

**PROPOSED RIVERBANK THEATRE  
GEORGE LANE CAR PARK  
MARLBOROUGH  
WILTSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**NGR: SU 1891 16889**

**May 2005**

**Report No: 416**



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**Quality Assurance**

This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with  
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Author

Date

Approved

QA Checked

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## **SUMMARY**

In May 2005 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at the George Lane Carpark, Marlborough at NGR: SU 1891 6889. The project was commissioned by Mark Davies of Ruddle Wilkinson Architects on behalf of the Kennet Valley Arts Trust.

The evaluation required the excavation and recording of a single trench measuring 20m by 2m within the proposed development area. The presence of a live service approximately at the mid-point of the trench required that a baulk be left and the trench was extended by two metres at either end in order to maintain the sample. In the event only the two 2m extensions at either end of the trench were fully excavated, due to the height of the water table combined with an identical stratigraphic sequence at either end of the trench. The trench location is shown on Figure 2.

No archaeological finds or features were identified during the course of the project.

The evaluation has revealed that the site has suffered from significant modern disturbance. The site has clearly been made up in modern times, with a layer of geotechnical membrane (Terram) sealing the natural ground. The car park surface is at the same level as the surrounding water-meadows and it is therefore clear that subsoil and topsoil had been previously stripped from the site, prior to the deposition of the made ground. The presence of the Terram at the base of the made ground indicates that this was of relatively recent occurrence.

The watertable was present at a depth of 0.83m from the modern ground surface.

The results of the evaluation have indicated that the site is of low archaeological potential.

## 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.

### Medieval

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

### Modern

The period from *circa* 1900 onwards.

### Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site, in this case clay with flints.

### NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

### OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum)

### OS

Ordnance Survey

### Post-Medieval

The period from *circa* 1500 to *circa* 1900.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in May 2005 on land at the George Lane Carpark, Marlborough. The project was commissioned by Mark Davies of Ruddle Wilkinson Architects on behalf of the Kennet Valley Arts Trust.
- 1.2 The site is located adjacent to the River Kennet in Marlborough at NGR: SU 1891 6889.
- 1.3 It is proposed to construct a new theatre/cinema, incorporating public toilets and flood plain compensation works, within the study area (Planning Reference K51601/F). A programme of archaeological works was required prior to the determination of planning permission, in accordance with the principals of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16): Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990) and the archaeological policies of Wiltshire County Council.
- 1.4 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works. The project was undertaken in accordance with the Project Design prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2005), based upon a brief issued by Wiltshire County Council Archaeological Service (SF/MJU/05SF047). The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (1994, revised 2001) and *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995).
- 1.5 Foundations Archaeology is certified to BS/EN/ISO 9001: 2000 for quality assurance in the provision of archaeological services. The company is a registered organisation with the Institute of Field 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

## 2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located in an area of recognised archaeological potential. A nearby evaluation undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in 2003 revealed a buried soil containing a significant assemblage of Palaeolithic/Mesolithic worked flint. A late Neolithic/early Bronze Age settlement site has also previously been uncovered by Cotswold Archaeological Trust to the southeast. To the west of the site a Romano-British brooch has been previously discovered in the garden of 16 George Lane. It was also possible that medieval and post-medieval finds and features might be present.
- 2.2 The study area therefore contains the potential for significant archaeological features and deposits, predominantly associated with the Palaeolithic period. This did not prejudice the evaluation against the recovery of evidence dating to other periods.

### **3 AIMS**

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation 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. In turn this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.
- 3.2 These aims were 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 of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
  - iii) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The project required the excavation of a single evaluation trench measuring 20m by 2m. The presence of a live service approximately at the mid-point of the trench required that a baulk be left and the trench was extended by two metres at either end in order to maintain the sample. In the event only the two 2m extensions at either end of the trench were fully excavated, due to the height of the water table combined with an identical stratigraphic sequence at either end of the trench. The trench location is shown on Figure 2.
- 4.2 Tarmac and non-significant overburden were removed to the top of the archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved with the use of a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter the trench was cleaned and all additional excavation was conducted by hand.
- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the Foundations Archaeology Specification (2005) and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Land use at the time of the archaeological investigation consisted of a tarmac surface to the George Lane car park. The site itself was flat and is situated within the flood plain of the River Kennet.
- 5.2 **Trench 1** (20m long) was aligned approximately northwest-southeast and was excavated onto a natural glacial deposit of chalk flint at an average depth of 1.41m (125.37m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural substrates were sealed beneath a naturally deposited layer of orange brown sand and flint (105), up to 0.2m thick. This was overlaid by a layer of geotechnical membrane (Terram) (104) beneath a layer of made ground comprising limestone rubble (103), up to 0.6m thick. The made ground was overlain by a layer of modern gravel hardcore (102), up to 0.52m thick, beneath a tarmac and concrete hardstanding (101) comprising the car park surface. No archaeological finds or features were present within the evaluation trench.

## 6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No archaeological finds or features were identified during the course of the project. No trace of the buried soil encountered nearby by Wessex Archaeology (2003) was present within the evaluation trench.
- 6.2 The evaluation has revealed that the site has suffered from significant modern disturbance. The site has clearly been made up in modern times, with a layer of geotechnical membrane (Terram) sealing the natural ground. The car park surface is at the same level as the surrounding water-meadows and it is therefore clear that subsoil and topsoil had been previously stripped from the site, prior to the deposition of the made ground. The presence of Terram at the base of the made ground indicates that this was of relatively recent occurrence.
- 6.3 The watertable was present at a depth of 0.83m from the modern ground surface.
- 6.4 The results of the evaluation have indicated that the immediate site area is of low archaeological potential.

## 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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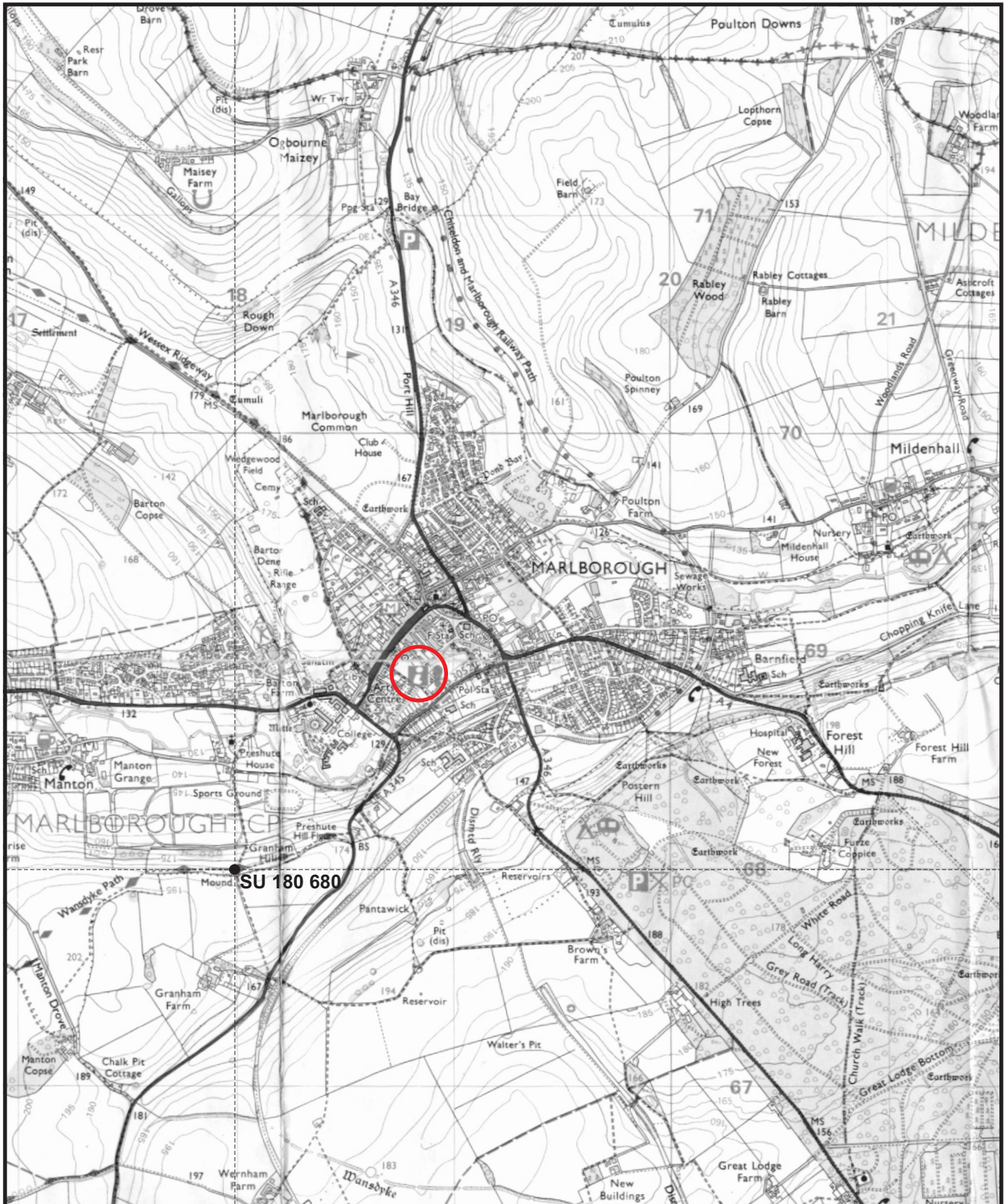
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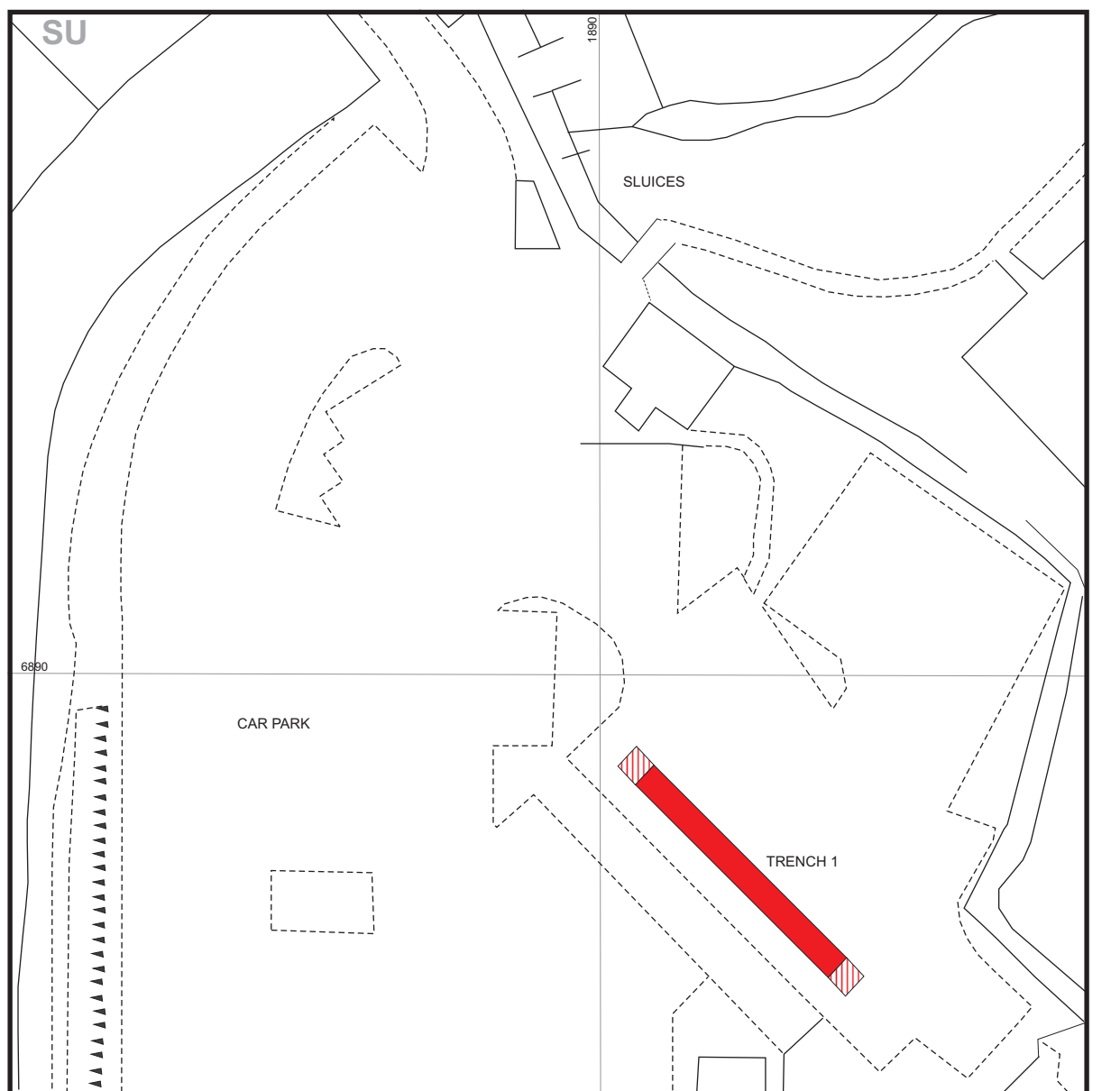
## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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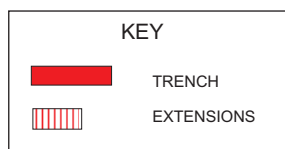
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FIGURE 1: Site Location



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0m 20m



**FIGURE 2: Trench Location**