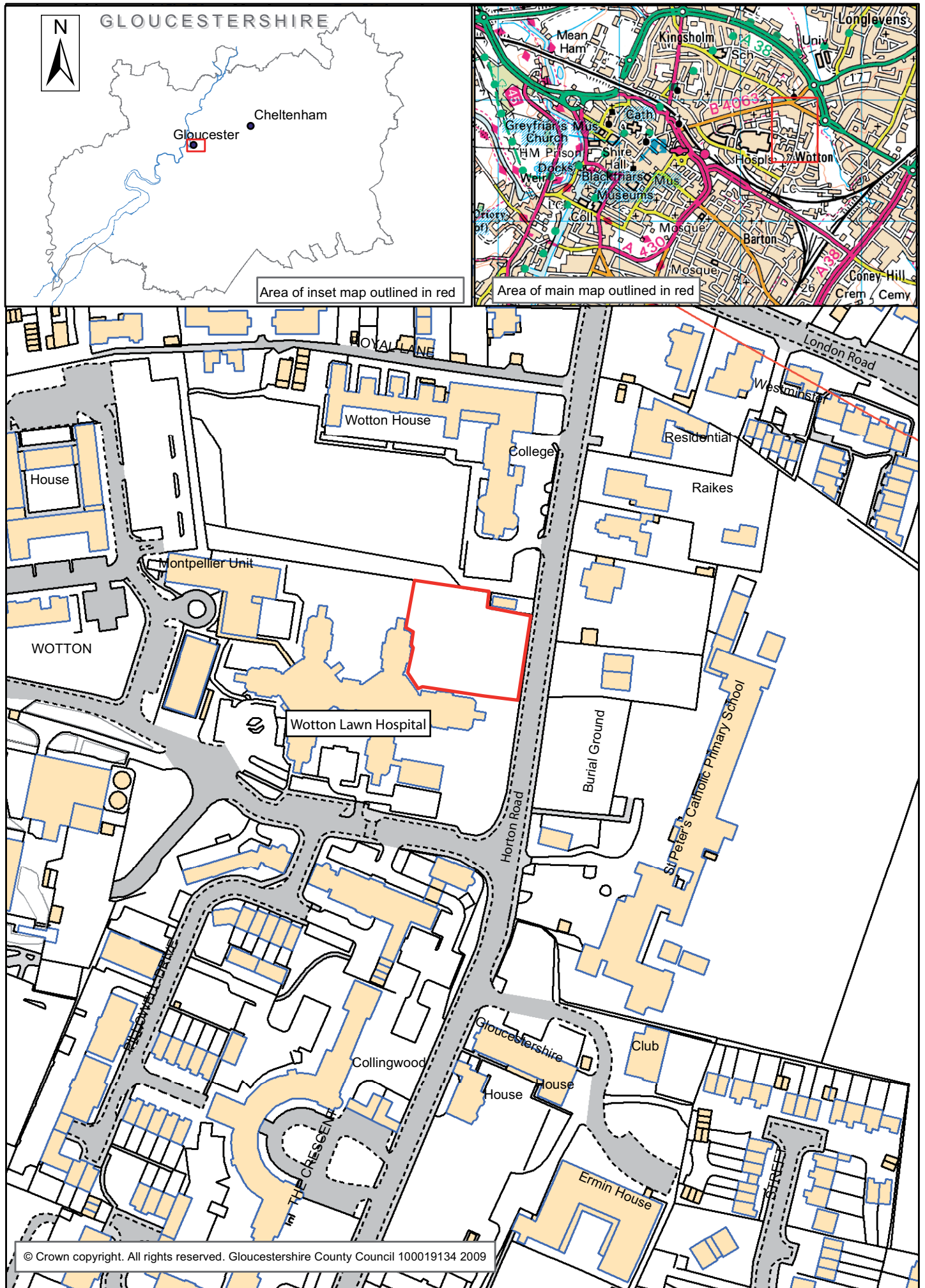


Figure 1: Wotton Lawn Hospital, Site location shown in red (Scale 1:2000)



Figure 2 : Plan of development area and monitored groundworks. (Scale 1:200)