

**Prior's Hall Park (Zone 3)  
Corby  
Northamptonshire**

*Archaeological Watching Brief*



for  
Bela Partnership Limited

CA Project: 660841  
CA Report: 17052  
Site Code: PHP 17

September 2017



Priors Hall Park (Zone 3)  
 Corby  
 Northamptonshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 660841  
 CA Report: 17052



Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	1/09/2017	JC/PB	PB	DRAFT	Internal review	MLC

*This report is confidential to the client. Cotswold Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability to any third party to whom this report, or any part of it, is made known. Any such party relies upon this report entirely at their own risk. No part of this report may be reproduced by any means without permission.*

## CONTENTS

SUMMARY .....	2
1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND .....	4
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES .....	6
4. METHODOLOGY .....	6
5. RESULTS (FIG 2) .....	6
6. DISCUSSION .....	7
7. CA PROJECT TEAM .....	7
8. REFERENCES .....	8
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS .....	9
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM .....	10

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1: 25,000)  
Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks (1: 1,000).



## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Priors Hall Park (Zone 3)
<b>Location:</b>	Corby, Northamptonshire
<b>NGR:</b>	492900 292000
<b>Type:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>Date:</b>	25-26 January 2017
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	EN/04/01326/OUT
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC)
<b>Accession Number:</b>	tbc
<b>Site Code:</b>	PHP 17

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of up to 735 new homes at Priors Hall Park (Zone 3), Corby, Northamptonshire.

The archaeological watching brief was carried out during the construction of a haulage road running from north to south through the centre of the site, the work primarily being involved with the removal of the uppermost topsoil deposits.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Bela Partnership Limited at Priors Hall Park (Zone 3), Corby, Northamptonshire (centred on NGR: 492900 292000; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for a mixed-use development that will include up to 735 new homes (Planning ref: EN/04/01326/OUT).
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with discussions between CA and Lesley-Ann Mather, Northamptonshire County Council's Archaeological Advisor (NCCAA), and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of Lesley-Ann Mather. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (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* (HE 2016).

### **The site**

- 1.3 The site (Zone 3) is located on the north-eastern outskirts of Corby, approximately 2km to the north of the village of Weldon, which now forms part of the town's eastern suburbs (Fig. 2). Topographically, the site is largely situated on the south-facing slope of a small valley that has been incised by Willow Brook, a small stream that flows eastwards into the ornamental lakes at Deene Park. Part of the site at its eastern end extends to the south of the stream, into an area previously quarried for ironstone. To the north of the stream the ground descends from c. 100m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) on Kirby Lane to c. 80m aOD on the valley floor at the eastern end of the site. To the south of the stream the ground is locally flat and lies at c. 90m aOD.
- 1.4 The site comprises an irregular block of arable farmland, covering an area of c.127ha, that lies to the south of Kirby Lane and east of Gretton Road. The field at the western end of the site has already been developed for commercial use; the remainder is divided into fields of varying sizes by hedgerows, fences and tree belts.

- 1.5 To the north of the stream the solid geology predominately comprises Jurassic argillaceous rocks of the Rutland Formation, with a localised outcrop of the overlying Blisworth Limestone Formation occurring on the high ground at the north-east corner of the site. In the base of the valley, where the overlying argillaceous rocks have been eroded by the stream, limestone of the Upper and Lower Lincolnshire Limestone Members have been exposed. To the south of the stream, quarrying has removed the overlying strata to expose rocks of the Northampton Sand Formation. Superficial deposits occur on the upper slope on the south side of the valley, where there is a cover of diamicton, a glacial till generally comprising poorly sorted sand and gravel in a clay or silty clay matrix. The ground has been reinstated in part of the former quarry site (BGS 2017), and therefore the natural geological substrate was not observed during the current phase of works.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The historical and archaeological background of the site has been presented in detail in the *Archaeological Background* section of the *Management Plan* prepared by CA, of which this document forms a part (CA 2017, Section 2). The information was gathered from a variety of sources, primarily the *Archaeology and Cultural Heritage* chapter prepared by Wardell Armstrong in 2004 for the *Environmental Assessment* (Chapter 12) and in its supplement issued in 2011 (Wardell Armstrong 2004; 2011), and the report on the results of the geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation of Zone 3 carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2011 (NA 2011). The following is a brief summary of the archaeological remains within Zone 3.

### **Bronze Age**

- 2.2 In the western part of the site, the remains of an Early Bronze Age henge monument and adjacent ditch system were investigated by Northamptonshire Archaeology as part of the archaeological mitigation works (Chapman and Jones 2012). The near circular henge had a diameter of c. 32m, with an opening to the south-east, and examination of the fills of its broad, U-shaped ditch indicated the former presence of an external bank. The cremated remains of a child, accompanied by a jet bead, were recovered from the interior of the henge; the burial was confirmed as a later addition to the monument, having been radiocarbon dated to

the Middle Bronze Age. The evaluation results suggest that the Bronze Age activity was confined to the western part of the site (NA 2011).

### ***Roman villa and hinterland***

- 2.3 The remains of a probable Roman villa complex are located in the central southern part of the site, immediately to the north of Willow Brook. The full extent of the villa is not established for certain, although the results of the magnetometry and resistivity surveys, along with the results of the evaluation trenching, provide a good indication of the probable extent of the settlement remains. The remains of the villa, which has been dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, include the foundations of walls, painted plaster, ceramic building material (brick/tile) and pottery (NA 2011).
- 2.4 To the east of the main settlement complex, the evaluation revealed the poorly preserved remains of four walls, possibly revetment walls for the gardens or allotments associated with the villa site, and a large amount of Roman ceramic building material. Also revealed were two limestone walls covered by collapsed building material that were noted to be quite 'plain' compared to the structures recorded further to the west; these are likely to be the remains of a barn or other outbuilding associated with the villa. Midden deposits were identified in trenches to the west of the main villa building.
- 2.5 In the eastern part of the site, approximately 450m east of the villa complex, the geophysical survey identified the route of a probable Roman road that extended north-eastwards from a crossing point on Willow Brook. Whilst the possible road alignment was clearly indicated by geophysical anomalies, the results of the subsequent trial trench evaluation were inconclusive, with several of the trenches targeted upon the anomalies encountering no identifiable archaeological remains. However, in two trenches compacted layers of limestone and slag hardcore were recorded, along with a cobble limestone and compacted gravel surface, although no flanking ditches or dating evidence was found.

### ***Post-medieval/modern***

- 2.6 Whilst it is clear that a significant Roman settlement existed within the site, it is possible that a number of the anomalies identified by the geophysical survey relate to the remains of Park Farm, which was recorded in the vicinity of the villa site on Ordnance Survey mapping until its demolition sometime between 1985 and 1992.

### 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 2017). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, which comprised the removal of topsoil for the construction of a haulage road (Fig. 2). This was carried out in two areas, which were identified as Trench 1 to the south and Trench 2 to the north.

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 Milton Keynes. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive will be deposited with the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC), accession number to be confirmed, along with the site archive. 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 The natural geological substrate was not revealed during the groundworks at Priors Hall Park (Zone 3), due to the high level of disturbance caused during the reinstatement of ground after the quarrying. A layer of modern made ground, which related to this reinstatement, was observed in both trenches. It comprised a mid





yellowish grey and orangey brown silty clay and rubble material in Trench 1 (102), and a mid orangey brown clayey sand and rubble in Trench 2 (202). It lay at an average depth of 0.2m below present ground level and was overlain by a shallow topsoil (101/201), which comprised a dark greyish brown compact silty clay.

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

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area as detailed in section 2, the watching brief identified no archaeological remains and no artefacts were recovered. The absence of archaeological deposits is considered likely to relate to the high levels of ground disturbance relating to ironstone quarrying and the subsequent reinstatement of the landscape and ground levels.

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by James Coyne, assisted by Kim Devereux-West. The report was written by James Coyne. The illustrations were prepared by Charlotte Patman. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Simon Carlyle.



## 8. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 9 August 2017
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017a *Zone 3, Priors Hall Park, East Northamptonshire District Council, Northamptonshire: Archaeological Management Plan*, report **16550**
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017b *Priors Hall park (Zone 3), Corby, Northamptonshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*, CA Unpublished Report
- Chapman, A, and Jones, C, 2012 An Early Bronze Age henge and Middle Bronze Age boundaries at Priors Hall, Kirby Lane, Corby, *Northamptonshire Archaeology*, **37**, 37–68
- CIfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014 *Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief*
- NA (Northamptonshire Archaeology) 2011 *Archaeological Evaluation on land at Priors Hall, Zone 3, Corby Northamptonshire*
- Wardell Armstrong 2004 *Priors Hall urban extension Environment Assessment chapter 12: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage*
- Wardell Armstrong 2011 *Supplement to the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage chapter of the Environmental Statement produced by Wardell Armstrong in 2004*

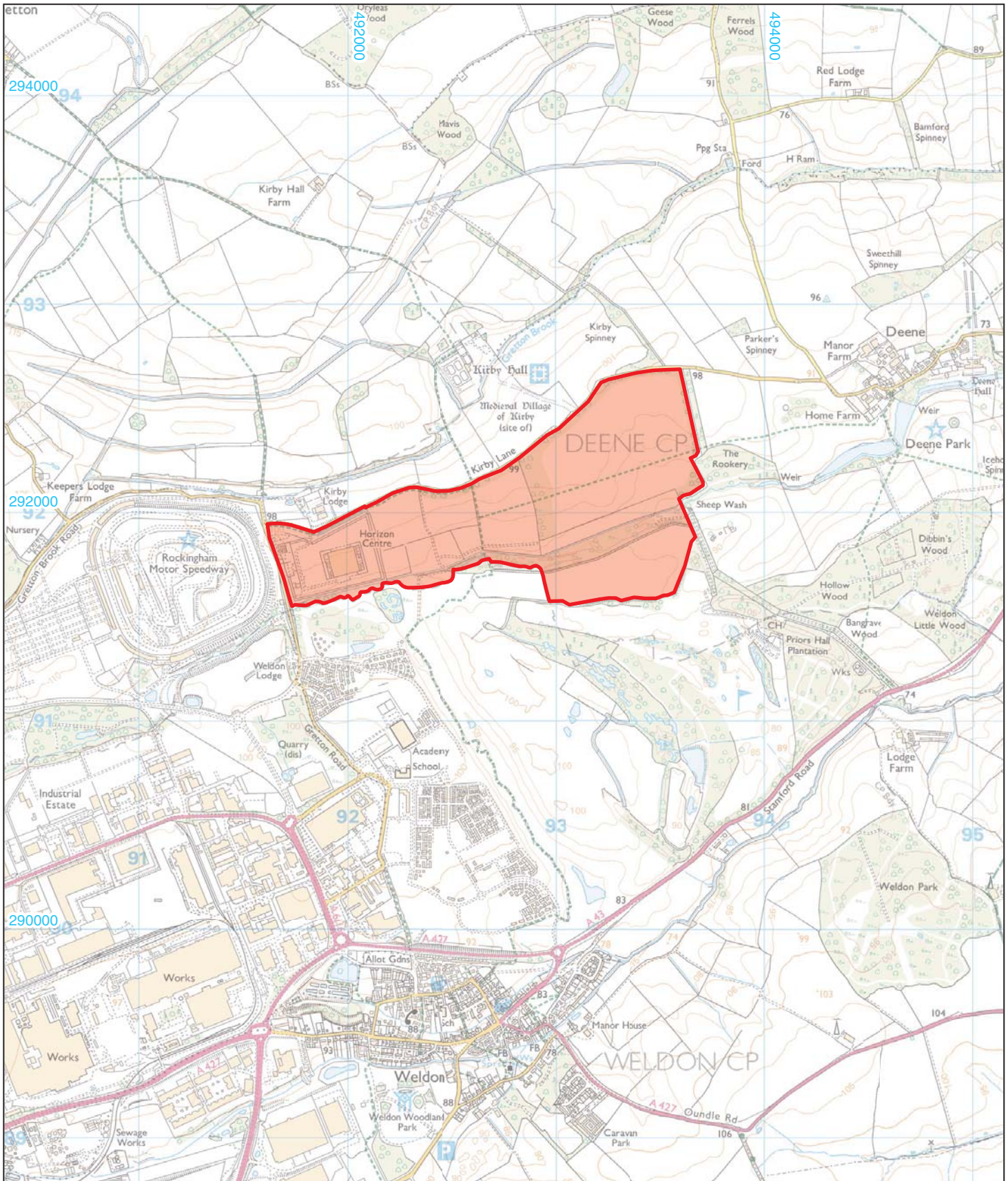
**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark greyish brown compact silty clay with moderate small to medium stones and charcoal flecks.	n/a	n/a	0.2
1	101	Layer		Made Ground	Mixed yellowish grey and orangey brown compact silty clay with occasional rubble and medium to large limestone blocks. Backfill material after quarrying.	n/a	n/a	n/a

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark greyish brown compact silty clay with moderate small stones and charcoal flecks, and occasional rubble material.	n/a	n/a	0.26
2	201	Layer		Made Ground	Mid orangey brown friable clayey sand with frequent brick, rubble and medium to large limestone block inclusions. Backfill material after quarrying.	n/a	n/a	n/a

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Priors Hall Park (Zone 3)	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of up to 735 new homes at Priors Hall Park (Zone 3), Corby, Northamptonshire.</p> <p>The archaeological watching brief was carried out during the construction of a haulage road running from north to south through the centre of the site, the work primarily being involved with the removal of the uppermost topsoil deposits.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	25-26 January 2017	
Project type	Archaeological Watching Brief	
Previous work	<p>Magnetometry survey in 2011 across the remaining areas of Zone 3 (CA 2017a);</p> <p>Detailed resistivity survey in 2011 in the immediate vicinity of the possible remains of a Roman villa (CA 2017a);</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation comprising 94 trenches excavated across Zone 3 (CA 2017a);</p> <p>Open area excavation in 2012 of a ring ditch feature in the western part of Zone 3 (CA2017a)</p>	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Corby, Northamptonshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	SP 9290 9200	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Simon Carlyle	
Project Supervisor	James Coyne	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC)	None
Paper	Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC)	Trench sheets, photographic register
Digital	Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (NARC)	Database, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 Priors Hall park (Zone 3), Corby, Northamptonshire: Archaeological Watching Brief, CA Report No. <b>17052</b>		



Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

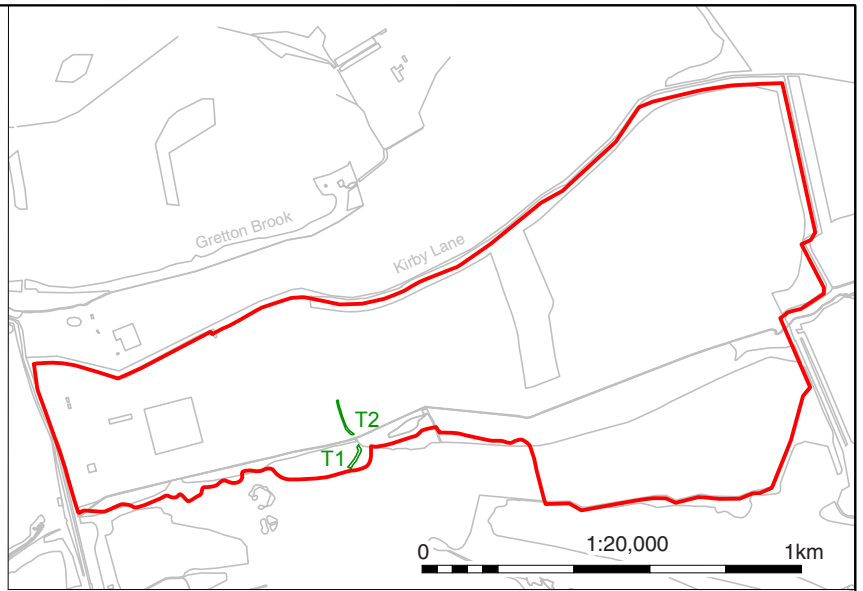
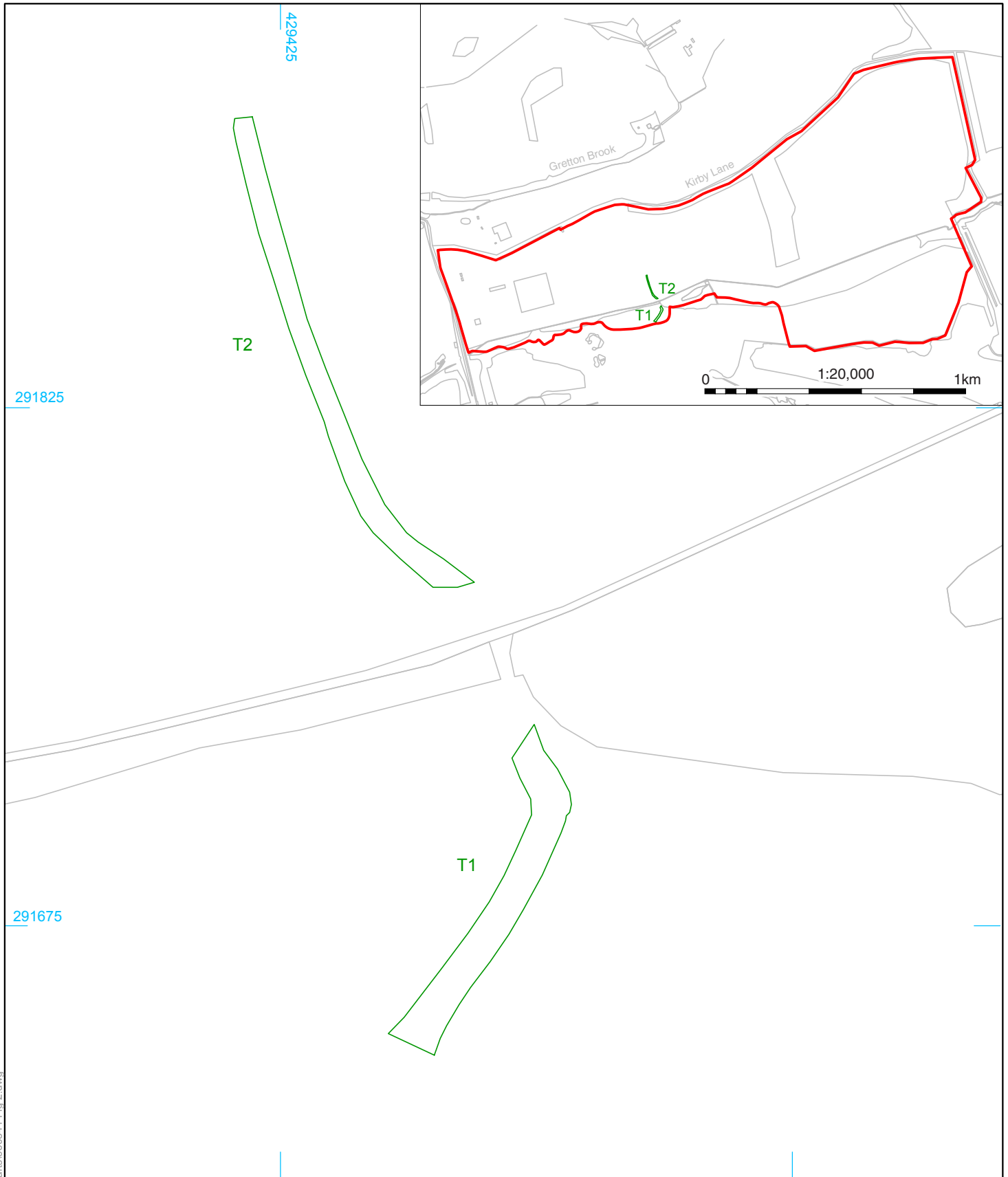
**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Priors Hall Park (Zone 3), Corby,  
 Northamptonshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan



Reproduced from the digital 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

<b>DRAWN BY</b>	CP	<b>PROJECT NO.</b>	660841	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b>	DJB	<b>DATE</b>	09/08/2017	<b>1</b>
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	MC	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	1:25,000	



- site boundary
- evaluation trench

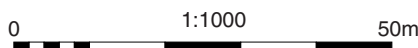


Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Priors Hall Park (Zone 3), Corby,  
 Northamptonshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 The site, showing location of  
 groundworks

<b>DRAWN BY</b> CP	<b>PROJECT NO.</b> 660841	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b> DJB	<b>DATE</b> 09/08/2017	<b>2</b>
<b>APPROVED BY</b> MC	<b>SCALE@A4</b> 1:1,000	



### **Andover Office**

Stanley House  
Walworth Road  
Andover  
Hampshire  
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

### **Cirencester Office**

Building 11  
Kemble Enterprise Park  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

### **Exeter Office**

Unit 53  
Basepoint Business Centre  
Yeoford Way  
Marsh Barton Trading Estate  
Exeter  
EX2 8LB

t: 01392 826185

### **Milton Keynes Office**

41 Burners Lane South  
Kiln Farm  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK11 3HA

t: 01908 564660

