



**Land Adjoining 2 St John's Road
Cirencester
Gloucestershire**

Programme of Archaeological Work

for
Ian Golding


CA Project: 3791
CA Report: 12135

July 2012

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Cirencester
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CA Project: 3791
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date	16 July 2012
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date	18 July 2012
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signed	
date	18 July 2012
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Land Adjoining 2 St John's Road
Location: Cirencester
NGR: SP 0231 0261
Type: Programme of Archaeological Work
Date: 11-14 June 2012
Planning Reference: CDC ref: 12/00369/FUL
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Corinium Museum
Site Code: LSJ 12

A programme of archaeological work was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during works associated with the development of a single dwelling with attached garage at the site.

A ditch dating from the Late Iron Age to Early Roman period was identified. Medieval and post-medieval ploughing was also in evidence.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June 2012 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out a programme of archaeological work for Ian Golding on land adjoining 2 St John's Road, Cirencester (centred on NGR: SP 0231 0261; Fig. 1). The programme of archaeological work was undertaken to fulfil a condition (no. 10) attached to the planning consent for a single dwelling with attached garage (CDC Planning ref: 12/00369/FUL). The objective was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.

1.2 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2012) and approved by Mr Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council archaeological advisor to Cotswold District Council (CDC). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological excavation* (IfA 2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (Gloucestershire County Council 1996), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

1.3 The site is bounded to the south, west and north by domestic dwellings and their associated gardens, and to the east by The Whiteway (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 114m AOD and is generally flat.

1.4 The proposed development site encloses an area of approximately 520m², with the footprint of the dwelling covering approximately 150m². The site previously lay as garden belonging to 2 St John's Road; the dwelling situated to the south-west of the development area.

1.5 The natural geological substrate is mapped as mudstone of the Forest Marble Formation, of the Bathonian era (BGS 2012). Natural substrate comprising a grey yellow silty clay was identified during the archaeological works.

Archaeological background

- 1.6 Archaeological interest in the sites lies in its position approximately 170m to the north of the northern defences of the Roman Town of Corinium (Scheduled Monument No. GC 316). There is a strong case for the Whiteway having Roman origins, even if its final approach into Cirencester remains to be determined (Holbrook and Jurica 2006, 97-8).
- 1.7 Approximately 90m to the north of the site, during the excavation for foundations to the rear of 22 Shepherds Way, contractors uncovered the lower limbs and pelvis of an adult inhumation aligned south/north. Several small fragments of Roman and medieval pottery were recovered from the associated spoil (GCC HER ref. 8997). Immediately to the east of the site, on the opposite side of The Whiteway, an evaluation was carried out on land at Cirencester Rugby Club. Twelve trenches were excavated, six of which revealed archaeological features including an undated field system, a medieval field system, a boundary ditch and bank, Romano-British artefacts, and a sherd of Beaker pottery from a stone-packed posthole (Hicks 1999).
- 1.8 In February 2011 an archaeological evaluation within the proposed development area identified a single north-east/south-west ditch which contained iron objects only broadly datable to the Roman to modern periods. A layer containing both Roman and medieval artefacts was also identified (CA 2011).

Methodology

- 1.9 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2012). An archaeologist was present to observe intrusive groundworks including the stripping of topsoil and subsoil across the building footprint prior to construction. The excavation of a soak-away (using a mechanical excavator) was also monitored to the north-west of the proposed dwelling (Fig. 2).
- 1.10 Where archaeological deposits were encountered, written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.11 The archive and artefacts from the excavation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Corinium Museum, along with the site archive. A summary of

information from this project, set out within Appendix D, 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 results of the project; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, finds and environmental evidence are to be found in Appendices A, B and C respectively.
- 2.2 The natural geological substrate, 302; a pale greyish yellow silty clay with occasional limestone gravel was revealed across the full extent of the excavated area. Within the footprint of the proposed dwelling, this was seen at c. 0.45m below present ground level (bpgl); at 113.9m AOD. Further to the north-west, excavation for a soakaway identified revealed the natural at 0.70m below present ground level (bpgl).
- 2.3 A short ditch, 308, was found aligned north-west/south-east, approximately central to the excavation area (Figs 2 and 3). It was 4m in length, up to 1.3m wide and 0.26m deep. The two terminals were hand excavated; producing fills 307 and 309 (to the south-east and north-west respectively). The south-eastern end of the ditch was more shallow; at 0.15m, and both ends of the feature were seen to splay outwards. The fill was a mid yellow brown clay silt; homogenous in character and containing two fragments of stuck flint and a sherd of pottery dating from the Late Iron Age. A small quantity of fragmentary animal bone was also recovered. A bulk sample <1> recovered from this fill contained modern fat hen/goosefoot spp (*Chenopodium* spp) seeds..
- 2.4 A wide and shallow linear feature, 311, was seen in the section of the machine-excavated soakaway. The fill, 310, was a loose, mid yellow brown clay silt. For health and safety reasons the trench was not entered and no finds were recovered from the fill of the feature. The full profile of the feature was not seen, but it was at least 1.20m wide and 0.20m deep.
- 2.5 A plough scar, 306, cut north/south across the site, truncating ditch 308. The fill, 305, was a mid greyish yellow silty clay, and contained a fragment of Minety ware medieval pottery and a small iron nail. The character of this deposit was indistinguishable from the layer, 301, that sealed this feature. Layer 301, which was

on average 0.15m thick, also contained medieval pottery, and a high incidence of horseshoe nails of medieval 'fiddle' type. It also contained an iron buckle probably dating from the 17th century, attesting to its later formation and the residual nature of the majority of the finds, which additionally included struck flint and abraded Roman pottery.

- 2.6 Ditch 304 was seen in the northern edge of the trench of the main excavation area and was 0.55m wide and 0.12m deep. This corresponded with a ditch, 202, that was identified during the archaeological evaluation (CA 2011). The fill, 303, was similar to the topsoil in character. All deposits were directly or indirectly sealed by a dark silty topsoil, 300, which was, on average, 0.30m thick. The topsoil contained many inclusions of post-medieval to modern date (the majority of which were not recovered), but also included a residual burnt and struck flint flake. The interface of the topsoil to the ploughsoil (301) below was broadly striated.

The Finds Evidence

- 2.7 Quantities of artefactual material were recovered from five deposits (Appendix B). Prehistoric worked flint was identified from topsoil/subsoil deposits and from ditch fills 307 and 309. The four pieces comprise flake or blade-like removals without secondary working, two of which are burnt. All material appears to be re-deposited and no comment can be made with regard to the dating of this material or the nature of activity it represents.
- 2.8 A single pottery sherd from ditch fill 309 dates to the Late Iron Age, perhaps continuing into the mid 1st century AD. The sherd is unfeathered and the suggested dating is based on the fabric and firing characteristics. The fabric is a grey-firing grog-tempered type with moderately common calcareous inclusions and as such is consistent with types characterising Late Iron Age/Early Roman transition in the region including Cirencester and Bagendon (Williams 1982).
- 2.9 Sherds in a fine sandy oxidised-firing fabric together with fragments of tile, all from subsoil deposit 301, are Roman in origin though are heavily abraded and clearly re-deposited.
- 2.10 An abraded sherd of Minety ware, type common from Cirencester from the 12th through to the 15th or early 16th centuries, was identified from deposit 305. Further sherds of Minety ware including wheelthrown sherds no earlier than c. 1250, were

present from subsoil deposit 301. A single sherd of a medieval Malvern type cooking pot was also identified, together with horseshoe nails of medieval 'fiddle' type. A buckle from this deposit is of double-looped trapezoidal form and probably dates to the 17th century. Pottery of post-medieval date was recorded from topsoil deposit 300 as sherds of glazed earthenware and white stoneware, the latter certainly dating to the 18th century.

The Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

- 2.11 One environmental sample (32 litres of soil) was retrieved from a deposit with the intention of recovering evidence of industrial or domestic activity and material for radiocarbon dating. The samples were processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2).
- 2.12 Fill 307 was taken from short ditch 308 <1> dating to the Late Iron Age. The sample contained a small amount of unidentifiable charcoal fragments. Only modern fat hen/goosefoot spp (*Chenopodium* spp) seeds were recovered. The paucity of these palaeoenvironmental remains means no additional information regarding function is available. The sample contains no material suitable for radiocarbon dating.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Ditch 308 was datable from its finds to the Late Iron Age, or perhaps into the Early Roman period. It may be part of a segmented ditch; a type of feature typical of later prehistoric periods, but not very common in the Upper Thames region or the Cotswolds (Allen *et al* 1999, 41). Segmented ditches are usually found in close association with other such features, forming discontinuous boundaries. A good example was found at St Augustine's Farm South, c. 4km to the south-west of this site, where the ditches were dated as Iron Age but based only upon 'a single sherd of probable Iron Age pottery' (Ibid). Unfortunately the limited extent of the excavation on St John's Road precludes ascertaining whether ditch 308 was indeed part of a complex of similar features.
- 3.2 The soakaway revealed a uniform deposit which extended to fill a wide linear feature, 311. This is interpreted as being remnant of a ridge and furrow system; a system that was similarly observed just opposite this site at Cirencester Rugby Club (Hicks, 1999).

- 3.3 The plough mark, 306, is thought to be the lowest surviving component of a wider ploughsoil recorded as layer 301, which extended across the footprint of the proposed building. This deposit was quite different in nature from the presumed medieval ploughsoil seen just to the west. Its lower organic content, and greater similarity to the natural deposit below, might suggest that this area was horizontally truncated of its medieval ploughsoil, or that it never existed here. It should be noted that the ploughsoil contained a markedly high concentration of iron objects.
- 3.4 The ditch, 304, appears to have been one of a series of similar features that crossed the excavation area from north-east to south-west. The undulations or striations that were seen at the interface between topsoil and ploughsoil, and that were essentially filled with topsoil, are interpreted as being part of a cultivation system, perhaps potato or asparagus beds, but they are not thought to be of archaeological significance.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

The fieldwork was undertaken, and report written, by Fiona Keith-Lucas. The illustrations were prepared by Ian Atkins, the finds report written by Ed McSloy and the environmental report was prepared by Sarah Cobain. The archive has been compiled by Fiona Keith-Lucas, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Laurent Coleman.



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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Topsoil			0.30	Modern
301	Layer	Post-medieval ploughsoil			0.15	Post-medieval
302	Layer	Natural			Not known	
303	Fill	Fill of 304		0.55	0.12	Post-medieval
304	Cut	Ditch		0.55	0.12	Post-medieval
305	Fill	Fill	5.00	0.30	0.25	Post-medieval
306	Cut	Plough scar	5.00	0.30	0.25	Post-medieval
307	Fill	Fill of 308	1.00	0.82	0.15	LBA-IA
308	Cut	Isolated ditch segment	4.00	1.30	0.26	LBA-IA
309	Fill	Fill of 308	1.00	1.24	0.26	LBA-IA
310	Fill	Fill of 311, including associated ploughsoil			0.70	Medieval
311	Cut	Furrow from ridge and furrow			0.20	Medieval

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Count	Weight(g)	Date
300	Post-medieval pottery: white salt-glazed stoneware; Ashton	2	45	C18
	Keynes glazed earthenware	1	11	
	Worked flint: broken flake (burnt)	1	23	
	Slate: counter?	1	4	
301	Clay tobacco pipe: stem	1	4	Pmed.
	Roman(?) pottery: sandy oxidised (abr)	7	19	
	Medieval pottery: Minety ware; Malvernian	5	52	
	Fe. obj: buckle	1	-	
	Fe. objects: nails; horseshoe nail; strip fragments	22	-	
	Ceramic building material: tile (Roman and post-med)	5	119	
	Marine shell: oyster	2	1	
Worked flint: flake	1	<1		
Animal bone	37	170		
305	Medieval pottery: Minety ware	1	5	C12- C15
	Fe obj.: nail fragment?	1	-	
307	Worked flint: blade-like	1	<1	-
309	Late prehistoric pottery: grog with (leached) calcareous inclusions	1	9	LIA-C1
	Worked flint: broken flake (burnt)	1	3	
	Animal bone	3	4	

APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

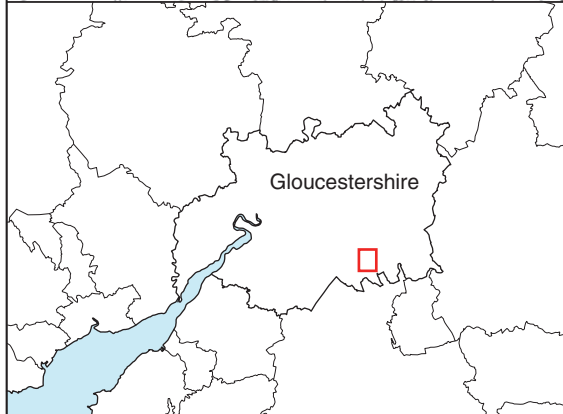
Sample No	Context No	Volume (L)	Percentage of sample processed	Flots	Flot Weight (g)	Material	Weight (g)	Identification (where applicable)
1	307	32	100%	1mm and 0.25mm	7	Charcoal	In flot	Too small to identify
						Plant macrofossils	In flot	Fat hen/goosefoot spp (modern)

Species List

Family	Species	Common Name
Amaranthaceae	<i>Chenopodium</i> spp	Fat hen/goosefoot spp

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Land Adjoining 2 St John's Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire
Short description	A programme of archaeological work, comprising a watching brief and excavation, was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a single dwelling with attached garage at the site. An isolated ditch segment dating from the Late Bronze Age or into the Iron Age was identified and excavated. Later ploughing was also in evidence.
Project dates	11 – 14 June 2012
Project type	Programme of Archaeological Works
Previous work	Archaeological Evaluation, Cotswold Archaeology 2011. CA Project 3345; CA Report 11033
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Land Adjoining 2 St John's Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire
Study area (M ² /ha)	520m ²
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 0231 0261
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	N/A
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Laurent Coleman
Project Supervisor	Fiona Keith-Lucas
MONUMENT TYPE	
Segmented ditch, Ridge and Furrow, Plough marks	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	
Body sherd, Lithic implement, Buckle, Shoeing nail	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Corinium Museum	
Physical	Pottery, animal bone, worked flint, iron objects
Paper	Context sheets, drawn sections
Digital	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012 <i>Land Adjoining 2 St John's Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Programme of Archaeological Works</i> . CA typescript report 12135	



0 1km



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PROJECT TITLE

Land adjoining 2 St John's Road
 Cirencester, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

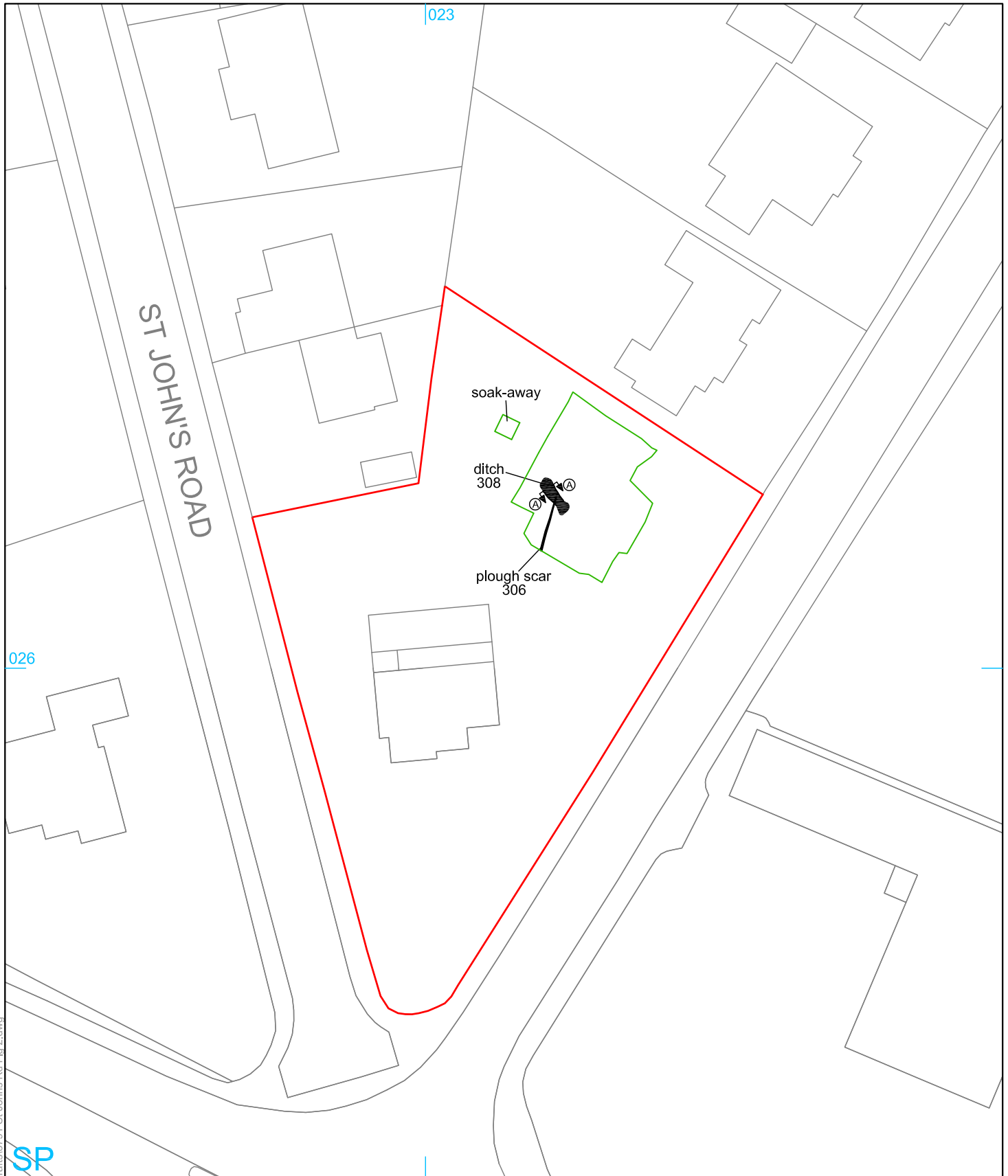
Site location plan

Reproduced from the 1998 Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright
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PROJECT NO. 3791 DATE 19-06-2012
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FIGURE NO.

1



- site
- trench
- archaeological feature



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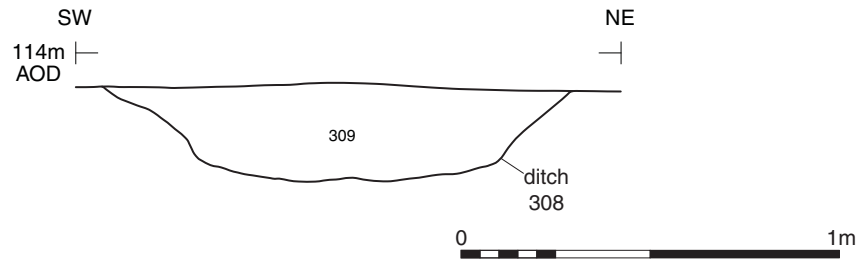
PROJECT TITLE
**Land adjoining 2 St John's Road
 Cirencester, Gloucestershire**

FIGURE TITLE
**Trench location plan, showing
 archaeological features**

PROJECT NO.	3791	DATE	19-06-2012	FIGURE NO.
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Section AA



south-east facing section through ditch 308



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PROJECT TITLE

Land adjoining 2 St John's Road
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FIGURE TITLE

Section and photograph

PROJECT NO. 3791 DATE 19-09-2012
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FIGURE NO.

3