

100 Hereford Road, Monmouth
PL/AP/DM/2018/00858
Archaeological Watching Brief



Prepared
for

WM and DJ James Development Services Ltd
Llanwenarth Barn
Govilon, NP7 9SF

By



- BLACK MOUNTAINS ARCHAEOLOGY -
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Summary

Comisiynwyd Archeoleg Mynydd Du Cyf gan WM and DJ James Development Services Ltd, Llanwenarth Barn, Gofilon, Y Fenni, Sir Fynwy, NP7 9SF, i gwblhau briff gwyllo archeolegol yn ystod gwaith daear yn gysylltiedig â'r codiad o annedd Newydd yn 100 Hereford Road, Sir Fynwy, NP25 3HH (PL/AP/DM/2018/00858). Sylwodd y briff gwyllo ar dynnu uwchbridd yr ardal ddatblygu a'r chloddiaid o pwll prawf sengl.

Mae cynghorwyr archeolegol yr ACLI (GGAT) wedi nodi'r potensial i ddod ar draws dyddodion archeolegol Rhufeinig a/neu ganoloesol. O ganlyniad, roedd Amod 4 y caniatâd cynllunio cymeradwy (PL / AP / 2018/00858) yn gofyn am raglen waith ar ffurf briff gwyllo archeolegol, a gymhwyswyd i'r holl waith sy'n treiddio i'r ddaear ar gyfer y datblygiad arfaethedig.

Er bod potensial archeolegol wedi'i briodoli i'r datblygiad arfaethedig, ni ddaethpwyd o hyd i unrhyw nodweddion archeolegol, dyddodion nac arteffactau yn ystod y briff gwyllo.

Mae'r adroddiad presennol yn nodi canlyniadau'r briff gwyllo archeolegol yn unol â Safon a Chanllawiau ar gyfer Briff Gwyllo Archeolegol gan y Sefydliad Siartredig Archeolegwyr, cyhoeddwyd 2014, diwygiwyd 2020.

Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by WM and DJ James Developments Ltd, Llanwenarth Barn, Govilon, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 9SF to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the erection of a new dwelling at 100 Hereford Road, Monmouth, Monmouthshire, NP25 3HH (PL/AP/DM/2018/00858). The watching brief observed the topsoil stripping of the development area and the excavation of a single test pit.

The archaeological advisors to the LPA (GGAT) have indicated the potential to encounter Roman and/or medieval archaeological deposits. Consequently, Condition 4 of the approved planning consent (PL/AP/2018/00858) required a programme of work in the form of an archaeological watching brief, which was applied to all ground penetrating works for the proposed development.

While an archaeological potential was ascribed to the proposed development, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the watching brief.

The present report sets out the results of the archaeological watching brief in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief, published 2014, revised 2020.

Acknowledgements and Copyright

The project was managed by Richard Lewis BA MCIfA. The fieldwork was undertaken by Richard Lewis. The report was prepared by Dr Rhys Morgan. The Welsh translation and illustrations were prepared by Dr Rhys Morgan. Copyright for this report is held by Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd/Archeoleg Mynydd Du Cyf, who have granted an exclusive license to WM and DJ James Development Services Ltd, enabling them to use and produce the material it contains. Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd retain copyright of any annotations. The authors are grateful to WM and DJ James Development Services Ltd for their support and cooperation during the project.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Black Mountains Archaeology Ltd/Archeoleg Mynydd Du Cyf were commissioned by WM and DJ James Developments Ltd, Llanwenarth Barn, Govilon, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 9SF to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the erection of a new dwelling at 100 Hereford Road, Monmouth, Monmouthshire, NP25 3HH (PL/AP/DM/2018/00858). The watching brief observed the topsoil stripping of the development area and the excavation of a single test pit (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological advisors to the LPA (GGAT) have indicated the potential to encounter Roman and/or medieval archaeological deposits. Consequently, Condition 4 of the approved planning consent (PL/AP/2018/00858) required a programme of work in the form of an archaeological watching brief, which was applied to all ground penetrating works for the proposed development.
- 1.1.3 While an archaeological potential was ascribed to the proposed development, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the watching brief.
- 1.1.4 The present report sets out the results of the archaeological watching brief in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, published 2014, revised 2020.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The *definition* of an archaeological Watching Brief as set out by the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists* (CIfA) is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive.
- 1.2.2 The *purpose* of an archaeological watching brief (as defined CIfA 2014) is:
- To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.
 - To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.
 - A watching brief is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

- The objective of a watching brief is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on a site.
 - (*Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, published 2014, revised 2020).

1.3 Legislative Framework

- 1.3.1 Planning legislation is set out in the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. *Planning Policy Wales (PPW 11th Edition)* sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. Chapter 6 sets out the Welsh Government's policy towards the historic environment. It states "*The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. The historic environment is a finite, non-renewable and shared resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales. It contributes to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life. The historic environment can only be maintained as a resource for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved. Cadw's published Conservation Principles highlights the need to base decisions on an understanding of the impact a proposal may have on the significance of an historic asset.*" (PPW 2021, 126).
- 1.3.2 Underpinning PPW are a series of legislative powers and TANs. *The Planning (Wales) Act 2015* sets out a series of legislative changes to deliver reform of the planning system in Wales, to ensure that it is fair, resilient and enables development. The 2015 Act also introduces a mandatory requirement to undertake pre-application consultation for certain types of development. *The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016* defines in Schedule 4(l) the parameters and definitions for the requirement of pre-application consultation by Welsh Ministers, particularly in response to the effect of statutory designated monuments, buildings, and parks and gardens.
- 1.3.3 Any works affecting an ancient monument and its setting are protected through implementation of the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. In Wales the 1979 Act has been strengthened by The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The 2016 Act makes important improvements for the protection and management of the Welsh historic environment. It also stands at the centre of an integrated package of secondary legislation (Annexes 1-6), new and updated planning policy and advice, and best-practice guidance on a wide range of topics (TAN 24 Historic Environment). Taken together, these support and promote the careful management of change in the historic environment in accordance with current conservation philosophy and practice.
- 1.3.4 The Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets out a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ concerning sites and monuments of national importance (scheduled/listed), and there exists in the current Planning Policy Wales (Chapter 6) a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of all types of heritage assets.

1.4 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.4.1 The proposed development is centred on NGR SO 5098 1413 and is located within the curtilage of 100 Hereford Road, Monmouth, Monmouthshire, NP7 9SF, on the northern outskirts of Monmouth's town centre. This property is situated at the juncture of Hereford Road, which runs north/south, and Priory Lane, which runs east/west. Immediately to the northeast of the proposed development is a large field that has historically been used for cultivation, while to the west, towards the opposite side of Hereford Road, is a small *cul-de-sac* known as Highfield Close. The nearest church to the proposed development is St Mary's Priory Church situated approximately 1.2km to the southwest on Priory Street. The dwellings constructed along Hereford Road are all of late Victorian date.
- 1.4.2 The town of Monmouth is located on the western edge of the Wye Valley, which extends across the Welsh border towards Hereford. The town is also surrounded on all sides by areas of upland. Monmouth is located at the point where the River Monnow feeds into the River Wye.
- 1.4.3 The superficial geological deposits within the development area are defined primarily by Lugwardine alluvial layers, which comprise permeable reddish brown silt deposits encountered at significant depths (SSEW 1983). The underlying bedrock comprises undifferentiated Lower Devonian mudstone, siltstone and sandstone formed approximately 398–416 million years ago during the Devonian period in an environment dominated by rivers and alluvial fans (BGS 2021).

1.5 History and Archaeology

- 1.5.1 The development area is located to the north of the medieval town of Monmouth and to the west of a major Roman road (RR612a) that linked the Roman fort, settlement and iron working centre of *Blestium* (present-day Monmouth) (referenced in the *Antonine Itinerary*) to the Roman fort of *Branogenium* and the settlement of *Bravonium* (Leintwardine). Pottery and coinage of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD dominate known archaeological assemblages in Monmouth (Burnham and Davies 2010, 264–5). *Blestium* is thought to have been based primarily on industrial activity. More specifically, the large-scale smelting of iron ore, quarried from the Forest of Dean nearby, was conducted within its confines (Shepherd 1993, 366). A metal working site dating to this period was discovered near Dixton (PRN 02968g), which centred on a Roman bloomery furnace (Egloff and Evans 2010, 48). The first Roman activity noted in Monmouth is represented by the establishment of a large fort (Clarke *et al.* 1992), possibly pre-Flavian in date, which was later partially overlain by a much smaller fort to the north.
- 1.5.2 The town of Monmouth was established during the medieval period when William FitzOsbern, 1st Earl of Hereford, commissioned the construction of Monmouth Castle (SAMMM159) on a promontory overlooking the River Wye at some point at the beginning of the 1070s. Withenoc, the successor to FitzOsbern as Lord of Monmouth, is also said to have established a Benedictine Priory shortly after, while FitzOsbern's nephew, William FitzBaderon, took up residence within the castle after his death. The development area is situated within the vicinity of Priory Farm (located approximately 150m to the east), which is also the site of a medieval grange attached to the

Benedictine Priory. Following the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII between 1536–41, the grange, like most other similar establishments, was confiscated by the crown and subsequently sold as private farmland.

1.5.3 Much of what survives now within the town of Monmouth is largely the result of a programme of Georgian and Victorian rebuilding by architects such as George Vaughan Maddox, who built Market Hall (now Monmouth Museum) as well as the Shambles (LB 2318). This programme of rebuilding gave the town the distinctive architectural character it possesses today (Newman 2000, 394).

1.5.4 Previous Investigations

1.5.5 Previous archaeological work undertaken at Hereford Road and Priory Farm confirm that the land had been used recently for agricultural purposes. However, scatters of both Roman and medieval pottery sherds have also been discovered. It is possible that these scatters are a result of night soiling (fertilising). This suggests that further possible Roman and medieval occupation existed somewhere nearby. In addition, a Roman metal working site was discovered to the south of the site.

1.5.6 2001 – an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Monmouth Archaeology at Lower Willows, Priory Lane, during which several sherds of Roman Greyware and Severn Valley ware were collected, along with an assortment of post-medieval pottery (Bray and Clarke 2001).

1.5.7 2014 – an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswolds Archaeology in advance of the replacement of a gas main along Prospect Road, Osbaston, during which no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were uncovered (Reynish 2014).

1.5.8 2015 – an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Monmouth Archaeology at 64 Hereford Road, during which no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were uncovered (Clarke 2015).

1.5.9 2016 – an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Monmouth Archaeology at 102 Hereford Road, during which an assemblage of post-medieval pottery was collected along with a single piece of iron slag (Bray and Clarke 2016).

2 Methodology

2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief observed the topsoil stripping of the development area along with the excavation of a single test pit.

2.1.2 The archaeological recording techniques conformed to the best industry standard and all deposits were recorded using a single continuous context numbering system pro forma. All contexts were recorded with the trench number prefix (e.g. context 02 in TP1 = 102) and are summarised in Appendix III. Contexts were schematically drawn in section. All excavations and contexts were photographed in digital using a Fujifilm FinePix S4800 super wide (30x) 24-720mm camera at 16mp and a Digital Lens, 18mp camera. In all excavations, natural deposits were encountered and recorded.

2.1.3 All classes of finds were retained, cleaned and catalogued and arrangements for final deposition have been agreed, as set out in the requirements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation,*

Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials (published 2014, revised 2020). With the permission of the landowner Mrs Danielle Fry, ownership will be transferred to The Legionary Museum, Caerleon for permanent curation. No deposits with palaeoenvironmental potential were encountered.

- 2.1.4 The archaeological watching brief was carried out to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, published 2014, revised 2020.
- 2.1.5 A digital copy of the report and archive will be supplied to the regional HER, the LPA and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. All data will be submitted to the relevant archives in accordance with the RCAHMW's *Guidance for Digital Archaeological Archives* (2015) and the regional HER's *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs)* (2018).
- 2.1.6 Due to the paucity of archaeological remains within the development area, Rob Dunning (GGAT, archaeological adviser to the LPA) confirmed that no HER enquiry was required for this particular project.

3 Results

- 3.1.1 The archaeological watching brief observed the topsoil stripping of the development area and the excavation of a single test pit (Figure 1). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered.
- 3.1.2 Both prior to and during excavations the entire development area was metal detected, during which time a small collection of modern material was uncovered, including discarded toothpaste tubes, tinfoil pie dishes and a car speaker.
- 3.1.3 The results of the excavation are detailed below. Contextual information can be found in Appendix III.

3.2 Stratigraphic Evidence

3.2.1 Topsoil Stripping (Figure 1, Plates 1–5)

- 3.2.2 Topsoil stripping was conducted across the entirety of the development area. The level of the ground surface prior to topsoil stripping was 77mOD, while the level of the ground surface afterwards was 76.5mOD.
- 3.2.3 During topsoil stripping of the development area, three deposits were encountered. The uppermost deposit comprised a thin layer of topsoil (001), 0–0.04m deep. Beneath this topsoil layer was a subsoil deposit (002), which consisted of mid-brown clayey loam, 0.04–0.5m deep. This subsoil deposit was very clean and contained no noticeable inclusions. In appearance, this deposit resembled a build-up of plough soil or garden soil. The lowermost deposit (003) comprised alluvial grey clay, very clean, with occasional gravel inclusions, measuring 0.5m+ in depth. This layer constituted a superficial geological deposit.

3.2.4 Test Pit (Figure 2, Plates 6 and 7)

- 3.2.5 A test pit was excavated towards the northern edge of the property's curtilage. This test pit measured 1.4m north/south x 1.1m east/west x 1.65m deep. The level of the

ground surface at the top of the test pit was 77mOD. The level of the ground surface at the base of the test pit was 75.35mOD.

- 3.2.6 A total of four deposits were encountered within the test pit. The uppermost deposit (004) comprised a mass of rooting derived from the hedge that originally demarcated the northern edge of the property boundary. This hedge was removed prior to the excavation of the test pit. In depth, deposit (004) measured 0–0.7m. Beneath (004) was a deposit of fractured mudstone (005), measuring 0.7–1m deep, while below this was a greyish brown gravelly clay deposit (006), 1–1.1m deep. The lowermost deposit encountered within the test pit was a light brown silty clay layer (007), 1.1–1.65m+ deep. Deposits (005)–(007) constituted natural geology.
- 3.2.7 It was also observed that mudstone layer (005) breached subsoil deposit (006) around 7m south of the property's northern boundary. This formed a narrow mudstone ridge that ran in an east/west direction across the entire development area.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The investigation comprised an archaeological watching brief conducted during groundworks associated with a proposed development at 100 Hereford Road, Monmouth. These groundworks consisted of the topsoil stripping of the development area and the excavation of a single test pit.
- 4.1.2 During the watching brief no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were uncovered. The overall stratigraphic sequence revealed during the watching brief comprised upper topsoil and vegetation deposits overlying a series of geological layers.

5 Bibliography

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6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix I: Figures

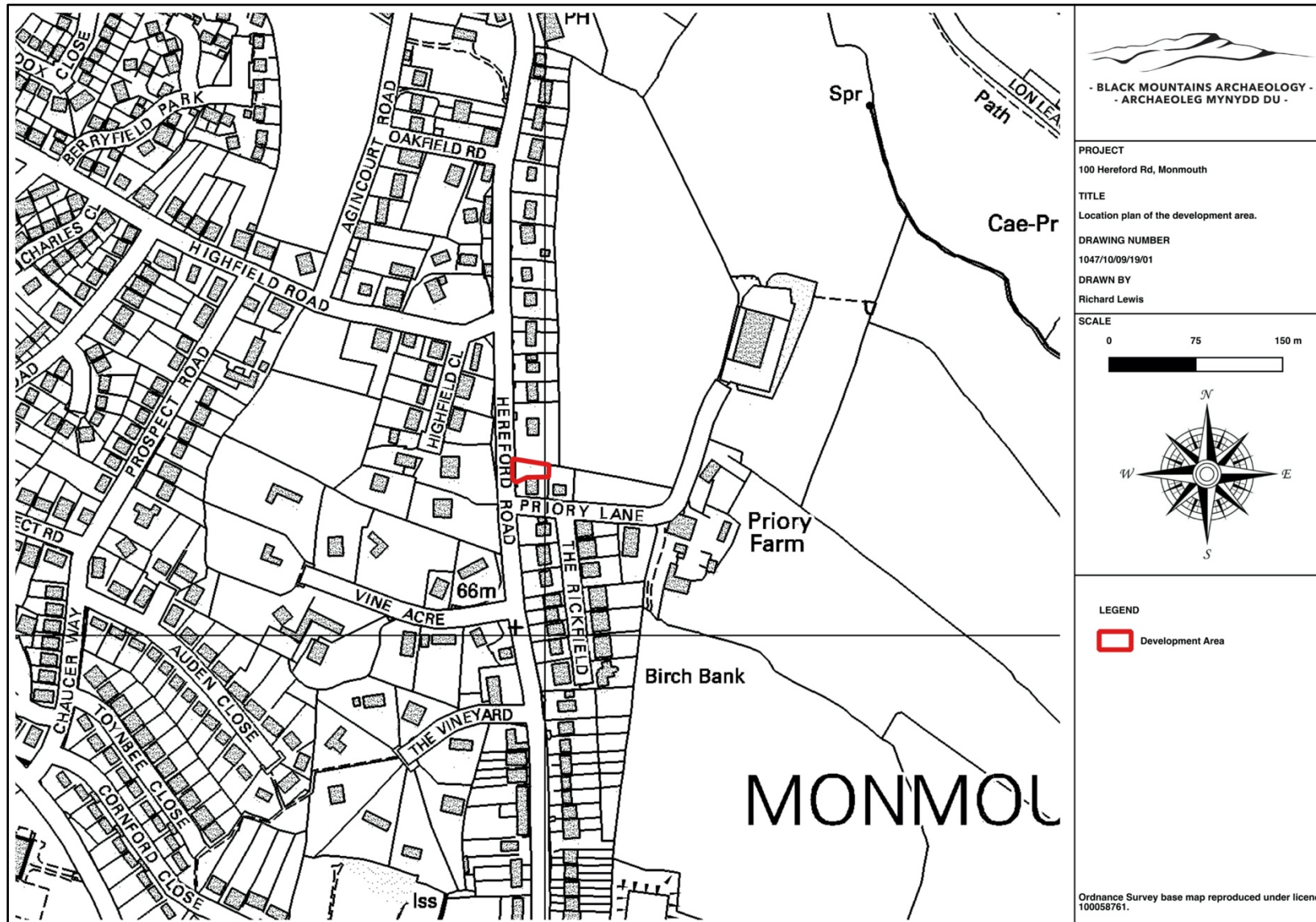


Figure 1. Plan showing location of development area at 100 Hereford Road, Monmouth

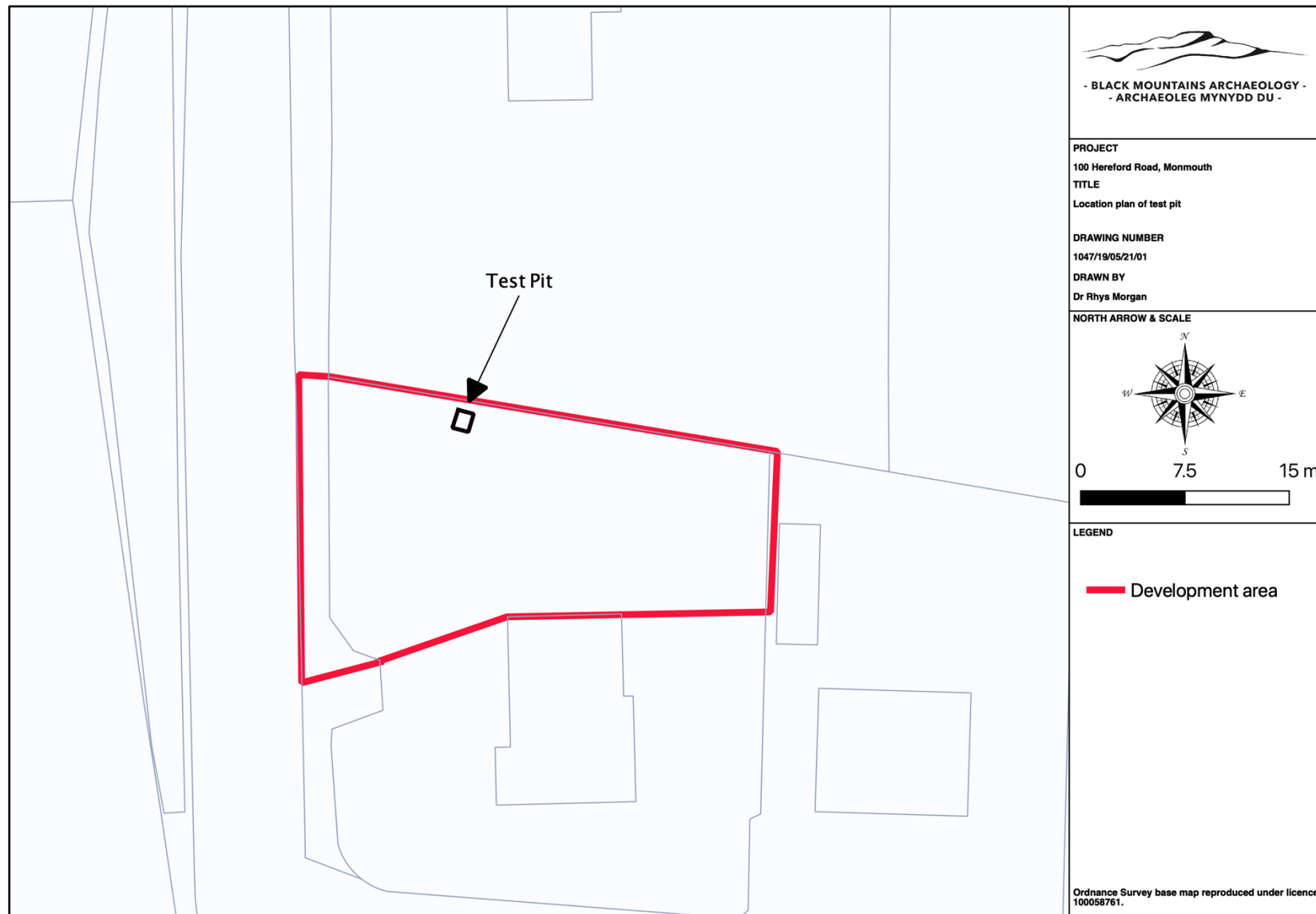


Figure 2. Plan showing location of test pit within development area

6.2 Appendix II: Plates



Plate 1. Topsoil stripping in progress (view northwest)



Plate 2. Southeast facing section of topsoil (001) (during topsoil stripping)



Plate 3. South facing section of topsoil (001) (during topsoil stripping)



Plate 4. View of development area after topsoil stripping (view northwest)



Plate 5. View of development area after topsoil stripping (view north)



Plate 6. South facing section of test pit excavated towards northern boundary of site



Plate 7. West facing section of test pit excavated towards northern boundary of site

6.3 Appendix II: Context Inventory

Topsoil stripping

Topsoil stripping was conducted across the entirety of the development area. The level of the ground surface prior to topsoil stripping was 77mOD, while the level of the ground surface afterwards was 76.5mPD.

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
001	Deposit	0–0.04m	Topsoil. Overlies (002).	Modern
002	Deposit	0.04–0.5m	Mid-brown clayey loam subsoil. Underlies (001). Overlies (003).	Natural
003	Deposit	0.5m+	Alluvial grey clay, very clean, with occasional gravel inclusions. Underlies (002).	Natural

Test Pit

A test pit was excavated towards the northern edge of the property's curtilage. This test pit measured 1.4m north/south x 1.1m east/west x 1.65m deep. The level of the ground surface at the top of the test pit was 77mOD. The level of the ground surface at the base of the test pit was 75.35mOD.

Context	Type	Depth	Description	Period
004	Deposit	0–0.7m	Mass of rooting derived from a hedgerow. Overlies (005).	Modern
005	Deposit	0.7–1m	Fractured mudstone. Formed ridge running E/W across site. Underlies (004). Overlies (006). However, underlies (006) and overlies (007) to the south of the site.	Natural
006	Deposit	1–1.1m	Greyish brown gravelly clay. Underlies (005). Overlies (007) However, overlies (005) to the south of the site.	Natural
007	Deposit	1.1–1.65m+	Light brown silty clay. Underlies (006). However, underlies (005) to south of site.	Natural



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Yn rhan o'n hawydd i wella ansawdd ein gwasanaeth, rydym yn croesawu unrhyw adborth y gallwch ei ddarparu.

As part of our desire to improve our quality of service we welcome any feedback you are able to provide.

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