

The Grand Western Canal Tiverton Devon

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Jacobs

on behalf of
Devon County Council

CA Project: 880240
CA Report: 17722

December 2017



The Grand Western Canal Tiverton Devon

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 880240

CA Report: 17722



| Document Control Grid | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Revision | Date | Author | Checked by | Status | Reasons for revision | Approved by |
| A | 8 December 2017 | Paul Clarke | Derek Evans | Internal review | — | Derek Evans |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

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..... | 3 |
| 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES..... | 5 |
| 4. METHODOLOGY | 5 |
| 5. RESULTS | 6 |
| 6. DISCUSSION..... | 6 |
| 7. CA PROJECT TEAM..... | 7 |
| 8. REFERENCES..... | 7 |
| APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS | 8 |
| APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM..... | 9 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan
- Fig. 2 The site, showing monitored groundworks and recorded features (1:100)
- Fig. 3 Trench 3: section and photograph (1:20)
- Fig. 4 Retaining wall: photographs



SUMMARY

Project Name: The Grand Western Canal
Location: Tiverton, Devon
NGR: 296242 112367
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 19 September–2 October 2017
Planning Reference: Mid Devon District Council 17/00997/FULL
Location of Archive: N/A
Site Code: GWCA 17

In September and October 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during the demolition and rebuilding of a retaining wall associated with the Grand Western Canal at Tiverton, Devon.

The watching brief recorded the granite-built retaining wall along the south-western site boundary. The wall was shown to have been subject to rebuild/extension at its south-eastern end.

The watching brief demonstrated that the difference in ground level on either side of the wall was caused by up to 2.5m of modern redeposited natural deposits abutting the wall's north-eastern side. It is likely that this redeposited material originated from the cutting of the canal, which supports the assumption that the retaining wall was constructed at the same time as the canal (i.e. 1814).



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September and October 2017, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief during the demolition and rebuilding of a retaining wall associated with the Grand Western Canal at Tiverton, Devon (centred at NGR: 296242 112367; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken for Jacobs, on behalf of Devon County Council. It was undertaken in order to discharge Condition 2 of the planning permission granted for the demolition/rebuilding works (Mid Devon District Council planning application reference: 17/00997/FULL).
- 1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2017) and approved by the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCCHET), the archaeological advisors to Mid Devon District Council. The watching brief was also in line with *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.4 The site lies on the eastern side of Tiverton, on the north-eastern side of Canal Road. The affected section of retaining wall is at the south-western end of the Grand Western Canal Country Park, and the end of the canal. The site covers c. 0.1ha, and includes a grassed area, the stone retaining wall, and a small section of Canal Hill.
- 1.5 The bedrock geology at the site is mapped as sandstone of the Tidcombe Sand Member, which was formed during the Permian Period. The south-western edge of the site is on the boundary of the Halberton Breccia Formation, which also formed in the Permian Period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2017).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological and historical background to the site has been outlined in a heritage statement (Jacobs 2017) and is summarised below.

- 2.2. While the watching brief site is surrounded by features associated with the original industrial use of the canal in the 19th century, there are no known archaeological features within the site boundary.

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43) and Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

- 2.3. The prehistoric period in the area is represented by the early Bronze Age hillfort of Cranmore Castle, c. 500m south of the watching brief site. There are also a number of artefact scatters in nearby fields, including flints recorded at Deyman's Hill House, c. 500m west of the watching brief site. It is suggested that the modern route of Exeter Hill, which joins Canal Hill c. 150m north-west of the watching brief site, follows the route of the Roman Road known as 'Long Causeway,' which may have had a prehistoric antecedent.
- 2.4. No prehistoric or Roman finds or features have been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the watching brief site.

Early medieval (AD 410–1066) and medieval (1066–1539)

- 2.5. There are various earthworks of former field systems in the landscape surrounding the watching brief site. While many of these features are currently undated, it is possible that some represent medieval use of the land surrounding the medieval town of Tiverton, which later became a Borough. The majority of the medieval features recorded in the area are focussed on the centre of Tiverton, c. 800m to the north-west of the watching brief site.

Post-medieval (1540–1800) and modern (1800–present)

- 2.6. The area to the east of Tiverton was dominated by industry and agriculture in these periods. Known agricultural features largely comprise catch meadows and water meadows, many of which appear to have been located to the south of the canal. Known industrial features include Grade II listed limekilns c. 15m north-east of the watching brief site.
- 2.7. The canal was completed in this area in 1814, and was used to transport coal and stone between Tiverton and the Somerset border. Various wharves and other associated structures are located along the canal, with a number surviving c. 75m west of the watching brief site. It is assumed that the retaining wall was constructed at the same time as the canal.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 As defined in the WSI (CA 2017), the objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

- to monitor development groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits/features thus revealed; and
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated project archive and a report setting out the watching brief results and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out in the WSI (CA 2017). An archaeologist was present during intrusive development groundworks (T1–T4, Fig. 2), comprising:

- two exploratory trenches (T1 and T2), excavated in order to locate services and test ground conditions;
- the dismantling of the retaining wall;
- the excavation of a new foundation trench for the relocated retaining wall (T4); and
- an area of cutting back and ground reduction around the wall (T3).

4.2 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.3 A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain, along with an uploaded copy of this report.

4.4 As no significant archaeological features were identified during the archaeological works, no project archive will be prepared. The results of the fieldwork will be held by DCCHE in the form of this report and the OASIS entry. The archaeological condition (see 1.2, above) will be discharged upon receipt of this report by DCCHE and completion of the OASIS entry.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the watching brief results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The natural geological substrate comprised dark red silty sand with common inclusions of gravel and pebbles. It was revealed in T4 only (context 402) at a depth of c. 89.8m aOD (c. 1m below road level). It was sealed by up to 0.5m of red silty sand colluvium 401.
- 5.3 Retaining wall 308 (Fig. 4) was constructed of worked granite coursed as quoins with stressed corners. It was aligned north-west/south-east, with a gradual return towards the east at its south-eastern end. The construction cut of the wall was not observed, but it is assumed to have been cut into colluvial layer 401.
- 5.4 Abutting the north-eastern face of wall 308 (and sealing colluvial layer 401) was a series of made ground deposits (contexts 400, 303–307; Fig. 3), formed predominantly of redeposited natural sand and gravel with occasional late post-medieval/modern demolition rubble inclusions (brick and stone). Modern ceramics were observed in deposit 304, one of the earlier deposits in this sequence. These deposits were sealed by topsoil 300 and were piled up behind the wall to a height of c. 93.3m aOD (c. 2.5m above road level).
- 5.5 The most south-easterly 5m of the retaining wall (context 302) was found to be a later abutment, constructed in the same manner as wall 308 (Fig. 4). The north-eastern face of wall 302 was abutted by a deposit of redeposited natural sand and gravel with demolition rubble inclusions (context 301).

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The watching brief recorded the granite-built retaining wall along the south-western boundary of the site. The wall was shown to have been subject to rebuild/extension at its south-eastern end.
- 6.2 The watching brief demonstrated that the difference in ground level on either side of the wall was caused by up to 2.5m of modern redeposited natural deposits abutting the north-eastern side of the wall. It is likely that this redeposited material originated

from the cutting of the canal, which supports the assumption (Jacobs 2017) that the retaining wall was constructed at the same time as the canal (i.e. 1814).

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The watching brief fieldwork was undertaken by George Gandham. This report was written by Paul Clarke. The report illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer*

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Accessed 16 October 2017

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 *The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Jacobs 2017 *Works to demolish and re-build a retaining wall to the Grand Western canal: Heritage Statement.*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

| Trench 1 | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------------|---|---------------|
| Context No. | Type | Context interpretation | Description | Thickness (m) |
| 100 | Layer | Topsoil | Dark greyish brown sandy silt | 0.12 |
| 101 | Layer | Made ground | Mid reddish brown sand, gravel and cobbles, poorly sorted | 0.38+ |

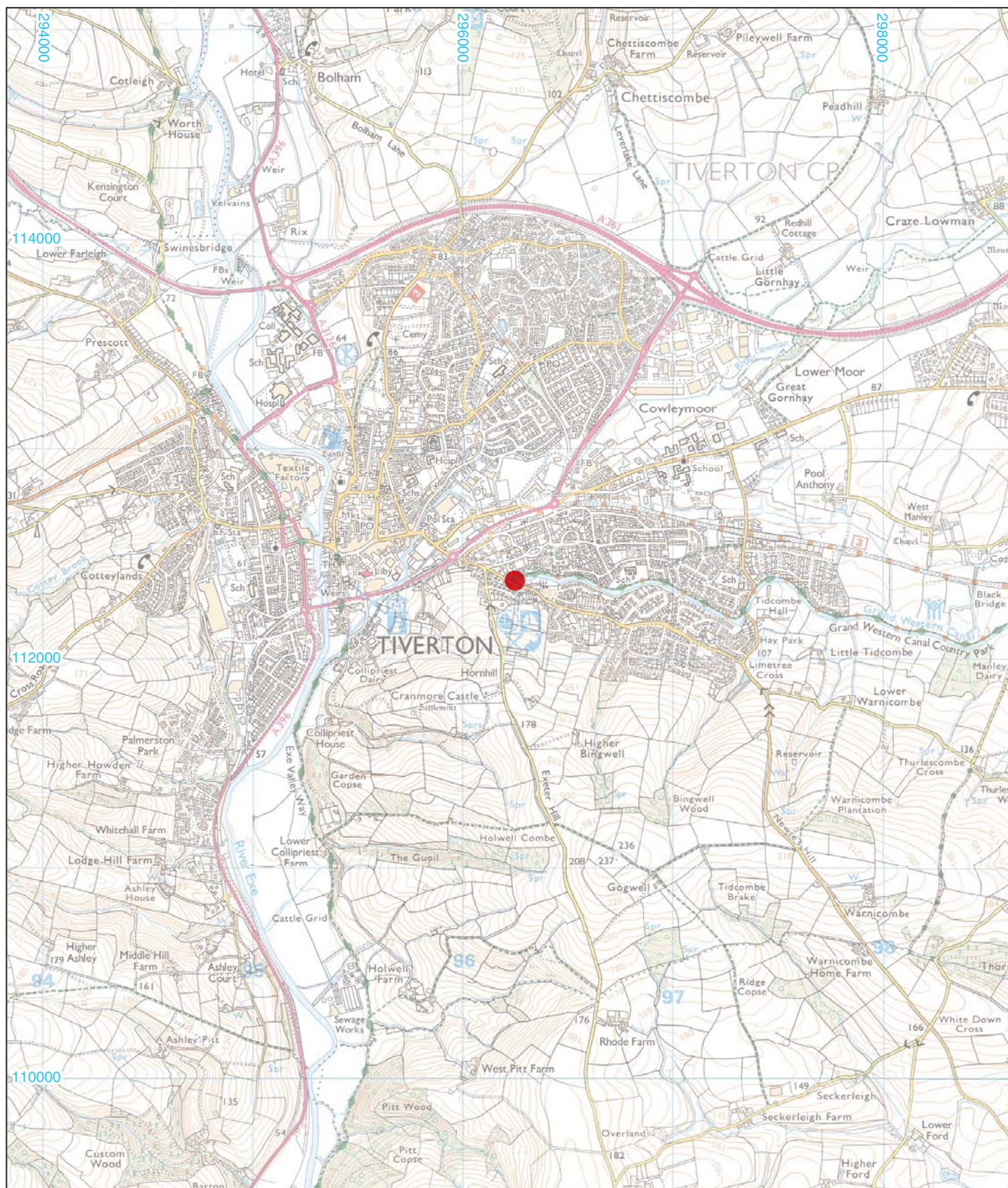
| Trench 2 | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------------|--|---------------|
| Context No. | Type | Context interpretation | Description | Thickness (m) |
| 200 | Layer | Topsoil | Dark greyish brown sandy silt | 0.2 |
| 201 | Layer | Made ground | Mid reddish brown sand, gravel and cobbles, poorly sorted | 0.2 |
| 202 | Layer | Made ground | Compact pale reddish brown sand and gravel with mortar flecks, poorly sorted | 0.2+ |

| Trench 3 | | | | |
|-------------|-------|--|---|---------------|
| Context No. | Type | Context interpretation | Description | Thickness (m) |
| 300 | Layer | Topsoil | Dark greyish brown sandy silt | 0.3 |
| 301 | Layer | Made ground | Friable reddish brown sand, with gravel, shillet, slate and stone; poorly sorted | 1.2 |
| 302 | Wall | Retaining wall (extension to wall 308) | South-west facing wall constructed of granite coursed as quoins with stressed corners | 1.6 |
| 303 | Layer | Made ground | Friable reddish brown clayey sand with gravel and sand; poorly sorted | 1+ |
| 304 | Layer | Made ground | Firm mid brownish grey sandy loam, with gravel and cobbles | 1.1+ |
| 305 | Layer | Made ground | Mid brownish grey silty sand | 0.5 |
| 306 | Layer | Made ground | Light reddish brown sand and gravel | 0.2 |
| 307 | Layer | Made ground | Brownish red sand with gravel and pebbles/cobbles; poorly sorted | 0.8 |
| 308 | Wall | Retaining wall | South-west facing wall constructed of granite coursed as quoins with stressed corners | 1.6+ |

| Trench 4 | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------------------|--|---------------|
| Context No. | Type | Context interpretation | Description | Thickness (m) |
| 400 | Layer | Made ground | Light brown clayey silt with rare subangular gravel and rare brick fragments | 0.8 |
| 401 | Layer | Colluvium | Friable dark brownish red silty sand, with rare pebbles | 0.5 |
| 402 | Layer | Natural substrate | Friable dark red silty sand with common gravel and pebbles | 0.8+ |

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

| | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| PROJECT DETAILS | | |
| Project name | The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton, Devon | |
| Short description | <p>In September and October 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during the demolition and rebuilding of a retaining wall associated with the Grand Western Canal at Tiverton, Devon.</p> <p>The watching brief recorded the granite-built retaining wall along the south-western site boundary. The wall was shown to have been subject to rebuild/extension at its south-eastern end.</p> <p>The watching brief demonstrated that the difference in ground level on either side of the wall was caused by up to 2.5m of modern redeposited natural deposits abutting the wall's north-eastern side. It is likely that this redeposited material originated from the cutting of the canal, which supports the assumption that the retaining wall was constructed at the same time as the canal (i.e. 1814).</p> | |
| Project dates | 19 September – 2 October 2017 | |
| Project type | Watching brief | |
| Previous work | None | |
| Future work | Unknown | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | | |
| Site location | Canal Hill, Tiverton, Devon | |
| Study area (m ² /ha) | c. 0.1ha | |
| Site co-ordinates | 296242 112367 | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | |
| Name of organisation | Cotswold Archaeology | |
| Project brief originator | Jacobs | |
| Project design (WSI) originator | Cotswold Archaeology | |
| Project Manager | Derek Evans | |
| Project Supervisor | George Gandham | |
| MONUMENT TYPE | None | |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS | None | |
| PROJECT ARCHIVES | Intended final location of archive | Content |
| Physical | N/A | N/A |
| Paper | N/A | N/A |
| Digital | N/A | N/A |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | | |
| Cotswold Archaeology 2017 <i>The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton, Devon: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA Report 17722 | | |



Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton,
 Devon

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

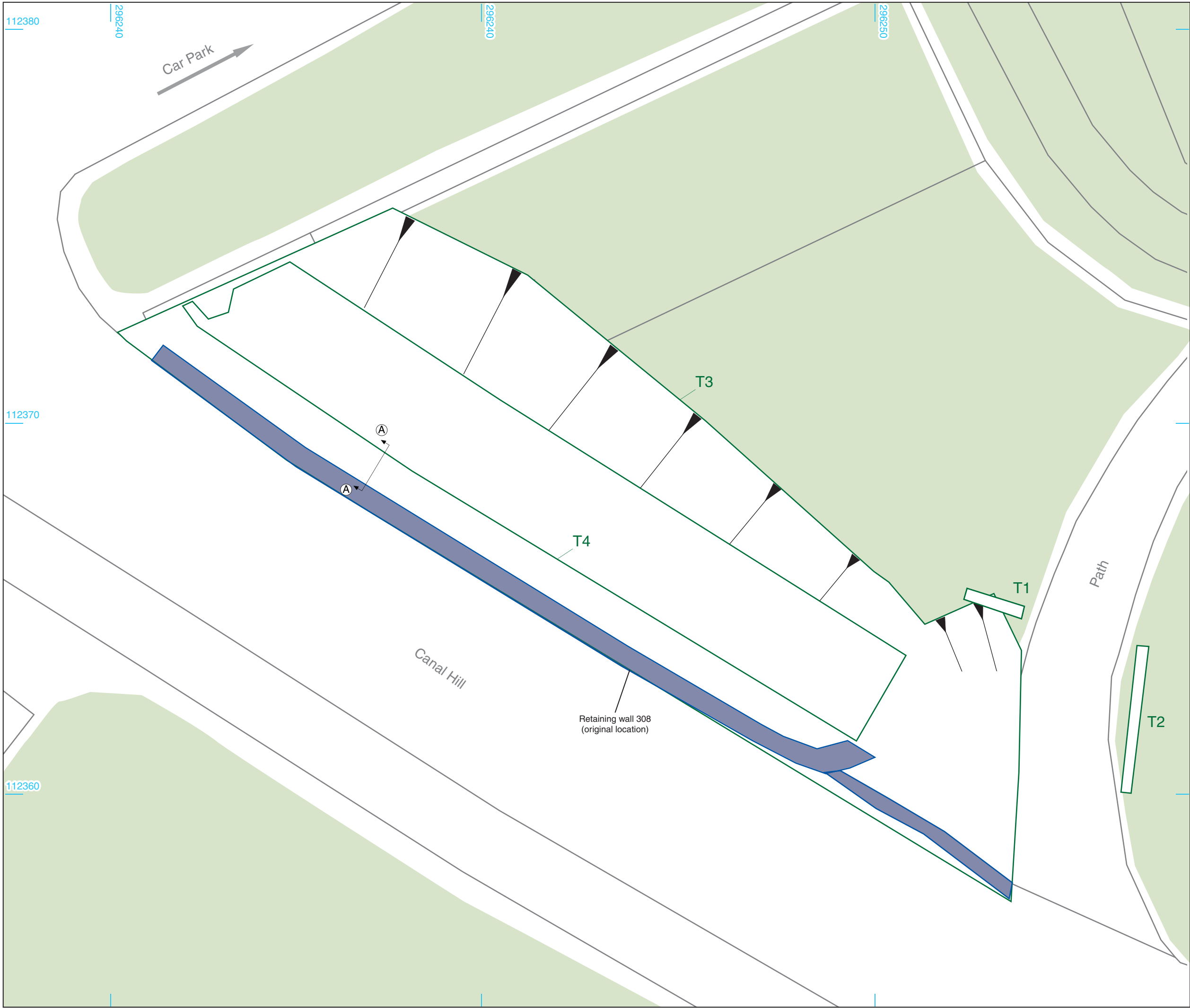
0 1km

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

DRAWN BY EE PROJECT NO. 880240
 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 21/11/2017
 APPROVED BY DE SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1



- Monitored groundworks
- Structure
- Section location
- Hachures

0 1:100 5m

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

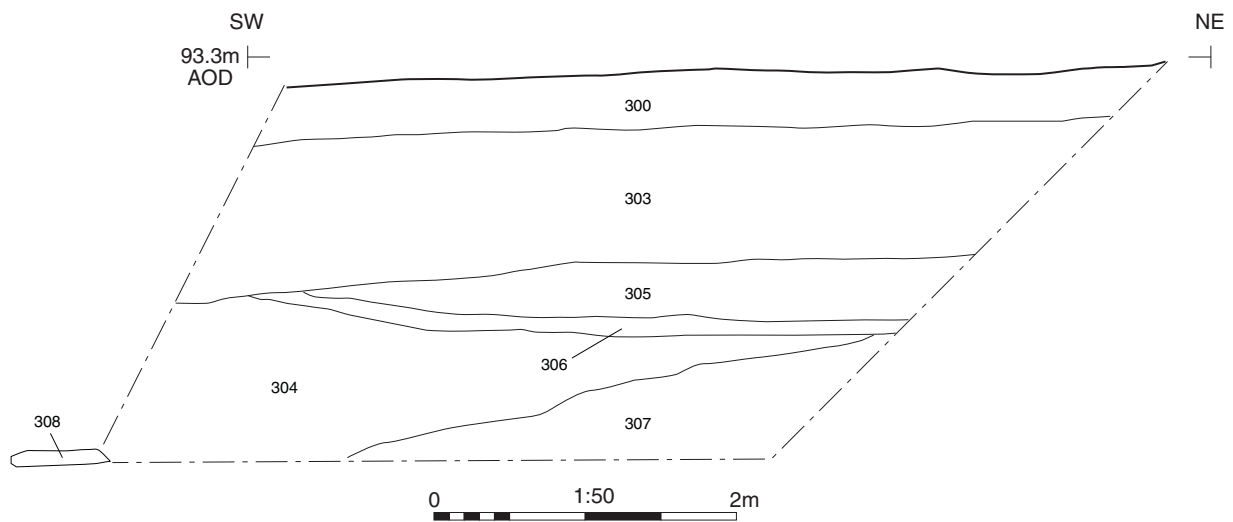
Cotswold Archaeology
Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
The site, showing monitored groundworks and recorded features

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|------------|------------|
| DRAWN BY | EE | PROJECT NO. | 880240 | FIGURE NO. |
| CHECKED BY | DJB | DATE | 21/11/2017 | 2 |
| APPROVED BY | DE | SCALE@A3 | 1:100 | |

Section AA



Made ground deposits formerly abutting wall 308, looking north-west (1m scale)



Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton,
Devon

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 3: section and photograph

DRAWN BY EE PROJECT NO. 880240
CHECKED BY DJB DATE 21/11/2017
APPROVED BY DE SCALE@A4 1:20

FIGURE NO.

3



Wall 302 during dismantling, looking north-west



Wall 308 during dismantling, looking north-east



**Cotswold
Archaeology**

Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 826185
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

The Grand Western Canal, Tiverton,
Devon

FIGURE TITLE

Retaining wall: photographs

| | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|------------|
| DRAWN BY | EE | PROJECT NO. | 880240 |
| CHECKED BY | DJB | DATE | 21/11/2017 |
| APPROVED BY | DE | SCALE@A4 | NA |

FIGURE NO.

4

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