

# Badbury Park School Swindon Wiltshire

*Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation*



for  
RPS Consulting Ltd

on behalf of  
ISG UK Construction West

CA Project: CR0161  
CA Report: CR0161\_1

August 2019



# Badbury Park School Swindon Wiltshire

## Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation

CA Project: CR0161  
CA Report: CR0161\_1



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|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Revision              | Date          | Author              | Checked by   | Status          | Reasons for revision | Approved by   |
| A                     | 8 August 2019 | Sara-Jayne Boughton | Alex Thomson | Final LPA Issue |                      | Cliff Bateman |
|                       |               |                     |              |                 |                      |               |
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|                       |               |                     |              |                 |                      |               |

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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Badbury Park School  
**Location:** Swindon, Wiltshire  
**NGR:** 418492 182133  
**Type:** Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation  
**Date:** 5 - 7 August 2019  
**Planning Reference:** Swindon Borough Council ref; S/10/0842  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery  
**Site Code:** BPS 19

An archaeological strip, map and record excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August 2019 at Badbury School, Swindon, Wiltshire. The excavation area measured 1,500m<sup>2</sup> in extent.

A ditch, dateable to the late post-medieval/early modern period, was recorded crossing the excavation area. It correlated to a feature identified by during previous geophysical and trial trench evaluation surveys, and is also depicted on historic cartographic sources.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological Strip, Map and Record (SMR) excavation at the request of RPS Consulting Services Ltd, on behalf of ISG UK Construction West, at Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 418492 182133; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 Outline planning consent was granted by Swindon Borough Council (SBC; ref. S/10/0842) for the construction of up to 890 dwellings along with employment land, local centre, community uses, primary school and other activities, on land at the south-eastern edge of Swindon. A Reserved Matters (RM) application has subsequently been submitted regarding the construction of a new primary school and associated facilities within the greater development area. An archaeological SMR excavation was requested in the area of the proposed car park for the new school by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council (WC), the archaeological advisor to SBC.
- 1.3 The SMR excavation was undertaken in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI; RPS 2019a) was produced and approved by WC. A Project Design was then produced by CA (2019) in response to the WSI, which was approved by RPS and WC.
- 1.4 The fieldwork followed *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Excavation* (ClfA 2014); the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* and accompanying *PPN3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015). It was monitored by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger.

### ***The site***

- 1.5 The proposed school development area is approximately 2ha and the area of the proposed car park, as excavated during these works, measured c. 0.15ha and lies within an open grass field. The site is bounded to the south-west by Day House Lane, to the south-east by recent residential properties fronting onto Rainscombe Road (part of the Badbury Park development), and to the north-east and north-west by grassland and woodland. The site lies at approximately 113m AOD, and is broadly level.

- 1.6 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as mudstone of the Lower Greensand Group, formed during the Cretaceous Period (BGS 2019). During the course of the SMR excavation the identified natural substrate comprised of yellow-orange silty-sand.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site and wider area have been subject to desk-based assessment (JSAC 2003), geophysical survey (PCG 2005; GSB 2006), two phases of trial trench evaluation (OA 2006; WA 2007) and Archaeological Management Plan (AMP; RPS 2019b). The results of these assessments and surveys are briefly summarised below.
- 2.2 Geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching identified a series of sub-rectangular enclosures directly to the north-west of the current site. These were of varying sizes, with some appearing to be separated by narrow trackways and may represent the remains of a small Roman settlement or farmstead (GSB 2006; PCG 2005; OA 2006; WA 2007; RPS 2019b; see Fig. 2 of this report).
- 2.3 The 1840s Tithe Map and 1882 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (see Fig. 4) depicts the SMR area as split across two parcels of land, with a boundary ditch/possible watercourse lying between the two. This possible watercourse appears to link a series of ponds, with water draining towards the Coate Water reservoir to the west.
- 2.4 This feature was highlighted by the preceding geophysical survey (PCG 2005). Subsequently, trial trenching undertaken in 2007 within the confines of the proposed SMR excavation area (WA Trench 51) identified a single ditch, which was interpreted as a modern feature and therefore not recorded in detail (WA 2007). An archaeological watching brief undertaken on the site in 2018 during geotechnical investigations recorded no features or deposits of archaeological interest (CA 2018).
- 2.5 An Archaeological Management Plan (AMP), produced for the RM application, has also been produced for the site by RPS (2019b) and it recommends management of an area of *in situ* preservation as established as part of the wider development area; termed Preservation Area 2. This falls into part of the current site boundary, although it only extends to within c. 30m of the west of the proposed car park.

### 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 and potential of structural and industrial remains
- assess the overall presence, survival, condition, and potential of artefactual and ecofactual remains

3.2 The specific aims of the work were to:

- establish if the identified area of Roman activity extends eastwards beyond the edge of the Archaeological Preservation Area 2
- record any evidence of past settlement or other land use
- recover artefactual evidence to date any evidence of past settlement that may be identified
- sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use and economy

3.3 Research aims identified from the *South West Archaeological Research Framework* (Webster 2007) included:

- 21: Improve our understanding of the environmental aspects of farming
- 29: Improve understanding on non-villa Roman rural settlement
- 40: Improve our understanding of agricultural intensification and diversification in later prehistory
- 41: Assess the impact of the Roman empire on farming

### 4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI and Project Design (RPS 2019; CA 2019). The location of the SMR excavation area was designed to cover the extent of the proposed car park of the school development, the extent of which was agreed with Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger (WC). The SMR excavation area was approximately 1,500m<sup>2</sup> in extent and was set out on OS National Grid (NGR)



co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4: *Survey Manual*. It was 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*.

- 4.2 Fieldwork commenced with the removal of topsoil and part of the subsoil from the excavation area by mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket, under archaeological supervision, to the development's formation depth of 0.35m bpgl.
- 4.3 Any 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*.
- 4.4 Deposits were assessed for their environmental potential but no features were sampled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*.
- 4.5 The archive from the excavation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery. 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 (FIGS 2–5)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the excavation results; detailed summaries of the contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 Natural geological substrate 1305 was recorded at the base of a single excavated intervention, at approximately 0.91m below present ground level. This was overlain by brown-orange silty-sand subsoil 1301, which was observed at the formation level for the car park throughout the excavation area.
- 5.3 Identified cutting the subsoil, ditch 1302 (Fig. 5, Section AA) was aligned broadly north-west/south-east and ran across the centre of the excavation area. It measured at least 40m in length, 2.2m in width and 0.69m in depth. It contained silty-clay and



silty-sand fills 1303 and 1304, from which modern plastic, glass and metal artefacts were recovered (but not retained) and was in turn sealed by topsoil 1300.

- 5.4 Modern disturbance was identified to the south-west of ditch 1302 and consisted of regular pit features filled with modern waste material. This likely relates to the previously undertaken geotechnical works.

## **6. DISCUSSION**

- 6.1 The excavation identified one feature of archaeological interest during the course of the fieldwork. Ditch 1302, recorded running through the centre of the excavation area, correlates closely to a feature identified by the preceding geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation, where it was recorded in Trench WA51. It also correlates to a field boundary depicted on historic cartographic sources (see Fig. 4), which suggest that it is of late post-medieval origin and continued in use until the mid 20th century.
- 6.2 Through the absence of earlier features and limited scope of the works (due to the limit of excavation equating to the formation level of the proposed car park), it is likely that the extensive Roman activity recorded within Preservation Area 2, to the north-west of the current site, either does not extend as far as, or has not been exposed by, the current works. However, due to the limited depth of excavation the presence of Roman features underlying the subsoil within the SMR area cannot be discounted.

## **7. CA PROJECT TEAM**

- 7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Sara-Jayne Boughton, assisted by Matt Coman. The report was written by Sara-Jayne Boughton. The illustrations were prepared by Ryan Wilson. The archive has been compiled by Sara-Jayne Boughton and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The fieldwork was managed for CA by Alex Thomson.



## 8. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer*  
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 31 July 2019
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2018 *Land at Badbury Park, Swindon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief*, CA Report No. **18247**
- CA 2019 *Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire: Project Design for an Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation*
- GSB (GSB Prospection Ltd) 2006 *Swindon Gateway: Geophysical Survey*, report ref. **03/05**
- JSAC 2003 *An archaeological desk-based assessment of the proposed Swindon Gateway, Coate, Swindon, Wiltshire*, Report ref: **1082/03/01**
- OA (Oxford Archaeology) 2006 *Swindon Gateway, B 2005/14, Archaeological Evaluation Report*. Job No: **2961**
- PCG (Pre-Construct Geophysics) 2005 *Geophysical survey: site of the proposed Swindon Gateway Development, Coate, Swindon, Wiltshire*
- RPS 2019a *Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation*
- RPS (RPS Consulting Services Ltd) 2019b *Badbury Park School, Swindon: Archaeological Management Plan*
- Webster, C. (ed.) 2007 *The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework, Resource Assessment and Research Agenda*, Somerset County Council
- WA (Wessex Archaeology) 2007 *Swindon Gateway, Swindon, Wiltshire: Integrated Archaeological Evaluation report (Phases 1 and 2)*, WA report ref. **63980.04**

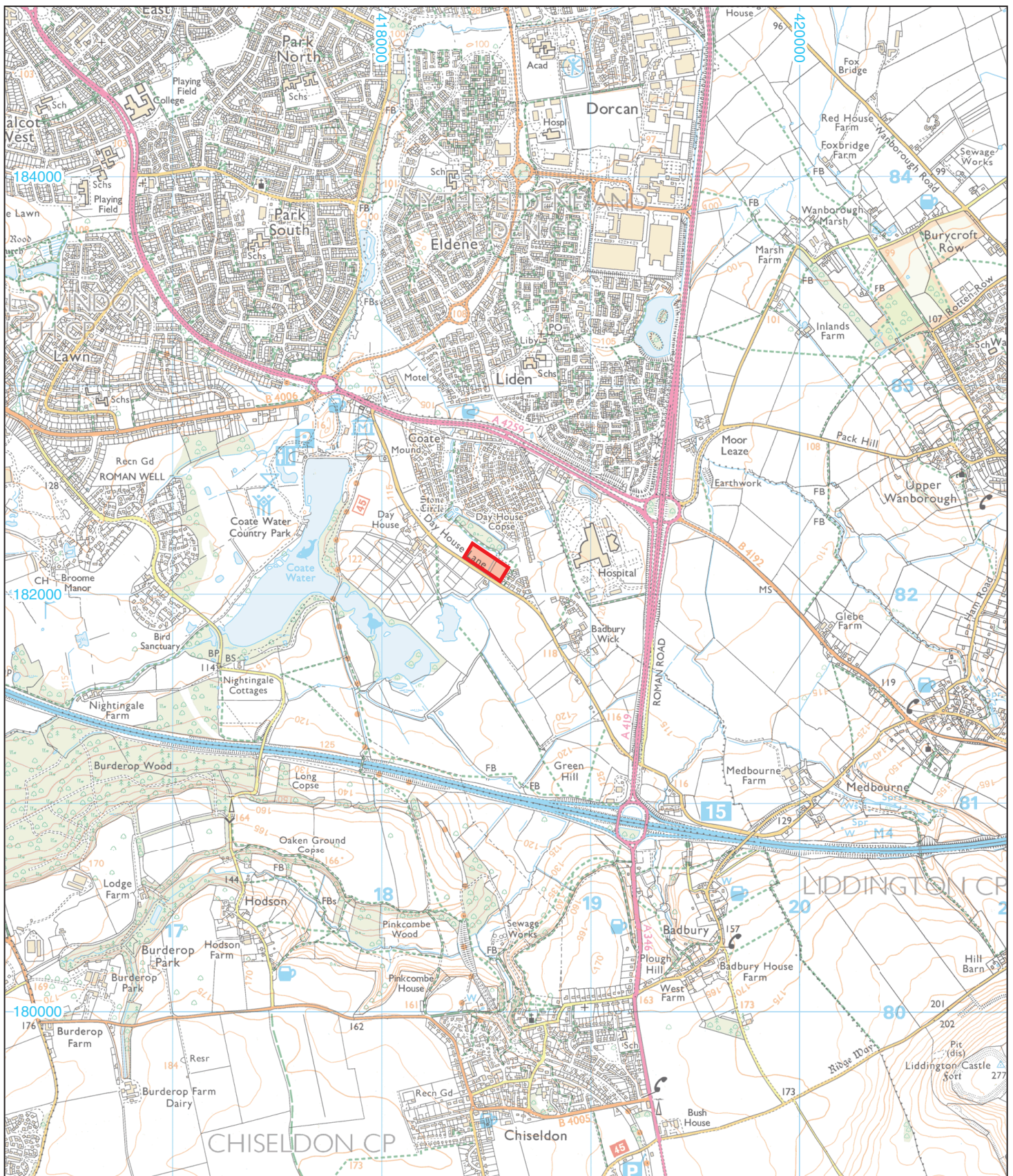
**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

| Trench No. | Context No. | Type  | Fill of | Context interpretation | Description   | L (m) | W (m) | Depth/thickness (m) |
|------------|-------------|-------|---------|------------------------|---|-------|-------|---------------------|
| 13         | 1300        | Layer |         | Topsoil                | Mid brown-grey sand-silt; friable; scrub on top   | >42   | >35   | <0.26               |
| 13         | 1301        | Layer |         | Subsoil                | Mid brown-orange silt-sand; friable; occ. large boulder inclusions; modern truncation was observed                                    | >42   | >35   | >0.10               |
| 13         | 1302        | Cut   |         | Ditch                  | NW/SE aligned ditch with steep sloping, concave sides and concave base  | >42   | 2.2   | 0.69                |
| 13         | 1303        | Fill  | 1302    | Lower fill of ditch    | Mid orange-grey silt-clay; friable; occasional charcoal flecks and decayed roots; plastic, glass and metal recovered but not retained | >1    | 1.68  | 0.26                |
| 13         | 1304        | Fill  | 1302    | Upper fill of ditch    | Mid brown-orange sand-silt; friable; plastic, glass and metal recovered but not retained  | >1    | 2.2   | 0.45                |
| 13         | 1305        | Layer |         | Natural substrate      | Light yellow-orange sand-clay; compact  | >1.68 | >1    |                     |

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

| <b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>  |   |                        |
|---|---|------------------------|
| Project Name  | Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire   |                        |
| Short description   | <p>An archaeological strip, map and record excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August 2019 at Badbury School, Swindon, Wiltshire. The excavation area measured 1,500m<sup>2</sup> in extent.</p> <p>A ditch, dateable to the late post-medieval/early modern period, was recorded crossing the excavation area. It correlated to a feature identified by during previous geophysical and trial trench evaluation surveys, and is also depicted on historic cartographic sources.</p> |                        |
| Project dates   | 5-7 August 2019   |                        |
| Project type  | Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation   |                        |
| Previous work   | Desk-Based Assessment (JSAC 2003)<br>Geophysical Survey (GSB 2006; PCG 2005)<br>Field Evaluation (OA 2006)<br>Field Evaluation WA (2007)<br>Archaeological Watching Brief (CA 2018)   |                        |
| Future work   | Unknown   |                        |
| <b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>   |   |                        |
| Site Location   | Day House Lane, Swindon, Wiltshire  |                        |
| Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)   | 1,500m <sup>2</sup>   |                        |
| Site co-ordinates   | 418492 182133   |                        |
| <b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>   |   |                        |
| Name of organisation  | Cotswold Archaeology  |                        |
| Project Brief originator  | Wiltshire Council   |                        |
| Project Design (WSI) originator   | RPS Consulting Ltd  |                        |
| Project Manager   | Alex Thomson  |                        |
| Project Supervisor  | Sara-Jayne Boughton   |                        |
| <b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>  | None  |                        |
| <b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>  | None  |                        |
| <b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>   |   |                        |
|   | Intended final location of archive  | Content                |
| Paper   | Swindon Museum and Art Gallery  | Field recording sheets |
| Digital   | Swindon Museum and Art Gallery  | Digital photos         |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>   |   |                        |
| CA (2019) <i>Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Excavation</i> , CA Report no. <b>CR0161_1</b> |   |                        |





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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

0 1km

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|                        |                           |                   |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>DRAWN BY</b> RW     | <b>PROJECT NO.</b> CR0161 | <b>FIGURE NO.</b> |
| <b>CHECKED BY</b> DJB  | <b>DATE</b> 12/08/2019    | <b>1</b>          |
| <b>APPROVED BY</b> SJB | <b>SCALE@A4</b> 1:25,000  |                   |





- Site boundary
- Preservation Area 2
- Current excavation area
- Archaeological feature
- Evaluation trench (OA 2006)
- Evaluation trench (WA 2007)
- Watching brief (CA 2018)

0 1:1500 50m

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Geophysics results: Pre-Construct Geophysics (2005)



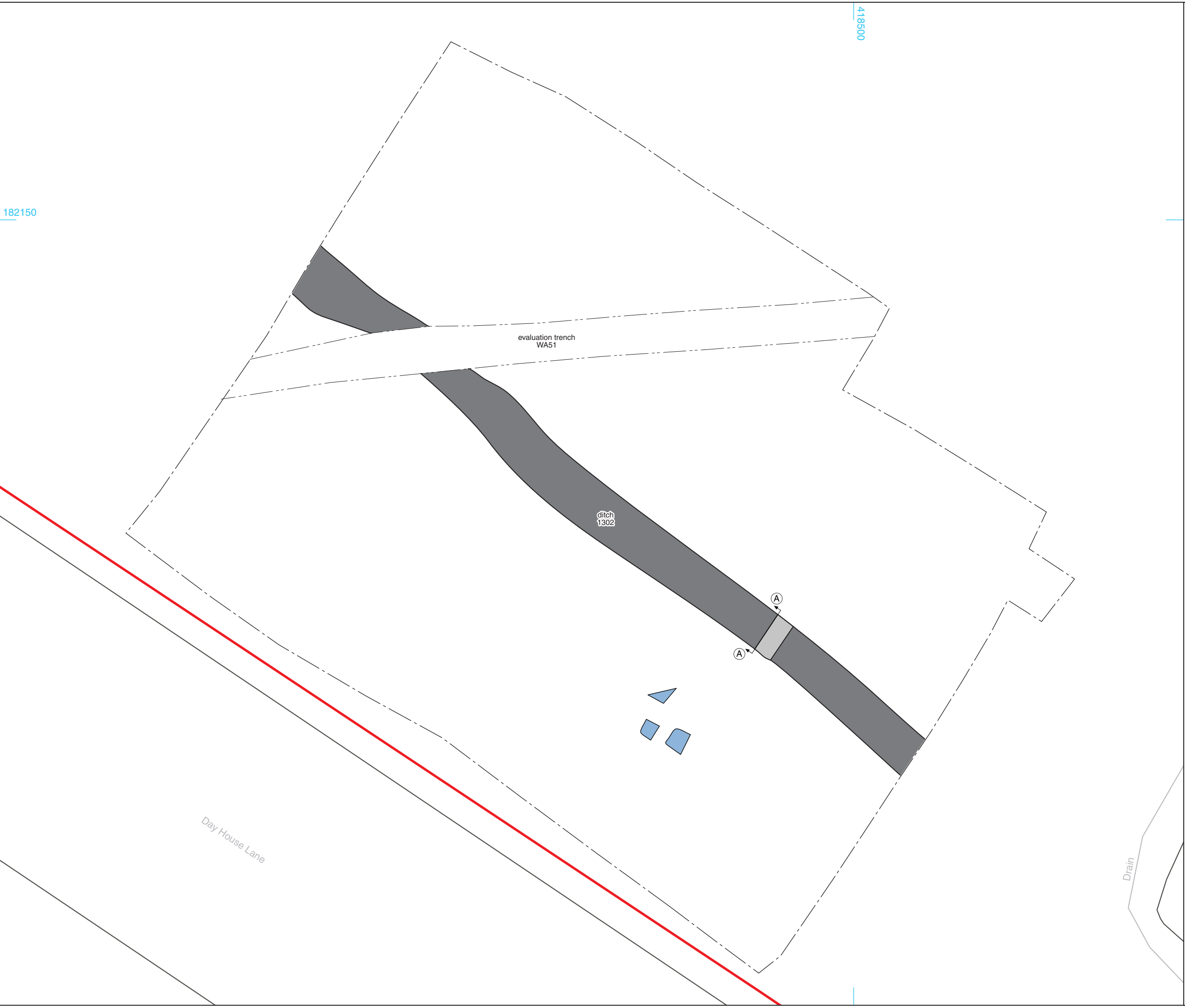
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PROJECT TITLE  
Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**The site, showing previous works and  
geophysical results**

|             |     |             |            |            |
|-------------|-----|-------------|------------|------------|
| DRAWN BY    | RW  | PROJECT NO. | CR0161     | FIGURE NO. |
| CHECKED BY  | DJB | DATE        | 12/08/2019 | 2          |
| APPROVED BY | SJB | SCALE       | A3 1:1500  |            |



- Site boundary
- Previous evaluation trench (WA 2007)
- Current excavation area
- Archaeological feature (excavated / unexcavated)
- Modern feature
- Section line

0 1:200 10m

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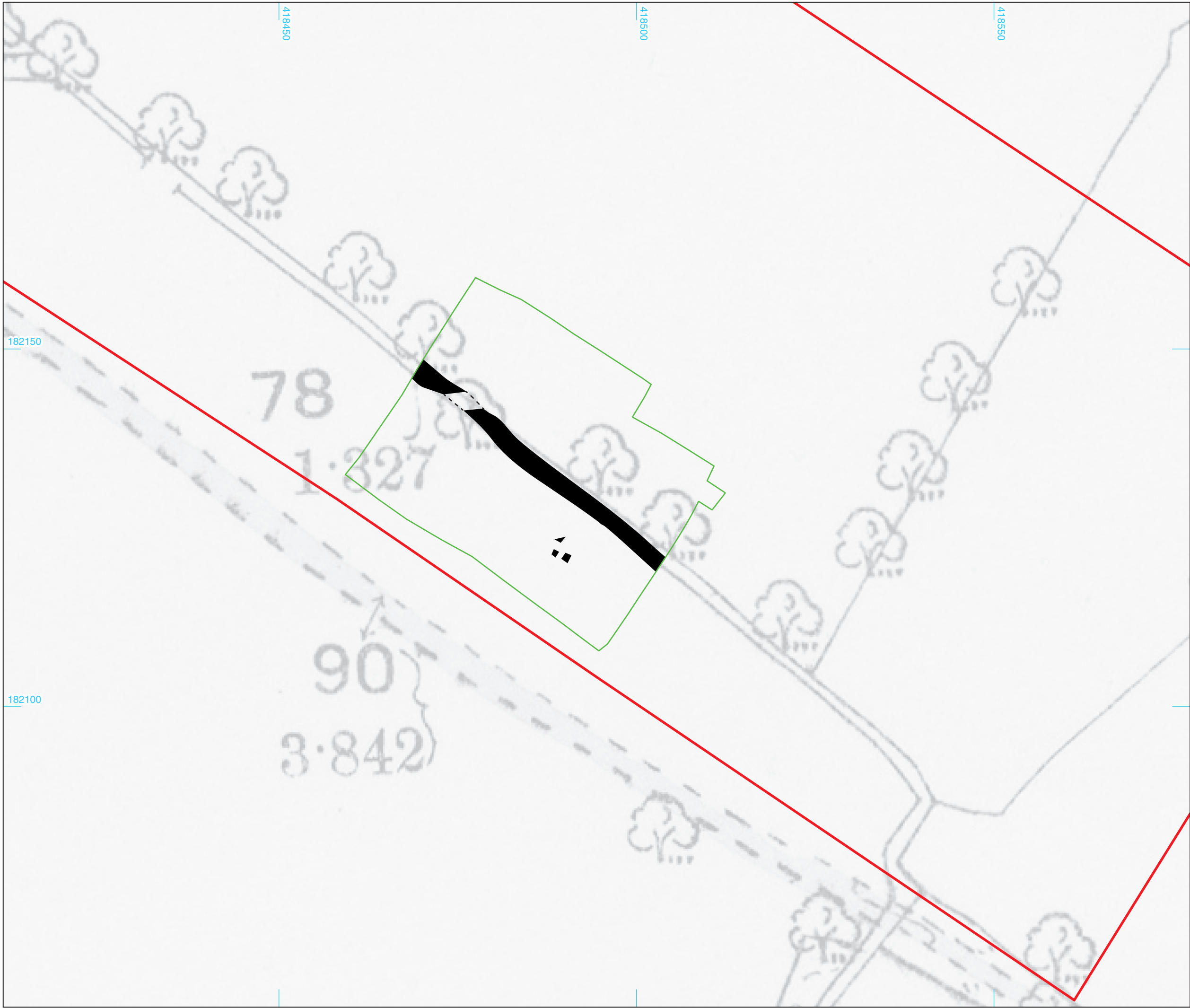
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PROJECT TITLE  
Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE  
The excavation area, showing archaeological features





- Site boundary
- Current excavation area
- Archaeological feature

0 1:500 25m

Mapping © British Library and National Library of Scotland



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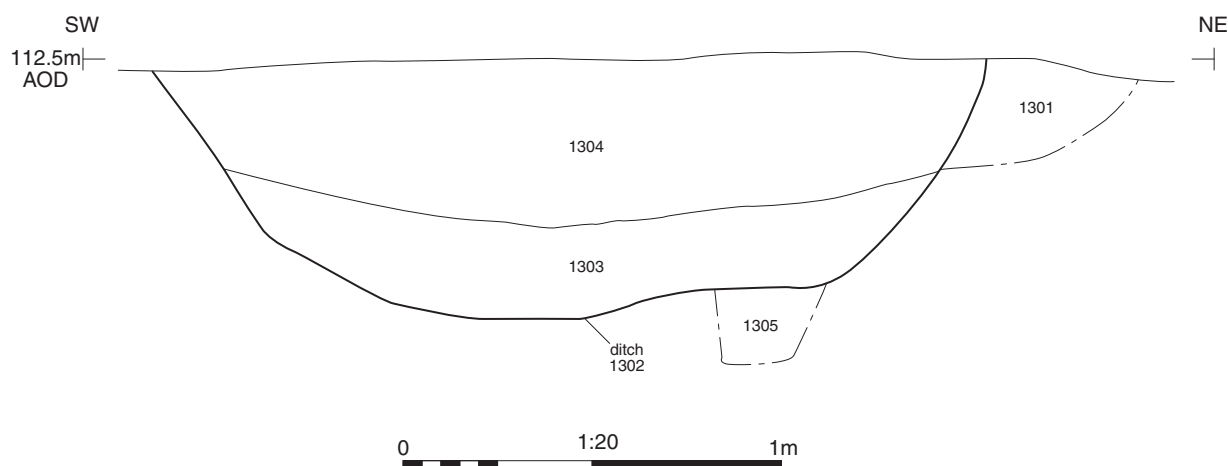
PROJECT TITLE  
Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE  
**The excavation area, overlain on 1882  
First Edition Ordnance Survey map**

|                                       |                  |                                 |                               |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| DRAWN BY<br>CHECKED BY<br>APPROVED BY | RW<br>DJB<br>SJB | PROJECT NO.<br>DATE<br>SCALE@A3 | CR0161<br>12/08/2019<br>1:500 | FIGURE NO.<br><b>4</b> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|



# Section AA



Ditch 1302, looking north-west (1m scale)



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## PROJECT TITLE

Badbury Park School, Swindon, Wiltshire

## FIGURE TITLE

**Ditch 1302: section and photograph**

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CHECKED BY **DJB** DATE **12/08/2019**  
APPROVED BY **SJB** SCALE@A4 **1:20**

FIGURE NO.

**5**

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