

Archaeological Watching Brief
to the west of
THE PITHAY,
PAULTON, SOMERSET.
for
Wayne Lenihan Ltd.



Report No. 2263/2010



Bristol and Region Archaeological Services

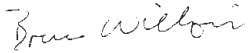

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Archaeological Watching Brief
to the west of
THE PITHAY,
PAULTON, SOMERSET.

Centred on
N.G.R. ST 65050 56520

Client Wayne Lenihan Ltd.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
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| <i>Date Issued:</i> | 8 July 2010  |

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Abbreviations

| | | | |
|-------|--|-----|---------------------------|
| AD | Anno Domini | Km | Kilometre |
| aOD | Above Ordnance Datum | m | Metre |
| BaRAS | Bristol & Region Archaeological Services | NGR | National Grid Reference |
| BC | Before Christ | NMR | National Monuments Record |
| c. | Circa | OS | Ordnance Survey |
| HER | 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.

July, 2010.

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundwork associated with the redevelopment of a site on the west side of The Pithay in Paulton. A two-storey block of flats is to be built on the site.

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the programme of intrusive groundwork.

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- Fig. 1 Site location plan
- Fig. 2 Plan showing study area in detail

Plates

- Cover A view of the site (looking west) from The Pithay. To the left is Ivy Cottage (dental surgery), while to the right stands Wicks & Pierce estate agents office (with flats above)
- Plate 1 Looking north-west at ground reduction work in progress. Note : Holy Trinity Church is visible in the background
- Plate 2 A view (looking south-west) of the south-west corner of the site. Beyond are detached houses (Nos. 10-12) on Laurel Drive
- Plate 3 The natural lias bedrock being exposed during ground reduction work – looking south
- Plate 4 Ground reduction work in progress – looking south-east
- Plate 5 South-facing section in foundation trench shows fill material sealing the lias clay – looking north-east

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) was commissioned by Wayne Lenihan Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork associated with the construction of a two-storey block of four 2-bedroom flats, with associated parking, on land on the west side of The Pithay in Paulton, Somerset (**Fig. 1; Cover**).
- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned to comply with condition 6 of the planning consent (Planning Reference 09/01537/FUL) granted by the local planning authority (Bath & North East Somerset Council) and in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* prepared by Bruce Williams (Manager, BaRAS) of Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (Williams 2010).
- 1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken during one site visit on Monday 8th February 2010 under the supervision of Tim Longman (Project Officer, BaRAS) who also compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with the Roman Baths Museum, Bath under the Accession Number BATRM 2010.4 and a copy of the report will be available to the National Monuments Record (NMR) in Swindon, which is maintained by English Heritage. The project has been entered in the Bath & North East Somerset Council Historic Environment Record (HER) and has also been allocated the following OASIS ID:bristola1-71571.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site (centred on NGR ST 65050 56520) occupies an area of land covering some 990m² on the west side of The Pithay (B3355), close to the centre of the village of Paulton, which lies approximately 12.5km south-west of Bath city centre.
- 2.2 The site (**Fig. 2**), which is located within the Paulton Conservation Area, fronts onto The Pithay (B3355), via a narrow pedestrian and vehicular entrance. This entrance is bounded south by Ivy Cottage (a bungalow used as a dental surgery) and north by a three-storey building occupied by estate agents (Wicks & Pierce) offices on the ground floor with two floors of flats above. The site is bounded to the rear (west) by a builders yard (Paulton Builders Merchants), south by the rear gardens of No. 11 Laurel Drive and 'The Lamb' public house and north by the rear gardens of two cottages fronting on The Pithay.
- 2.3 Much of the site was largely unoccupied, apart from a disused garage/workshop, alongside the southern boundary, which has since been demolished. In addition there is an extant block of three garages, plus areas of hard standing that are used for car parking by the dental surgery, estate agents offices and flats. The west and north sides of the site were largely covered with self-seeded trees and shrubs that had grown unchecked for some time.
- 2.4 The topography of the site is that it slopes from west to east towards The Pithay, with a ground level of about 116m aOD near the western boundary, then with a gradual fall to about 114.6m aOD near the middle of the site. There is then fairly level ground then a fall to about 113.3m aOD near The Pithay.
- 2.5 The geology of the study area comprises white lias and blue lias (Lower Lias) of the Jurassic period (British Geological Survey 1962).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is situated in the historic parish of Paulton, which formed part of the hundred of Chewton in the county of Somerset. Chewton hundred is not yet covered in the *Victoria History of the Counties of England*, but an early account of the hundred is given by the Revd. John Collinson (1791). However, this largely dwells on the descent of the Lordship of Paulton and provides no information upon the origins of the village of Paulton itself.
- 2.2 There have been no modern historical studies of Paulton and no known amateur research of any relevance to the development of the town has been published. Comparatively little is known of prehistoric activity within the area and the Bath & North East Somerset Council HER records only one find of Romano-British material, that of the site of a stone building within a kilometre of the proposed development (HER 1113). Paulton is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Morris 1980).
- 3.3 Cartographic sources are equally limited, the earliest map or plan to show the site being the Parish Tithe Map of 1839 (SRO T/PH/TI Paulton). This appears to indicate that most of the development site was probably a paddock, though there is also a building shown at the southern boundary of the site.
- 3.4 There is no indication that the site has been subject to any prior archaeological investigation, indeed there is a paucity of archaeological data within the urban area of Paulton. Of significance, however, is the presence of the nearby Holy Trinity Church (HER 1114), which together with its churchyard lies some 50 metres to the north-west. An archaeological desk-based assessment (Broomhead 2005) was carried out on the site of the 'Old Builders Yard', immediately west of this site. That was followed by trial trenching by BaRAS in 2007 (Potter 2007). It found little of archaeological interest apart from several cut features dating from the 19th century.

4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (Williams 2010). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Field Archaeologists (1999, revised 2008) and *Management of Archaeological Projects* (MAP II) issued by English Heritage (EH 1991). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundwork.
- 4.2 The watching brief involved monitoring ground reduction work across the area of the footprint of the proposed new building followed by the mechanical excavation of foundation trenches.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 All groundwork was carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator utilising both toothed buckets and toothless grading buckets.
- 5.2 The site visit, in early February, initially involved monitoring mechanical ground reduction work (**Plates 3 & 4**) across the site of the proposed two-storey building. Up to 1m of blackish topsoil/fill, brownish yellow clay subsoil and stiff natural blue/grey lias clay, which sealed the underlying lias bedrock, was mechanically removed across the building footprint.
- 5.3 The excavation of foundation trenches commenced later the same day. The depth of the trenches (**Plate 5**) was to be approximately 1m below the reduced ground surface. Beneath up to 0.6m of fill/made ground was the natural lias clay.
- 5.4 No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed and no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered during intrusive groundwork at the site. All excavation work took place within the western half of the site, well back from The Pithay and therefore away from the street frontage and the possible sites of any earlier buildings fronting The Pithay.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area affected by the intrusive groundwork.

7. PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Longman MIfA (Project Officer, BaRAS) who also produced this report. The illustrations were prepared and the report compiled by Ann Linge (Design & Production Officer, BaRAS). The project was managed by Bruce Williams MIfA (Manager, BaRAS).

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

Published Material

- | | |
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Unpublished Material

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| Broomhead, R. A., 2005 | <i>The Old Builders Yard, Church Street, Paulton. An Archaeological Desktop Assessment</i> (Privately circulated client report) |
| Potter, K., 2007 | <i>Archaeological Evaluation of land at The Old Builders' Yard, Church Street, Paulton</i> (BaRAS Report 1820/2007, privately circulated client report) |
| Williams, B., 2010 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief on land to the rear of Ivy Cottage, Paulton</i> (BaRAS Report; privately circulated report) |

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Bristol and Region Archaeological Services would like to thank Messrs. Wayne and Gary Lenihan (Wayne Lenihan Limited), and Mr Peter Attwood (Architect) for their assistance and co-operation. Thanks also to Richard Sermon (Archaeological Officer, Bath & North East Somerset Council) for his advice.

APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement

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

NATIONAL POLICIES

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work that would affect a SAM.

GOVERNMENT POLICY GUIDANCE

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990) have been replaced (23 March 2010) by Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) which sets out the Government's national policies on conservation of the historic environment. Those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets.

Of particular relevance within the Planning Policy Statement are:

Policy HE6: Information Requirements for Applications for Consent Affecting Heritage Assets

HE6.1 Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets themselves should have been assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary given the application's impact. Where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.

Policy HE9: Additional Policy Principles Guiding the Consideration of Applications for Consent Relating to Designated Heritage Assets

HE9.1 There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I or II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Policy HE12: Policy Principles Guiding the Recording of Information Related to Heritage Assets

HE12.3 Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance. Developers should publish this evidence and deposit copies of the reports with the relevant historic environment record. Local planning authorities should require any archive generated to be deposited with a local museum or other public depository willing to receive it. Local planning authorities should impose planning conditions or obligations to ensure such work is carried out in a timely manner and that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.

DISTRICT POLICY

Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan including waste and minerals policies Revised Deposit Draft 2003 as approved for used for Development Control purposes contains the following policies: **Policy BH.11** – Development which would adversely affect Scheduled Ancient Monuments or any other sites of national importance, and their settings and does not preserve such sites in situ will not be permitted.

Policy BH.12 – Development which would harm important archaeological remains or their settings outside the scope of Policy BH.11 will not be permitted unless the adverse impact of the development proposal on the remains can be mitigated.

Policy BH.13 – Development which adversely affects significant archaeological remains within Bath will not be permitted unless the preservation in situ of these remains can be achieved through a detailed design and construction scheme.

A draft <http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Planning/planning-policy-documents/planning-policy-documents.en?page=2> - internalSection2 Supplementary Planning Guidance, (SPG) 'Archaeology in Bath & North-East Somerset' has recently (2004) been prepared. Its principal purpose when adopted is to supplement Policies BH.11, BH.12 & BH.13 of the existing and emerging Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan and should be read in conjunction with these.



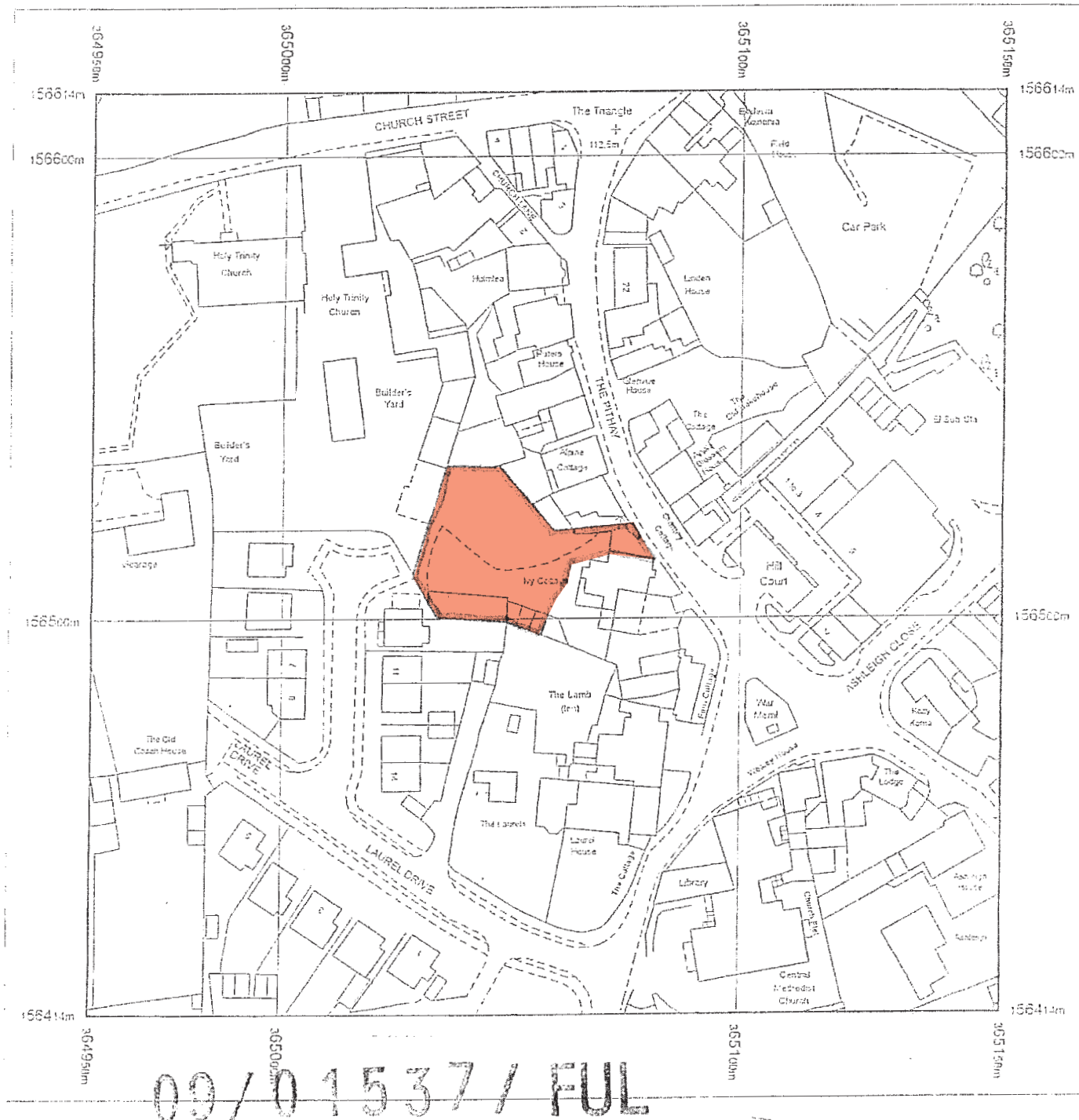
Fig.1 Site location plan



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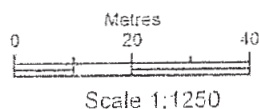


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Fig.2 Plan showing study area in detail



Plate 1 Looking north-west at ground reduction work in progress. Note : Holy Trinity Church is visible in the background



Plate 2 A view (looking south-west) of the south-west corner of the site. Beyond are detached houses (Nos. 10-12) on Laurel Drive



Plate 3
The natural lias bedrock
being exposed during
ground reduction work –
looking south



Plate 4
Ground reduction work in
progress – looking south-
east



Plate 5
South-facing section in
foundation trench shows fill
material sealing the lias clay
– looking north-east