

**Malmesbury Garden Centre
Malmesbury
Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

for

WYG Environment

on behalf of

**Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd and Grafton
Merchandising GB Ltd**

CA Project: 3742
CA Report: 12049

March 2012

Malmesbury Garden Centre
Malmesbury
Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 3742
CA Report: 12049

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date	22 March 2012
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Malmesbury Garden Centre
Location: Malmesbury, Wiltshire
NGR: ST 9400 8837
Type: Evaluation
Date: 7 – 13 March 2012
Location of Archive: Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Site Code: MGA 12

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2012 at Malmesbury Garden Centre, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. Seven trenches were excavated.

A post-medieval ditch and an undated ploughing headland were recorded.

Despite the high potential identified for Roman archaeological remains, no features or artefacts of this date were identified.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March 2012 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for WYG Environment on behalf of Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd and Grafton Merchandising GB Ltd at Malmesbury Garden Centre, Malmesbury, Wiltshire (centred on NGR: ST 9400 8837; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application for the construction of a new Sainsburys foodstore, associated car park and filling station, and new employment and industrial units.

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by WYG Environment (2012) prepared in accordance with the requirements of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Archaeology Service, Wiltshire Council. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006). It was monitored by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, including a site visit on 12 March 2012.

The site

1.3 The site is located to the north-east of Malmesbury and is bounded to the west by the A429 and to the south, east and north by arable fields (Fig. 1). The site lies at approximately 90m AOD, and drops away slightly to the north

1.4 The site measures 3.63 ha and is primarily in use as a garden centre with associated parking and storage. The evaluation trenches were all located in two areas of undeveloped grassland in the eastern part of the site. The western area of this grassland was flat whilst the northern extent of the eastern area sloped down towards a shallow valley which appeared to have been partially infilled in the modern period.

1.5 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Kellaways Clay Member of the Jurassic Era (BGS 2012). The natural substrate encountered during the evaluation comprised sandy clays.

Archaeological background

- 1.6 A desk based assessment for the site has been compiled (WYG 2011) and the following background is summarised from both this and the WSI (WYG 2012).
- 1.7 There is no evidence for prehistoric activity within the site. However, a potential ring ditch and a series of field boundaries, trackways and pits in Charlton Park, to the north of the site, may be of Iron Age date. Lithics dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age were recovered during excavations in advance of the Easton Grey to Minety pipeline approximately 250m to the south-east of the site (WYG 2011, 2012).
- 1.8 Evidence for a previously unrecorded Roman villa in the vicinity was uncovered during archaeological work undertaken on the pipeline in the same location as the lithics outlined above. Geophysical survey detected a series of enclosures and trackways, with tiles and tesserae recorded on the surface of the field during the survey. Subsequent archaeological investigations along the re-routed pipeline to the west of the villa identified several small ditched paddocks which appeared to be cut by a playing card shaped enclosure identified by the preceding geophysical survey. The upper fills of these ditches contained ceramic and stone roof tiles, box flue tiles, brick and tesserae likely to derive from the demolition of the villa. Three trackways, two phases of field systems and a four post structure were also recorded (ibid.).
- 1.9 The site is located approximately 1.25km northeast of the modern town of Malmesbury which has origins dating to the 7th century AD when a religious school was founded on the site of a fortified settlement with a Saxon garrison. The town was fortified as a burgh by King Alfred and the abbey was re-built in the 10th century. The site lies outside the site of the medieval town and is likely to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods (ibid.).

Archaeological objectives

- 1.10 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist Wiltshire Council in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.11 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 7 trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Trenches 1, 3 and 6 measured 20m in length, trench 2 measured 35m in length, trenches 4 and 7 measured 40m in length and trench 5 measured 60m in length. All trenches measured 2m in width. Trench 5 was 5m shorter than originally intended due to current land use constraints. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2009).
- 1.12 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.13 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003) and no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (2010).
- 1.14 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-3)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively.

- 2.2 Within trenches 1 and 2 the natural substrate was sealed by modern levelling deposits which in turn were sealed by the existing topsoil. A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was recorded in trenches 3 to 7 where the natural substrate was sealed by the existing topsoil. No archaeological features were identified in trenches 1, 3-4 and 6-7.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.3 Ditch 204 was identified towards the centre of the trench on a north-east/south-west alignment cutting through colluvially derived subsoil 202 into the underlying natural substrate 203. It contained a primary blue-grey silty clay fill 205 from which one sherd of 17th- to 18th- century pottery was recovered. This was overlain by a similar, secondary fill, 206 which contained lenses of re-deposited natural clay, suggestive of some deliberate backfilling occurring. Two further sherds of 17th- to 18th- century pottery were recovered from this deposit which was directly sealed by modern levelling layer 201. The ditch was broadly aligned with the partially infilled valley at the northern extent of the eastern grassed area.

Trench 5 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.4 A ploughing headland, 503, comprising dark grey-yellow sandy clay subsoil, was identified towards the southern end of the trench and measured approximately 18m in width and a maximum of 0.22m in height. The location of this deposit correlated with a low ridge visible in relief running on a north-west/south-east alignment towards the northern end of Trench 7, although the corresponding subsoil deposit was barely visible in Trench 7.

The Finds

- 2.5 The finds assemblage recovered from the evaluation is summarised in Appendix B. The pottery assemblage is small size, amounting to 5 sherds weighing 28g. In addition a length of iron bar, a fragment of floor tile and a prehistoric flint flake were recovered. The assemblage was recovered from the two stratified contexts, fills 205 and 206 within ditch 204, each dated to the 17th to 18th centuries. The level of preservation was fair, with the pottery sherds exhibiting some abrasion. Due to the relatively recent date of deposition of the recovered artefacts, none of this material will be retained.

2.6 *Pottery*

The pottery assemblage consisted of a limited range of fabrics. A single abraded and residual sherd of medieval pottery was recorded from topsoil 400. This occurs in an unglazed oolitic limestone-tempered fabric of a type common from the area and dateable across the 11th to 13th centuries.

2.7 The post-medieval pottery, recovered from the fills of ditch 204, comprised glazed earthenwares of 17th to 18th century type and a single small sherd of creamware, which would have had a production date range of around 1760 to 1790.

2.8 *Other finds*

A length of iron bar or strapping was retrieved from post-medieval ditch fill 206. It is probably a structural fitting such as a brace or strap-hinge.

2.9 A fragment of floor tile, with a white and speckled green glaze, was recorded from topsoil 400. The tile was similar to plain glazed medieval types, though an early post-medieval date is also possible.

2.10 A flint flake, with no visible secondary working, was identified from topsoil 400. It is clearly re-deposited and only broadly dated to the earlier prehistoric period (Bronze Age or earlier).

3. **DISCUSSION**

3.1 The alignment of post-medieval ditch 204 suggests it was positioned to drain into the shallow valley at the northern extent of the eastern grassed area.

3.2 The location of the identified ploughing headland does not correlate with any boundaries depicted on historic mapping. However, it does appear to broadly reflect the alignment of several field boundaries to the east of the site depicted on the 1842 Malmesbury Tithe map.

3.3 Despite visual scanning of the excavated spoil, no Roman finds were recovered. This, coupled with the total absence of archaeological features dating to the Roman period, strongly suggests that the Roman activity identified to the east does not extend into the current site.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Havard, assisted by Anthony Beechey, Roy Poulter, Diarmuid Ó Seaneachain and Chris Watts. The report was written by Tim Havard. The illustrations were prepared by Pete Moore. The archive has been compiled by Tim Havard, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2012 <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>
accessed 13 March 2012

WYG (WYG Environment) 2011, *Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd and Grafton Merchandising GB Ltd: Archaeological and Heritage Desk Based Assessment*

WYG (WYG Environment) 2012 *Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd and Grafton Merchandising GB Ltd, Evaluation Excavation: Written Scheme of Investigation*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil			0.1	
101	Layer	Fine yellow sand			0.1	
102	Layer	Modern levelling layer including plastic, brick and concrete rubble			0.7	
103	Layer	Natural substrate			>0.1	

Trench 2

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Topsoil			0.25	
201	Layer	Modern levelling layer: mixed clay, topsoil, concrete and brick rubble and garden centre waste			0.3 to 1	
202	Layer	Buried subsoil/colluvial deposit: light brown yellow sandy clay			0.4 max	
203	Layer	Natural substrate: light brown yellow sandy clay with patches of yellow lias clay			>0.3	
204	Cut	Ditch: irregular aligned NE-SW, irregular sides and uneven base	>2	2	0.43	
205	Fill	First fill of 204: mid blue grey slightly silty clay	>2	1.2	0.26	
206	Fill	Second fill of 204: mid grey silty clay with patches of yellow re-deposited clay	>2	2	0.27 max	

Trench 3

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Topsoil			0.35 max	
301	Layer	Intermittent colluvial layer: orange brown sandy clay			0.1 max	
302	Layer	Natural substrate: orange sandy clay			>0.1	

Trench 4

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
400	Layer	Topsoil			0.3 max	
401	Layer	Natural substrate: mid brown yellow clay with occasional angular pebbles			>0.1	

Trench 5

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
500	Layer	Topsoil			0.3	
501	Void	Number not assigned				
502	Layer	Natural substrate: mid brown yellow clay with rare patches of gravelly clay			>0.1	
503	Deposit	Ploughing headland deposit: dark grey yellow sandy clay			0.22 max	

Trench 6

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
600	Layer	Topsoil			0.28	
601	Layer	Natural substrate: light grey yellow clay with rare gravelly clay patches			>0.1	

Trench 7

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
700	Layer	Topsoil			0.28	
701	Layer	Very intermittent subsoil: grey yellow sandy clay			0.15 max	
702	Layer	Natural substrate: grey yellow sandy clay with rare gravelly clay patches				

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
205	Post-medieval pottery: glazed earthenware	1	5	C17-C18
206	Post-medieval pottery: creamware; glazed earthenware	2	5	C17-C18
	Iron: length of bar	1	352	
400	Post-medieval pottery: glazed earthenware	1	15	C17-C18
	Medieval pottery: oolitic limestone-tempered ware	1	3	
	Ceramic tile: medieval/post-medieval floor tile	1	18	
	Flint: flake	1	2	

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Malmesbury Garden Centre, Malmesbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2012 at Malmesbury Garden Centre, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. Seven trenches were excavated.</p> <p>A post-medieval ditch and an undated ploughing headland were recorded.</p> <p>Despite the high potential identified for Roman archaeological remains, no features or artefacts of this date were identified</p>	
Project dates	7-13 March 2012	
Project type	Archaeological Evaluation	
Previous work	Archaeology and Heritage Desk-Based Assessment prepared by WYG Environment	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Malmesbury Garden Centre, Malmesbury, Wiltshire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	3.63ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	ST 9400 8837	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	WYG Environment	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	Tim Havard	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Ceramics
Paper	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Context sheets, trench recording sheets, permatrace drawings
Digital	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Digital photos, survey data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012 <i>Malmesbury Garden Centre, Malmesbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 12049		



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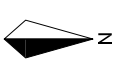
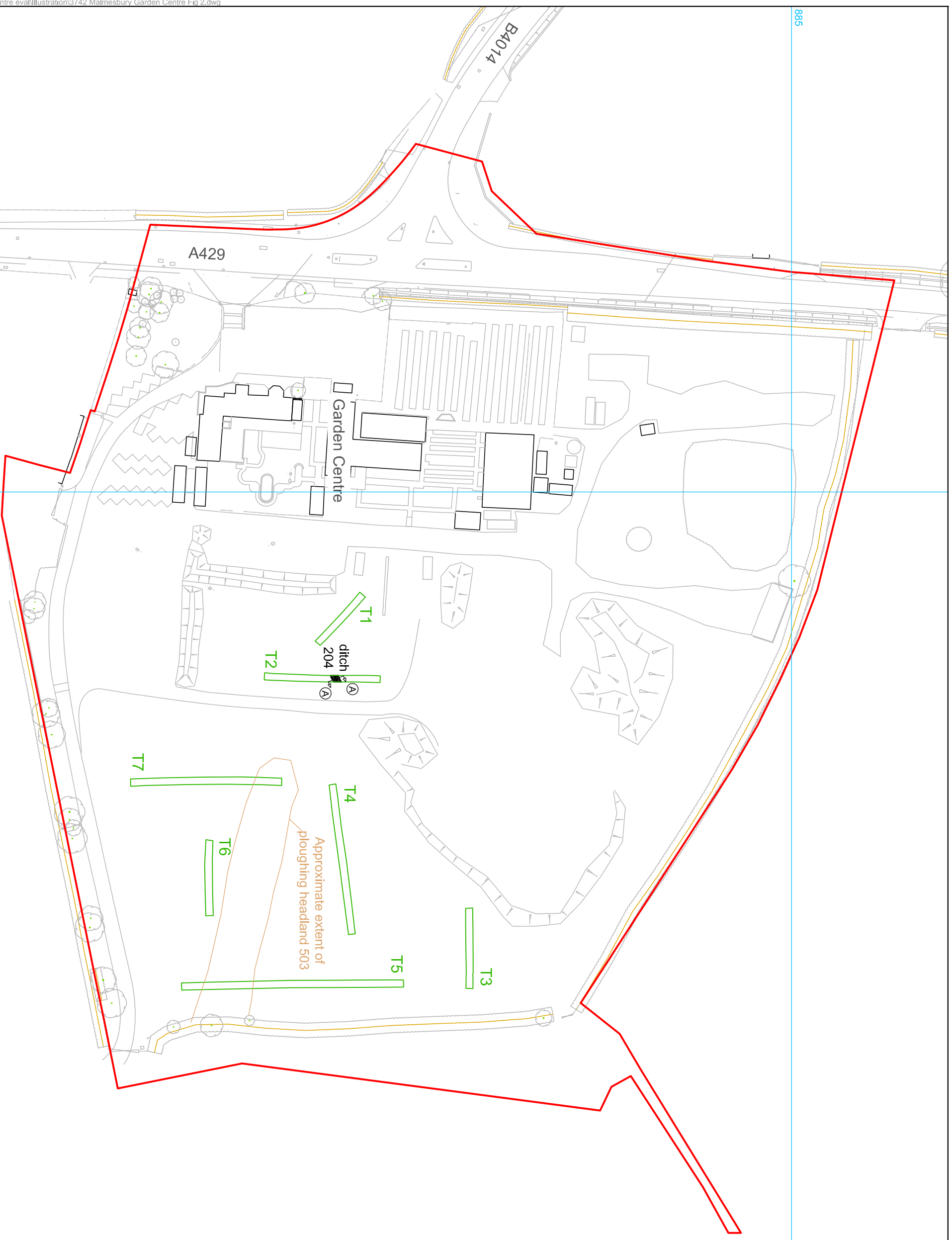
PROJECT TITLE
 Malmesbury Garden Centre
 Malmesbury, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 3742 DATE 21-3-2011
 DRAWN BY PJM REVISION 00
 APPROVED BY PJM SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.
 1

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- ▬ site
- ▬ evaluation trench
- archaeological feature



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PROJECT TITLE
 Malmesbury Garden Centre
 malmesbury, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan showing
 archaeological features

PROJECT NO.	3742	DATE	21-03-2012	FIGURE NO.	2
DRAWN BY	PJM	REVISION	00		
APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE	@A3 1:1000		

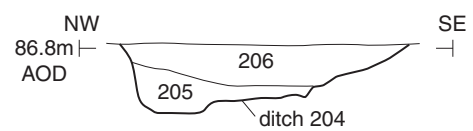


Ploughing headland 503 looking north-west (scales 2m and 0.4m)



Ditch 204 looking north-east (scales 1m & 0.4m)

Section AA



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Section and photographs

PROJECT NO. 3742 DATE 21-3-2012
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FIGURE NO.

3