

Farleigh Hungerford Castle Norton St Philip Somerset

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
English Heritage

CA Project: 5993
CA Report: 16671
SMC Reference: S00140870

December 2016



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A	8 December 2016	Michael Joyce	Steven Sheldon	Draft		Cliff Bateman

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Farleigh Hungerford Castle
Location: Norton St Philip, Somerset
NGR: ST 380092 157636
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 22 November 2016
SMC: Ref: S00140870
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Somerset Museum Service
Site Code: NSP 16

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the excavation and removal of existing bollards and the installation of new lift assist bollards at Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks and no artefactual material was recovered.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for English Heritage at Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset (centred on NGR: ST 380092 157636; Fig. 1), during the excavation and removal of existing bollards and the installation of new lift assist bollards in the same excavations.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out following a request by English Heritage based on recommendation made by Hugh Beamish, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Historic England (HE) and in accordance with Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) granted by Historic England (Ref: S00140870). The watching brief followed a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Hugh Beamish, HE. The fieldwork followed the Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief (ClfA 2014) and the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (HE 2015).

The site

- 1.3 Farleigh Hungerford Castle is situated on a promontory of high ground on the south bank of the River Frome, immediately to the north of the modern A366. The groundworks for the replacement bollards were located within two existing driveways immediately to the south-east of the castle's East Gate. The driveways lie at approximately 51m AOD, with the ground level rising gradually from east to west.
- 1.4 The solid geology of the site is mapped as Chalfield Oolite Formation-Limestone of the Jurassic Period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2016). The natural substrate was not observed during the watching brief due to the level of modern truncation encountered.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The proposed replacement bollards lie within the area of the Scheduled Monument (SM) *Farleigh Hungerford Castle* (National Monument Number 1015871) and



therefore within an area of high archaeological significance. The following history of the site is taken from the List Entry (No: 1410041; Historic England 2015):

- 2.2 From the reign of William II to Edward III, Farleigh was held by the Montfort family and their original early 14th-century manor house was located on the site of the castle. In 1369-70 the manor was bought by Sir Thomas de Hungerford who fortified the manor house and built the hall and inner court in 1380-90. His son, Sir Walter Hungerford, added the outer court and moat in 1420-30. Although the castle is said to have prospered for about 300 years, it was described as being in a 'very ruinous' state by 1701.
- 2.3 The inner court lies at the north-western end of the castle and is surrounded by a curtain wall and towers. It was divided into living quarters that included a hall and a kitchen, both of which survive today as wall footings and substructures. The north-east and north-west towers survive only as ruins, but the south-west and south-east towers remain partially upstanding. The curtain wall survives to its full height in a few places but is ruinous elsewhere. A watching brief, carried out in 2005 on the northern edge of the site, concluded that the castle bank in that location is part of the original build, although it had been subject to collapse in two places (Rodwell 2005).
- 2.4 The outer court is formed by a curtain wall which abuts the inner court and encloses an area of c. 3000m². Within the enclosed area stands the mid 14th-century Chapel of St Leonard, which originally stood outside the castle defences and acted as the parish church. Between 1973 and 1976 archaeological excavations were carried out to the north of the chapel and across the ditch and curtain wall of the west side of the outer court (Wilcox 1981). These excavations provided information on the defences on the south west side of the castle, and confirmed the existence of an earlier church under the extant chapel (*ibid.*).
- 2.5 The main entrance into the outer court was through the East Gate, originally via a drawbridge, but subsequently over a causeway. A number of domestic buildings, erected in the early part of the 17th-century, are located immediately to the south-west of the East Gate (i.e. outside of the curtain wall of the outer court).



3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 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.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2016). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising the excavation and removal of existing bollards and the installation of new lift assist bollards in the same excavations (Trenches 1-3; see Fig. 2 for location and extent).

4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.3 The archive from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Somerset Museum Service. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIG. 2)

5.1 Trenches 1-3 were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m below the present ground level (bpgl) and were entirely contained within the previous excavations for the existing bollards. The earliest deposits identified in these trenches related to the backfilling of these excavations. These deposits were overlain by modern bedding/levelling deposits, typically measuring 0.2m in thickness, for the modern tarmac driveway surfaces.

5.2 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the site (see *archaeological background* above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. In all of the excavated trenches any possible archaeological deposits, had they existed, would have been removed to a depth of at least 1.2m bpgl during the installation of the existing bollards.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Michael Joyce. The report was written by Michael Joyce. The illustrations were prepared by Tilia Cammegh. The archive has been compiled by Michael Joyce, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html Accessed 2 December 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Rodwell, K. A. 2005 *Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Somerset: Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief During Stabilisation and Stream Bank Repairs*, Unpublished English Heritage Report

Wilcox, R. 1981 'Excavations at Farleigh Hungerford, 1973-6', *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History* **124**, 87-109



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		Tarmac	Tarmac driveway	>0.4	>0.5	0.15
1	101	Layer		Modern bedding/levelling deposit	Mid grey black sand and gravel	>0.4	>0.5	0.05
1	102	Fill		Modern backfill around existing bollard	Mid-light grey brown sand and gravel	>0.4	>0.5	>1
2	200	Layer		Tarmac	Tarmac driveway	>0.36	>0.5	0.16
2	201	Layer		Modern bedding/levelling deposit	Mid grey black sand and gravel	>0.36	>0.5	0.04
2	202	Fill		Modern backfill around existing bollard	Mid-light grey brown sand and gravel	>0.36	>0.5	>1
3	300	Layer		Tarmac	Tarmac driveway	>0.36	>0.5	0.16
3	301	Layer		Modern bedding/levelling deposit	Mid grey black sand and gravel	>0.34	>0.4	0.05
3	302	Fill		Modern backfill around existing bollard	Mid-light grey brown sand and gravel	>0.34	>0.4	>1

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the excavation and removal of existing bollards and the installation of new lift assist bollards at Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.	
Project dates	22 November 2016	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	Watching Brief (Rodwell 2005) Field Excavation (Wilcox 1981)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset	
Study area (M ² /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	ST 380092 157636	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Historic England	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon	
Project Supervisor	Michael Joyce	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive:	Content:
Physical	Somerset Museum Service	N/A
Paper	Somerset Museum Service	Trench recording forms, digital photographic registers
Digital	Somerset Museum Service	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 <i>Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report 16671		



● Site location



Cotswold Archaeology

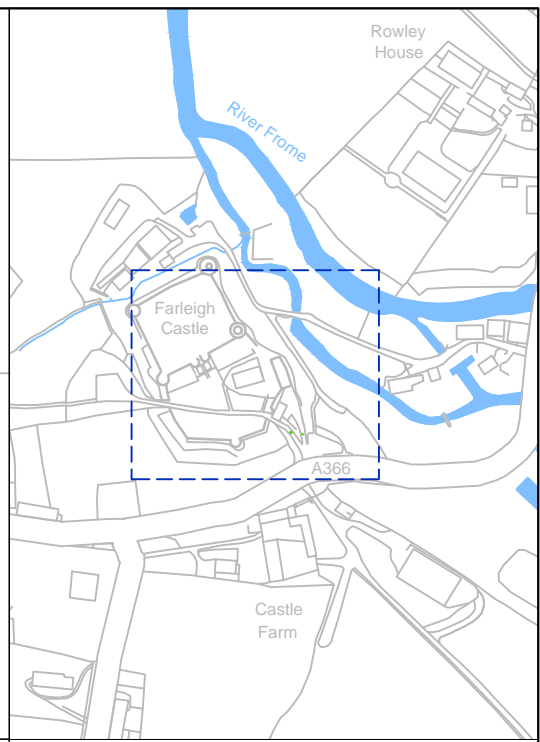
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PROJECT TITLE
 Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY TC	PROJECT NO. 5993	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY DB	DATE 2/12/2016	
APPROVED BY SS	SCALE @A4 1:25,000	1

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 Bollard location/observed groundworks

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PROJECT TITLE
 Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset

FIGURE TITLE
 The site, showing location of groundworks

DRAWN BY AO	PROJECT NO. 5993	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY AO	DATE 09.12.2016	2
APPROVED BY SS	SCALE@A3 1:500 & 1:200	

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PROJECT TITLE

Farleigh Hungerford Castle, Norton St Philip, Somerset

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph: completed works

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FIGURE NO.

3

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