

**Cheltenham Street
Bath
BANES**

Archaeological Watching Brief

for
Greensky Developments Ltd


CA Project: 4630
CA Report: 14424

September 2014

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Bath
BANES

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CA Project: 4630
CA Report: 14424

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date	5 September 2014
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date	10 September 2014
issue	01

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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks (1:1000)



SUMMARY

Project Name: Cheltenham Street
Location: Bath, BANES
NGR: ST 74374 64474
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 14-16 July 2014
Planning Reference: 12/01058/FUL
Location of Archive: Roman Baths Museum
Site Code: CRB 13

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of 14 dwellings at Cheltenham Street, Bath, BANES.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered. The sharp boundary between the natural substrate and the overlying modern make-up would suggest truncation. It is unclear if this followed 1940s air raids or was the result of 1960s construction works.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2014 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Greensky Developments Ltd at Cheltenham Street, Bath, BANES (Bath and North East Somerset; centred on NGR: ST 74374 64474; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent granted by BANES Council for the construction of 14 dwellings (BANES Planning ref: 12/01058/FUL).
- 1.2 Condition number 21 of the planning permission was recommended by Richard Sermon, Archaeologist, BANES Council, the archaeological advisor to BANES Council. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)* produced by CA (2013). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2009), 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 proposed development area encloses an area of approximately 0.16ha, and comprises the site of a 1960's office building and associated car park. It is bounded to the south by Cheltenham Street, to the west by Sydenham Road, to the east by Westmoreland Road and to the north by the rear gardens of residential properties fronting Lower Bristol Road. The site lies at approximately 23m AOD and is generally flat.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Charmouth Mudstone of the Jurassic era, overlain by river terrace deposits of sand and gravel and possibly alluvial deposits of silt, clay sand and gravel of the Quaternary Period in the northern part of the site (BGS 2013). The watching brief observed clay substrate across the site.

Archaeological background

- 1.5 The site is located on a gravel terrace that may have potential for prehistoric and Roman activity, as the raising of the ground level during the 18th and 19th century

has ensured that the river gravels and alluvium remain largely undisturbed by later developments (BANES 2004).

- 1.6 The site is located on the edge of the historic core of Bath. The Roman town of *Aquae Sulis* was traditionally thought to be contained within a walled area of only 24 acres (10 ha). However, work over the past thirty years has shown that the urban extent of *Aquae Sulis*, while still not fully understood, is much larger than the walled area. A large, but completely unknown Roman 'villa' at the old Beechen Cliff School Site was discovered, approximately 100m from the proposed development site, but on the valley slope, not on the gravel terrace (CA 2012). A ring of such "suburban villas" is now known around *Aquae Sulis*, all less than a kilometre from the town centre; at least two of these are associated with earlier Iron Age occupation (Davenport 2007a).
- 1.7 The development site may be situated alongside a Roman Road as there is a strong possibility that the Lower Bristol Road originated as a Roman route. There is no direct evidence for this identification; however, this road does link Bath to several Roman urban and rural sites and villages (CA 2012). The line of the Fosseway has been argued on topographical grounds in Keevil 1989. In that article he also suggests possible subsidiary routes, one of which cuts across the north-west corner of the proposed development site. It is no longer considered that these subsidiary routes existed, their justification being founded on the need to identify a route to link with the known line north of the river (Davenport 2007b).
- 1.8 Located approximately 600m to the east of the site is the recorded location of the medieval settlement of Lyncombe, a medieval suburb to the south of Bath. It probably forms part of a land holding which extends to the north of the River Avon originating in a grant from King Edgar in AD970 (BANES 2004). The proposed development site itself would have lain outside any of this development and was entirely rural and agricultural (CA 2012).
- 1.9 The area to the north of the site was largely water meadows within Twerton Parish prior to the late 18th and early 19th century. This area, along with the majority of the areas immediately surrounding the site formed part of the 19th century expansion of Bath (BANES 2004).

- 1.10 All indications are that the proposed development site was undeveloped and agricultural land throughout the post-Roman period and certainly was such in the 18th and 19th centuries until after 1853. The Cotterell Map as originally surveyed in 1852-3 shows the site completely clear of development, but a later hand (pre-1886) has pencilled in what is clearly a preliminary version (indicated by variations from what was built) of the housing development of Sydenham Terrace and Cheltenham Street as built by 1886. The flat-fronted, front garden-less houses fronting Cheltenham Street are likely to be of a lower status than those fronting Sydenham Terrace (CA 2012).
- 1.11 In the mid-19th century, development began along the Lower Bristol Road as new works were constructed or extended (e.g. Newark Works and the Corset Factory, both between the river and the Lower Bristol Road just east of the site). The Great Western Railway, which runs almost adjacent to the proposed development site, was opened in 1841. The Midland Railway was opened in the 1860s and its line passes to the north of the proposed development site. It closed in 1967 (CA 2012).
- 1.12 The site remained unaltered, as far as can be seen from the evidence, until 1942. In April that year three nights of bombing by the Luftwaffe were concentrated by chance or design along the river and mostly south of it. The 1952 OS 1:2,500 map shows the clearance necessary after the raid. Most houses were burnt out by incendiaries and were later demolished for safety reasons. The map shows that all of the north side of Cheltenham Street was cleared and a large portion of the southern side. The houses on the south side were all cleared for commercial redevelopment by the 1970s (CA 2012).

Archaeological objectives

- 1.13 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
 - at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

Methodology

- 1.14 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2013). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising levelling and the excavation of foundation and service trenches (Fig. 2).
- 1.15 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2013).
- 1.16 The archive from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Roman Baths Museum. A summary of information from this project set out within Appendix B and will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIG 2)

- 2.1 The natural geological substrate, 102/202, consisting of clay, was revealed , at an average depth of 0.5m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by made ground 101/201, which was in turn sealed by piling mat 100/200.
- 2.2 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits may indicate that structural remains either do not extend as far as or were not exposed by the development, or that they may have been removed during previous development. The sharp boundary between the natural substrate and the overlying modern make-up would suggest truncation. It is unclear if this followed the 1940s air raids or was the result of the 1960s construction works.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Alex Thomson. The report was written by Luke Brannlund. The illustrations were prepared by Aleks Osinska. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Richard Young.

5. REFERENCES

BANES (Bath and North East Somerset Council) 2004 *Archaeology in the City of Bath: Supplementary Planning Guidance*.

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2013 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html accessed 11 August 2013

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012 *Cheltenham Street, Bath, Bath and North East Somerset: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*

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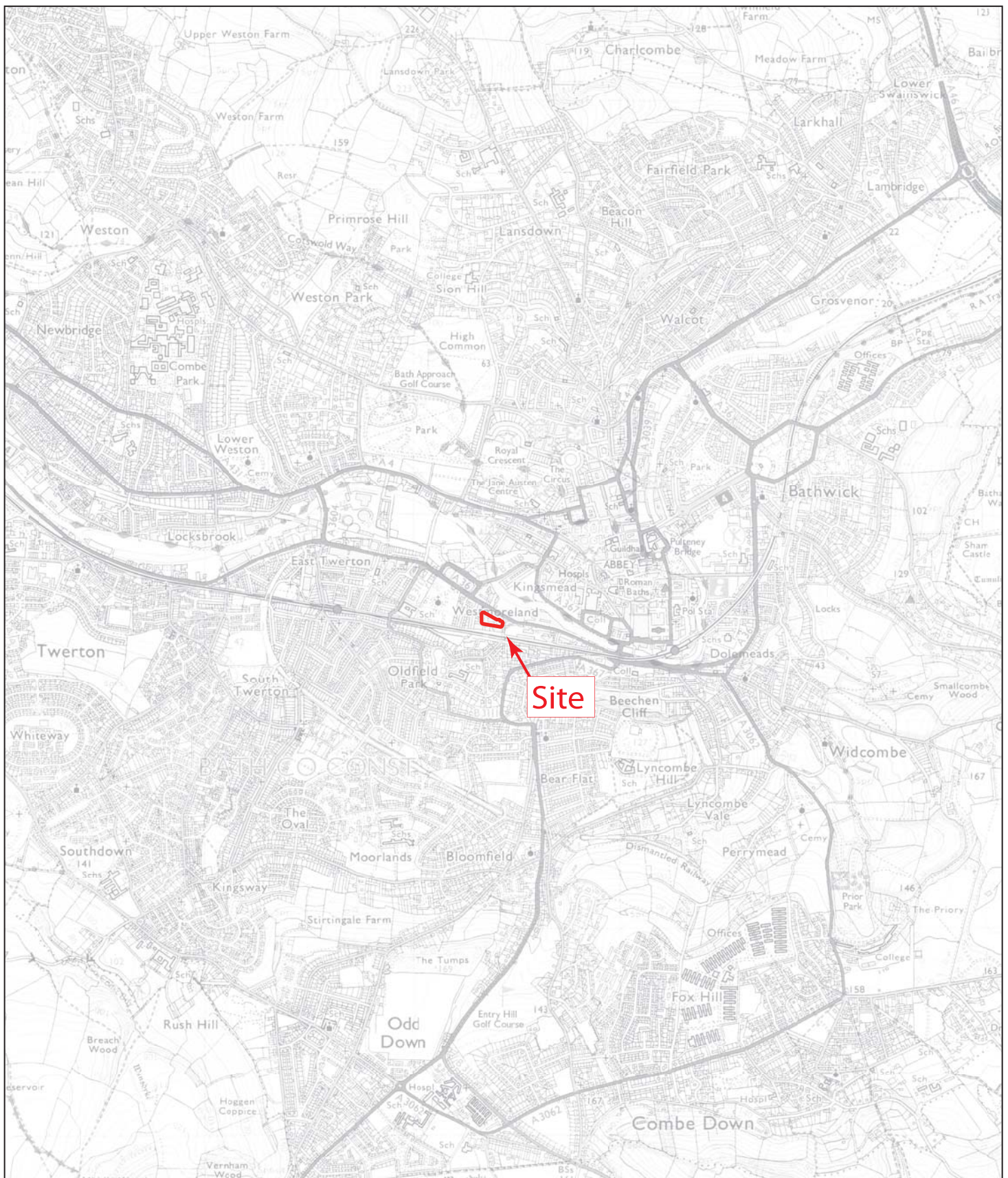


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	Depth /thickness (m)
1	100	Layer	Piling mat	Crushed stone	0.1
1	101	Layer	Made ground	Dark brown sad silt with rubble	0.5
1	102	Layer	Natural	Light yellow-brown/blue-grey clay	n/a
2	200	Layer	Piling mat	Crushed stone	0.1
2	201	Layer	Made ground	Dark brown sad silt with rubble	0.4
2	202	Layer	Natural	Light yellow-brown/blue-grey clay	n/a

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Cheltenham Street, Bath, BANES	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of 14 dwellings at Cheltenham Street, Bath, BANES. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered. The sharp boundary between the natural substrate and the overlying modern make-up would suggest truncation. It is unclear if this followed 1940s air raids or was the result of 1960s construction works.	
Project dates	14-17 July 2014	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012 <i>Cheltenham Street, Bath, Bath and North East Somerset: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment</i> .	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Cheltenham Street, Bath, BANES	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.16 ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	ST 74374 64474	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	BANES Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Alex Thomson	
MONUMENT TYPE	none	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	none	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	n/a	n/a
Paper	Roman Baths Museum	trench sheets, site plans, photographic registers
Digital	Roman Baths Museum	digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 <i>Cheltenham Street, Bath, BANES: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report 14424		



Site

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PROJECT TITLE

Cheltenham Street, Bath
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FIGURE TITLE

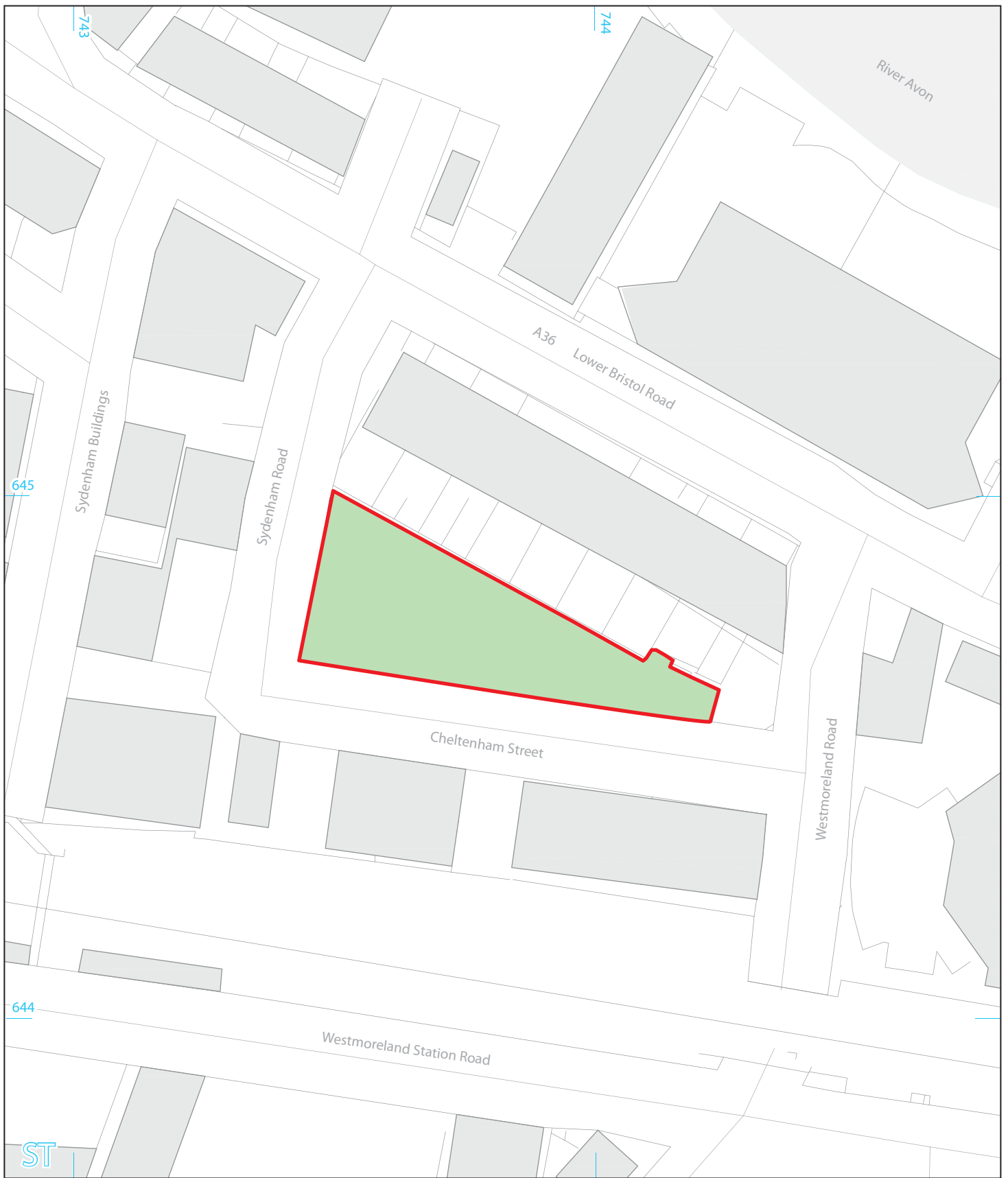
Site location plan



PROJECT NO. 4630 DATE 20/08/2014
 DRAWN BY AO REVISION 00
 APPROVED BY LM SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1

Reproduced from the 2004 Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright Cotswold Archaeology Ltd 100002109



-  site boundary
-  area of observed groundworks



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PROJECT TITLE

**Cheltenham Street, Bath
BANES**

FIGURE TITLE

**The site, showing location of
groundworks**

PROJECT NO. 4630	DATE 20/08/2014	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY AO	REVISION 00	2
APPROVED BY LM	SCALE@A4 1:1,000	

