



**Bristol and Region  
Archaeological  
Services**

**Archaeological Watching Brief  
IEP DEPOT,  
STOKE GIFFORD,  
SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

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OASIS: bristola1-170289



**FAME**  
Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers



Archaeological Watching Brief  
at the  
**IEP DEPOT,**  
**(INTERCITY EXPRESS PROGRAMME)**  
**STOKE GIFFORD,**  
**SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

Centred on NGR ST 61450 79960

Prepared for **Hitachi Rail**

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### Abbreviations

AD	<i>Anno Domini</i>	EH	English Heritage
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	Km	Kilometre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	m	Metre
BC	Before Christ	NGR	National Grid Reference
BCC	Bristol City Council	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
BGS	British Geological Survey	OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations
c	<i>Circa</i>	OS	Ordnance Survey
DCLG	Dept. for Communities and Local Government	PRN	Primary Record Number
DCMS	Department for Culture Media and Sport	SGHER	Historic Environment Record

### NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

November, 2014

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## **SUMMARY**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with redevelopment at the site of the IEP Depot, Stoke Gifford, South Gloucestershire.

No significant archaeological features or finds were observed during the watching brief.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) on behalf of Hitachi Rail during site redevelopment (Planning Permission No. PT11/2781/F) at the Intercity Express Programme (IEP), Stoke Gifford, Bristol.
- 1.2 The fieldwork was undertaken between the 27th March and 29th April, 2014 and on the 22nd and 30th October, 2014.
- 1.3 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number BRSMG 2014/38 and a copy of the report will be made available to the English Heritage Archive. The project has been entered in the South Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record as 20335 and in the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) as: bristola1-170289.

## 2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site (centred on NGR ST 61450 79960) is located in the north-eastern quadrant of the four-way railway junction known as Filton Junction, a short distance to the west of Bristol Parkway railway station (**Fig.1**). It stands on ground that has been raised over many years by the tipping of waste railway ballast and other materials, but which originally was just below the equivalent of the 50m contour.
- 2.2 The solid geology of the site comprises Jurassic and Triassic mudstones of the Saltford Shale Member, under superficial Quaternary deposits of alluvium comprising clay, silt, sand and gravel (BGS 2014).
- 2.3 As far as is known, the site has not been the subject of any previous archaeological work.

## 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 3.1 The site lies predominantly within the ancient parish of Stoke Gifford, with a small part within the Filton parish boundary. Stoke Brook and its tributary defining the parish boundaries here. The site was in agricultural use until at least the late 19th century, with some historic field boundaries surviving into the 20th century. None of the field names is of archaeological interest beyond describing their historic function.
- 3.2 The site is bounded on three sides by the construction of the railways linking Bristol, South Wales and Avonmouth docks constructed during 1860-1910. All three run along embankments; the Stoke Brook or its tributary being crossed in the three places, the watercourses culverted and, where necessary, diverted or realigned. This continued as the site was utilised as a landfill for large quantities of building and railway material from 1939, with the brook being moved northwards by 1955 directly connecting the culverts flowing beneath the north-south and east-to-north railway embankments. The early 1970s OS coverage records the tip and sidings reaching the western extremity of the site covering the original stream course, with another tip appearing alongside the north-south line. Early 1990s mapping shows tips continuing to encroach on the remaining lower land to the north of the Stoke Brook.
- 3.3 The HER map has only a single item for the site, an artefact scatter of Anglo-Saxon material found when the railway was constructed in the 1860s (SGHER 1346). Evidence for a Romano-British settlement beyond the north-eastern embankment was discovered in the 1970s (SGHER 1331), close to where a coin hoard and pottery of the same period was found in 1880 (SGHER 11009). Nearby crop marks are also thought to be of the same period (SGHER 18145). A mound of possibly prehistoric origin has been noted closer to the outside of the embankment (SGHER18144). Apart from the railway lines themselves (SGHER 14222, 16322 & 16323); there are also Second World War defences in the form of several pillboxes though none directly on the site.
- 3.4 According to the HER records, no other evidence has been found on the study area for any of the following:
- Scheduled monuments;
  - Statutory or locally listed buildings;
  - Historic battlefields;
  - Registered parks or gardens;
  - Ecclesiastical establishments, consecrated ground, faith buildings or places-of-worship;
  - Burial grounds (in use or disused);
  - Conservation area.

#### **4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (Bryant, 2014), *BaRAS Site Manual* (2009) and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundworks.
- 4.2 The groundworks were carried out using 360 degree mechanical excavators fitted with toothed buckets. Photographs were taken as the works were monitored and records / plans of the soils exposed made where relevant.



## 5. RESULTS

- 5.1 The archaeological work revealed no earlier features beyond the extant remains of the original culvert and agricultural clay land drains. Refer to **Appendix 2** for full descriptions of contexts and features.
- 5.2 No archaeological features were observed during the groundwork. The site comprises landfill made up of predominantly building material, demolition rubble and industrial waste with mixed-in soil and clay, overlying natural clay and mudstone deposits (**Fig. 2**). Between 4-5m of this material was removed before piling occurred for the construction of the new culvert. The deposits recorded are from within these pilings during the excavation and construction of this culvert (**Plate 1**).
- 5.3 The lowest deposit excavated on the site was mudstone (010) underlying clay deposits (007 & 009) containing a sandy clay lens (008) (**Plates 2 & 3**). Context 007 contained 2" and 3" extruded clay land drains in a possible herringbone pattern, the larger bore section of pipe running North - South with the smaller pipe angling North-East - South-West towards it. The junction was outside the excavation area. There was no visible evidence of pipe trenches or backfill. Above this context were a series of redeposited bands of material consisting of various mixes of building and demolition rubble, crushed brick, stone, concrete, and soil (002, 003 & 004); context 002 being truncated by the current development and overlaid with context 001 during the construction of the culvert. At the north-eastern end of the excavation these were gradually replaced by a thick deposit of railway ballast (011).
- 5.4 At the north-eastern end of the site the original brick culvert and later corrugated steel pipe (012) under the railway embankment were exposed beneath layers of railway ballast (011) (**Plates 4-6**).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No significant archaeological remains were identified during the watching brief.
- 6.2 The sequence of deposits show a site of poor agricultural land undergoing drainage before being used as a landfill site during the 20th-century. The construction method and layout of the land drain pipes suggests a mid-19th century date of construction following a 'herring bone' pattern flowing into Stoke Brook.
- 6.3 No evidence of the earlier routes of the brook or ditches were observed during the watching brief.

## 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

### Published material

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### Unpublished material

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British Geological Survey. (2012). Geology of Britain Viewer. Available:  
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## **APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement**

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local-authority policies.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)**

The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) for England published by the UK Government in March 2012 states that the historic environment, which includes designated and non-designated heritage assets, is an irreplaceable resource and, as such, should be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities when considering and determining planning applications. This is taken to form part of a positive strategy set out in the respective Local Plan (i.e. *Bristol Core Strategy*) to ensure the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The assigned significance of heritage assets will be key factor in terms of their conservation.

Given their irreplaceable nature, any harm to, or loss of, a heritage asset, or heritage assets, should be clearly and convincingly justified as part of a planning application. As part of this, applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. Where a heritage asset, or assets, are to be harmed or lost as the result of a proposal, the applicant will be required to record and advance the understanding of the significance of that asset or assets, to include making the evidence arising publicly accessible, but this will be in proportion to the significance of the asset/assets in question.

While the NPPF takes into account the historic environment as a whole, additional protection is afforded to designated heritage assets under current English Law. Any proposal that would result in harm or loss of a designated heritage asset is also required to be justified by the applicant in meeting strict criteria set out in the NPPF.

### **LOCAL POLICY**

South Gloucestershire Planning Policy (Archaeology L11) states that:

Development which would not physically preserve sites of national archaeological importance, whether scheduled or not, or would have a significant impact on the setting of visible remains, will not be permitted. Planning permission will not be granted for development on sites or landscapes of archaeological interest or of high archaeological potential without an archaeological assessment and if necessary a field evaluation.

Where the assessment indicates that the proposed development would harm a site, structure or landscape of archaeological or historic importance or its setting, development will not be permitted unless applicants can demonstrate a satisfactory scheme indicating how the impact of the proposal on the archaeological resource can be mitigated. The council will negotiate agreements to preserve and manage archaeological remains.

## APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Type	Description	Stratigraphy	Date
001	Layer	100mm gravel/stone chippings laid during current construction work.	Above 002	21st century
002	Layer	Dark reddish brown silty clay mixed with building material/demolition rubble and rubbish. 200mm thick. Redeposited material.	Above 003 Below 002	20th century
003	Layer	Light reddish brown sandy clay mixed with crushed brick and containing stone and gravel lens/ad-mixes. 300mm thick. Redeposited material.	Above 004 Below 003	20th century
004	Layer	Yellowy brown silty clay with frequent building material inclusions. 300mm thick. Redeposited material.	Above 005 Below 004	20th century
005	Layer	Compacted dark brown silty clay loam. Buried topsoil/Open working area, heavily contaminated with rubbish. 200mm thick. Probably truncated by later activity.	Above 006 Below 005	20th century
006	Layer	Grey brown silty sandy gley soil with occasional inclusion of building material. 700mm thick.	Above 007 & 008. Below 005	20th century /unknown
007	Layer	Yellowy grey brown silty clay with occasional mudstone inclusion. 700mm thick. Clay land drains observed in this deposit.	Above 009 Below 006 & 008	Unknown/ late 19th/mid-20th century
008	Layer	Yellowy brown sandy clay lens.	Above 007. Below 006	Unknown
009	Layer	Pale yellow/grey sandy clay. 200mm thick.	Above 010 Below 007	Unknown
010	Layer	Pale grey mudstone 300+mm. Limit of excavation.	Below 009	Unknown
011	Layer	40mm railway ballast.	Above 012	20th century
012	Structure	Culvert. Brick built culvert under railway embankment with later phase corrugated steel pipe laid in it and backfilled with railway ballast.	Below 011	Late 19th/early 20th century

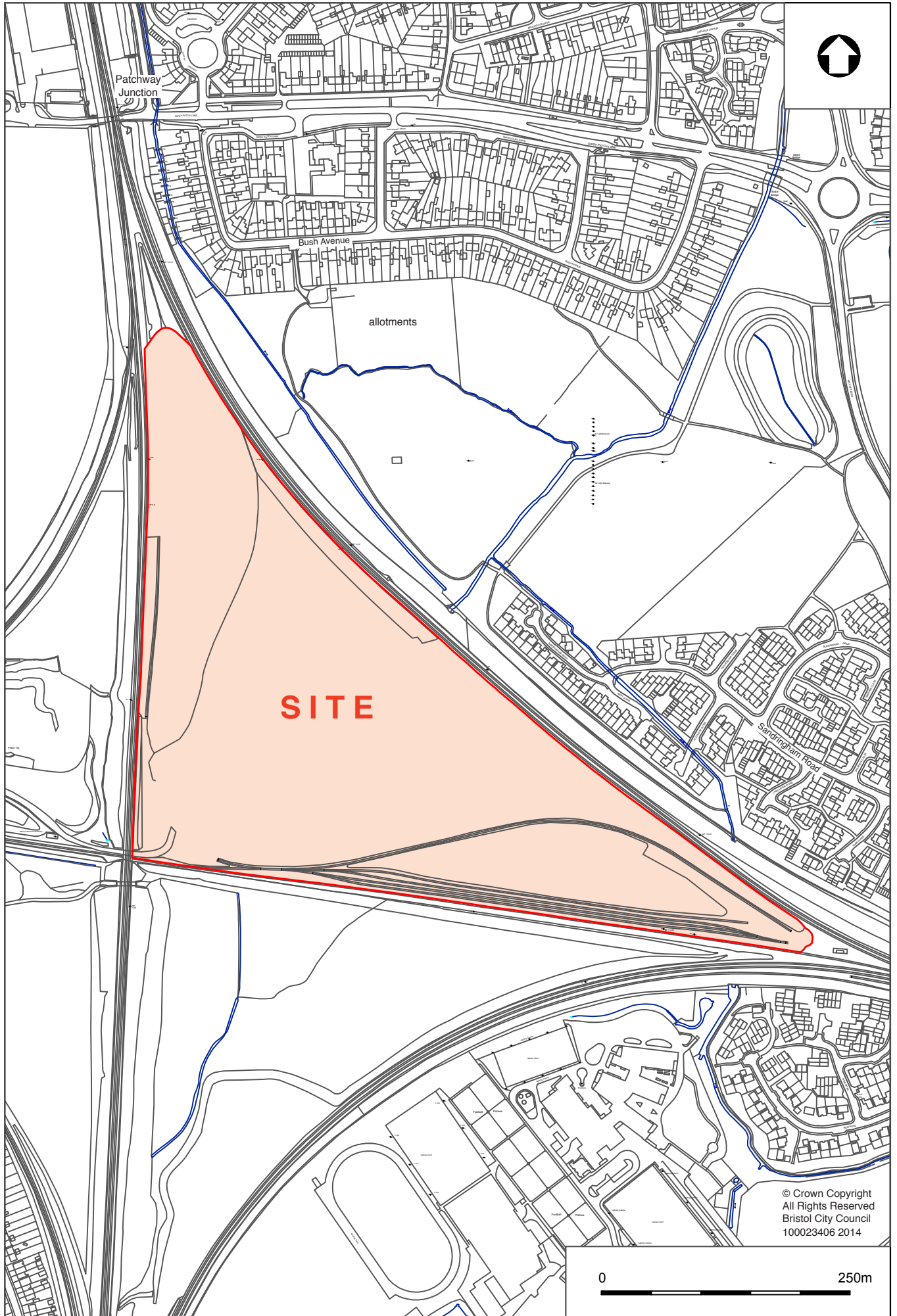


Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:5000









Plate 1 View along culvert, looking south-west



Plate 2 Representative section, looking south-west



Plate 3 Sand lens in section, looking north-east



Plate 4 Top of original culvert, looking north-east



Plate 5 Corrugated steel pipe laid into brook and original culvert, looking north-east



Plate 6 View down onto original culvert, looking south