

Cricklade Car Park: Land to the rear of 38 High Street, Cricklade, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief

**CRICKLADE CAR PARK,
LAND TO THE REAR OF 38 HIGH STREET,
CRICKLADE,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: SU 0997 9367

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

November 2011

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

Site name: Cricklade Car Park.
Site code: CCP11
NGR: SU 0997 9367
Site activity: Archaeological Watching Brief
Date and duration: 15th November 2011 – 22nd November 2011: 5 days on site
Site area: Approximately 700m²
Location of archive: Swindon Museum

In November 2011 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological monitoring on land at the rear of 38 High Street, Cricklade, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 0997 9367). The work was commissioned by Cricklade Town Council.

Planning permission (**Planning Reference: 11/01261/FUL**) has been granted for the construction of a new car park on land to the rear of 38 High Street Cricklade. Part of the site is situated within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (W1872). Scheduled Monument Consent was therefore sought, and subsequently granted (**English Heritage Ref: S00014459**), on condition that a programme of archaeological monitoring works was undertaken.

The monitored works comprised the reduction of the modern ground surface within the footprint of the new car park and the excavation of a service trench.

No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered during the monitoring work. The reduction of the car park did not extend below deposits containing Modern artefactual material. Natural ground was encountered in the base of the service trenching, though no archaeological deposits were present. Although no archaeological deposits were encountered during the works, it remains possible that features of archaeological interest survive below the modern deposits encountered.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material: brick, tile etc.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Roman

The period traditionally dated between AD 43 and circa AD 410.

Saxon

The immediate post-Roman period, traditionally dated from AD 410 to AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2011 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological monitoring during groundworks associated with the construction of a new car park on land at the rear of 38 High Street, Cricklade, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 0997 9367). The work was commissioned by Cricklade Town Council.
- 1.2 Planning permission (**Planning Reference: 11/01261/FUL**) has been granted for the construction of a new car park. Part of the site is situated within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (W1872). Scheduled Monument Consent was therefore sought, and subsequently granted (**English Heritage Ref: S00014459**) on condition that a programme of archaeological monitoring works was undertaken.
- 1.3 Foundations Archaeology is certified to BS EN ISO 9001: 2008 for quality assurance in the provision of archaeological services. The company is a Registered Organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists and subscribes to that organisation's Code of Conduct. All relevant IfA Codes of Practice were adhered to throughout the course of the project.
- 1.4 The project was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Foundations Archaeology (2011), which was prepared in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (rev. 2008), *Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region) and *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (County Archaeological Service 1995). The WSI was approved by English Heritage.
- 1.5 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The new car park is located immediately to the west of the rear of 38 High Street, Cricklade and to the south of Green Gable Surgery, with access from the High Street via a road to the north of No. 38. It is adjacent to the eastern boundary of St Sampson's School playing fields. The site is situated at a height of *circa* 84m OD.
- 2.2 The underlying geology is Upper Jurassic Oxford Clay overlying Kellaways Beds, overlain by some localised Quaternary alluvial deposits (BGS 1974).
- 2.3 The remains of a Romano-British settlement (SU09SE302), protected as a Scheduled Monument (AM872a), are located approximately 250m to the north of the site. Numerous Roman finds and features are known from the vicinity.

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- 2.4 Cricklade is best known as a Saxon *burghal hideage* site, being one of a series of fortified settlements originating during the reign of Alfred the Great. Parts of the Saxon town (SU09SE400 and SU19SW400) are protected as a Scheduled Monument (HER ref: AM 323/AM 872, English Heritage ref: W1872).
- 2.5 Cricklade remained important as a Medieval town (SU09SE452); traces of occupation from the 13th to 17th centuries have been identified in the vicinity of the site, along the High Street, Horse Fair Lane and Calcutt Street.
- 2.6 The study area therefore contained the potential for archaeological finds predominantly dating to the Roman, Saxon and Medieval periods. This did not prejudice the watching brief against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains, as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary; this was intended to allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed works.
- 3.2 These aims were to be achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) To define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible.
 - ii) To attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site.
 - iii) To attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site.
 - iv) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.
 - v) To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The monitored works comprised the reduction of the Modern ground surface to formation level within the footprint of the new car park and the excavation of a service trench.
- 4.2 All intrusive groundworks were subject to constant archaeological monitoring by a qualified and suitably experienced archaeologist. Potential archaeological deposits were manually investigated and, where appropriate, hand excavated and recorded. Spoil heaps were visually scanned for finds.
- 4.3 All on site and post excavation works fulfilled the requirements of the brief.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the project is given in Appendix 1. The area reduction did not penetrate through Modern deposits. Layer (103) was visible at the formation level across much of the site, overlain by (107) in the east-southeast. Where the formation level rose at the east-southeast edge of site, (107) was visible in plan. Within the south-southwest corner, (103) is overlaid by (105), again visible in plan where the formation level rose. Natural substrate was encountered only in the base of the service trench where it was overlaid by (106), which was in turn overlaid by (103).

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered during the monitoring work. The reduction works did not penetrate through modern deposits. The natural substrate was encountered within the service trench, but no archaeology was present. Although no archaeological deposits were encountered during the watching brief, it remains possible that preserved archaeological features survive undisturbed below the modern deposits.

7 ARCHIVE

- 7.1 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology. It comprises:

Digital photographs
Colour and B&W photographs
Record sheets
Correspondence
Written Scheme of Investigation

Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Method statement

- 7.2 The archive has been prepared in accordance with *MoRPHE* (English Heritage 2006) and *Guidelines for the preparation of archaeological archives for long-term storage* (UKIC 1990). It will be deposited with Swindon Museum using their specific deposition policies within 12 months under an accession code, which will be provided on deposition.
- 7.3 The results of the work will be published in a suitable archaeological journal, and an OASIS report will be completed and submitted.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Survey, 1974. *Swindon: England and Wales Sheet 252. Solid and Drift Edition*. Institute of Geological Sciences.

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9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire County Council, John Coole of Cricklade Town Council and Hugh Beamish of English Heritage for their help and co-operation during the course of this project.

APPENDIX 1: The Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
101	na	na	0.12 – 0.20	Tarmac	102	na
102	na	na	0.15 – 0.20	Crushed stone, modern CBM and crushed concrete	107	101
103	>33.6	>5.6	0.54	Dark grey-brown compact silt-clay, which contained frequent Modern glass, CBM, animal bone, charcoal and Modern pottery	106	107, 104, 105
104	na	na	0.10 – 0.21	Dark brown friable silt-clay topsoil	103, 105	na
105	>12.1	>4.1	>0.45	Light grey-brown compact silt-clay with occasional patches of redeposited beige clay, which contained frequent Modern glass, CBM, animal bone, charcoal and Modern pottery	103	104
106	>5	>0.35	0.21	Light grey compact silt-clay which contained occasional small undated fragments of CBM	NATURAL	103
107	>40	>7.2	>0.40	Equivalent to (105)	103	102
NATURAL	na	na	>0.06	Beige/light grey compact clay	na	106

