

**Archaeological desk-based  
assessment  
at  
Alvin Street,  
Gloucester**



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## Archaeological desk-based assessment at Alvin Street, Gloucester

Jonathan Webster

### Summary

A desk-based assessment for the historic environment was undertaken at Alvin Street, Gloucester (NGR 83605 18840). It was undertaken on behalf of Rooftop Housing Group Ltd, who intends to redevelop the site with 27 units, a mix of houses and flats over two floors for which a planning application will be submitted.

This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that are potentially affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is considered. The potential impact of the application, and the need for further on-site investigation, is assessed.

The area of investigation lies in a landscape that has boasted some 2,000 years of almost continual occupation, located in the lee of the original Roman settlement at Kingsholm Fort to the north and the later Roman colony of *Glevum Colonia* whose walls were c 120m to the west. Situated to the immediate north of London Road that traces one of the major Roman roads into the town, it was an area that contained extra-mural suburbs and cemeteries that spanned three centuries of growth and construction before a decline in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Occupation did not end there however, and the medieval settlement eventually outgrew the original Roman defensive walls. Alvin Street itself traces the route of the 12<sup>th</sup> century city limits and is named after Alvin gate that was located at the street's northern extent at its junction with Skinner Street.

The usage of the site during through the medieval period is unknown, but by 1799 it is clear that the area had been under pasture for several generations. Although this had changed by the first detailed maps of 1851 which indicate that the area was in use as a combination of public park and gardens for properties fronting both London Road and Alvin Street. The proposed development site continued to be open area until 1870 when the first warehouse of Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd was constructed in the east of the site. This was added to in the late 1970s.

Excavation of the foundation trenches associated with a development in 1988 (currently in use by Cotswold Golf Ltd), within the south-west portion of the site, recorded no medieval deposits, but complex Roman deposits, structures, and an inhumation less than 1m below the current ground level, and due to the sloping nature of the site towards Alvin Street this reduced to as little as 0.45m, and is likely to be even shallower along the eastern limit of the site. Overlain by post-medieval 'dark earth' layers, these Roman deposits range from 0.50m to more than 1m in depth, whilst the apparently limited foundations associated of the Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd warehouse would suggest that the likelihood of similar in-situ deposits to have survived is high.

It is recommended that evaluation be undertaken of those areas of the site which have not been previously investigated to establish the depth and nature of the archaeology. This would then inform the need for further mitigation, potentially either monitoring of the groundworks associated with the development, or excavation of areas to the full construction depth in advance of the development.



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## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A desk-based assessment was undertaken at Alvin Street, Gloucester (NGR 83605 18840). It was undertaken on behalf of Rooftop Housing Group Ltd, who intends to redevelop the site with 27 units, a mix of houses and flats over two floors for which a planning application will be submitted to Gloucester City Council.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application.

Although no specific brief was provided, a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced, to conform with the generality of briefs which have been previously issued (WA 2014).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (IfA 2012).

An event reference for this project will be provided by the Historic Environment Record office on completion and deposition of this report.

#### 1.2 Planning background

Present government planning policy is contained within the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). This is supplemented by detailed guidance which had related to earlier government policy but which is at least partially still relevant to the present policy (DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010).

Gloucester's current planning policies pre-date NPPF (DCLG 2012, Section 126) and contain little that directly fulfils the obligations in section 126 although the *Development Affecting Sites of Historic Environment Interest-Interim Adoption SPD* (Gloucester City Council 2008) states:

- The Council will seek to protect, enhance and preserve sites of archaeological interest and their settings.
- There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings.

In addition to the above the area of investigation sits within Gloucester City Council's Conservation Area number 9 (GCC 2007) that takes into account the Government Planning Policy Act 1990, PPG15, PPG16 and EH 2005 (a & b). This document states:

- Given the particularly high number of listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the conservation area, all such applications will be judged with regard to national policy, including PPG15 and PPG16, and applicants may be asked to provide an Archaeological Evaluation of the site before the application is determined.

### 2 Aims

The general aims of this assessment are to:

- establish the nature and extent of the heritage assets;
- assesses the significance of the heritage assets within the application site and affected by the proposed development;
- assess the impact of the application on the heritage assets.

The specific aims of this desk-based assessment are to:

- recommend mitigation measures to the client, to offset detrimental effects of the development.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The assessment was undertaken by Jonathan Webster, BA (hons); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2009 and has been practising archaeology since 2001. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (AlfA, MA, BA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt MlfA, BSc (Hons).

#### 3.2 Documentary research

All relevant information on the history of the site and past land-use was collected and assessed. Records of known archaeological sites and monuments including archives were obtained from Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (HER). Historic maps and published sources were consulted at Gloucestershire Archives.

The results are mapped on Figures 2-8 and the details of individual features of the historic environment are given in Appendix 1. Event records have been omitted where this would repeat information in other record types, and would not materially affect the assessment.

#### 3.3 List of sources consulted

##### *Cartographic sources*

- 1799 Enclosure Map, list map D, Ref. Q-RI-70
- 1851 Heath maps, Map numbers 3 & 6 (St Mary De Lode & St John the Baptist respectively), Scale 1/528
- 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 1886, Map sheet XXV.II, Scale 1/2500, Ref. 25/15/1
- 1902 OS, Map sheet XXV.II, Scale 1/2500, Ref. 25/15/2
- 1938 OS, Map sheet XXV.II, Scale 1/2500, Ref. 25/15/3
- 1955 OS, Map sheet XXV.II, Scale 1/10,560, Ref. 25/15/5
- 1960 OS, Map sheet XXV.II, Scale 1/10,560, Ref. 25/15/6
- 1970 OS, Map sheet XXV.II, Scale 1/10,560, Ref. 25/15/7
- 1975 OS map, Scale 1/10,000, Ref. 1975/SO8318NE
- 1994 OS map, Scale 1/10,000, Ref. 1994/SO8318NE

##### *Aerial photographs*

- Google Earth, accessed 12 August 2014

##### *Documentary sources*

- Anon. 2007 *A load of old Cobblers; A history of Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd*, [www.footweartoday.co.uk/news/archivestory.php/aid/315/A\\_load\\_of\\_old\\_Cobblers.html](http://www.footweartoday.co.uk/news/archivestory.php/aid/315/A_load_of_old_Cobblers.html) accessed 14 August 2014
- British Geological Survey (BGS) 2014 *Map Viewer (Solid and drift)* [www.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html) accessed 14 August 2014
- DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government
- DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010 *PPS5 Planning for the historic environment: historic environment planning practice guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport/English Heritage



- English Heritage 2011 *The setting of heritage assets*, English Heritage
- English Heritage 2005a *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, English Heritage
- English Heritage 2005b *Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas*, English Heritage
- Garrod, A P, 1989 Annual review of minor development sites in Gloucester: Gardiner Bros (Leathers), 1 Alvin Street, Site 21/88, SO 836189, *Glevensis*, the Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group Review, **23**, pp13
- Gloucester City Council 2002 Gloucester Local Plan Second Stage Deposit, August 2002
- Gloucester City Council 2007 London Road Conservation Area (Conservation Area No 9), Appraisals and Management Proposals
- Gloucester City Council 2008 *Development Affecting Sites of Historic Environment (Archaeological) Interest; Interim Adoption Supplementary Planning Document*, dated August 2008
- IfA 2012 *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*, Institute for Archaeologists, updated 16 November 2012
- Kirby, D, 2007 *The Story of Gloucester*, Sutton Publishing
- WA 2014 *Proposal for an archaeological desk based assessment at Alvin Street, Gloucester*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 29 May 2014, P4365

### 3.4 Other methods

A site visit was undertaken on 13 August 2014.

Consultation has been undertaken with Andrew Armstrong, Gloucester City Archaeologist, Gloucester City Council, to establish the key issues of importance in decision-making in response to the planning application.

This assessment is limited to consideration of heritage assets and potential assets that are relevant to the application site.

### 3.5 Impact assessment criteria

The criteria cited in Table 1 have been used.

**Major Beneficial:** Demonstrable improvement to a designated heritage asset of the highest order (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. Designated assets will include scheduled monuments, grade I/II\* listed buildings, grade I/II\* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks or World Heritage Sites. Improvement may be in the asset's management, its amenity value, setting, or documentation (for instance enhancing its research value). It may also be in better revealing a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area's significance.

**Beneficial:** Demonstrable improvement to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of improvement will demonstrably have a minor affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level. Improvement may be in the asset's management, its amenity value, setting, or documentation (for instance enhancing its research value).

<p><b>Not Significant:</b> Impacts that have no long-term effect on any heritage asset.</p>
<p><b>Minor Adverse:</b> Minor harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm will demonstrably have a minor affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p>
<p><b>Moderate Adverse:</b> Minor harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks or World Heritage Sites.</p> <p>Harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm will demonstrably affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p>
<p><b>Major Adverse:</b> Harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites or harm to a building or other element that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area as a whole.</p> <p>Substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm or loss will demonstrably affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p>
<p><b>Severe Adverse:</b> Substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites or the loss of a building or other element that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Unknown:</b> Where there is insufficient information to determine either significance or impact for any heritage asset, or where a heritage asset is likely to exist but this has not been established, or where there is insufficient evidence for the absence of a heritage asset. For instance where further information will enable the planning authority to make an informed decision.</p>

Table 1: Impact assessment criteria for heritage asset

## 4 The application site

### 4.1 Location and size

The study area included the application site (Fig 1), although heritage assets were considered within 175m of the site in order to provide a broader understanding of the local context. The site is 2,598m<sup>2</sup> in area.

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## 4.2 Topography, geology and soils

The area of investigation is sloped down to the east towards Alvin Street, which is at odds with the general area which sits atop a flat plateau just above the floodplain of the River Severn, at an average height of 15m AOD (above Ordnance Datum). The ground rises to the east towards the Summit of Wotton Hill (24m AOD) while it drops almost imperceptibly to the west and north-west. The underlying geology is mapped as mudstones from the Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone formations that are dated to between the Triassic and Jurassic periods and are typical of the shallow lime rich seas of the period. These are overlain by the Cheltenham Sand and Gravel formation, deposited three million years ago (BGS 2014).

## 4.3 Current land-use

The site area currently comprises two warehouses; for Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd and Cotswold Golf Ltd, along with associated car parking for both and properties fronting London Road.

## 4.4 Historic land-use and archaeological character

The area of investigation is known to have been part of the Gloucester settlement that has had almost continual occupation for nigh on 2000 years, located to the south of Kingsholm Fort, built in the late AD40s as a military base that dominated the Severn valley. This fort was abandoned in AD68 and the walled colony of Gloucester (*Glevum Colonia*) was created; its Westgate (HER ref. 628) being c 120m west of the proposed development. Around the same time the main Roman road (HER refs. 641 & 806) to Cirencester (*Corinium Dondubinium*) was constructed (roughly along the current route of London Road). Lying to the immediate south of the present site, this road is known to have been bordered by both extra-mural settlement activity dating mainly from between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, and later 4<sup>th</sup> century inhumations (HER refs. 752, 764, 827, 871, 868, 869 and 892). This suburb followed much the same pattern as the rest of the colony of Gloucester with a rapid growth in the late 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries, reaching a peak in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century before a decline into the 4<sup>th</sup> century as communication and trade routes deteriorated across parts of the Roman Empire.

Although it is thought that this area outside the city walls remained in use during the Anglo-Saxon period there is little archaeological evidence to prove this and a distinct gap is seen within the record. Not until the 12<sup>th</sup> century do we see evidence of activity as the city was expanded at this time to a line roughly following Alvin Street, The name is derived from the Alvin Gate, a 12<sup>th</sup> century structure located at the northern limit of Alvin Street at its junction with Skinner Street (Kirby 2007). By this time the area of investigation was under the administration of St Peter's Abbey located to the east (GCC 2007), and industrial pits, possibly associated with leather tanning were found within the current site boundaries (HER ref. 871).

By 1799 it is clear that the area was in use as pastoral fields for at least several generations (Enclosure details Ref. Q-RI-70) with the nearest property, Northgate House (FID 189), to the immediate south, which was built in the mid to late 17<sup>th</sup> century. By 1851 the area in general had become largely built up; the current street system being laid out to follow the former field systems seen in the 1799 map. The proposed development site was in use at this time as a public park, along with gardens for properties fronting both London Road and Alvin Street. The Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd, was established here in 1870 as a tannery making gloves and horse harnesses, by James Gardiner who constructed the warehouse on the site. Starting out as simply Gardiners, the company expanded under the direction of James' son, Colston, who introduced his three sons to the business in the early 1900s. Gardiner and Brothers was created although by 1918 only one brother remained; Ashley being killed in the Great War and his younger brother Bernard leaving to start a motor company. The company continued to grow and the warehouse was expanded in the late 1970s and again in 1988 when Bill Endacott, a cousin through the maternal side built and opened the Cotswold Golf shoe range that sold products from the Gardiners range in a more specialist market (Anon. 2007).

## **5 Heritage assets**

### **5.1 Designated heritage assets**

The proposed development lies to the east of the scheduled area of the walled city of *Glevum Colonia* but does lie within Conservation Area No. 9 (GCC 2007). Although not a specific archaeological document it does take into account the heritage assets and a desire to preserve the character of the area as a whole. Originally designated a Conservation Area on 22 February 1984 by Gloucester City Council this was revised first in 1991 after new provisions of Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* which redefined a conservation area as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance'. Section 71 of the same act required local planning authorities to 'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas', which led to a further period of consultation regarding the boundaries of Conservation Area No. 9 to be redefined in 2006.

Of particular note however was section 72 that specifies that 'in making a decision on an application for development within a Conservation Area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'. This led to Gloucester City Council undertaking a study of appraisal and management proposals (GCC 2007) that conformed with the English Heritage *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (2005a) and *Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas* (2005b). Additionally it took into account the government guidelines on both the *Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15)* and *Planning and Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology (PPG16)*.

The area of investigation lies to the immediate north of one of the major Roman roads that ran into the walled city within an area of known extra-mural development and cemeteries, the preservation of which has previously been noted as well preserved (GCC 2007).

### **5.2 Undesignated heritage assets**

Of specific relevance to the present site is the archaeological recording in 1988 of the footings for the new Cotswold Golf Ltd building (HER ref. 871). This revealed between 0.5 and 1m+ of complex archaeological stratigraphy of Roman date that included at least one inhumation, a building, associated gardens and boundary features, metallised surfaces and various pits (Appendix 1 and Fig 8). These had been truncated by occasional medieval pits in the western end of the site and the whole had been partially truncated and sealed by between 0.45 and 0.98m of post medieval 'dark-earth' deposits that were thought to date from between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It should be noted that this project was never published and although the archives were studied by the author and show that a detailed investigation of the site was undertaken, no information on the finds was present other than those notes made during the site investigations. While the author is happy with the quality of the work undertaken, a certain degree of scepticism has to be given the various dates as no evidence is present.

In addition, Roman buildings have been found to the south-west (HER ref. 827), south (HER ref. 868) and south-east (HER ref. 869 & 892), along with a tessellated pavement (HER ref 356), roads (HER ref. 806 & 1654) and large numbers of general Roman finds (Appendix 1 and Fig 7).

To the immediate south of the proposed development, the 17<sup>th</sup> century listed building Northgate House (FID 189) butts the site, its frontage on London Road being 'refaced' in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **5.3 Potential heritage assets**

Inspection of the current Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd warehouse during a site visit associated with this investigation demonstrated that with the exception of the external load bearing walls the impact of the present building is probably minimal (Plate 5). The previous archaeological investigations (HER ref. 871) indicated that the concrete floor slab of the warehouse was 0.35m in depth, which, would not have penetrated the post-medieval 'dark earth' deposits. As such it is

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expected that both medieval and Roman structures, buildings, features and deposits are still present across the entirety of the site with potentially up to 1m or more of complex stratigraphy being present through the central and western parts particularly.

## **6 Assessment of the significance of heritage assets**

### **6.1 Designated assets**

#### **6.1.1 Listed building**

The 17<sup>th</sup> century Northgate House which butts the south of the proposed development area has been placed on the 'buildings at risk' register 2001 (Updated 2006), and as such any development works undertaken would have to be sympathetic to this building's character and setting to ensure no detrimental effects to it.

#### **6.1.2 Conservation Area**

The especial historic significance of the Conservation Area has been described as 'taking in one of the earliest suburbs of Gloucester that was integral to the Roman City of Gloucester and includes the very rare survival of the early 12<sup>th</sup> century hospital chapel of St Peter's Abbey (St Margaret's)' (GCC 2007).

### **6.2 Undesignated assets**

#### **6.2.1 Sites of archaeological interest**

##### *Nature of the archaeological interest in the site*

The investigation of the footings associated with the construction of Cotswold Golf Ltd offices in 1988 (HER ref. 871), within the present development area demonstrates that complex well preserved deposits, features and structures survive which have the potential to provide a wealth of data to further our understanding of this important part of the city. It should be noted however that this site investigation was never published beyond a brief overview (Garrod 1989). The following is taken from the site archive. No finds reports or lists were present and all depths were measured from the surface level with no reference to ordnance datum (AOD). The author is however confident in the quality of the data recorded and it is clear that surface levels have not changed since the investigations were undertaken, and while the stratigraphic narrative appears complete and the relative phasing robust, some caution should be taken in the specifics, such as dates as no evidence is available to confirm these.

##### *Roman deposits (Fig 8)*

The earliest features noted were a series of small pits of possible industrial nature such as clay extraction or tanning that were seen across the central and eastern parts of the excavations. A possible 1<sup>st</sup> century building was noted at the west end of the excavation, however this had been heavily truncated by a later building of probable mid 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century date. In association with this later building a number of metallated internal and external surfaces were revealed, of particular interest was a surface (Trench IX, context 27) revealed to the immediate east of the building (0.89m below present ground level), comprised of a fine metallated surface banded with fine layers of clay silt and charcoal that was suggestive of phased occupation. To the east of this a possible boundary ditch (Trench XXI, context 4; Trench XXIV, context 10) was noted aligned parallel to the building and, like the building was thought to continue under the Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd warehouse to the north. Trench III, a test pit against the southern face of the current warehouse, revealed the top of either a deep pit or well (Trench III, Context 4), however no drawings were available for this trench and as such no depth could be determined, although given the relative depths seen to the west and south it would be expected between 0.8 and 0.9m below the present ground surface.

Across the investigation area there were between six and ten layers of horizons and deposits, in total from 0.45m to more than 1m thick. Along with the aforementioned multi-phased building, they

indicated that continual occupation of the site had occurred from the late 1<sup>st</sup> to the late 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. One of the latest Roman features noted was a north to south orientated adult inhumation (Trench XXV, context 3) 0.46m below the present ground surface. Laid out in supine position with feet to the south, this individual had been apparently buried within a coffin (parts of which were recovered), although due to later truncation by post-medieval deposits no grave cut was found. This inhumation lay to the immediate east of a boundary ditch, although it is unclear if they were contemporary.

#### *Medieval*

Although the historic evidence suggests that this area of the city continued to be occupied throughout the post-Roman/Anglo-Saxon period there is a lack of evidence within the archaeological record both on site (HER ref. 871) and elsewhere within the immediate area. As such although features and deposits from this period may exist, none can be expected from the available evidence. However what is seen both within the area of investigation and on sites to the west, south and east, is industrial activity - pits, ditches and gullies, potentially associated with leather working or butchery. Leather working in particular was often sited on the peripheries of settlement, due to the space required and often noxious fumes created as part of the curing process. Three of these pits were revealed during the 1988 investigations on the present site (Trench V, context 3), (Trench VIII, context 2) and (Trench IX, context 11). These pits were typified by steep sides and flat bases and although no clay lining was noted they were filled with bands of silts and 'organically rich' deposits. No other information was available, although their potential to contain environmental information appears to have been high.

#### *Post-medieval/modern*

The above deposits had been sealed, and in some places partially truncated, by between 0.45m and 0.98m of 'dark-earth' make up that had been used to raise the ground level between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This material comprised layers of loosely compacted ash and clinker within a humic soil. It is considered that this material was derived from a combination of industrial and domestic hearth waste sources. Seen frequently elsewhere across many towns and cities including Cirencester, Bath and Bristol, it is thought that this waste was put down as a combination of manure and ground reclamation. It should be noted that the difference in depths related to this dark earth correlated exactly with the incline of the modern surface and that this slope is a modern truncation that removed a wedge of the dark earth to allow easier access to Alvin Street which is itself c 0.50m lower than the west side of the site.

#### *Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site*

The importance of this site can not be stressed enough, with well preserved deposits dating back almost 2000 years having a high potential to better our understanding of the nature, extent, status and phasing of this important extra-mural suburb. Whilst the history of Gloucester is known to a relatively high degree, very few sites of such complexity and broad date range have been investigated with modern techniques and methodologies in this part of the city. In many respects this site has the possibility to offer a unique opportunity to understand not just the construction and status of Roman buildings, their associated gardens, and industrial activities, but, given the potential for further inhumations, providing the opportunity to investigate Roman individual's remains, to better our understanding of lifestyle, diet, disease, wealth and status.

#### *Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site*

The archaeological deposits that are considered to exist on the site are both extensive and complex in nature. They are also expected to lie at a shallow depth below the existing surface; significant archaeological horizons identified in the south-west end of the site were as little as 0.46m below the surface in the east and 0.98m to the west. Due to the topography, there is the potential for the archaeology to be even shallower along the Alvin Street frontage. These

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significant deposits range from 0.50m to more than 1m in thickness across the site. Within the 1988 investigations the natural undisturbed geology lay at a greater depth toward the centre of the site, than at the eastern and western ends. It is anticipated that the same situation occurs across the rest of the site.

## 7 The impact of the development

### 7.1 Impacts during construction

The proposed development will affect following heritage assets and the impact has been categorised as described in Table 1.

It is likely that given the potentially shallow depth of complex and significant archaeological deposits along the east of the site especially and the remainder of the site generally, that any intrusive works are likely to have a **minor adverse** effect on the heritage assets. This can be mitigated via a number of different strategies dependent on the conclusions of the planning archaeologist.

- Foundations for the proposed development are likely to have a **minor adverse** effect on the heritage assets although this maybe minimised to an extent by the use of raft foundations and/or piles.
- Service and drainage routes are likely to have a **minor adverse** impact on the heritage assets. Due to the shallow nature of potentially significant archaeological horizons little can be done to minimise the damage further than making the best use of trenching needed with multiple services placed in close proximity and suitable archaeological works being undertaken in those areas that will be disturbed.
- General site reductions and levelling of the proposed development area would, if levelled to a depth comparable to Alvin Street, remove much of the protective overburden provided by the post-medieval 'dark-earth' deposits and as such increase the potential for a **minor adverse** impact to significant archaeological deposits. As such, if general ground reduction across the site is required then at least archaeological monitoring of the groundworks would be required, if not open area excavation to the full depth of the impact horizon. If the latter were undertaken and the findings fully reported and published then the impact would be **beneficial**.

### 7.2 Impacts on sustainability

The NPPF emphasises the importance of sustainability (DCLG 2012, section 131), specifically.

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality.
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and therefore cannot be directly replaced. However mitigation through recording and investigation also produces an important research dividend that can be used for the better understanding of the area's history and contribute to local and regional research agendas (cf NPPF, DCLG 2012, section 141).

Given the shallow depth of significant deposits and the infrequent nature of such large areas being developed in this part of the city, it may be argued that the archaeology present could help provide a unique opportunity to better understand the development and evolution of this suburb with key focus on the Roman and later medieval period features. Previous works (HER ref.871) would suggest that although complex, the best strategy overall would be an open area excavation that would clear the site ahead of any development occurring and allow the client to then undertake the

construction with no further restrictions. However, given the cost of such an undertaking, it maybe more viable for a combination of measures be undertaken to reduce the depth of intrusive works required and undertake all foundation trenches and service runs as individual excavations in their own right. This would potentially be cheaper although would require the client to have a relatively flexible timescale due to likely interruptions and pauses to digging caused by archaeological interventions required to remove features and deposits as they are exposed.

### **7.3 Unknown impacts**

Whilst it would appear highly likely that significant archaeological deposits occur throughout the proposed development area, this cannot be proven at present. As such a programme of archaeological evaluation could be carried out to see just how extensive and complex these deposits are and to what extent and depth are they sealed by post-medieval overburden. These answers might help to provide further mitigation opportunities if it can be proven that the depth of archaeology below the present ground surface is greater than currently identified, or if the significant deposits and features previously noted are focused within an intensive band parallel to the former Roman road and less activity is present further to the north.

## **8 Recommendations**

The assessment has identified that significant deposits of Roman and possibly also medieval date are likely to be present close to the present ground surface across the entire proposed development area and are conclusively present in the southern quarter.

In order to mitigate the impacts identified above, the following actions are recommended.

- Archaeological evaluation trenches are undertaken to better characterise the relative depths, quality and nature of significant archaeological deposits and overburden so that a more informed decision can be made as regards further works.
- Consideration of the foundation design is undertaken to mitigate and minimise the number and depth of intrusive works required. Raft foundations and piling for example may help to reduce the potential damage to the heritage assets.
- All intrusive ground works are monitored to the full depth with contingency time provided to allow full investigation and recording of those deposits and structures that can't be protected by the proposals above.
- Archaeological excavation of all areas of groundworks in advance of development (the footprint of the new buildings, areas of ground reduction and services), to clear the site of all significantly important archaeological deposits to the full depth of the construction horizon, to allow the client to continue unhindered by further restrictions or timescale issues.

The scope and specification of mitigation works will be agreed with the Gloucester City Archaeologist.

Any site investigation works or watching briefs required would be concluded by production of an archaeological report (and appropriate publication) to be deposited for public consultation and a project archive to be deposited at a local museum.

## **9 Publication summary**

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*A desk-based assessment for the historic environment was undertaken on behalf of Rooftop Housing Group Ltd, at Alvin Street, Gloucester (NGR 83605 18840).*



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*This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that are potentially affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is considered. The potential impact of the application, and the need for further on-site investigation, is assessed.*

*The area of investigation lies in a landscape that has boasted some 2,000 years of almost continual occupation, located in the lee of the original Roman settlement at Kingsholm Fort to the north and the later Roman colony of Glevum Colonia whose walls were c 120m to the west. Situated to the immediate north of London Road that traces one of the major Roman roads into the town, it was an area that contained extra-mural suburbs and cemeteries that spanned three centuries of growth and construction before a decline in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Occupation did not end there however, and the medieval settlement eventually outgrew the original Roman defensive walls. Alvin Street itself traces the route of the 12<sup>th</sup> century city limits and is named after Alvin gate that was located at the street's northern extent at its junction with Skinner Street.*

*The usage of the site during through the medieval period is unknown, but by 1799 it is clear that the area had been under pasture for several generations. Although this had changed by the first detailed maps of 1851 which indicate that the area was in use as a combination of public park and gardens for properties fronting both London Road and Alvin Street. The proposed development site continued to be open area until 1870 when the first warehouse of Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd was constructed in the east of the site. This was added to in the late 1970s.*

*Excavation of the foundation trenches associated with a development in 1988 (currently in use by Cotswold Golf Ltd), within the south-west portion of the site, recorded no medieval deposits, but complex Roman deposits, structures, and an inhumation less than 1m below the current ground level, and due to the sloping nature of the site towards Alvin Street this reduced to as little as 0.45m, and is likely to be even shallower along the eastern limit of the site. Overlain by post-medieval 'dark earth' layers, these Roman deposits range from 0.50m to more than 1m in depth, whilst the apparently limited foundations associated of the Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd warehouse would suggest that the likelihood of similar in-situ deposits to have survived is high.*

*It is recommended that evaluation be undertaken of those areas of the site which have not been previously investigated to establish the depth and nature of the archaeology. This would then inform the need for further mitigation, potentially either monitoring of the groundworks associated with the development, or excavation of areas to the full construction depth in advance of the development.*

## **10 Acknowledgements**

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Terri Penny and Gerry McNamee (Rooftop Housing Group Ltd), Steve Burden (Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd), staff at Gloucestershire Archives, and Andrew Armstrong (Gloucester City Archaeologist, Gloucester City Council).



## Appendix 1 Heritage assets registered with the Historic Environment Record (those within the application site are indicated in bold)

HER No.	NAME	EASTING	NORTHING	TYPE	PERIOD	DESCRIPTION
<b>30</b>	24-26 London Road	8369	1880	Stray Find	Roman	Pottery and bones
<b>58</b>	43 Alvin Street	8352	1894	Stray Find	Roman	Coin
<b>116</b>	15-17 London Road	8359	1879	Stray Find	Roman	Pottery
<b>137</b>	50 Oxford Street	8374	1891	Stray Find	Roman	Coin
<b>151</b>	Kingsholm School, Worcester Street	8352	1885	Stray Find	Roman	Coin
<b>349</b>	11 London Road	8356	1877	Stray Find	Roman	Pottery
<b>355</b>	Market Parade	834	186	Stray Find	Roman	Pottery
<b>356</b>	Market Parade	834	187	Documentary Record	Roman	Pavement
<b>381</b>	111 Northgate Street	8346	1874	Stray Find	Roman	Pottery
<b>628</b>	London Road	8348	1874	Excavation	Medieval	Gate
<b>641</b>	31 London Road	8367	1881	Watching Brief	Roman / Medieval / Post Medieval	Road surfaces
<b>752</b>	41-45 London Road	8375	1884	Watching Brief	Roman	Building / surface / wellhead
<b>764</b>	12 London Road	8354	1874	Excavation	Roman / Medieval / Post Medieval	Building / pits / pottery
<b>780</b>	Black Dog Way	8344	1887	Watching Brief	Post Medieval	Pipe kiln
<b>803</b>	33 Oxford Street	8367	1891	Watching Brief	Roman / Post Medieval	Layer / pond?
<b>806</b>	Bruton Way / Northgate Street	8348	1874	Watching Brief	Roman / Medieval / Post Medieval	Metalling / Ditch / Twyver

<b>827</b>	11-17 London Road	8356	1878	Watching Brief	Roman	Buildings
<b>868</b>	16 London Road	8362	1874	Watching Brief	Roman	Buildings
<b>869</b>	20 London Road	8367	1876	Watching Brief	Roman	Buildings
<b>871</b>	<b>1 Alvin Street</b>	<b>8359</b>	<b>1882</b>	<b>Watching Brief</b>	<b>Roman / Medieval</b>	<b>Buildings / inhumation / pits</b>
<b>878</b>	25 London Road	8364	1881	Watching Brief	Roman / Medieval	Building / ditch
<b>892</b>	23 London Road	8363	1880	Watching Brief	Roman	Buildings
<b>907</b>	35 Oxford Street	8366	1891	Watching Brief	Roman / Post Medieval	Layer / pond?
<b>916</b>	40b London Road	8376	1879	Watching Brief	Roman	Layer
<b>1012</b>	1-8 Wellington Parade	8367	1874	Watching Brief	Post Medieval	Wells
<b>1064</b>	18 London Road	8366	1878	Watching Brief	None	Negative
<b>1403</b>	Bruton Way	8349	1875	Watching Brief	Roman / Post Medieval	Street / buildings / ditch
<b>1518</b>	23 Worcester Street	8343	1879	Evaluation	Roman / Medieval	Metalled surfaces, ditches, bank
<b>1629</b>	2 Claremont Road	8376	1877	Evaluation	None	Negative
<b>1654</b>	32 London Road	8371	1878	Watching Brief	Roman	Road, structures
<b>1656</b>	32 London Road	8371	1880	Evaluation	None	Negative
<b>1695</b>	Worcester Street	8342	1886	Evaluation	Roman / Medieval	Surfaces
<b>1752</b>	17 Oxford Street	8365	1886	Watching Brief	None	Negative
<b>1818</b>	London Road / Oxford Street	8369	1881	Watching Brief	All	Streets surfaces
<b>1977</b>	Junction of Black Dog Way and Worcester Street	8342	1885	Desk Based Assessment	Various	Assessment
<b>1981</b>	Lower Northgate Street	8344	1880	Desk Based Assessment	Various	Assessment
<b>2025</b>	FAS Phase 4	8346	1873	Watching Brief	Post Medieval	Tramway
<b>2046</b>	Land to the rear of 36 London Road	8375	1875	Watching Brief	Roman	Ditch
<b>2076</b>	The Welsh Harp	8373	1876	Built Heritage Assessment	Post Medieval	Assessment

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## Plates



*Plate 1: Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd factory, from Alvin Street, looking south-west*



*Plate 2: Northern car park area of Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd factory, from Alvin Street, looking west*

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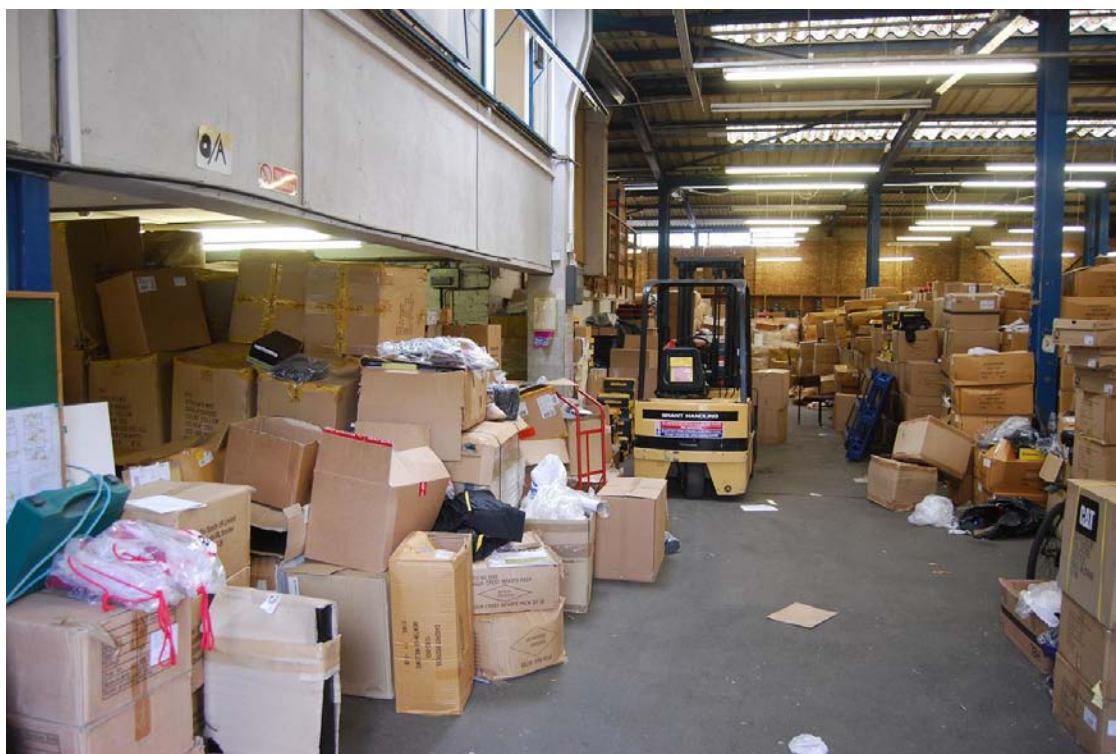


*Plate 3: Cotswold Golf Ltd factory and car park, from Alvin Street, looking north-west*



*Plate 4: Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather) Ltd factory sign, looking south-west*

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*Plate 5: Inside Gardiner Bros and Co (Leather), looking south*

**Figures**

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