

**Absolute
Archaeology LLP
2015**

Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief ~
Monument Field, Prior Park College, Bath, BA2 5AH



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On behalf of

National Trust

Client Name: National Trust
 Document Title: Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief ~ Monument Field,
 Prior Park College, Bath, BA2 5AH
 National Grid Reference: ST 76602 63166 - ST 76606 63189
 Document Type: Watching Brief Report
 Issue Number: 1.0
 Date of Preparation: 10.04.2015
 Local Planning Authority: Bath and North East Somerset Council
 Planning Reference: N/A
 Site Code: AARC184/2015/WB
 Oasis Reference: absolute1-208524 (1)

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Summary

This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief in Monument Field, Prior Park College, Prior Park College, Bath, BA25 5AH (hereafter referred to as the Project Site). The project was commissioned by the National Trust, in conjunction with work to establish a new cricket pitch in the grounds of Prior Park College. The groundwork was carried out on the 10th February 2015.

No archaeological layers, features or deposits were identified during the groundwork and no significant finds were identified in the spoil. The results of the watching brief were negative and no further work was recommended in conjunction with the project.

Acknowledgements

Absolute Archaeology LLP would like to thank Mr Mike Crudge (Estates Manager, Prior Park College) and Mr Andy Boyce, for GreenSward Sports Consultancy Ltd, along with his ground workers. We would also like to thank the Prior Park College staff for their co-operation. Our thanks also go to Dr Martin Papworth (National Trust, Regional Archaeologist) for his help and expertise.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief in Monument Field, Prior Park College, Bath, BA25 5AH (hereafter referred to as the Project Site). The project was commissioned by the National Trust, in conjunction with work to establish a new cricket pitch in the grounds of Prior Park College. The groundwork was carried out on the 10th February 2015.

2. THE PROJECT SITE

2.1. Location

The Project Site is located to the SE of Bath Skyline, 2km SE of the centre of the City of Bath. The land is maintained by the National Trust and is used as a sports ground by the students at Prior Park College.

Historically the Project Site formed part of a Deer Park, the perimeter of which is preserved in later boundaries. The deer park was divided by a north south wall, which is represented today by the route of a public footpath running along the eastern boundary of the site. The 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map (1935) illustrates an earthwork running NE – SW across the south-eastern corner of the Project Site, just 50m to the SE of the cricket pitch. The date of this earthwork is unknown.

2.2. Geology and Topography

Geologically the area is defined as Middle Jurassic Coombe Down Oolite Member Formation (BGS Sheet 265). The Project Site lies approximately 160m above aOD on slight undulating ground, sloping to the West. The development area was defined by a mown grassed area at the time of the groundwork.

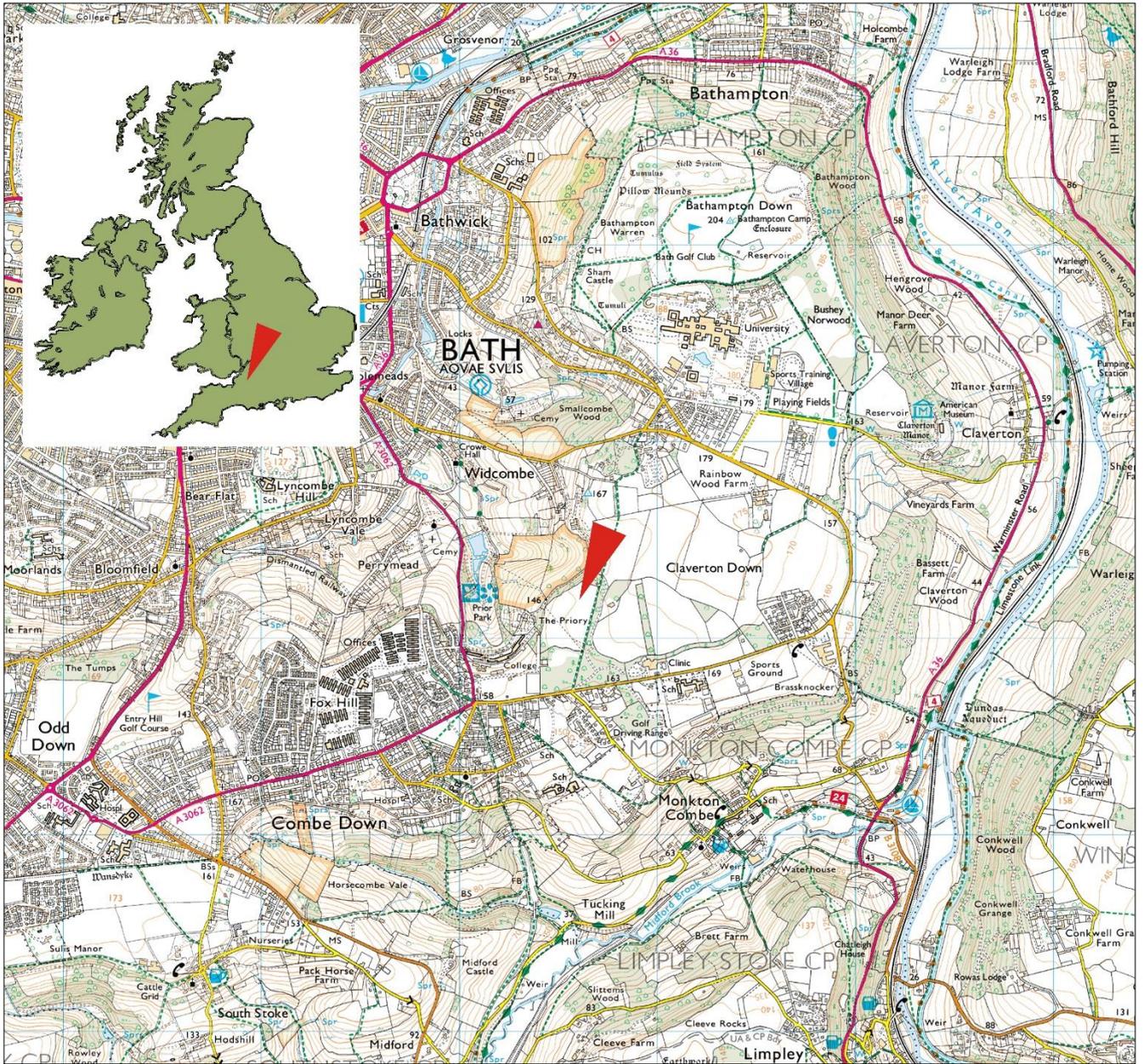


Figure 1 Project Site Location

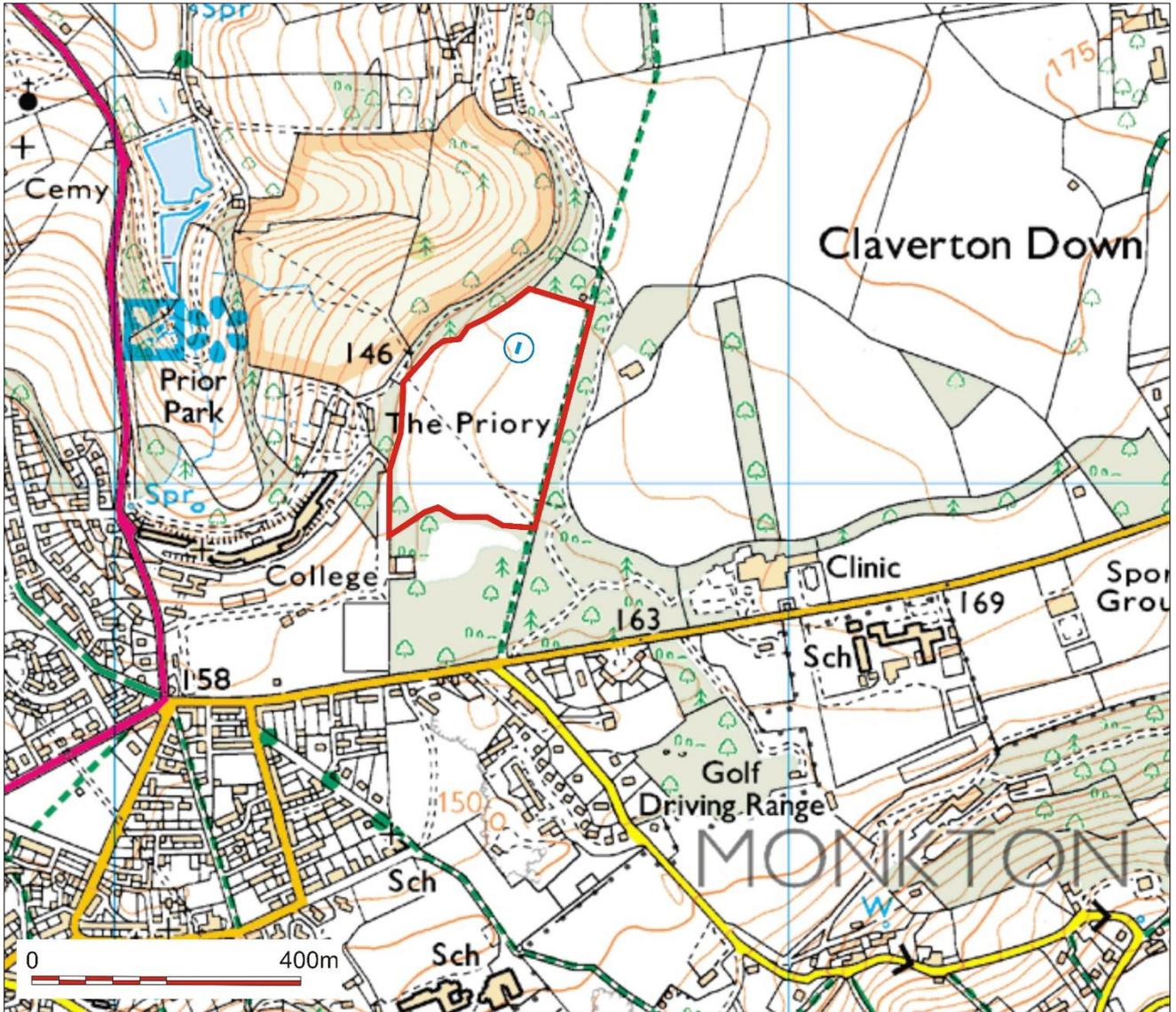


Figure 2 Monument Field outlined in red. Project Site circled in blue

3. METHODOLOGY

The broad aim of the watching brief was to identify and record features of archaeological interest discovered during groundwork associated with the development, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on any archaeological resource.

All work was undertaken in accordance with the ClfA Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief (revised 2008).

Primary Aims-

- Seek to assess the potential for archaeological activity associated with the project site;

- Record and identify archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their extent and significance;
- Undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment to interpret archaeological features and phasing identified during site works, and to place these within their local and regional context;
- Create a site archive for deposition in a suitable repository.

All groundwork was carried out using a Volvo 360° mechanical digger with a 1.2m grading bucket.

4. RESULTS

An area measuring 25m in length x 2.74m in width was reduced by a mechanical digger to a depth of 150mm. The excavation of the cricket pitch revealed a loamy, sandy calcareous clay turfline/topsoil (100) measuring <120mm in depth, sealing a calcareous sandy clay subsoil (101) measuring >30m in depth. Frequent water worn fragments of Oolithic limestone, measuring <400mm in length, were encountered during the reduction.



Photo 1 NNE facing view of cricket pitch (Scales 1 x 2m & 1 x 1m)



Photo 2 West facing view of cricket pitch

Several sherds of 20th century tin glazed pottery, along with post medieval glass and clinker were observed within the topsoil. These were not retained. No further artefacts were identified in the spoil, which was monitored throughout.

5. CONCLUSION

No archaeological layers, features or deposits were identified during the groundwork and no significant finds were identified in the spoil. The results of the watching brief were negative and no further work was recommended in conjunction with the project.

6. REFERENCES

BGS Bath: England and Wales. Sheet 265 (Solid and Drift Edition): 1:50000 Series

Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. *Standard and guidance for an archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading: IFA