



Kingshill North London Road, Cirencester Gloucestershire

Archaeological Excavation



for CgMs Consulting

on behalf of David Wilson Homes (South West)

> CA Project: 5604 CA Report: 15788

> > November 2015



Kingshill North, London Road, Cirencester Gloucestershire

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Kingshill North

Location: London Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire

NGR: SP 0382 0244

Type: Excavation

Date: 6 October to 9 November 2015

Location of Archive: To be deposited with the Corinium Museum, Cirencester

Site Code: KNC 15

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between October and November 2015 at Kingshill North, London Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Three areas were excavated within the development area, targeted on features identified during previous archaeological investigations within the site.

The excavation identified an area of pitting within the eastern part of the site (Area 3), that had previously been investigated during a watching brief associated with construction of a former contractor's compound. Although no artefactual material was recovered during the current works, a large quantity of probable Early Iron Age pottery had been retrieved during its preceding excavation. Two shallow pits identified immediately to the north may be broadly contemporary, although produced only modern finds.

Evidence for post-medieval/modern ditches was noted at the western and eastern limit of the site. The ditches at the eastern limit most probably represent a former roadside boundary along the original course of Cherry Tree Lane before the lane was realigned during construction of A419 bypass. Extensive modern disturbance encountered within all three excavation areas suggests that groundworks associated with the construction of former compound facilities for the adjacent A419 were more extensive than had previously been recorded.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between October and November 2015, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological investigation at the request of CgMs Consulting, on behalf of David Wilson Homes (South West), at Kingshill North, London Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SP 0382 0244; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 Planning permission for residential development has been granted by Cotswold District Council (CDC), conditional on a programme of archaeological work being undertaken in advance of development (CDC planning reference 13/02942/OUT; condition 19). Following consultations between Steven Weaver and Charles Parry (CgMs Consulting and the archaeological advisor to CDC respectively) it was agreed that the archaeological mitigation would be undertaken by means of a staged approach.
- 1.3 The excavation was undertaken in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CgMs (2014) and approved by CDC, acting on the advice of Mr Parry. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological excavation* (ClfA 2014), 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). It was monitored by Charles Parry, including a site visit on 20 October 2015.

The site

- 1.4 The development site is broadly triangular in plan and comprises a single, cultivated field, approximately 5.5ha in extent, situated on the north-eastern limits of the urban extent of Cirencester. The London Road and A419 carriageway bound the site to the south and north-east respectively, with residential development to the west.
- 1.5 The underlying geology of the site is mapped as Forest Marble Formation Mudstone, with Signet Member Limestone present at its north-western extent (BGS 2015). The natural geological substrate encountered during the current works comprised limestone brash and grey-blue clay.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological potential of the site has previously been presented in a series of preceding reports; two archaeological desk-based assessments (John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC) 2000 and 2005), geophysical survey (GSB Prospection 2000) and a subsequent trial trench evaluation (Oxford Archaeology (OA) 2006). An updated Heritage Statement has also been produced by CgMs Consulting (CgMs 2103). It is not intended to fully reprise these report here, but the following is a summary of their conclusions.
- 2.2 The assessments identified no designated heritage assets within the current site, but did recognise the potential for remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods to be present (JSAC 2000 and 2005 and CgMs 2013). This potential was suggested by cropmark evidence, the record of an Iron Age pit and possible prehistoric ditch recorded during a watching brief undertaken during construction works for a contractor's compound (established within the current Area 3 during works associated with the construction of the adjacent A419), and the site's location at the junction of two Roman roads (Fosse Way and Akeman Street) immediately to the north-east of the major Roman town of *Corinium*.
- 2.3 Subsequent geophysical survey conducted throughout the site in 2000 suggested that anomalies of archaeological interest might be present (GSB 2000), although later targeted trial trench evaluation did not corroborate the geophysical survey results (OA 2006). The evaluation trenching revealed little evidence for any archaeological activity (ibid.), in contrast to that recorded in fields immediately to the west that were subsequently subject to later mitigation in advance of development. It was concluded that the general lack of any archaeological activity observed during the evaluation within the central and eastern areas of the current site was most probably a result of previous truncation caused by the construction and later landscaping associated with the A419 compound (Mudd *et al* 1999).
- 2.4 Archaeological excavations undertaken in 2008 immediately west of the current site revealed evidence for prehistoric occupation. The earliest activity comprised a series of pits of late Neolithic date with associated rich finds assemblages. The identified pit groups appeared to be sited with due regard to the existing topography, extending in a broad band that followed the contours of an existing dry coombe that in part survives within the north-west extent of the current site (Area 1). Bronze Age

activity was represented by two Beaker burials, one enclosed by a ring ditch, and a further inhumation burial. Middle Iron Age activity was represented by a number of storage pits, predominantly filled with domestic waste, although some evidence for structural deposition was noted. By the later Iron Age, settlement activity was defined by a series of enclosures surrounding structures and pits set within a pastoral landscape. This settlement appeared to have been abandoned by the late 1st century AD, either immediately before or at the time of the establishment of the Roman town of *Corinium*. During the Roman period, the area appears to have remained in agricultural use, although a late 1st to mid 3rd-century AD cremation burial was recorded. The area continued in agricultural use throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods (OA 2011).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological mitigation were to:
 - Record the nature of the main stratigraphic units encountered
 - Assess the overall presence, survival, condition, and potential of artefactual and ecofactual remains
 - Ensure the adequate recording of any buried archaeological remains that may be exposed within the current defined limits of the excavation area(s) prior to their removal by development
 - Determine whether archaeological features continue beyond the excavation area(s) and, if so, define the area of archaeological activity within the Site.
 - Produce a plan of all archaeological features exposed within the excavation area(s)
 - Investigate and record exposed archaeological features/deposits in order to clarify both their date, character, and significance and to provide a clear understanding of their chronology
 - Ensure that any artefactual/environmental evidence is recorded, assessed and if appropriate analysed and published to an acceptable standard.
 - Make available the results of the investigations
- 3.2 In addition, site specific regard was given to the following:

- Does evidence survive, in the area of the 120m contour (in Area 1), for further Neolithic pitting as previously revealed during the adjacent 2008 excavations
- Are isolated burials located within the site (noting the occurrence of burials of Bronze Age (beaker) date and early/mid Roman date in the 2008 excavation)
- Is there any evidence for Middle/Late Iron Age settlement or land use to complement that previously found to the west during the adjacent 2008 excavations
- What was the land use during the Roman period; was settlement focussed to the west within the town of *Corinium*, with the land previously occupied in the Late Iron Age turned over exclusively to agriculture

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 An initial, phased investigation, comprising three excavation areas targeting areas with a heightened potential for the survival of below ground archaeological features/deposits was undertaken (Areas 1 to 3 inclusive; see Figs. 1 and 2 for locations and extent). The results of these initial works would inform discussions between CgMs and the archaeological advisor to CDC as to the necessity for any further continuation of archaeological stripping and recording throughout the remainder of the site.
- 4.2 The initial phase of mitigation works comprised the archaeologically-supervised strip of three areas (Areas 1 to 3) totalling 1.28ha in extent. These areas were focused for the following reasons:
 - Area 1: Western side of development site situated on the 120m contour along which adjacent archaeological activity to the west indicated a correlation with the presence of surviving below ground activity.
 - Area 2: Central area of development site this area was focused on, and adjacent to, an undated linear feature recorded during the previous evaluation (Trench 39).
 - Area 3: Eastern area of development site this area was focused within the former A419 compound site on a zone of pit and linear features recorded during a previous watching brief.

- 4.3 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2015). Areas 1 to 3 were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual. The excavation areas were scanned for live services by trained CA staff using CAT and Genny equipment in accordance with the CA Safe System of Work for avoiding underground services.
- 4.4 Fieldwork commenced with the removal of topsoil and subsoil from the excavation areas by mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket, under archaeological supervision.
- 4.5 The archaeological features thus exposed were hand-excavated to the bottom of archaeological stratigraphy. All features were planned and recorded in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual.
- 4.6 Deposits were assessed for their environmental potential but none required sampling in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites.* In the event, no deposits were identified that required sampling
- 4.7 All artefacts recovered from the excavation were retained in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of finds immediately after excavation*.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-5)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the excavation results; detailed summaries of the contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B.
- 5.2 The dating evidence indicates that the majority of archaeological activity identified during the current works dates to the post-medieval/modern period. Stratigraphical analysis of the features has indicated two distinguishable phases of activity:
 - Phase 0: Geology
 - Phase 1: Early Iron Age
 - Phase 2: Post-medieval/modern

Phase 0: Geology

5.3 The natural geological substrate identified throughout the site comprised limestone brash and grey-blue clay, revealed typically at depths of 0.4m to 0.6m below present ground level. Within Area 1, the natural substrate was, for the most part, overlain by an undated silt-clay colluvial deposit 1004, the exception being at its south-eastern extent where it was truncated by modern disturbance. These deposits were sealed by a subsequent modern stony-clay dump deposit 1002 and by subsoil 1001. Within Area 2 the natural substrate was overlain by modern dump deposits, whilst in Area 3 it was overlain by 0.2m of silt-clay subsoil. Modern topsoil, typically 0.2 to 0.3m in thickness, overlay the subsoil in Area 1, the made-ground in Area 2 and the subsoil in Area 3.

Phase 1: Early Iron Age (Figs 2 & 5)

- The earliest phase of archaeological activity comprised irregular, but broadly oval pit 3011 and a subsequent sub-circular pit 3013, in Area 3. Both had previously been examined during a preceding watching brief when Early Iron Age pottery was recovered (Mudd et al 1999).
- Pit 3011 was approximately 8.5m by 5.5m in size, and up to 0.5m in depth. It contained compact fill 3012, comprised of dark grey-brown stony-clay from which, in contrast to the preceding excavations, no artefactual material was recovered. Although this feature had previously been interpreted as a possible burnt mound, no fire-reddened or heat-affected stone were encountered during the current works. It is also of note that no charcoal was present and neither the sides nor the base of the pit were heat-affected. Also, in contrast with the previous investigation of the feature when it was suggested that the pit contained multiple deposits, only a single, homogenous fill, 3012, was discernible.
- 5.6 Two shallow sub-circular pits, 3003 and 3005, approximately 0.05m in depth, were partially exposed along the northern edge of Area 3. Both contained similar stonyclay fills to pit 3011. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery and an undated iron nail were recovered from fill 3006 within pit 3005.

Phase 2: Post-medieval and modern (Figs 2 & 3)

5.7 Shallow U-shaped ditch 1005/1007, aligned north/south before turning to the east, was noted cutting colluvium 1004 and limestone bedrock 1003 within Area 1. The

feature, previously identified within a preceding evaluation trench (OA 2006), contained a basal silt-clay fill 1006/1009 and secondary fill 1007. Residual worked flint and sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from this feature in association with post-medieval ceramics and clay tobacco pipe.

- 5.8 Within Areas 1 and 2, the natural limestone was cut by a series of large, deep, intrusions (up to 1.5m in depth where tested) containing modern metal, wood, concrete and tarmacadam fragments and plastic. A concrete slab foundation 2013, an associated vertical-sided and flat-based trench 2014 (containing modern plastic, and previously identified as an undated ditch during the 2006 evaluation), a former temporary trackway constructed from sandstone scalpings, and a former water pipe trench were also noted within Area 2.
- 5.9 At the eastern limit of Area 3 two parallel, shallow ditches, 3007 and 3009, indicative of a former hedgebank were identified. A fragment of modern plastic was recovered from fill 3008 within ditch 3007.

6. THE FINDS

6.1 With the exception of two residual sherds of Roman pottery and a residual worked flint flake retrieved from fill 1006/1009 within ditch 1005/1007, all the recovered material was post-medieval/modern in origin. Details of all recovered artefacts are presented in Appendices B to H.

7. DISCUSSION

7.1 The excavation has confirmed the results of the 1995 watching brief, 2000 geophysical survey and 2006 field evaluation, revealing only limited archaeological remains within the site. With regard the site specific aims and objectives (see section 3.2 above), no evidence was encountered for the continuation of the Later Neolithic pitting on, or around, the 120m contour in Area 1, nor for further Bronze Age and/or Roman burials within the site. In addition, no evidence was recovered during the current works indicative of Middle/Late Iron Age or Roman settlement or land use.

- 7.2 The only feature identified in Area 1 was a post-medieval/modern ditch, presumably representative of a former field boundary. The ditch is not depicted on the 1884 First Edition Ordnance Survey map, or any subsequent editions, suggesting that it was redundant by the late 19th century.
- 7.3 Within Area 3, the current works presented an opportunity to examine further an area of prehistoric pitting investigated during the 1995 watching brief. Although no artefactual material was recovered from pit 3011 during the current works, a large quantity of probable Early Iron Age pottery had been retrieved during its preceding excavation (Mudd *et al* 1999, 70-3). The two shallow pits, 3003 and 3005, identified nearby may, based on their similar fill characteristics, be broadly contemporary with pit 3011 although only post-medieval/modern artefacts, most probably intrusive finds, were recovered from their fills.
- 7.4 The double-ditched boundary (ditches 3007 and 3009) identified at the eastern extent of Area 3 correlates with the location of the former course of Cherry Tree Lane prior to its re-location during construction of the A419 bypass. The ditches most probably represent a former hedgebank adjacent to the former road.
- 7.5 Given the paucity of the archaeological findings, and the extensive nature of the modern intrusions, it has subsequently been agreed between Messrs Weaver and Parry (CgMs and the archaeological advisor to CDC respectively) that no further archaeological works will be required either in advance of or during forthcoming development.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

8.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Alistair Barber assisted by Anthony Beechey, Sikko van der Brug, Ray Holt, Juan Moreno, and Alex Thomson. The report was written by Alistair Barber. The finds reports were written by Jacky Sommerville, with the animal bone report by Andy Clarke. The illustrations were Leo Hartley. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The fieldwork was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

9. STORAGE AND CURATION

9.1 The archive is currently held at CA offices in Kemble. With the agreement of the legal landowners, the site archive and artefactual collection will be deposited with the Corinium Museum, Cirencester, which has agreed in principle to accept the complete archive upon completion of the project. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix I, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

11. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2014 Geology of Britain Viewer http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology-viewer-google/googleviewer.html Accessed 14 January 2014
- CgMs Consulting 2013 Land to the North of A417 London Road, Kingshill, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Heritage Statement
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- GSB Prospection 2000 London Road, Cirencester GSB unpublished client report 2000/111
- JSAC (John Samuels Archaeological Consultants) 2006 An Archaeological Desk-Based
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- JSAC 2006 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of land at Kingshill North,
- Mudd, A, et al, 1999 Excavations alongside Roman Ermin Street, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Vols. 1 and 2
- OA (Oxford Archaeology) 2006 Kingshill North, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation Report
- OA 2011. Cirencester Before Corinium: Excavations at Kingshill North, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph No.34

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Type	Fill Of	Description	Spot Date
1000	Layer		Topsoil	·
1001	Layer		Subsoil	
1002	Layer		Modern dump deposit	Modern
1003	Layer		Natural	
1004	Layer		Colluvium	
1005	Cut		Ditch	
1006	Fill	1005	Primary fill of ditch	C18-19
1007	Fill	1005	Secondary fill of ditch	
1008	Cut		Ditch	
1009	Fill	1008	Primary fill of ditch	post- medieval/modern
2000	Layer		Topsoil	
2001	Layer		Modern dump deposit	Modern
2002	Layer		Natural	
2003	Layer		Modern dump deposit	Modern
2004	Cut		Modern service trench	
2005	Fill	2004	Fill of service trench	Modern
2006	Cut		Modern intrusion	
2007	Fill	2006	Fill of modern intrusion	Modern
2008	Cut		Modern intrusion	
2009	Fill	2008	Fill of modern intrusion	Modern
2010	Cut		Modern intrusion	
2011	Fill	2010	Fill of modern intrusion	Modern
2012	Cut		Modern foundation trench	
2013	Structure	2012	Modern concrete foundation	Modern
2014	Cut		Modern trench	
2015	Fill	2014	Fill of modern trench	Modern
3000	Layer		Topsoil	
3001	Layer		Subsoil	
3002	Layer		Natural	
3003	Cut		Pit	
3004	Fill	3003	Fill of pit	
3005	Cut		Pit	
3006	Fill	3005	Fill of pit	C18-19
3007	Cut		Ditch	
3008	Fill	3007	Fill of ditch	post- medieval/modern
3009	Cut		Ditch	
3010	Fill	3009	Fill of ditch	
3011	Cut		Pit	
3012	Fill	3011	Fill of pit	
3013	Cut		Pit	
3014	Fill	3013	Fill of pit	

APPENDIX B: POTTERY

A total of six sherds (18g) of pottery was recovered from hand-excavation of two deposits. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. Roman fabric codes are equated to the Cirencester pottery type series as defined by Rigby (1982); where possible, post-medieval/modern fabrics correspond to the Cirencester pottery type series codes as defined by Ireland (1998).

Roman

Two unfeatured bodysherds (4g) in a sandy, oxidised fabric (OXID) were retrieved as residual finds from fill 1006 of ditch 1005. Condition, in terms of edge abrasion and surface preservation, is moderate. This pottery is broadly dateable to the Roman period.

Post-medieval/modern

A total of four sherds (14g) of pottery from this date range was recorded in two deposits. Dateable to the 18th century are single bodysherds of white salt-glazed stoneware (WSG) from fill 1006 of ditch 1005 and fill 3006 of pit 3005. Fill 1006 of ditch 1005 also produced: a rimsherd from a plate or dish in transfer-printed refined whiteware (TRP) (fill 1006 of ditch 1005), which dates to the late 18th to 19th centuries; and a base sherd from a vessel in 'late' English stoneware, of mid 19th to mid 20th century date. The whiteware sherd is in moderate to good condition and the remainder of this pottery is in very good condition.

References

Ireland, C. A. 1998 'The Pottery', in Wilkinson and McWhirr 1988, 98-140.

Rigby, V. 1982 'The Coarse Pottery', in Wacher and McWhirr 1982, 153-200.

Wacher, J. and McWhirr. A. 1982 *Early Roman Occupation at Cirencester*. Cirencester Excavations I. Cirencester Excavation Committee.

Wilkinson, D. and McWhirr, A. 1998 *Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church and Medieval Abbey*. Cirencester. Cotswold Archaeological Trust Ltd.

APPENDIX C: WORKED FLINT

A flint flake, in edge-damaged and heavily recorticated condition, was recovered as a residual find in post-medieval/modern dated fill 1009 of ditch 1008. It is only broadly dateable to the prehistoric period.

APPENDIX D: METAL ITEMS

A flat-headed iron nail, of uncertain date, was retrieved from fill 3006 of pit 3005.

APPENDIX E: CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Fill 1006 of ditch 1005 produced a fragment of brick (249g) of post-medieval date, in moderate condition.

APPENDIX F: GLASS

Fill 1009 of ditch 1008 produced a fragment of green-coloured glass (1g) deriving from a vessel of post-medieval or modern date.

APPENDIX G: CLAY TOBACCO PIPE

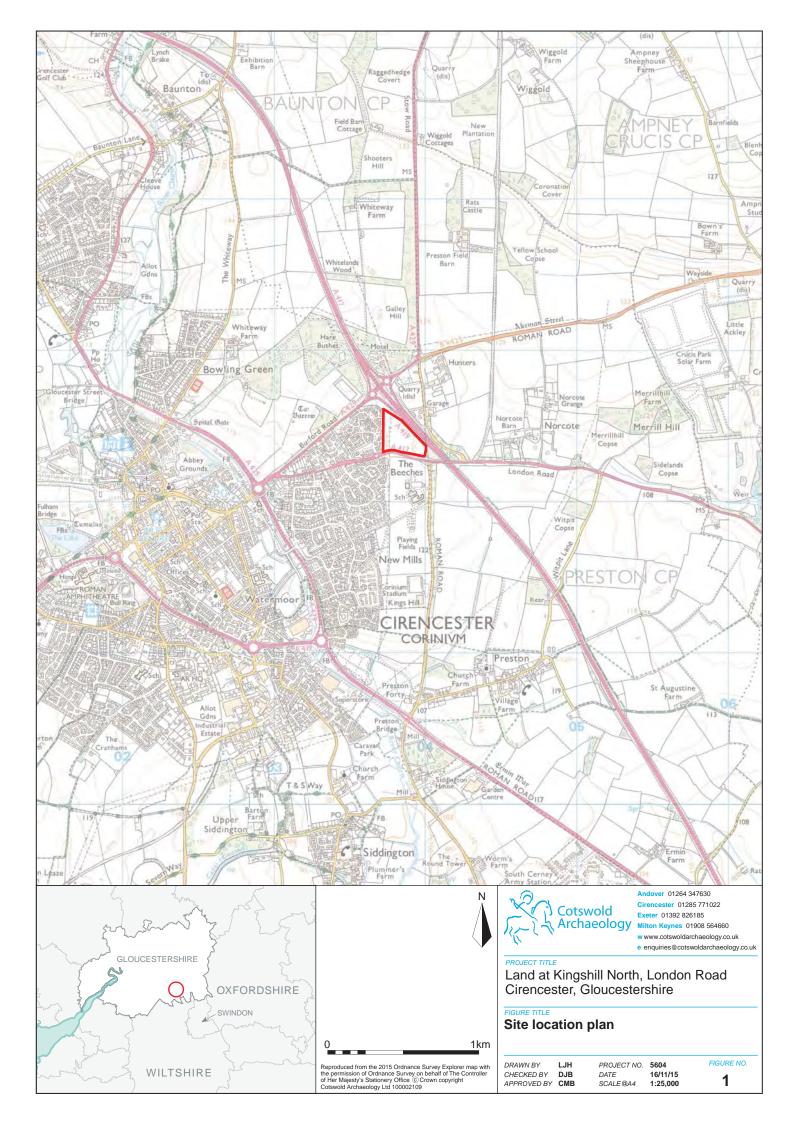
A fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem, broadly dateable to the late 16th to late 19th centuries, was recorded in fill 1009 of ditch 1008.

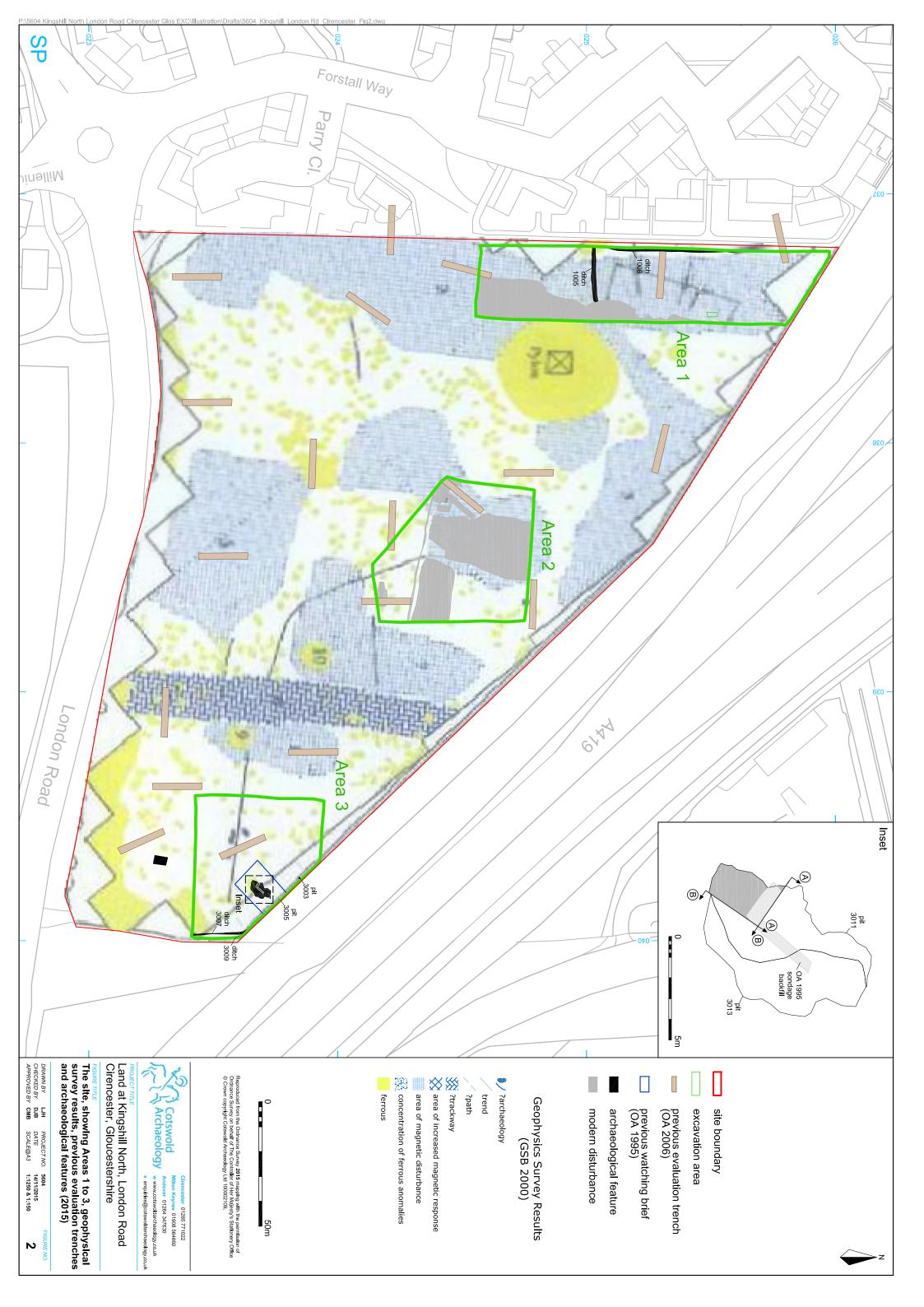
APPENDIX H: ANIMAL BONE

A total of eight fragments (22.5g) of animal bone were hand recovered from deposits 1006 and 1009, the fills of post-medieval/early modern ditch 1005/1008. The bone was poorly preserved and fragmentary with the only species to be identified being dog (*Canis familiaris*) represented by a distal humerus and a fragmented phalange.

APPENDIX I: OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Name	Kingshill North, London Road, Cirencester.			
Short description	An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between October and November 2015 at Kingshil North, London Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Three areas were excavated within the development area, targeted on features identified during previous archaeological investigations within the site.			
	The excavation identified an area of pitting within the eastern part of the site (Area 3), that had previously been investigated during a watching brief associated with construction of a former contractor's compound. Although no artefactual material was recovered during the current works, a large quantity of probable Early Iron Age pottery had been retrieved during its preceding excavation. Two shallow, undated, pits identified immediately to the north may be broadly contemporary.			
	Evidence for post-medieval/modern ditches was noted at the western and eastern limit of the site. The later most probably representing a roadside boundary along the former course of Cherry Tree Lane. Extensive modern disturbance encountered within all three excavation areas suggests that groundworks associated with the construction of former compound facilities for the adjacent A419 were more extensive than had previously been recorded.			
Project dates	6 October– 9 November 2015			
Project type	Excavation			
Previous work	Desk-based Assessment (JSAC 2006, CgMs 2013), Geophysical Survey (GSB Prospection 2000), Watching Brief (OA 1995), Archaeological Evaluation (OA 2006)			
Future work	Unknown			
PROJECT LOCATION				
Site Location	London Road, Cirencester, Glouceste	London Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire		
Study area	Site: 5.5ha, Excavation area: 1.28ha			
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 0382 0244			
PROJECT CREATORS				
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	Cotswold Archaeology		
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	87		
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman			
Project Supervisor	Alistair Barber			
MONUMENT TYPE	None			
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None			
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content		
Physical	Corinium Museum	Ceramics, flint, animal bone, glass,iron nail, clay tobacco pipe		
Paper	Corinium Museum	Context sheets, Trench Recording Form Drawing Register, Digita Photo Register,		
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photos		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		•		









- 3 Area 1, looking north
- 4 Area 2, looking west



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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Kingshill North, London Road Cirencester, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

DRAWN BY LJH
CHECKED BY DJB
APPROVED BY CMB

PROJECT NO. 5604

DATE 16/11/15

SCALE@A4 n/a

7/15 3 & 4



Pit 3011, looking north-east (0.5m & 1m scales)





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