

Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
CgMs Consulting

on behalf of
Barrett David Wilson Homes Southern Counties

CA Project: 770671
CA Report: 18397

August 2018



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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	3
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	7
4. METHODOLOGY	7
5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-3)	8
6. DISCUSSION.....	8
7. CA PROJECT TEAM.....	8
8. REFERENCES.....	8
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	10
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	11

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1	Site location plan (1:25,000)
Figure 2	The site, showing location of groundworks (1:250/1:10,000)
Figure 3	Working Shots



SUMMARY

Project Name: Riverdown Country Park
Location: Old Sarum, Salisbury
NGR: 414938 132141
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 16, 19 July 2018
Planning Reference: 16/00048/FUL
Location of Archive: Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Site Code: RIVS18

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundwork associated with the development of a new country park, including a new car park with access from Spire View (Roman Road), land re-profiling, pathways, a play area and associated drainage at Old Sarum.

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



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2018 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for CgMs on behalf of Barrett David Wilson Homes Southern Counties at Riverdown Country park, Old Sarum, Salisbury (centred at NGR: 414938 132141; Figure 1).
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the formation of new country park, including a new car park with access from Spire View (Roman Road), land re-profiling, pathways, a play area and associated drainage (Planning ref: 16/00048/FUL).
- 1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of the County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council (ACAWC). The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area is approximately 55ha, and comprises agricultural land bordered to the north by the Roman Road, and to the west, east and south by housing estates. The site lies at approximately 87m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Newhaven Chalk Formation. The superficial deposits are unknown but are likely to comprise Head deposits (Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A succinct summary of an excavation, evaluation and geophysical survey in the vicinity and on the site by Wessex Archaeology (2014, 2015 and 2016) and Cotswold Archaeology (2016) respectively are given below.

Early Prehistoric

- 2.2 The site is located within an area that has produced extensive evidence for prehistoric remains. The site is located within a landscape that appears to have

been occupied from the Neolithic onwards. The focus of activity, which continues in the later prehistoric periods, is at Old Sarum centred c.1km west of the site. Recent large scale archaeological excavation to the east has revealed an early Neolithic burial, a spread of mid-Neolithic pits, worked flints, sarsen stones, and animal bone (WA 2014).

- 2.3 The focus of Bronze Age activity is focused on and around Old Sarum centred 1km to the west of the site, though there are no known Bronze Age finds from the site itself. Assemblages of Bronze Age flint implements have been found to the north and east of the site. A Bronze Age flanged axe has been recorded c. 750m to the north-east of the study site. A Bronze Age cremation is also known slightly further to the east. A Bronze Age axe was also found c. 850m to the south-east of the study site.
- 2.4 The large scale excavation c.1.2km to the south-west of the site has revealed a Middle Bronze Age field system, three inhumation burials and an occupation area. In the Late Bronze Age, the settlement expanded with a circular fenced enclosure, a number of round houses and an avenue of post holes (WA2014).
- 2.5 The density of Neolithic and Bronze Age remains within and immediately beyond the site indicates that the area was intensively occupied throughout these two periods. Where archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the area, early prehistoric remains have generally been revealed. In light of this evidence, the site is considered to have low to moderate potential for the presence of Neolithic assets and a moderate to high potential for Bronze Age remains.

Iron Age/Roman

- 2.6 The focus of Iron Age and Roman settlement in the area was Old Sarum, centred c. 1km to the west of the site. In the Roman period three roads converged on this point with the Salisbury to Winchester Roman road passing east-west to the north of the site.
- 2.7 Extensive cropmarks identified on Old Sarum Airfield and located to the north-west of the site are indicative of intensive Iron Age agricultural activity/land division however, no settlement enclosures have been identified. Cropmarks to the east of the study site are also considered to date to the Iron Age. However, no evidence for

settlement has been found although the cropmarks indicate intensive agricultural land division.

- 2.8 The site's western boundary is adjacent to an area of late (Iron Age) prehistoric settlement where over 70 postholes, some forming 4 post structures, were excavated. Pits and a burial found in association with the postholes are dated to the Iron Age. A fairly significant Iron Age settlement is located to the southeast of the site and excavations proved longevity of use into the Roman period.
- 2.9 Two Iron Age burials are recorded to the south-west of the site and these are located approximately equidistant between the settlement described above and two further settlements. The settlements are c. 600m to the south-west of the site.
- 2.10 As mentioned above the focus of Roman settlement was at/around Old Sarum. However, a significant Roman settlement is also located along the Salisbury to Dorchester Roman Road 1.2km to the south-west of the site. No Roman assets are recorded on the site or within its immediate vicinity. Roman coins found along the line of the Roman road (linking Salisbury to Winchester) to the north of the site are 'chance' finds most probably dropped by travellers using the road. A pit 14 feet in diameter and 9 feet deep feature is recorded to the south-east of the site contained an inhumation accompanied with Roman vessels.
- 2.11 The density of Iron Age and Romano-British remains within and immediately beyond the study area indicates that the area was densely occupied throughout these two periods. In light of this evidence, particularly the adjacent late prehistoric settlement, the study site is considered to have moderate to high potential for later prehistoric and a moderate potential for the presence of Romano-British heritage assets.

Saxon - Early Medieval

- 2.12 The site and the immediate vicinity contain no records of Saxon or early medieval assets. The site is located away from nearby settlements that may have had Saxon origins. Therefore, it is considered to have low/nil potential for Saxon remains. The focus of Saxon and early medieval settlement was at Old Sarum located 1km to the west of the site.



Medieval

- 2.13 There are no medieval remains recorded within the study site or within the immediate vicinity. At this time the focus of medieval activity was shifting from Old Sarum, located c. 1km to the west, to the present urban centre of Salisbury, located c. 4km to the south of the site. The site was located away from the nearby medieval settlements and would have been within the open field agricultural regime of Old Sarum. Consequently, the site is considered to have low/nil potential for medieval remains.

Post Medieval and Modern

- 2.14 There are no post-medieval medieval remains recorded within the site.

Recent Works

- 2.15 Work carried out by Wessex Archaeology (2014), comprising strip, map and sample excavation and a watching brief, on land at Bishopdown Farm, Salisbury revealed features of early and later prehistoric date including inhumation burial dated to the Early Neolithic, and a spread of Middle Neolithic pits containing Peterborough Ware pottery, worked flint, non-local stone (sarsen), animal bone and antler, as well as charred plant remains. A few pits containing small quantities of Beaker and/or Early Bronze Age pottery were also recorded (WA2014).
- 2.16 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in October 2015 (WA 2015) at Land to the north and west of Bishopdown Farm, Riverdown Park, land parcel A1-A3, Salisbury, Wiltshire. Five post-holes were recorded in Trenches 9, 10 and 11, which are believed to be the continuation of a prehistoric timber post avenue previously identified during the excavation to the south at Greentrees School, in 2015, and at land at Old Sarum, to the north, in 2006. A further 4 post-holes and a curvilinear gully were recorded in Trench 3, the form of which suggests a roundhouse with drip gully. Although no dating evidence was recovered, Trench 3 is in close proximity to the location of a three Late Bronze Age roundhouses and a pit, identified in 2001/2, during works associated with the Old Sarum water pipeline.
- 2.17 A subsequent geophysical survey of the site by Wessex Archaeology (2016) identified a number of anomalies of likely and possible archaeological significance including ditch and pit like features, and a possible enclosure to the south east. The pit like features may represent settlement activity associated with the enclosure.

- 2.18 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in September 2016 at Land off Neal Close, Bishopsdown Farm, Salisbury, Wiltshire. Five trenches were excavated. (CA 2016) Despite the low to moderate potential for Neolithic archaeology and moderate to high potential for Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano British archaeology, no strong evidence was found for any specific period. Trench 3 contained one linear, an undated boundary ditch. Trench 5 contained the shallow remnants of a potential lynchet and suggested evidence of terracing within the site.

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 comprising the excavation of the cut off drain where it impacted existing ground surface (Figure 2). The provision of car parking and installation of play areas were not monitored as set out in the WSI as these works did not impact on the existing ground surface.
- 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 and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Andover. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive

will be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum. 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 (FIGURES 2-3)

- 5.1 The natural geological substrate (102) consisting of white chalk, was revealed at an average depth of 0.5m below present ground level. This was overlain by mid yellow brown friable silty clay subsoil with occasional sub-rounded chalk inclusions (101) averaging 0.18m in thickness, which was in turn sealed by 0.32m of mid greyish brown friable silty clay topsoil with occasional sub-angular flint and chalk inclusions.
- 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 (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 associated with the Bronze Age and Iron Age features identified within the vicinity of the site either do not extend as far as or were not exposed by the limited scope of the development.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Bush and Emily Troake. The report was written by Emily Troake and Ray Kennedy. The illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled by Zoe Emery, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ray Kennedy.

8. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 19 July 2018

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CgMs, 2015, *Land off Neal Close, Bishopsdown Farm, Salisbury, Wiltshire*, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

Wessex Archaeology (WA), 2014, *Land to the North, West and South of Bishopsdown Farm, Salisbury, Wiltshire: Post-Excavation Assessment and Update Project design*. Unpublished client report.

WA, 2015, *Land at Riverdown Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire* (Land Parcels A1-A3) Archaeological Evaluation Report

WA, 2016, *Riverdown Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire*, Detailed Gradiometer Survey

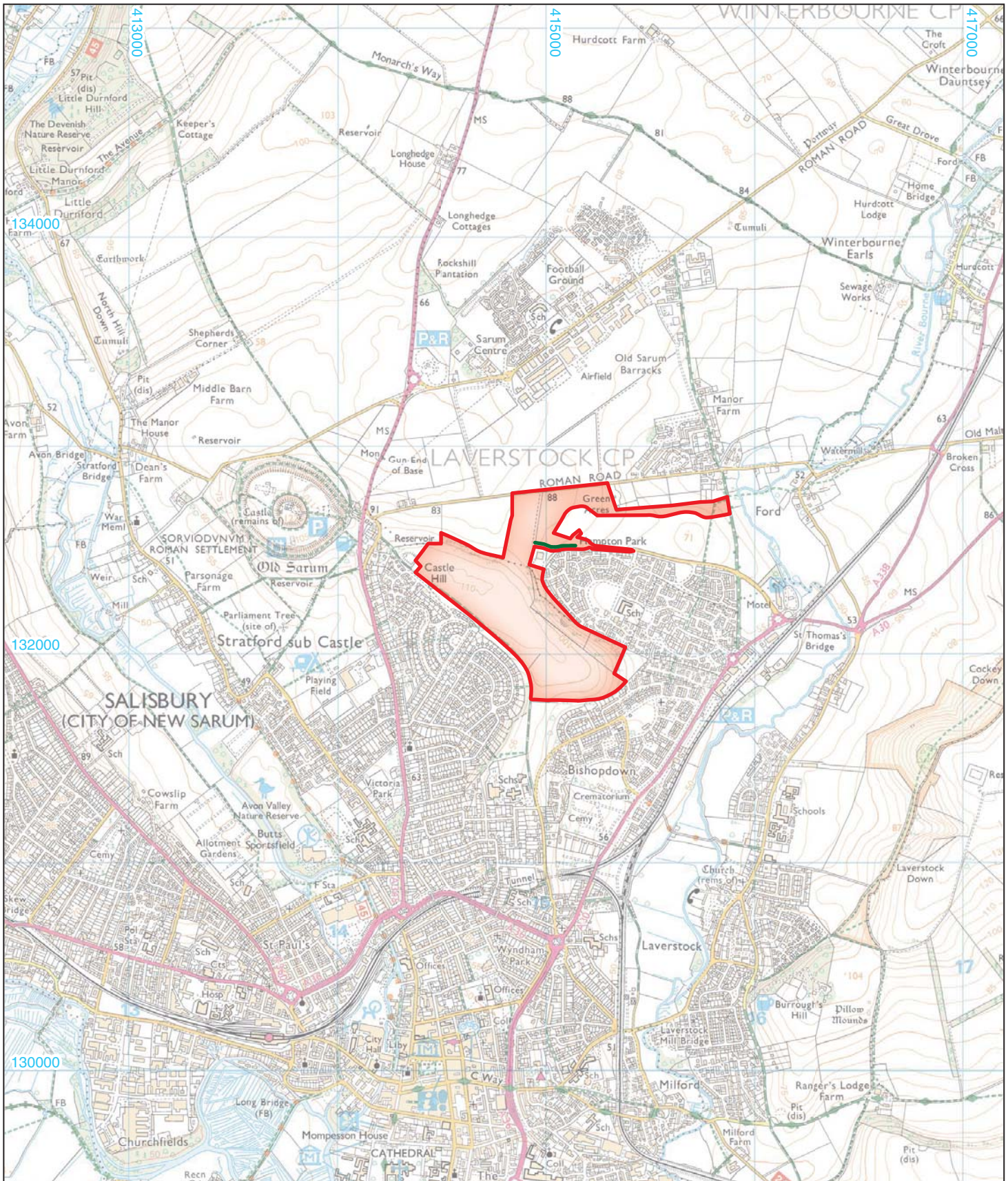


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		topsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay, friable, common rooting throughout and occasional sub angular flint inclusions	>150	0.9	0.32
1	101	Layer		subsoil	Mid yellow brown silty clay, friable with rare rooting and occasional sub rounded flints	>150	0.9	0.18
1	102	Layer		Natural	Chalk with occasional large flint nodules	>150	0.9	>0.14
1	103	Layer		Made ground	Chalk and topsoil from other parts of the construction site dumped here	>150	0.9	0.42

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a new country park, including a new car park with access from Spire View (Roman Road), land re-profiling, pathways, a play area and associated drainage at Old Sarum. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.
Project dates	16, 19 July 2018
Project type	Watching Brief
Previous work	Wessex Archaeology (WA), 2014, Land to the North, West and South of Bishopsdown Farm, Salisbury, Wiltshire: Post-Excavation Assessment and Update Project design. Unpublished client report. WA, 2015, Land at Riverdown Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire (Land Parcels A1-A3) Archaeological Evaluation Report WA, 2016, Riverdown Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, Detailed Gradiometer Survey
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury
Study area (M ² /ha)	
Site co-ordinates	414938 132141
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	N/A
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy
Project Supervisor	Emily Troake
MONUMENT TYPE	
None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	
None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical	For example ceramics, animal bone etc
Paper	Context sheets, matrices etc
Digital	Database, digital photos etc
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2018 <i>Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 18397	



N

█ Site boundary
█ Observed groundworks

0 1km



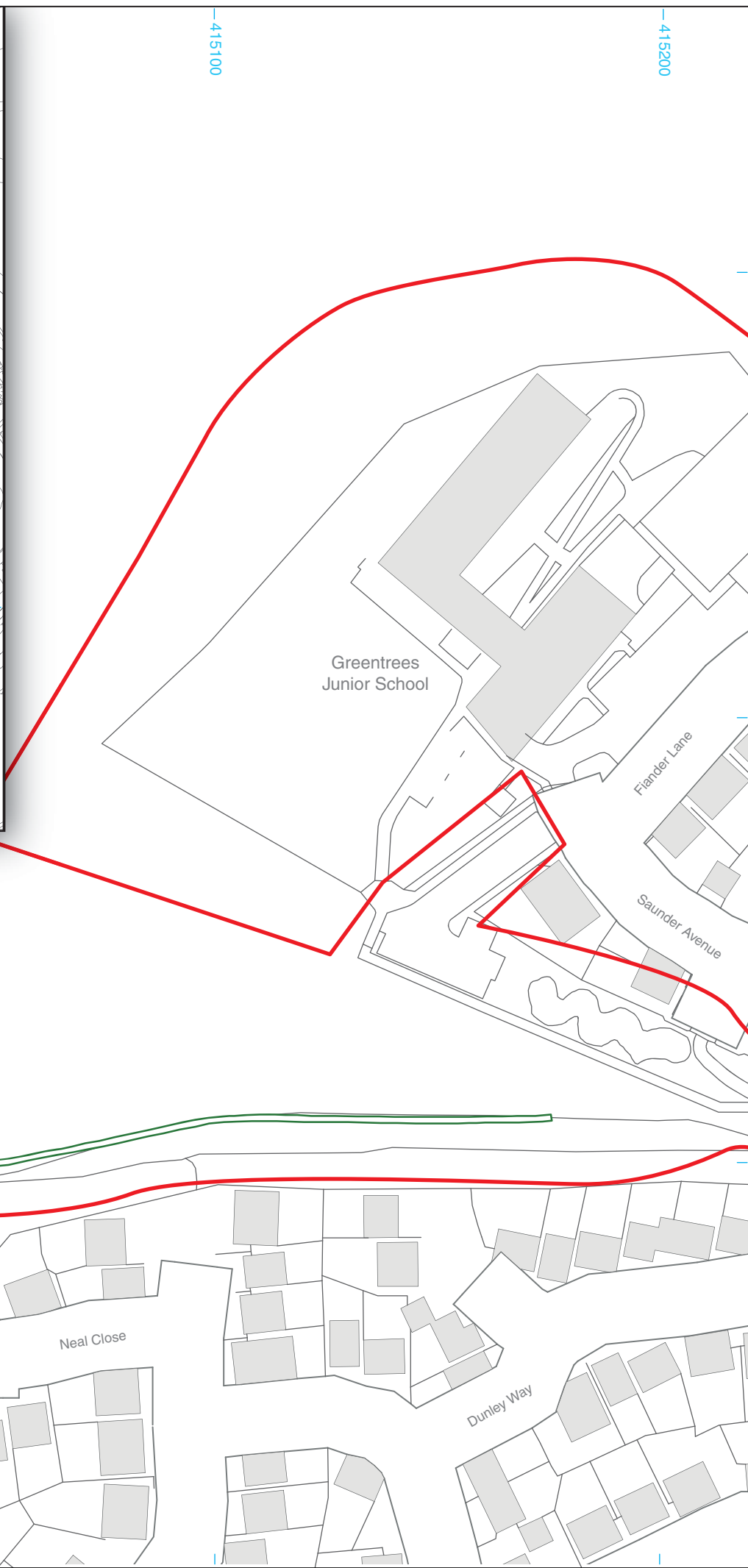
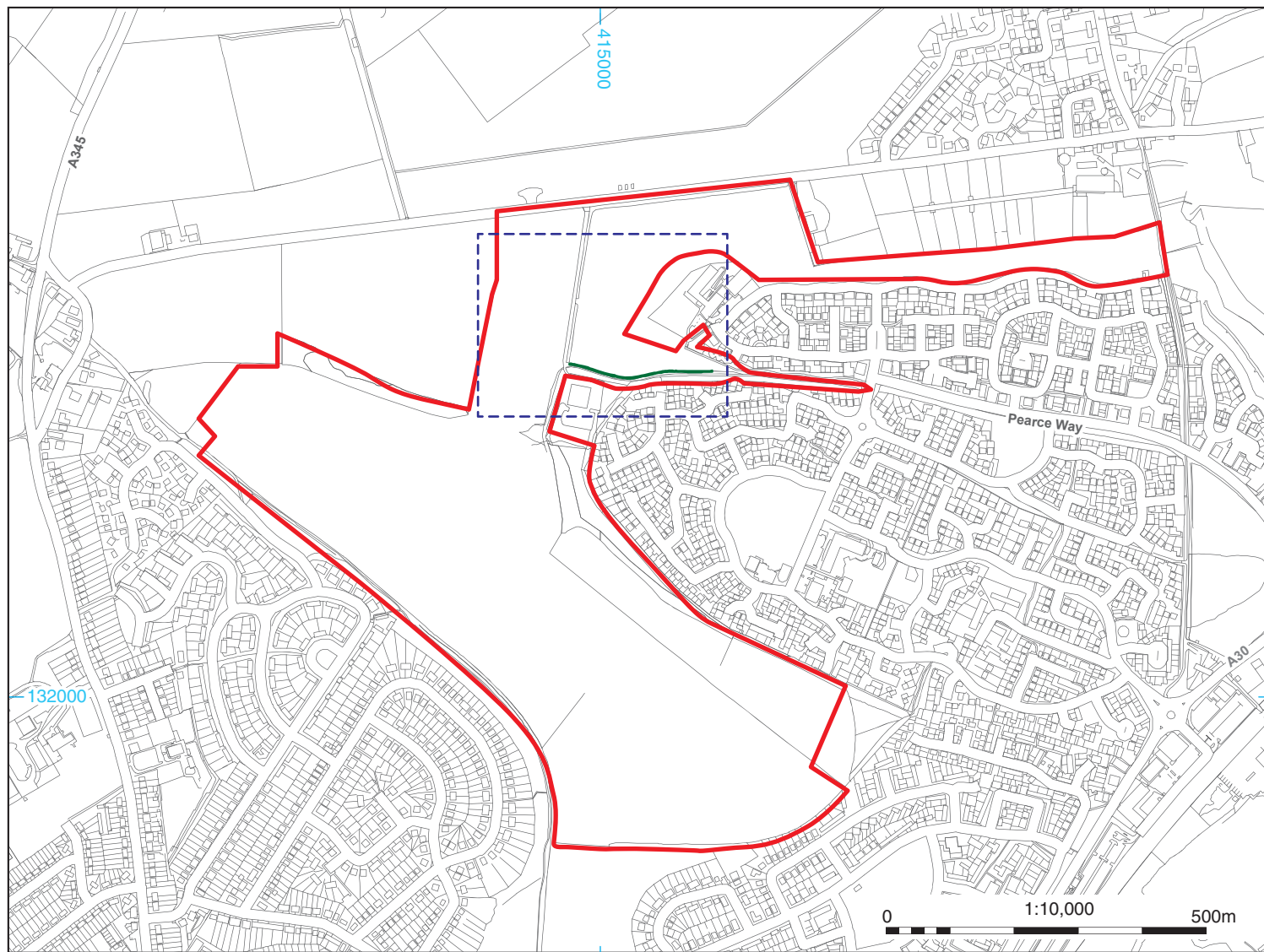
Cotswold Archaeology
 Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY DJB	PROJECT NO. 770671	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY AO	DATE 31/07/2018	1
APPROVED BY RK	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	

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Ordnance Survey 0100031673



- Site boundary
- Observed groundworks



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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
**Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum,
 Salisbury**

FIGURE TITLE
Area of observed groundworks

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	770671	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	31/07/2018	2
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A3	1:1,250 / 1:10,000	



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

PROJECT TITLE

Riverdown Country Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury

FIGURE TITLE

Working shots

DRAWN BY AO PROJECT NO. 770671
 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 02/08/2018
 APPROVED BY RK SCALE@A4 NA

FIGURE NO.

3

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

Unit 8 - The IO Centre
Fingle Drive
Stonebridge
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK13 0AT

t: 01908 564660

e: enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

