

Archaeological Investigation:

38 Cosgrove Road
Old Stratford
Northamptonshire
MK19 6AF
(NGR 478046, 241243)

Planning App. Ref. S/2017/1768/FUL
HER Event No. ENN108862

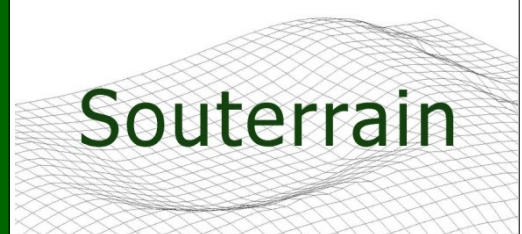


April 2018

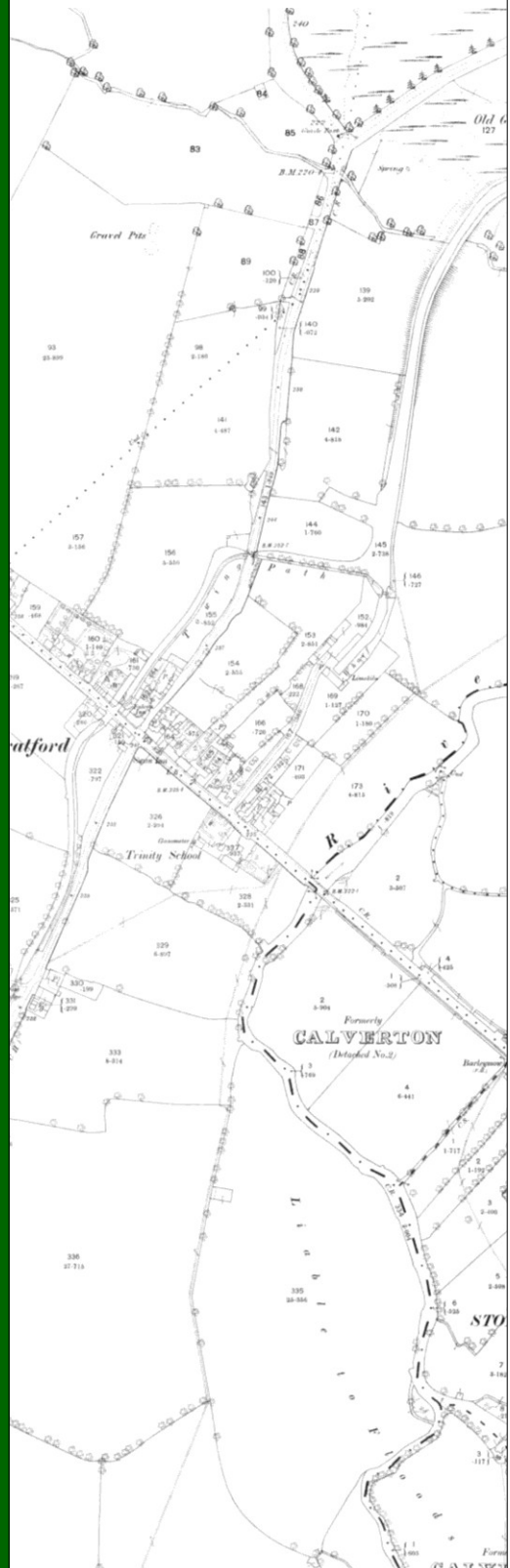
Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

for

Mrs Caroline Dudley
(Old Stratford)



Archaeological Services Ltd



**Archaeological Investigation:
38 Cosgrove Road, Old Stratford,
Northamptonshire, MK19 6AF
(NGR 478046, 241243)**

Application Ref. S/2017/1768/FUL

Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Event No. ENN108862

SOU17-560

Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

April 2018

Produced for:

Mrs Caroline Dudley
(Old Stratford)

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CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	3
<i>Preface</i>	4
<i>Summary</i>	5
1. INTRODUCTION	6
2. PLANNING BACKGROUND	6
3. SITE LOCATION AND ASPECT	6
Proposed development	7
Geology	7
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL	7
Prehistoric Period	7
Roman Period	7
Early Medieval Period	8
Medieval Period	8
Post-Medieval Period	8
5. PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION & RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	9
6. FIELD PROCEDURE	9
7. INVESTIGATION RESULTS	9
8. REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	10
9. ARCHIVE	10
10. COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY	10
11. REFERENCES	11
12. PHOTOGRAPHS	15
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONTEXTS	18

List of Figures

Figure 1 Location of Site

Figure 2 Location of Site

Figure 3 Area of Ground Reduction, showing direction of photographs 1 to 5

(Illustrations and photographs follow the main text)

Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during ground preparation for a new house at 38 Cosgrove Road, Old Stratford, Northamptonshire.

On account of the site's proximity to Watling Street (course of Roman road) and find-spots of Roman artefacts, it was considered to have the potential to contain buried remains that may contribute to our understanding of the origins and development of the Roman road-side settlement at Old Stratford.

The soil strip revealed a truncated post-medieval stone field drain, which was probably associated with the inclosure of Cosgrove's medieval open fields in the 18th century. There were no earlier archaeological features. Neither were any artefacts present.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents an illustrated and descriptive account of archaeological observations made by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain), on the 5th of January 2018, during ground preparation for a new dwelling at 38 Cosgrove Road, Old Stratford, Northamptonshire (Fig. 1). Archaeological monitoring was carried out on behalf of Mrs Caroline Dudley (the Planning Applicant) of the above address, in compliance with a condition attached to the planning consent.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) Planning Permission S/2017/1768/FUL has been granted, subject to Conditions, on the 7th of September 2017, to the Planning Applicant for *'one detached dwelling & detached triple garage, front extension to existing bungalow & raise roof to create first floor living accommodation'* at 38 Cosgrove Road Old Stratford MK19 6AF (the Application Site).
- 2.2 In view of the archaeological potential of the site, planning consent has been granted with a Condition (No. 3) attached for a programme of archaeological mitigation work. The reason for the Condition is to ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded. This is in accordance with paragraphs 128, 129 and 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.3 The Planning Applicant obtained specific advice concerning the archaeological requirements from Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council (AAA)¹ and statutory consultant for SNC. It was agreed that, in the first instance, the new house footprint would need to be stripped under archaeological observation. In the event of archaeology being present, other elements of the proposed intrusive groundwork (i.e. garage, access and services) would require monitoring by an archaeologist. Groundwork in the footprint of the existing building was excluded, since the ground had already suffered disturbance.
- 2.4 In consideration of the above approach, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)² was accepted by the AAA and issued to SNC.

3. SITE LOCATION AND ASPECT

- 3.1 The civil parish of Old Stratford lies on Northamptonshire's south-eastern border with the Borough of Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. The village of Old Stratford straddles the route of the old A5, on the northwest side of the River Great Ouse, 6 miles northwest of Milton Keynes town centre and 7 miles southeast of Towcester. On the opposite side of the river lies the town of Stony Stratford. The Application Site is situated 140 m northwest of the centre of Old Stratford, on the east side of Cosgrove Road. The property comprises roughly 0.14 hectares, centred at NGR 478046, 241243. Topographically the site has a gentle incline from c. 80 m OD in the northwest to c. 70.45 m in the southeast. It is bounded by residential properties and gardens.

¹ 23rd March 2017

² Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd, 2017. *Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis & Publication of Works: 38 Cosgrove Road, Northamptonshire, MK196AF, Planning App.Ref. S/2017/1768/FUL, SOU17-560, V.1* 6th October 2017

Proposed development

- 3.2 The proposed house is to be built approximately 29 m to the southeast of an existing bungalow and will occupy a footprint of c. 106 sq.m³. A garage is to be sited c. 17 m to the southeast of the existing house, with a footprint of c. 54.85 sq.m.

Geology

- 3.3 The superficial geology consists of brown to grey clay and silty clay of the Oadby Member (aka. Boulder Clay)⁴, which overlies solid geology of the Lias Group.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

- 4.1 Primarily, the Application Site was considered to have the potential to contain archaeological remains that may contribute to our understanding of the origins and development of the Roman road-side settlement at Old Stratford. The WSI prepared for the archaeological work provides a broad historical background archaeological potential of the site; a *précis* of which is given here. Information has been drawn from a 500 m radius of the Application Site, referred to as the Study Area. The HER numbers in the footnotes refer to specific records held by the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

Prehistoric Period

- 4.2 Few finds of prehistoric date have been recorded within the Study Area. A large ditch containing Iron Age occupation debris was excavated in 2015⁵ about 450 m to the southwest and there is speculation that indeterminate cropmarks recorded on the south side of the A5 traffic island at Old Stratford (c. 600 m NW)⁶ might also pertain to pre-Roman settlement.

Roman Period

- 4.3 Old Stratford lies on the northwest side of the River Great Ouse where it is crossed by the Roman road, later known as Watling Street⁷ (*OE Waecelinga Straet* : 'paved road'). Road construction began soon after the invasion in AD 43, with the army's advance north-westwards. Old Stratford is thought to have originated as a posting station (*Mansio*)⁸, later developing into a road-side settlement⁹, between the major settlement of *Magiovinium* (Dropshort, Bucks) to the south-east and the town of *Lactodurum* (Towcester, Northants) to the northwest. The settlement is also thought to have preceded Stony Stratford on the opposite side of the river¹⁰. The present A5 trunk road runs more or less along the course of the Roman road and the Application Site is located on the northeast side of the road at a distance of 140 m. Unsurprisingly, a quantity of remains from the Roman period have been unearthed within the Study Area; mostly in the 20th century. Significantly, a pit containing numerous artefacts (including *sigillata* tableware pottery and tile fragments) was found during building work at Firs Farm in 1965¹¹, just 30 m to the southwest of the Application Site. Several Romano-British ditches and a large quantity of artefacts¹² have been unearthed during quarrying c.360 m to the northwest. Metal detectorists

³ As defined on Border Oak drawing No. D1660 3a: June 2017. *Proposed house to the rear of Cosgrove Road, old Stratford, Milton Keynes, for Mr & Mrs Dudley, 1:2500 (on A3).*

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ HER1236/0/4, SP 7759 4119

⁶ HER1236, SP 77430 41431 (centre; 390m by 387m)

⁷ HER 447/1 ,Margary Routes 1e & 1f

⁸ An Imperial Hostel providing lodgings for messengers and officials.

⁹ HER 1255,

¹⁰ op.cit. Woodfield P., 2005, *The Whittlewood Project: Historic Buildings Survey, Passenham with Old Stratford*

¹¹ HER1242/0/1, ENN8046, SP 781 412 (point) SP74SE

¹² HER1235/0/1, SP 779 416 (point); The excavator's comments on some of the finds may be seen at <http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/os/doc/his/ro.html>

have also located a zone of Romano-British occupation on the south-side of the A5 traffic island (600 m to the NW)¹³.

Early Medieval Period

- 4.4 Archaeological knowledge of the post-Roman period is limited within the Study Area. In 1996, fragments of three early-middle Saxon (i.e. c. 450-650 AD) pottery vessels were found beneath the topsoil¹⁴ c.435 m west of the Application Site (to the south of the main traffic island). Possible Saxon activity has been suspected from metal detected finds about 600 m to the northwest¹⁵.

Medieval Period

- 4.5 The Application Site was formerly situated in Cosgrove parish. In 1086, Cosgrove and Old Stratford were a part of the territories held by Robert, Count of Mortain. The land was forfeited after the battle of Tinchebray in 1106, and was subsequently acquired by the honour of Berkhamstead. By the late 13th century the honour of Berkhamstead was held by Edmund, Earl of Cornwall. The land reverted to the Crown in 1376, and was still a part of the Duchy of Cornwall in the 19th century.
- 4.6 Throughout the medieval period Watling Street remained a main route, though it is uncertain when the forded crossing of the Great Ouse at Old Stratford was replaced by a bridge; the earliest record of a bridge is dated to the 14th century¹⁶. Apart from medieval stone net-sinkers and fish-basket weights¹⁷ found on the river bed¹⁸, no other finds of the period have been recorded in the Study Area.
- 4.7 It is probable that the Application Site lay within the medieval open fields of Cosgrove, though few visible traces of such exist today. A remnant of a furlong field survives as earthwork cultivation strips in a Public Space (2.5 hectares) alongside the River Great Ouse, 250 m east of the Application Site. Other remnants were recorded in 2001, but have since been built over¹⁹.

Post-Medieval Period

- 4.8 Cosgrove's open fields were inclosed by agreement of the landowners, finalised by an Act of Parliament in 1767²⁰. The inclosure award map shows that John Biggin Esq. of London was in possession of all of the land on the Cosgrove side of Old Stratford, including the area now occupied by the Application Site, which is shown as farmland. The estate was inherited by Biggin's great nephew, George Mansel, whose family already held estates in Cosgrove, including Cosgrove Hall. By 1830 the Mansels owned almost all of Cosgrove east of Watling Street, except for a handful of freeholds along the roadside at Old Stratford. Two thirds of the estate was farmland at this time, which included the location of the Application Site. Watling Street continued to be the country's arterial route from London to the midlands and northwest, while Old Stratford remained a road-side hamlet up until the early decades of the 20th century. In 1608, there were 10 houses, all of which were situated at the crossroad and between the crossroad and the river²¹. By 1830, there were 39 dwellings, 27 of which were in Cosgrove parish on the northeast side of the road.

¹³ HER1236, SP 77430 41431 (centre; 390m by 387m)

¹⁴ HER7062/0/1 SP 7760 4137

¹⁵ HER 7062 SP 77425 41425 (380m by 180m); ENN106387; metal Detecting, Pre 2007; ENN100158 Metal Detecting, 1999-2000

¹⁶ HER447/1/18, SP 7812

¹⁷ HER 7306/0/0, SP 782 411; HER 7307/0/0, SP 780 408

¹⁸ HER 7307

¹⁹ HER 9998/0/3, SP 78156 41536 (centre); HER 9998/0/4, SP 78208 41164 (centre); HER 9998/0/4, SP 78208 41164 (centre)

²⁰ See 'Cosgrove and Furtho' <http://www.cosgrovehistory.co.uk/> [accessed 29th September 2017]

²¹ HER1255; 1608 Whittlewood Forest map, Northamptonshire Record Office; see also: 'Old Stratford' <http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/os/index.html>

4.9 In the late 18th century, the construction of the Buckingham branch of the Grand Junction Canal²² impacted farmland in the vicinity of the Application Site. It ran parallel to the Deanshanger Road / Cosgrove Road (A508), on its northwest side. A side-cutting of the canal ran broadly around three sides of the Application Site, clockwise west to east, at a distance of c. 60 - 90 m. A wharf was built 70 m to the west of the site. The canal fell into disuse in the late 1930s. The side-cutting was in-filled in the late 1960s and is now a landscaped swathe of Public Open Space between a residential estate (Water Close - Wharf Close) and Cosgrove Road.

5. PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION & RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

5.1 Fundamentally, the investigation would attempt to:

- i. Establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site.
- ii. Establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes.
- iii. Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region.
- iv. Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

5.2 On account of the Application Site's proximity to significant archaeological remains of the Roman period, there was the potential for buried archaeology that would contribute to regional research themes²³. In particular, consideration was given both to the possibility of settlement continuity from the late Iron Age through to the Roman period, and to remains pertaining to the settlement which developed around the Roman posting station.

6. FIELD PROCEDURE

6.1 The investigation was conducted with due consideration to Health and Safety and in accordance with the requirements of the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and *Standard Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (Rev. 2014). Ground reduction was undertaken by mechanical excavator fitted with a smooth ditching bucket under the guidance of an experienced archaeologist. All investigation and recording was carried out in accordance with the written scheme. Archaeological features were surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum by RTK DGPS.

7. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

7.1 In the descriptions below, the numbers in bold refer to photograph numbers at Section 12. The photograph viewpoints are shown on Figure 3. The metric scales which appear in the photographs are 2 m in length with divisions of 0.5 m.

7.2 Ground conditions were very wet, after a thaw, which proved tough and claggy for the mechanical excavator. Notwithstanding this, archaeological visibility was good throughout the work, and confidence of observations optimum.

7.3 The topsoil (001) was dark brown and clayey, and generally 0.2 - 0.23 m thick. It directly overlay superficial geological stratum, the latter comprised of stiff light brown silty clay (002). A 1.6 m-

²² HER 7807/1, SP 76587 39323

²³ see Knight, Vyner & Allen 2012; Cooper, 2006

wide strip along the south end of the building footprint was initially reduced to 70.05 m OD m (c. 0.5 m below existing ground level) to clarify the geological horizon (Fig. 3; **2, 3**). The geological stratum over the remainder of the footprint was reduced throughout by c. 0.05 - 0.09 m.

- 7.4 The only feature present was a c. 9 m length of truncated field drain (003), composed of small pieces of limestone rubble (Fig. 3; **3**). This faded to the north having been truncated in the past.
- 7.5 There were no artefacts present.

8. REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The investigation proved to be 'negative' in terms of significant archaeological remains being present.
- 8.2 With regard to the date, nature and extent of activity at the development site and its association with contemporary landscapes (see Objectives 5.1, i and ii), it has been previously mentioned that the site was probably once within Cosgrove's medieval open fields, which were inclosed in 1767 (*ante*, 4.8). The improvement of agricultural land by under-drainage was sometimes, though not always, a feature of 18th century inclosure. Before the advent of sectional clay drainage pipes in the early 19th century, fields drains were usually comprised narrow channels dug into the subsoil, back-filled with brushwood or stones. The field drain [004] exposed within the new building footprint is thus most likely date to the 18th century. Notably, the field drain was severely truncated demonstrating that the ground had been disturbed. There were, however, no visible signs that this was as a result of post-medieval ploughing.
- 8.3 The investigation was thus unable to contribute to research Objectives 5.1 ii and iv.

9. ARCHIVE

- 9.1 A photographic record was made and the site was surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum; all data is contained in this report.
- 9.2 The OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations: www.oasis.ac.uk) identification number for this project is souterra1-313404.

10. COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 10.1 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive licence to the Owner in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the WSI. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. A licence is to be also granted to Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record for the use of all reports arising from projects for planning purposes and *bona fide* research requests.
- 10.2 Souterrain undertakes to respect all requirements for confidentiality about the Applicant's proposals provided that these are clearly stated. It is expected that owners respect Souterrain's

and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' general ethical obligations not to suppress significant archaeological data for an unreasonable period.

11. REFERENCES

BGS 2018. British Geological Survey, <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/> [accessed 14th June 2017]

DCLG, 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework* Department for Communities and Local Government

Cooper N J (ed), 2006. *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: an archaeological resource assessment and research agenda* (University of Leicester/ English Heritage)

CifA 2014 (rev.). *Standard Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Knight D, Vyner B & Allen C 2012. *Research Agenda and Strategy For The Historic Environment Of The East Midlands*, East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (Nottingham/York)

Milton Keynes Heritage Association, 'Old Stratford - Roman and other pit finds', <http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/os/doc/his/ro.html> [accessed 14th June 2017]

Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd. 2017. *Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis & Publication of Works: 38 Cosgrove Road, Northamptonshire, MK196AF, Planning App.Ref. S/2017/1768/FUL, SOU17-560, V.1 6th Oct. 2017*

Woodfield P. 2005. *The Whittlewood Project: Historic Buildings Survey, Passenham with Old Stratford*

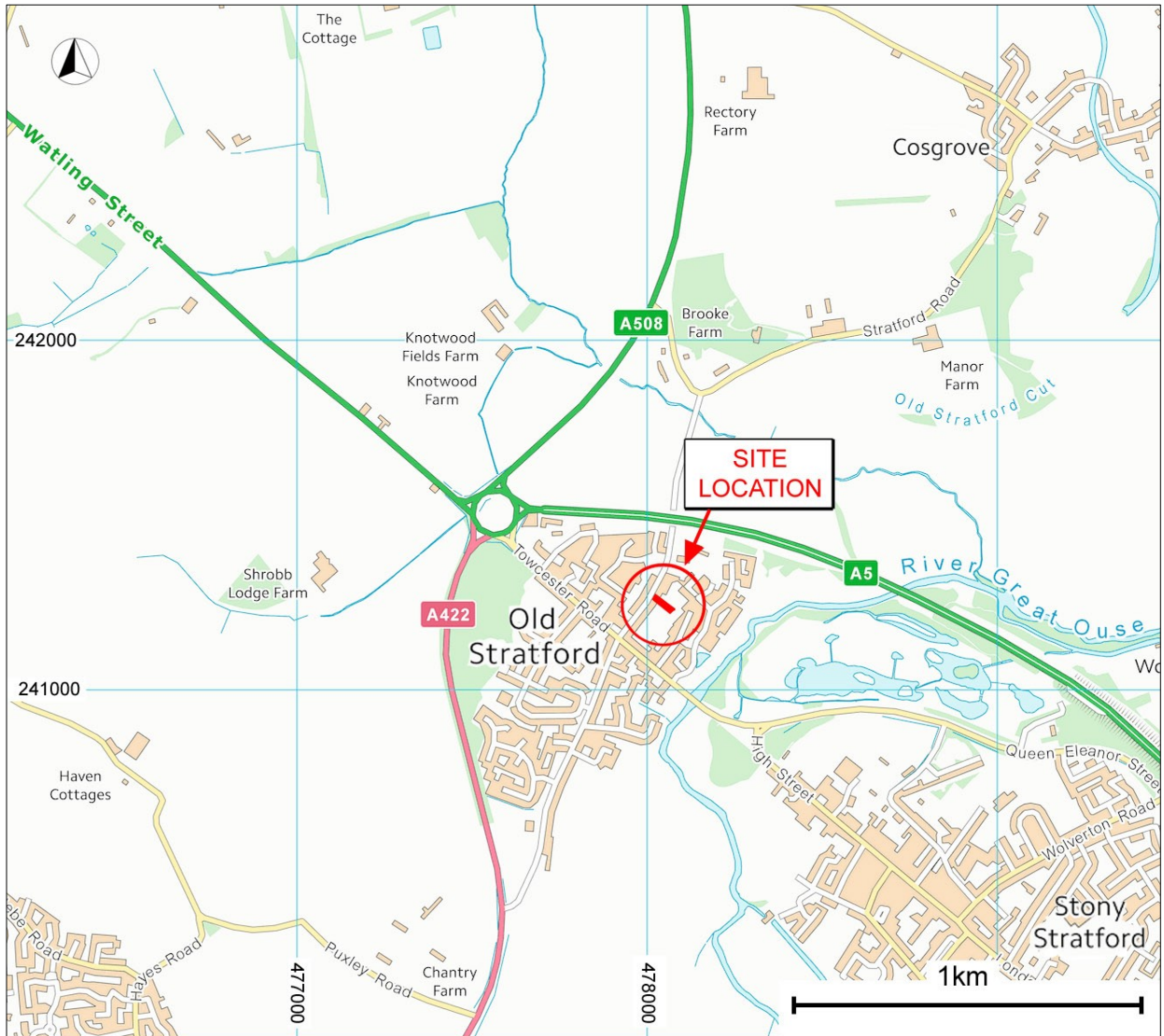


Figure 1. Location of Site

(based on Ordnance Survey Open Data mapping 2018 , © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

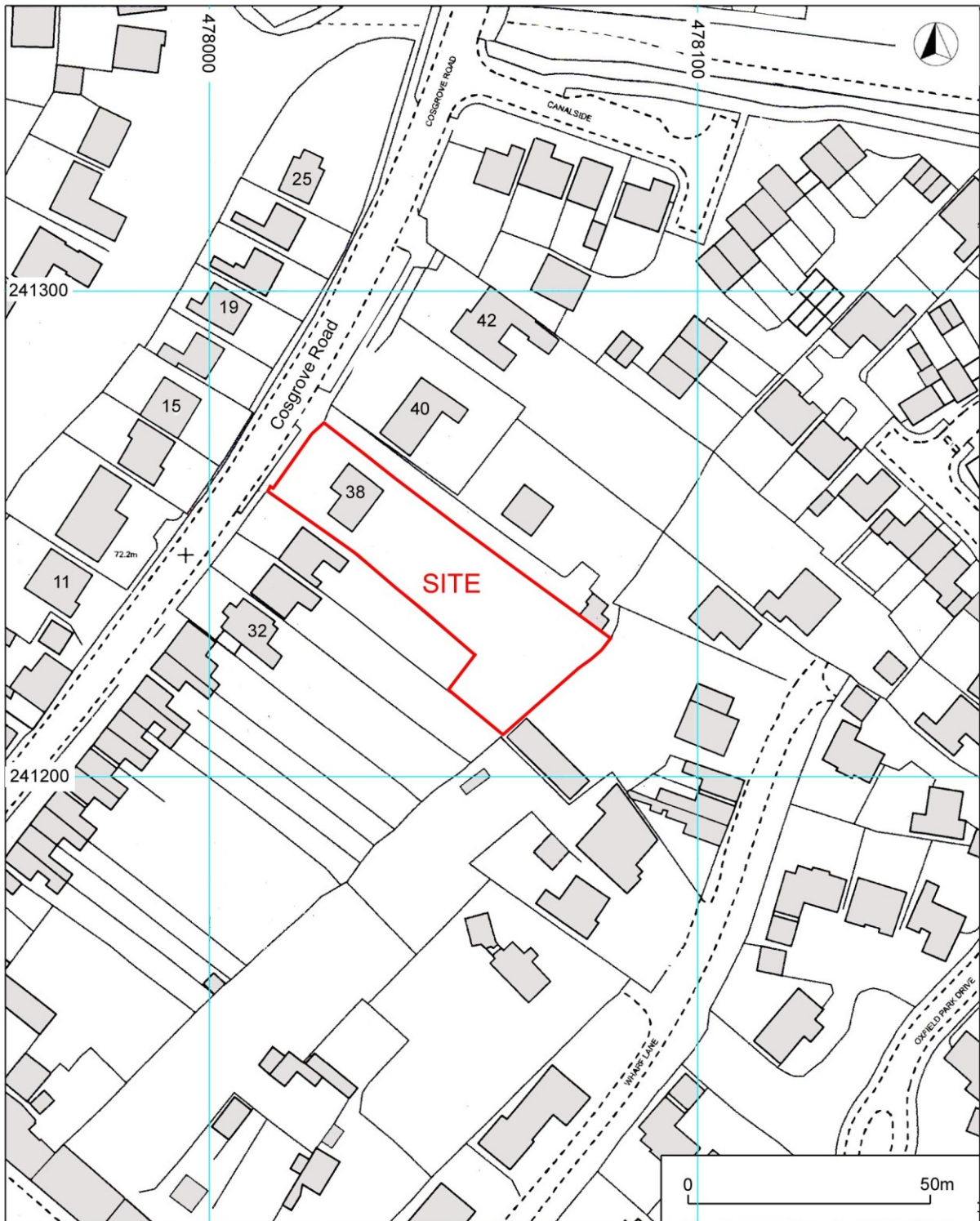


Figure 2. Location of Site

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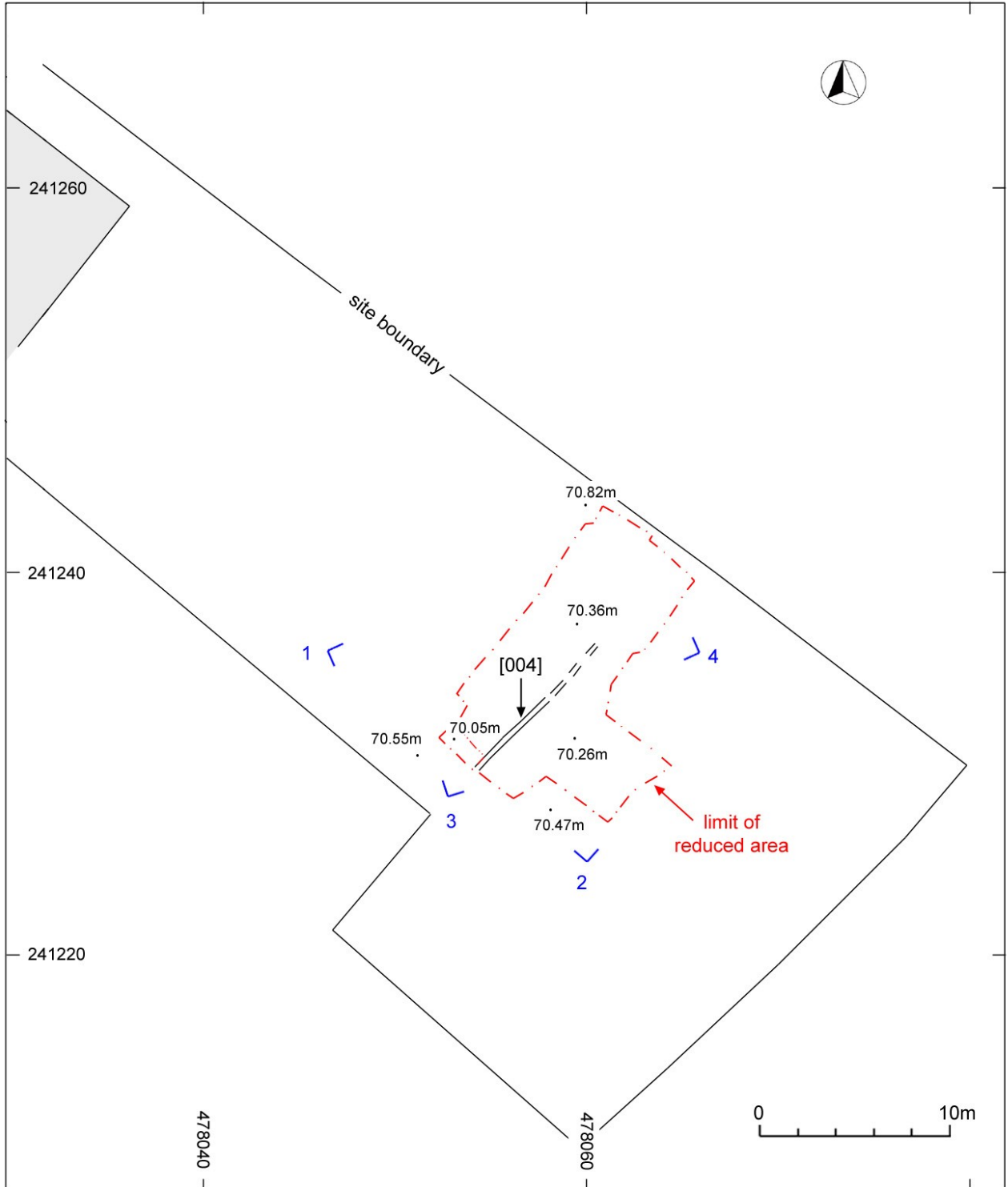


Figure 3. Area of Ground Reduction, showing direction of photographs (Section 12, Photos 1 to 4)

Survey: ©Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd, 2018

12. PHOTOGRAPHS



1. Overview of the site prior to ground reduction. Facing ESE



2. Overview of site, after ground reduction. Facing N



3. Overview of site after ground reduction. Green arrow marks position of stone field drain. Facing NE



4. Overview of site after ground reduction, facing NW. Dark brown patches in central area and at top right denote recent grubbing out of trees

APPENDIX 1: List of Contexts

KEY: Relationships: **a.** above; **abt.** abuts; **adj.** adjoins; **b.** below; **c.** cuts; **cub.** cut by; **co.** contains; **wi** within
 Dimensions: **le.** length; **wid.** width; **de.** depth; **th.** thickness

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	drawing	Finds	Date of record
001	Layer	Dark brown and clayey. Topsoil	a.(002)	th. 0.2 - 0.23 m	gps plan	-	05.01.2018
002	layer	Stiff light brown silty clay. Geological Stratum At around 70.27 m OD.	b.(001)	-	gps plan	-	05.01.2018
003	layer	Construction fill of post-medieval field drain. Consists of small pieces of limestone in dug channel	Wi.[004]	de. <0.3m	gps plan	-	05.01.2018
004	cut	Cut of field drain	c.(002); co.(003)	wid. c. 0.2 m	gps plan	-	05.01.2018

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: souterra1-313404

Project details

Project name Archaeological Investigation: 38 Cosgrove Road, Old Stratford, Northamptonshire

Short description of the project Archaeological monitoring was carried out during ground preparation for a new house at 38 Cosgrove Road, Old Stratford, Northamptonshire. On account of the site's proximity to Watling Street (course of Roman road) and find-spots of Roman artefacts, it was considered to have the potential to contain buried remains that may contribute to our understanding of the origins and development of the Roman road-side settlement at Old Stratford. The soil strip revealed a truncated post-medieval stone field drain, which was probably associated with the inclosure of Cosgrove's medieval open fields in the 18th century. There were no earlier archaeological features. Neither were any artefacts present.

Project dates Start: 06-10-2017 End: 05-01-2018

Previous/future work No / No

Project reference code ENN108862 - HER event no.

Project reference code S/2017/1768/FUL - Planning Application No.

Project reference code SOU17-560 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Other 5 - Garden

Monument type FIELD DRAIN Post Medieval

Significant Finds NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE OLD STRATFORD 38 Cosgrove Rd

Postcode MK19 6AF

Study area 106 Square metres

Site coordinates SP 78046 41243 52.063637732056 -0.861397975755 52 03 49 N 000 51 41 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0.26m Max: 0.31m

Project creators

Organisation Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

Project brief originator Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)

Project design originator Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

Project manager M Wilson

Project supervisor M Wilson

Type of funding body Developer
Name of funding body Mrs Caroline Dudley

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Digital Archive ID ENN108862
Digital Contents "none"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Paper Archive ID ENN108862
Paper Contents "none"
Paper Media available "Report"

Project bibliography 1

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