

Archaeological Watching Brief at 78 Gretton Road Winchcombe Gloucestershire

Worcestershire Archaeology
for P&C Coney

June 2019



Find out more online:
www.explorethepast.co.uk



78 GRETTON ROAD WINCHCOMBE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



©Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire Archaeology
Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service
The Hive
Sawmill Walk
The Butts
Worcester
WR1 3PD

Explore
the Past

SITE INFORMATION

Site name: 78 Gretton Road, Winchcombe
Local planning authority: Tewkesbury Borough Council
Planning reference: 17/00438/FUL
Central NGR: SP 02292 29212
Commissioning client: P&C Coney
WA project number: P5270
WA report number: 2687
HER reference: Unassigned
Oasis reference: fieldsec1-347979

DOCUMENT CONTROL PANEL				
Version	Date	Author	Details	Approved by
1	24/06/2019	Jamie Wilkins	Draft for comment	Tom Rogers

This report is confidential to the client. Worcestershire Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability to any third party to whom this report, or any part of it, is made known. Any such party relies upon this report entirely at their own risk. No part of this report may be reproduced by any means without permission.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
REPORT	2
1 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Background to the project	2
1.2 Site location, topography and geology.....	2
2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	2
3 PROJECT AIMS	3
4 PROJECT METHODOLOGY	3
4.1 Fieldwork.....	3
4.2 Artefact methodology by C Jane Evans	3
4.2.1 Recovery policy.....	3
4.2.2 Method of analysis	3
4.2.3 Discard policy.....	4
5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS	4
5.1 Trench description.....	4
5.1.1 Summary context description table	4
6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE	4
6.1 Artefactual analysis by C Jane Evans	4
7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE	5
8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	5
9 PROJECT PERSONNEL	5
10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
11 BIBLIOGRAPHY	5

FIGURES

PLATES

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT ARCHIVE

An archaeological watching brief at 78 Gretton Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire

By Jamie Wilkins

With contributions by C Jane Evans

Illustrations by Jamie Wilkins

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology in April 2019 at 78 Gretton Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire (NGR SP 02292 29212). This comprised observation of groundworks associated with the creation of a new dwelling within the subdivided garden.

The site is located at the northern extent of Winchcombe, c 850m north of the historic core of the town and just 20m south-west of a scheduled monument (NHLE 1021449; SM No. 21700). The scheduled area comprises a Romano-British villa site, with associated enclosures and field systems, occupied from the mid-2nd to late-3rd century AD.

No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified within the footprint of the proposed development. A small sherd of Roman pottery recovered most likely derived from the villa site.

A fragment of medieval 13th-16th century tile is an interesting find as it shows some evidence of being deliberately rounded to form a counter or stopper. This may have been used as a crude gaming piece.

Report

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA) in April 2019 at 78 Gretton Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire (NGR SP 02292 29212). This comprised observation of groundworks associated with the creation of a new dwelling within the subdivided garden. The project was commissioned by Peter Coney of P&C Coney (the Client). A planning application has been submitted to Tewkesbury Borough Council and planning permission was granted subject to a programme of archaeological works (planning reference 17/00438/FUL).

The archaeological advisor to the local planning authority considered that the development had the potential to impact upon possible heritage assets.

No specific brief was provided but this project conforms to the generality of briefs previously issued for Gloucestershire. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018) and approved by Charles Parry, Archaeologist for Gloucestershire County Council (the Curator).

The watching brief conforms to the industry guidelines and standards set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in the *Standard and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014).

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

The site is located at the northern end of Gretton Road, approximately 850m north of the historic core of Winchcombe. It is situated at approximately 102m *above ordnance datum* (AOD), c 9m higher than the historic core of the town. The site is bounded to the north, south and east by garden and property boundaries. Gretton Road forms the western boundary.

The site is generally flat although a gentle decline to the south is present. It is currently in use as a garden for the existing property, 78 Gretton Road.

The underlying geology comprises sedimentary bedrock of Charmouth Mudstone formation. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2019).

2 Archaeological and historical background

The site is located approximately 20m south-west of a scheduled monument (Fig 1), which comprises an area of Roman settlement activity (NHLE 1021449; SM No. 21700). Geophysical survey (BCC 2009) and archaeological evaluation trenching (JMHS 2009) identified that the settlement comprised a minor, but high-status, Romano-British villa with associated multi-phased enclosures and field systems. Artefactual evidence indicates the site was occupied from the mid-2nd century to late-3rd century AD.

The evaluation also identified part of a mid to late Iron Age enclosed settlement surviving within the south of the scheduled area (JMHS 2009). It is likely that the Romano-British villa site located on the northern margins of an earlier Iron Age settlement represents some continuity of occupation within the landscape.

Further archaeological works to both the north (CA 2011a) and the south (JMHS 2012) of the scheduled monument have produced evidence which suggests the settlement activity continues outside of the scheduled area. Additionally, evaluation trenching at 56-70 Greet Road identified further Roman remains, including fragments of *tegulae*, a type of tile used in the roofs of Roman buildings (CgMs 2007).

An archaeological watching brief at 82 Gretton Road, 14m north of the site, identified a post-medieval boundary ditch, but did not identify any Romano-British remains which may indicate that the settlement continued westwards.

Located c 850m north of the historic centre of Winchcombe, the site is likely to have been situated within the common fields of the town during the medieval period. An archaeological evaluation on land 220m west of site (HA 2013), identified evidence for ridge and furrow in all trenches.

3 Project aims

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- observe, investigate and record archaeological deposits and;
- to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible within the constraints of the Client's groundworks.

4 Project methodology

4.1 Fieldwork

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2018). Fieldwork was undertaken between 02 and 04 April 2019.

The development area, amounting to just under 99m², was stripped of topsoil, before a smaller area (56m²), following the line of the footing trenches, was excavated down to the natural substrate. The location of the excavated area is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under constant archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket.

Observation of the excavated trench was undertaken during and after machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified.

Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012) and trench and feature locations were surveyed using a differential GPS with an accuracy limit set at <0.04m.

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was undertaken through a combination of structural and artefactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology. Subject to the agreement of the landowner it is anticipated that it will be deposited at Tewkesbury Museum.

4.2 Artefact methodology by C Jane Evans

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for findswork by ClfA (2014b), for pottery analysis by PCRG/SGRP/MPRG (2016), for archive creation by AAF (2011), and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

4.2.1 Recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012; appendix 2).

4.2.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were identified, quantified and dated to period.

No artefacts from environmental samples were examined.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

4.2.3 Discard policy

Artefacts from topsoil and subsoil and unstratified contexts will normally be noted but not retained, unless they are of intrinsic interest (eg worked flint or flint debitage, featured pottery sherds, and other potential 'registered artefacts'). All artefacts will be collected from stratified excavated contexts, except for large assemblages of post-medieval or modern material, unless there is some special reason to retain such as local production. Such material may be noted and not retained, or, if appropriate, a representative sample may be collected and retained. Discard of finds from post-medieval and earlier deposits will only be instituted with reference to museum collection policy and/or with agreement of the local museum.

5 Archaeological results

5.1 Trench description

A simple stratigraphic sequence was observed across the entirety of the site. No archaeological features or deposits were identified (Fig 2).

A loamy topsoil overlay the entirety of the trench, and was observed to seal a clay subsoil (Plates 1-2). Topsoil (100) contained moderate fragments of modern pottery and ceramic building material (*cbm*) which were not retained. Conversely, two more-interesting artefacts were recovered from the subsoil (101). This comprised a single abraded sherd of Roman pottery, and an abraded fragment of tile or *cbm* (Plates 3-4).

The natural geology was encountered between 0.43m-0.52m below ground surface (*bgs*) at c 101.20m AOD. The natural substrate comprised a compact, mid to light brownish-yellow clay with occasional limestone gravel inclusions (Plate 2).

5.1.1 Summary context description table

Context	Brief description	Max depth (m)	Depth from ground surface (m)	Comments
100	Topsoil	0.26	0.00	Friable, dark blackish-brown, clay-loam with frequent rooting and moderate modern waste.
101	Subsoil	0.16	0.26	Moderately compact, dark yellowish-brown, silty-clay with frequent rooting and occasional charcoal flecking.
102	Natural geology	-	0.43-0.52	Compact, mid to light brownish-yellow, clay, with occasional limestone gravels.

Table 1: Summary context descriptions

6 Artefactual evidence

6.1 Artefactual analysis by C Jane Evans

The only finds recovered came from the subsoil (context 101); a sherd of probable Roman pottery (3g) and fragment of post Medieval roof tile (42g), both very abraded. The Roman pottery, an un-diagnostic body sherd in an oxidised sandy fabric, is from a thin walled vessel. It may be derived from

Roman activity associated with the near-by villa. The tile is in a Malvernian fabric (Hurst 1992, 156, Fabric 3). It is un-sanded and has patches of decayed glaze, and dates broadly to the 13th-16th centuries (Plate 4). The tile fragment shows signs of having been deliberately rounded to form a counter or stopper with a diameter of 50-55mm (Plates 3-4).

7 Environmental evidence

Environmental sampling was approached using standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). In the event, no deposits were excavated which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

8 Discussion and conclusions

No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified within the confines of the footprint of the proposed development (Fig 2). The natural substrate was observed at 0.43m-0.52m bgs and no cut archaeological features were identified.

The small assemblage recovered from the subsoil reflects the character of the northern extent of Winchcombe. The sherd of Roman pottery is reflective of the known Roman activity (NHLE 1021449; SM No. 21700) located c 20m north-east of the site (Fig 1), and may be derived from the Romano-British villa. However the watching brief demonstrates that intensive Roman activity as recorded nearby did not extend into the area of the development.

The fragment of 13th-16th century tile is an interesting find as there is some evidence to suggest it had been deliberately rounded to form a counter or stopper (Plates 3-4). A counter such as this may have been used as a crude gaming piece and highlights how materials could often be recycled or reused. The tile was likely deposited via manuring processes given the high level of abrasion and the sites location in the agricultural hinterland of Winchcombe during the 13th-16th centuries.

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. Conditions were suitable in all of the trenches/areas to identify the presence or absence of archaeological features. It is considered that the nature, density and distribution of archaeological features provides an accurate characterisation of the development site as a whole.

9 Project personnel

The fieldwork was led by Jamie Wilkins.

The project was managed by Tom Rogers. The report was produced and collated by Jamie Wilkins. Specialist contributions and individual sections of the report are attributed to the relevant authors throughout the text.

10 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following: Pete Coney of P&C Coney for commissioning the project, and also for providing access to the site. The project was monitored by Charles Parry, Archaeologist for Gloucestershire County Council (The Curator) and Worcestershire Archaeology would also like to thank them for their advice.

11 Bibliography

AAF 2011 *Archaeological archives: a guide to the best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Available at <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/>

BCC, 2009 *Land at Greet Road, Winchcombe: Report on Archaeological Geophysical Survey*, Bartlett-Clark Consultancy

BGS, 2019 Geology of Britain viewer. Available: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>
Accessed: 03 April 2019

CA, 2011a *Land off Greet Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation*, Cotswold Archaeology, Unpubl report **11262**

CA, 2011b *82 Gretton Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire: Programme of Archaeological Works*, Cotswold Archaeology, Unpubl report **11314**

CgMs, 2007 *Land to the rear of 56-70 Greet Road, Winchcombe, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation Report*, CgMs Consulting, Project ref **JL/8117**

ClfA, 2014a *Standard and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

ClfA, 2014b *Standard and guidance: for collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

HA, 2013 *New Cemetery and Allotments, Gretton Road, Winchcombe: Archaeological Evaluation*, Headland Archaeology Ltd, HA job no. **NCWG12**

Hurst, D 1992 Ceramic building material, in S Woodiwiss *Iron Age and Roman salt production and the Medieval town of Droitwich*, CBA Research Report, **81**

JMHS, 2009 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Land off Greet Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire*, John Moore Heritage Services, JMHS project no. **2037**

JMHS, 2012 *Archaeological Watching Brief at 70 Greet Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire*, John Moore Heritage Services, JMHS project no. **2470**

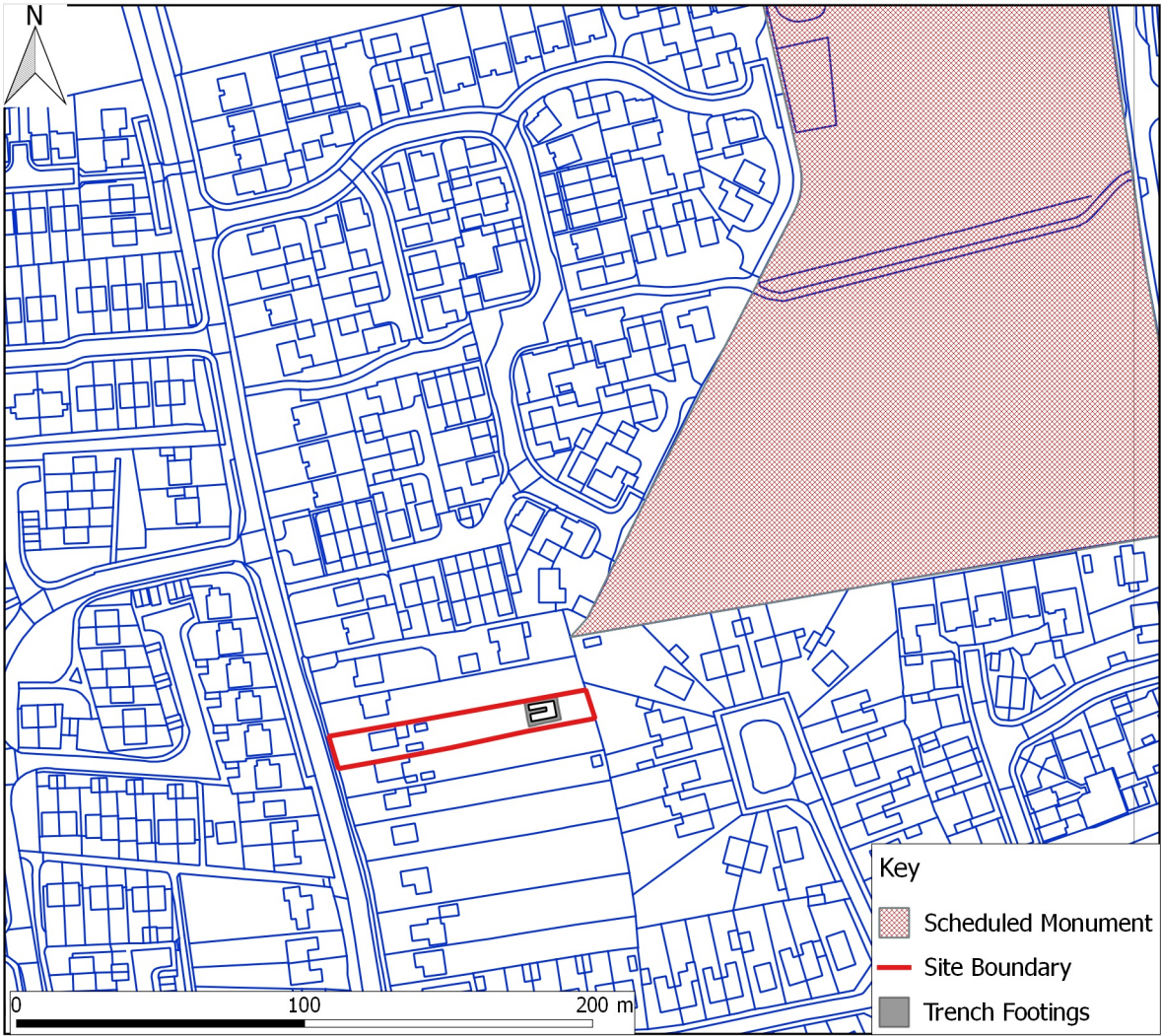
PCRG/SGRP/MPRG, 2016 *A standard for pottery studies in archaeology*

SMA 1993 *Selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological collections*. Available at <http://www.swfed.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/selectionretentiondispersalofcollections1-SMA.pdf>

WA, 2012 *Manual of service practice, recording manual*, Worcestershire Archaeology Unpubl report **1842**. Worcestershire County Council

WA, 2018 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 78 Gretton Road, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology Unpubl document dated 14 June. Worcestershire County Council

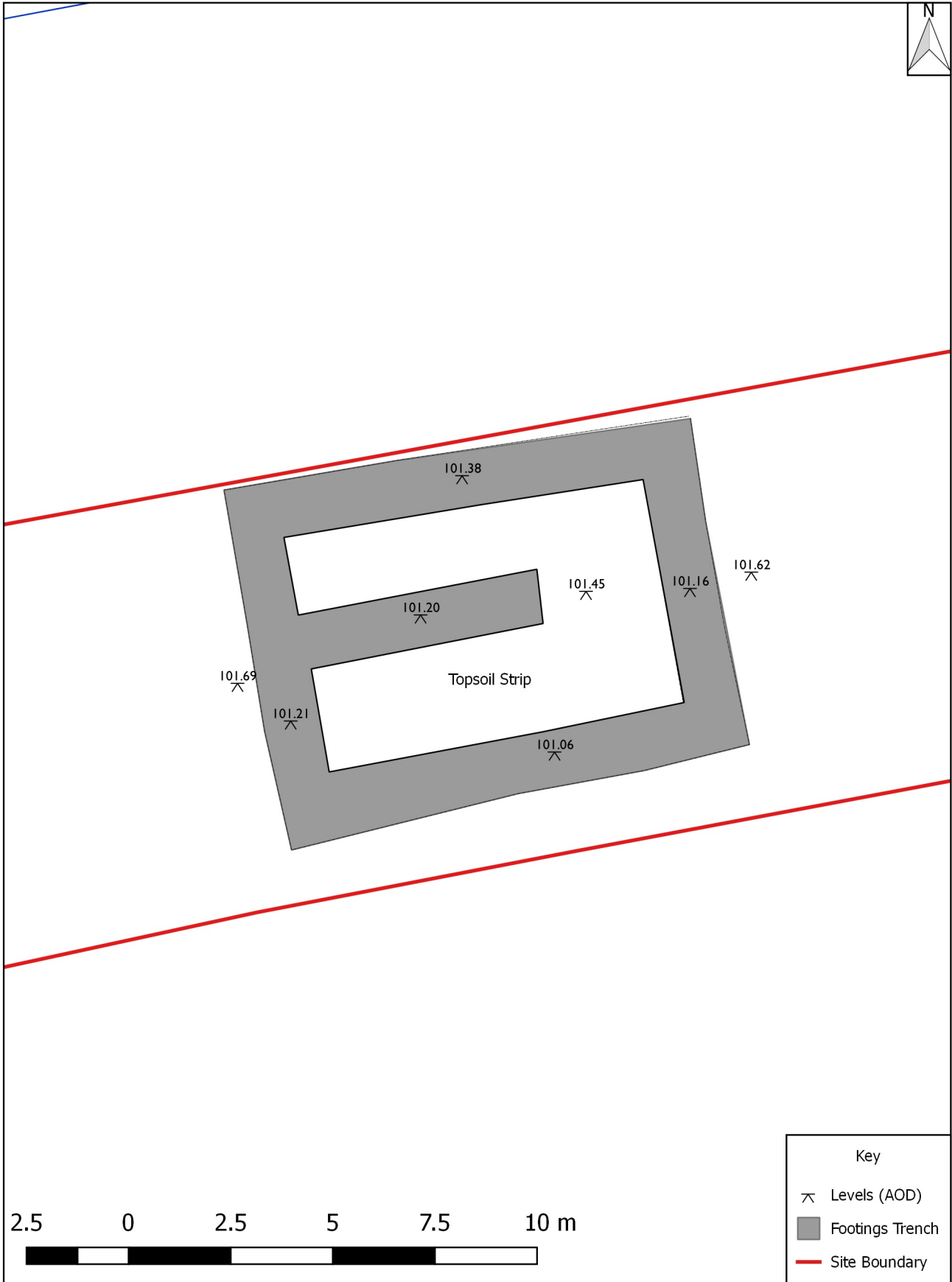
Figures



© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230

Location of the site

Figure 1



© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230

Plan of the footings trench for the proposed development

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1: Looking west across the development area, with the machining of the footings trench in progress.



Plate 2: Looking west across the development area. The footings trench has been machined to the natural substrate, 1m scales.



Plate 3: A 13th to 16th century medieval tile exhibiting signs of deliberate rounding to form a counter or stopper, 8cm scale.



Plate 4: The reverse of the possible counter or stopper. A decayed glaze, representing its former function as a tile, is visible on the left of the artefact, 8cm scale.

Appendix 1: Summary of project archive

TYPE	DETAILS*
Artefacts and Environmental	Ceramics
Paper	Context sheet, Diary (Field progress form), Report
Digital	GIS, Images raster/digital photography, Survey, Text

*OASIS terminology

