

Final Report

(114950)



Seven Bridges, A419 Cricklade, Wiltshire

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation Report



Planning Ref: 15/07848/FUL
Ref: 114950.02
January 2017



**Seven Bridges, A419
Cricklade, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation Report

Prepared for:
BP Oil UK Limited
Chertsey Road
Sunbury on Thames
Middlesex
TW16 7BP

Prepared by:
Wessex Archaeology
Portway House
Old Sarum Park
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP4 6EB

www.wessexarch.co.uk

January 2017

**WA Ref. 114950.02
Planning Application Ref. 15/07848/FUL**



Quality Assurance

Project Code	114950	Accession Code		Client Ref.	
Planning Application Ref.	15/07848/FUL	Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	411750 192875		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	E	B Cullen	PA	<i>P. Andrews</i>	19/01/2017
File:	\\projectserver\wessex\Projects\114950_Reports				
File:					
File:					
File:					
File:					

* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

DISCLAIMER

THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT WAS DESIGNED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A REPORT TO AN INDIVIDUAL CLIENT AND WAS PREPARED SOLELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THAT CLIENT. THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT DOES NOT NECESSARILY STAND ON ITS OWN AND IS NOT INTENDED TO NOR SHOULD IT BE RELIED UPON BY ANY THIRD PARTY. TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY WILL NOT BE LIABLE BY REASON OF BREACH OF CONTRACT NEGLIGENCE OR OTHERWISE FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE (WHETHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL) OCCASIONED TO ANY PERSON ACTING OR OMITTING TO ACT OR REFRAINING FROM ACTING IN RELIANCE UPON THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT ARISING FROM OR CONNECTED WITH ANY ERROR OR OMISSION IN THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THE REPORT. LOSS OR DAMAGE AS REFERRED TO ABOVE SHALL BE DEEMED TO INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, ANY LOSS OF PROFITS OR ANTICIPATED PROFITS DAMAGE TO REPUTATION OR GOODWILL LOSS OF BUSINESS OR ANTICIPATED BUSINESS DAMAGES COSTS EXPENSES INCURRED OR PAYABLE TO ANY THIRD PARTY (IN ALL CASES WHETHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL) OR ANY OTHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL LOSS OR DAMAGE.



Seven Bridges, A419 Cricklade, Wiltshire

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation Report

Contents

Summary	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 Project background	4
1.2 Scope of document	4
1.3 The Site.....	5
1.4 Archaeological and historical background	5
2 METHODOLOGY.....	7
2.1 Aims and objectives	7
2.2 Fieldwork methodology	7
2.3 Monitoring	7
2.4 Recording.....	8
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS.....	8
4 DISCUSSION.....	8
5 STORAGE AND CURATION.....	9
5.1 Museum	9
5.2 Archive.....	9
5.3 Discard policy.....	9
5.4 Copyright.....	9
5.5 Security copy.....	9
6 REFERENCES.....	9

Figures

Figure 1: Site location plan

Plates

Front cover: Soil stripping in progress, view from south-east
Back cover: Soil stripping completed, view from west
Plate 1: North-east facing representative section of site (scale 1 m)



Seven Bridges, A419 Cricklade, Wiltshire

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by BP Oil UK Limited to carry out archaeological mitigation works in advance of the demolition of an existing service station and the construction of a replacement at Seven Bridges Service Centre, A419, Cricklade, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 411750 192875.

Planning consent (ref. 15/07848/FUL) has been given by Wiltshire Council for the demolition of the existing petrol filling station and erection of a new petrol filling station including new enlarged sales building, new canopy, fuel pumps, replacement storage tanks, car parking and ancillary rearrangements to the forecourt. Given the presence nearby of the line of Ermin Street and the Scheduled Roman villa 220 m to the south at Kingshill Farm (National List entry 1018434), the County Archaeologist advised that a programme of archaeological Strip, Map and Record excavation be undertaken.

The fieldwork was carried out over from the 12th–14th December 2016. An area of 605 m² was mechanically stripped under continuous archaeological supervision, but no archaeological remains were revealed or artefacts recovered.



Seven Bridges, A419 Cricklade, Wiltshire

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation Report

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Jane Iles of BP Oil UK Limited for commissioning the archaeological mitigation works. Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service is duly acknowledged for providing advice and monitoring the investigations.

The archaeological Strip, Map and Record excavation was undertaken by Benjamin Cullen. This report was compiled by Benjamin Cullen and edited by Phil Andrews. The Illustrations were prepared by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Ruth Panes.



Seven Bridges, A419 Cricklade, Wiltshire

Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by BP Oil UK Limited ('the Client') to undertake a programme of Strip, Map and Record excavation on land at Seven Bridges Service Centre, A419 Cricklade by-Pass Dual Carriageway Southbound, Cricklade, Wiltshire, SN6 6JR, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 411750 192875 (hereafter 'the Site'; **Figure 1**).

1.1.2 Planning consent has been granted by Wiltshire Council (ref. 15/07848/FUL) for the following development within the Site:

Demolition of Existing Petrol Filling Station & Erection of New Petrol Filling Station Including New Enlarged Sales Building, New Canopy, Fuel Pumps, Replacement Storage Tanks, Car Parking and Ancillary Rearrangements to the Forecourt.

1.1.3 The following archaeological condition was attached to the planning consent:

Condition 8

No development shall commence within the area indicated by the red line shown on the site location plan until:

a) A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and

b) The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

1.2 Scope of document

1.2.1 This report presents the results of the archaeological mitigation works relating to the new petrol filling station and associated works.



1.3 The Site

- 1.3.1 The Site consists of a sub-rectangular parcel of land located immediately north of the A419 (Southbound) between Calcutt and Seven Bridges, approximately 1.9 km east of Cricklade. It is orientated north-west to south-east, and the development proposal area covers approximately 0.36 hectares in extent.
- 1.3.2 The area subject to Strip, Map and Record excavation measured 635 m², with an additional contingency area of 805 m², amounting to a total area of 1440 m² (**Figure 1**).
- 1.3.3 The south-eastern part of the Site contains a disused petrol filling station, with a shop and canopy and an additional HGV filling lane, whilst the north-western part of the Site comprises an area of previously undeveloped agricultural land.
- 1.3.4 The Site occupies a relatively flat area of land, at an elevation of approximately 80 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 1.3.5 The bedrock geology underlying the Site is mapped by the British Geological Survey (BGS) as Mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation, overlain by Sand and Gravel of the Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member, Lower Facet.
- 1.3.6 Geo-environmental works undertaken within the previously developed part of the Site in early 2015 recorded the underlying geology as a '*SOFT brown grey grading with depth to STIFF/VERY STIFF dark grey slightly sandy CLAY with occasional sand lenses*', which was ascribed to the Oxford Clay Formation. This was observed to be overlain by made ground and tarmac/concrete surfaces of between 0.2 and 0.4 m thickness (Subadra Consulting Ltd 2015).

1.4 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.4.1 The A419 corresponds approximately with the route of Ermin Street, a major Roman road linking *Glevum* (Gloucester) to *Corinium* (Cirencester), and onwards to *Calleva* (Silchester). The proximity of the Roman road suggests that there may be some potential for associated archaeological remains to be encountered within the Site. Such remains could include traces of the road itself, evidence of suburban roadside settlement or 'ladder-type' development, field systems and, possibly, burials.
- 1.4.2 The Site is also situated approximately 220 m to the north of the Scheduled Romano-British villa at Kingshill Farm (National List entry 1018434), which lies to the south of the A419 (see **Figure 1**). The building is known from partial excavation, which revealed two large walls, 0.7 m thick, built from Corralian limestone set in pink mortar. One wall, traced for a length of 13 m, is orientated east-west and is joined 3 m from its eastern end by another wall 5 m long and orientated north-south. In the western angle, less substantial walls form a series of rooms with a mortar floors. Immediately to the east of the north-south wall a series of channels branch from a gap in the east-west wall, this gap interpreted as a stoke hole, forming part of a channelled hypocaust heating system. The channels are about 0.3 m wide and lined with horizontal slabs of coral rag. Large quantities of Romano-British domestic pottery and some imitation Samian ware have been found adjacent to the site of the villa, demonstrating that it extends beyond the area of the scheduling.
- 1.4.3 A trial trench evaluation undertaken in 2000 on land adjacent to the Kingshill (alternatively, Thamesdown) Recycling Centre, to the south of the Site, identified a concentration of features in the southern part of the area investigated. The faunal and environmental data suggested that the site was located on the periphery of a settlement located to the

south/south-east, presumably related to the Scheduled Roman villa site. The majority of features were of Roman date, with a significant number of early–mid Saxon features. Two of the Roman features, a pond and a possible trackway, contained Romano-British and early–mid Saxon pottery. The presence of stratified early–mid Saxon pottery at this site mirrors reports of the discovery of similar sherds to the east (possibly from excavations at the villa). Whether this represented evidence for a continuity of use of the Romano-British settlement, or peripheral debris away from a separate Saxon centre, is uncertain (Wessex Archaeology 1999; 2000).

- 1.4.4 A subsequent evaluation, consisting of four machine excavated trenches, was undertaken nearby at Kingshill Recycling Centre by Cotswold Archaeology in 2011. This revealed 30 ditches, eight pits and two postholes. The material recovered from the excavated features suggests there was Iron Age activity in the vicinity of the site, and at least two phases of Romano-British activity, including early Roman settlement, as well as a limited amount of ironworking. Evidence for later Roman activity included a number of ditches and quantities of unstratified roof tile and ceramic building material, suggesting a substantial building existed in the vicinity (presumably the Scheduled villa) (Cotswold Archaeology 2011). There were no Saxon deposits, and no evidence for continuity of settlement into the Saxon period, as identified by the earlier evaluation undertaken to the north (Wessex Archaeology 2000).
- 1.4.5 Further afield, the Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a series of excavations along the line of the A419/A417 Swindon to Gloucester Road Scheme in 1996 and 1997. The work entailed the excavation of around 35 archaeological sites along the 25 km route extending from Cricklade in the south to Nettleton in the north (Williams *et al.* 1999a; 1999b). These sites produced important evidence spanning the prehistoric to post-medieval periods, including significant evidence of Roman settlement along the line of Ermin Street at Birdlip Quarry, to the north-west of Cirencester. A roadside funerary monument was found at Fields Farm, adding to pre-existing evidence of funerary activity along the Roman road in the form of a number of mortuary enclosures. Closer to the Site, more peripheral Roman features included quarry pits and ditches at Court Farm and Westfield Farm, the former of which were likely associated with a nearby settlement site, known from aerial photographic evidence. Roman field boundaries were also uncovered at Latton, whilst Ermin Street itself was examined at a number of locations.
- 1.4.6 Another programme of archaeological investigation was carried out from 2005 along the line of the A419 to the south-west of the Site, in the Kingsdown area north of Swindon. These investigations identified a possible prehistoric henge, a large late Bronze Age enclosure, a Bronze Age inhumation and a cremation burial, and a Romano-British ladder settlement. The latter comprised a series of rectilinear fields or paddocks delineated by large boundary ditches attached to a square settlement enclosure (Wessex Archaeology 2010).
- 1.4.7 There are currently no specific indications that significant archaeological remains are present within the Site, although vestigial medieval ridge and furrow earthworks are visible on satellite imagery in the undeveloped north-western area, and across much of the surrounding landscape. Nevertheless, the results of previous archaeological investigations, as well as the proximity of Ermin Street and the nearby Scheduled villa, suggest that there may be some potential for buried remains, particularly of Roman date, to be present within the previously undeveloped and largely undisturbed area of the Site to the north-west.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and objectives

2.1.1 The aims of the archaeological Strip, Map and Record excavation were to:

- *Clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site that may be impacted by development;*
- *Identify, within the constraints of the excavation, the date, character and condition of any surviving remains within the Site;*
- *Assess the degree of pre-existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits; and*
- *Produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the Site's archaeological potential.*

2.2 Fieldwork methodology

2.2.1 The Strip, Map and Record (SMR) excavation took place between the 12th and 14th of December 2016.

2.2.2 All works were conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (CIfA 2014a). Full details of the fieldwork methodology are set out in the agreed WSI (WA 2016).

2.2.3 The SMR excavation comprised an area covering 635m², as indicated on **Figure 1**, with an additional contingency area covering 805m² around the north-east and north-west sides. The contingency area, which contains both overhead and buried services, would have been subject to SMR investigations if archaeological remains had been encountered within the main SMR area, which was contiguous with the contingency area.

2.2.4 The SMR area was set out using GPS equipment. Topsoil was removed using a tracked 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and under constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist from WA. Topsoil was removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the upper archaeological horizon, or the level of the natural geology, whichever was reached first (see **Front Cover**). Due to the wet ground conditions (see **Back Cover**), the excavation was conducted without a dumper as upon loading, the wheels sank below the dig level.

2.2.5 The resulting surface was inspected for archaeological remains. With the agreement of WCAS, investigations ceased when the potential for encountering remains was exhausted.

2.2.6 Following the initial strip and map of the area, the Client and WCAS were consulted on the lack of any archaeological remains observed, and an agreement was reached obviating the requirement for archaeological investigations within the contingency area.

2.3 Monitoring

2.3.1 Provision was made for monitoring progress and standards throughout the fieldwork by WCAS, in consultation with the Client. Both parties were informed of any meeting dates and updated on the progress of the works as they proceeded.



2.4 Recording

- 2.4.1 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using WA's *pro forma* recording system.
- 2.4.2 A complete drawn record of archaeological features and deposits was compiled. This includes both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels were calculated and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.
- 2.4.3 A digital photographic record was maintained using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels.
- 2.4.4 All as-dug locations, associated archaeological remains and other features of relevance to the project were digitally surveyed using GPS within the OS NGR system, but also including heights above OS datum (Newlyn). The electronic survey record was periodically downloaded and retained within the site archive, with co-ordinate and/or datum information transposed onto the appropriate paper archives.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

- 3.1.1 The area stripped was 605 m², reduced slightly from the 635 m² proposed due to the presence of three borehole monitoring pipes (see **Figure 1**).
- 3.1.2 The entire area of Strip, Map and Record excavation was reduced down to the level of the natural geology.
- 3.1.3 The stratigraphic sequence comprised a topsoil/ploughsoil layer of dark grey brown silty clay loam up to 0.26 m thick. This lay immediately above the natural geology which consisted of a mid orange brown (with a grey hue) sandy clay with occasional patches of blue grey clay (**Plate 1**).
- 3.1.4 The only features identified were a series of probably recent of plough scars.
- 3.1.5 The only archaeological artefacts noted were several fencing stakes of an obviously modern date, which were not retained.
- 3.1.6 No deposits deemed suitable for environmental sampling were encountered.

4 DISCUSSION

- 4.1.1 The Strip, Map and Record excavation identified no surviving archaeological remains within the Site. This may indicate that the Site has been heavily truncated by ploughing in the past, although this is considered unlikely, and more plausibly it can be suggested that there has been no earlier activity of archaeological interest here beyond agriculture.
- 4.1.2 While the presence of the Romano-British villa at Kingshill Farm a little over 200 m to the south might lead to the expectation that there should be evidence for Roman activity on the Site, there were no Romano-British (or other) artefacts observed in the ploughsoil to show this. Perhaps the villa-related activity was largely confined to the south of Ermin Street here, and did not extend to the current Site to the north.
- 4.1.3 Given the lack of archaeological remains, there is no requirement for further works, or analysis and publication beyond a summary note in the county archaeological journal.



5 STORAGE AND CURATION

5.1 Museum

5.1.1 The designated receiving museum will be Wiltshire Museum, Devizes. The Curator was contacted in advance of the fieldwork for an accession number.

5.2 Archive

5.2.1 The complete Site archive, which includes paper records, photographic records, graphics, and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; Brown 2011; ADS 2013; ClfA 2014b).

5.2.2 All archive elements have been marked with the Site/accession code and a full index will be prepared.

5.2.3 It is proposed in principle that, subject to the wishes of the landowner, the entire archive will be donated to and deposited with Wiltshire Museum. Provision has been made for the cost of long term storage in the post-fieldwork costs.

5.2.4 Until final deposition with the museum, the archive will be stored at the offices of WA in Salisbury.

5.3 Discard policy

5.3.1 WA follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections* (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

5.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993 and 1995; English Heritage 2011).

5.4 Copyright

5.4.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by WA under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

5.5 Security copy

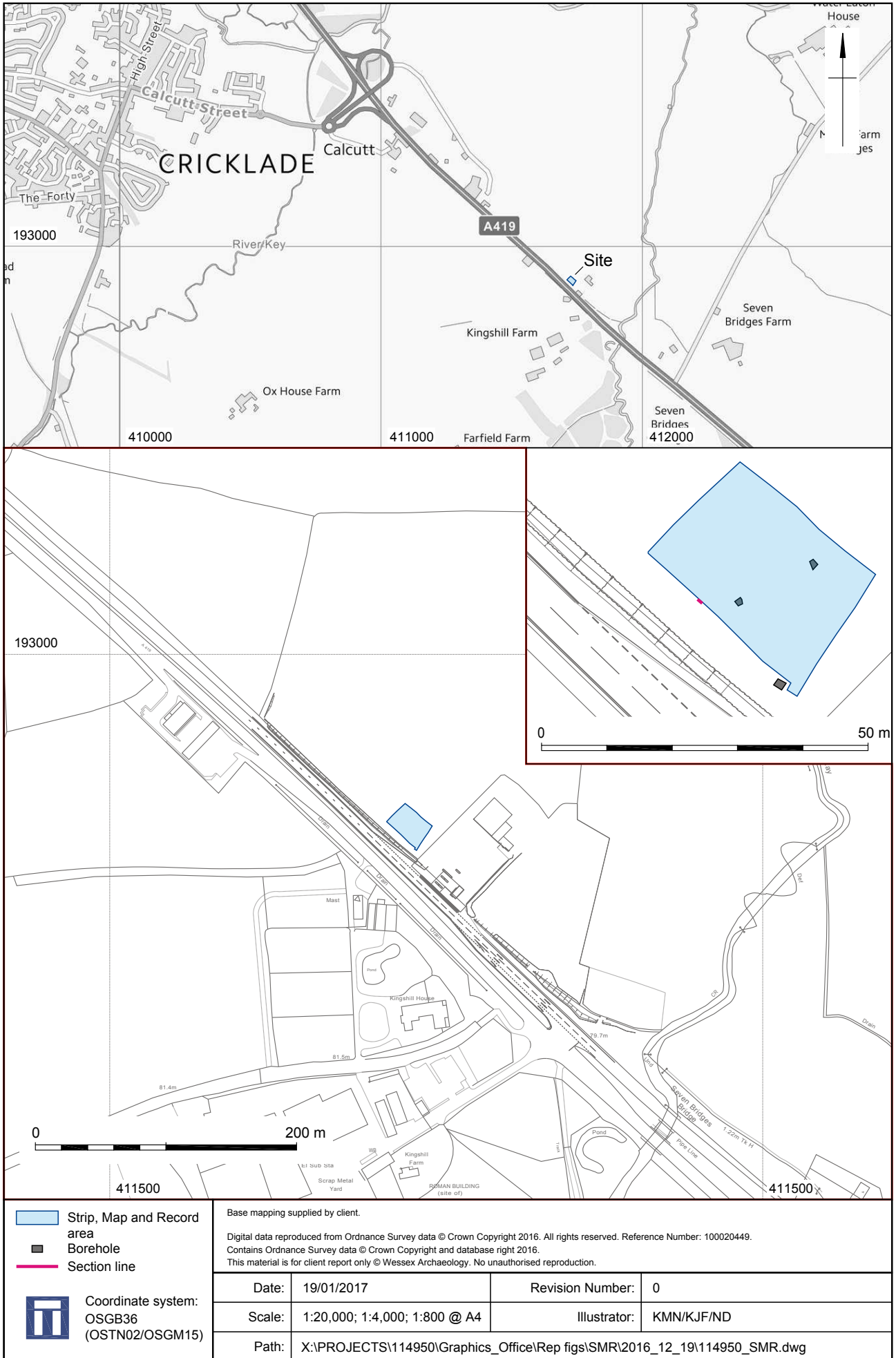
5.5.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

6 REFERENCES

Archaeology Data Services [ADS], 2013. *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice*. Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice.



- British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain Viewer. Accessed on 18/10/2016 at: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>
- Brown, D.H., 2011 (revised edition). *Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists [CIfA], 2014a. *Standards and Guidance for archaeological excavation*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists [CIfA], 2014b. *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*.
- Cotswold Archaeology, 2011. *Kingshill Recycling Centre, Cricklade, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*. CA Report ref: 11171.
- English Heritage, 2011, *Environmental Archaeology; a guide to theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*. Swindon: Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 2nd edition.
- Williams, R.J., Lupton A. and Mudd A., 1999a. *Excavations alongside Roman Ermin Street Gloucestershire and Wiltshire The Archaeology of the A419/A417 Swindon to Gloucester Road Scheme Volume 1: Prehistoric and Roman Activity*. Oxford Archaeological Unit monograph.
- Williams, R.J., Lupton A., and Mudd A., 1999b. *Excavations alongside Roman Ermin Street Gloucestershire and Wiltshire The Archaeology of the A419/A417 Swindon to Gloucester Road Scheme Volume 2: Medieval and Post-Medieval Activity, Finds and Environmental Evidence*. Oxford Archaeological Unit monograph.
- Society of Museum Archaeologists [SMA], 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. Society of Museum Archaeologists.
- Society of Museum Archaeologists [SMA], 1995. *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*, Society of Museum Archaeologists.
- Subadra Consulting Ltd, 2015. *Seven Bridges Service Station A419 Southbound, Cricklade, Wiltshire. Geo-Environmental Investigation Report*. Report No: In12881 CL 001.
- Wessex Archaeology, 1999 *Proposed Biomass Power Project, Cricklade, North Wiltshire: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*. Unpublished client report ref: 47155
- Wessex Archaeology, 2000 *Proposed Biomass Power Project, Cricklade, North Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished client report ref: 47156
- Wessex Archaeology, 2010. *Kingsdown, Swindon, Wiltshire. Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results*. Unpublished client report ref. 66714.02.
- Wessex Archaeology, 2016, *Seven Bridges, A419, Cricklade, Wiltshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of Strip, Map and Record Excavation*. Unpublished client report ref T22406.01.




Site location

Figure 1



Plate 1: North-east facing representative section of site (scale 1m)

	This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
	Date:	19/12/2016	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	N/A	Illustrator:	ND
	Path:	X:\PROJECTS\114950\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\SMS\2016_12_19\114950_Plates.cdr		



Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk

