

**Siddington Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire**

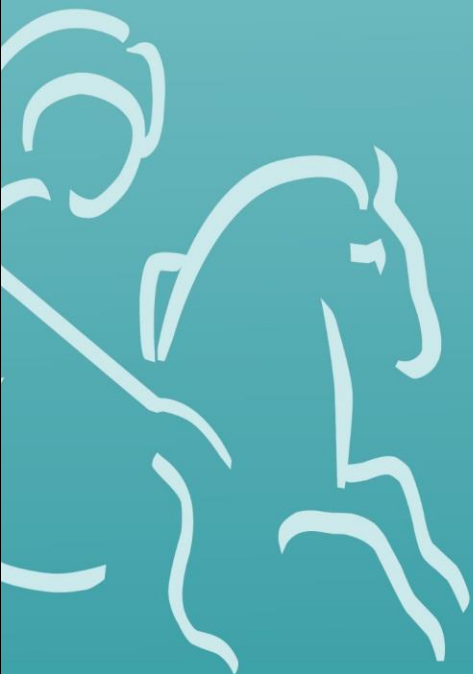
Archaeological Watching Brief



for:
Thames Water Utilities Ltd.

CA Project: CR1014
CA Report: CR1014_1

September 2022



Siddington Park Cirencester Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Siddington Park
Location:	Cirencester, Gloucestershire
NGR:	403914 200238
Type:	Watching brief
Date:	February 2022
Planning reference:	17/00076/OUT
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Corinium Museum and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Site Code:	CASIPC 22

In February 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with development at Siddington Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In February 2022, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the installation of a weholite tank at Siddington Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (centred at NGR: 403914 200238; Fig. 1). This watching brief was undertaken for Thames Water Utilities Ltd.
- 1.2. The work carried out on the site was undertaken as part of existing planning consent granted by Costwold District Council for the construction of a central facilities building providing community care services together with 171 Assisted Living Units/Close Care Units, landscaped grounds, internal highways, parking and associated works (CDC; planning ref: 17/00076/OUT). Condition 9 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with an approved Project Design (NA 2017).
- 1.3. The scope of the watching brief was defined by Charles Parry, former Archaeologist, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), the archaeological advisor to CDC, during consultation with AECOM. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a subsequent *Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief* prepared by AECOM (2019) and approved by Mr. Parry.
- 1.4. The watching brief was also in line with *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020), *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: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.5. The area subject to groundworks comprised a roughly triangular parcel of land, of c. 0.4ha in extent. It lies c. 350m to the south of Cirencester and c. 500m to the north-east of Siddington and on the south-west side of the A419. The site currently comprises partially removed woodland and is bounded to the west by South Cerney Road, to the north by a further area of woodland, to the south by residential properties, and to the east by the Continue Care Retirement Community (CCRC) development. The site lies at approximately 110m AOD and is broadly flat.

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- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Cornbrash Formation - Limestone, which formed in the Jurassic era, with no overlying superficial deposits (BGS 2022). The natural geological substrate identified during the course of the watching brief comprised limestone brash.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Extensive archaeological work has been undertaken immediately to the north and east of the site as part of the Siddington Park CCRC development. These works comprised an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA; JSAC 2006), geophysical survey (GSB 2006), archaeological trial trench evaluation (CA 2006a), a watching brief (CA 2006b) and an archaeological excavation (NA 2016). The following is a brief summary of these results of these assessments.

Prehistoric and Roman

- 2.2. Mesolithic flints have been recovered from alluvial deposits during excavations at Siddington Road, Cirencester, located c. 500m to the north-west of the site, where there was also evidence for Neolithic and Early Bronze Age settlement (CA 2020). Further settlement activity from the earlier prehistoric has been identified at the Kingshill South and North sites, c. 1km and 2km north of the site respectively (Simmonds *et al.* 2018; Biddulph and Welsh 2011). Geophysical anomalies interpreted as representing a Bronze Age barrow have also been recorded at Worm's Farm, c. 1km to the south-east of the site (WAFG 2015).
- 2.3. Intensive settlement of the Churn Valley continued into the later prehistoric, with Early Iron Age settlement activity attested at Kingshill North (Biddulph and Welsh 2011) and Middle Iron Age ring ditches at Kingshill South (Simmonds *et al.* 2018) and Siddington Road (CA 2020).
- 2.4. The site is located c. 1km to the south of the town wall of Roman *Corinium* (Cirencester) and adjacent to the route of Ermin Street, the major Roman road linking *Calleva Atrebatum* (Silchester) with *Corinium* and then *Glevum* (Gloucester) to the north.

Medieval and post-medieval

- 2.5. A sunken featured building (SFB), dating to the early Medieval period, was identified at Preston Mill Barn c. 270m to the north of the site (CA 2018), and a further eight SFBs were excavated at Siddington Road (CA 2020).

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- 2.6. The settlement at Siddington was established by the time of the Domesday survey and a possible deserted medieval village, Upper Siddington, is located just to the north of the modern settlement. It is likely that the development site lay within agricultural land throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods (JSAC 2006).

Geophysical Survey

- 2.7. The geophysical survey (GSB 2006) identified strong anomalies interpreted as pits and ditches of probable Iron Age or Roman date, particularly focused in the southern half of the Continuing Care Retirement Community development area directly to the east of the site.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 2.8. The trial trench evaluation (CA 2006) corroborated the findings of the geophysical survey and dated most of the features to the Middle Iron Age Period, although some residual earlier prehistoric material was also recovered.
- 2.9. The archaeological excavation (NA 2016) revealed five phases of activities. A series of pits and ditches interpreted as 'storage enclosure' was dated from the Middle to the Late Iron Age Period. Features associated with agricultural use were dated to the Roman period. A series of SFBs, dated between the 5th–7th century were also investigated. During the post-medieval period the area was of agricultural use.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The objectives of the watching brief were:
- to monitor the development groundworks, and to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological remains
 - to determine, where possible, the nature, depth, extent, character, preservation, significance and date of any archaeological deposits or features encountered (as far as circumstances permit)
 - to record the range, quality and quantity of artefactual and environmental evidence present
 - to ascertain whether settlement activity dating from the Middle Iron Age to the early medieval period (identified to the north and east) extends to within the site; and

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- 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 watching brief comprised the observation by a competent archaeologist of all intrusive groundworks associated with the proposed development. These works comprised an area of ground reduction for the installation of a weholite tank, (Fig. 2).
- 4.2. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.4. CA will make arrangements with Corinium Museum for the deposition of the project archive. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).
- 4.5. 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.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2 & 3)

- 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 102, comprising limestone brash, was revealed at an average depth of 0.4m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by orange clay silt subsoil 101, averaging 0.15m in thickness, which was in turn sealed by 0.25m of modern topsoil 100.
- 5.3. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material 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 archaeological remains associated with the settlement activity identified on the wider development site do not extend as far as the watching brief area.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Joe Price. This report was written by Christopher Leonard. The report illustrations were prepared by Helena Munoz-Mojado. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Richard Young.

8. REFERENCES

- AECOM 2021 *Siddington Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief*
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- NA 2016. Siddington Park, Cirencester. Post-Excavation Assessment of Potential and Analysis and Updated Project Design
- Simmonds, A., Biddulph, E and Welsh K 2018 *In the Shadow of Corinium: Prehistoric and Roman occupation at Kingshill South, Cirencester, Gloucestershire*. Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph **41**
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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Interpretation	Description	Depth/ thickness (m)
1	100	Layer	Topsoil	Mid orange-brown clay silt. Occasional limestone pieces	0.25
1	101	Layer	Subsoil	Mid brownish orange clay silt	0.15
1	102	Layer	Natural	Limestone brash	n/a

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Siddington Park	
Short description	In February 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with development at Siddington Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks and no artefactual material was recovered.	
Project dates	22–23 February 2022	
Project type	Watching brief	
Previous work	DBA (John Samuels Archaeological Consultants 2006) Geophysical survey (GSB 2006) Archaeological evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2006) Watching brief (Cotswold Archaeology 2006) Archaeological excavation (Network Archaeology 2015)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Cirencester, Gloucestershire	
Study area (m ² /ha)	0.4ha	
Site co-ordinates	403914 200238	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	AECOM	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Joe Price	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive:	Content:
Paper	Corinium Museum	Trench recording forms, photographic registers
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2022 <i>Siddington Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief CA</i> typescript report CR1014_1		

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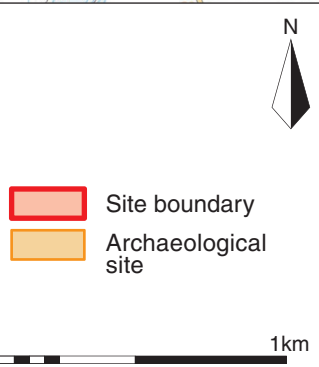
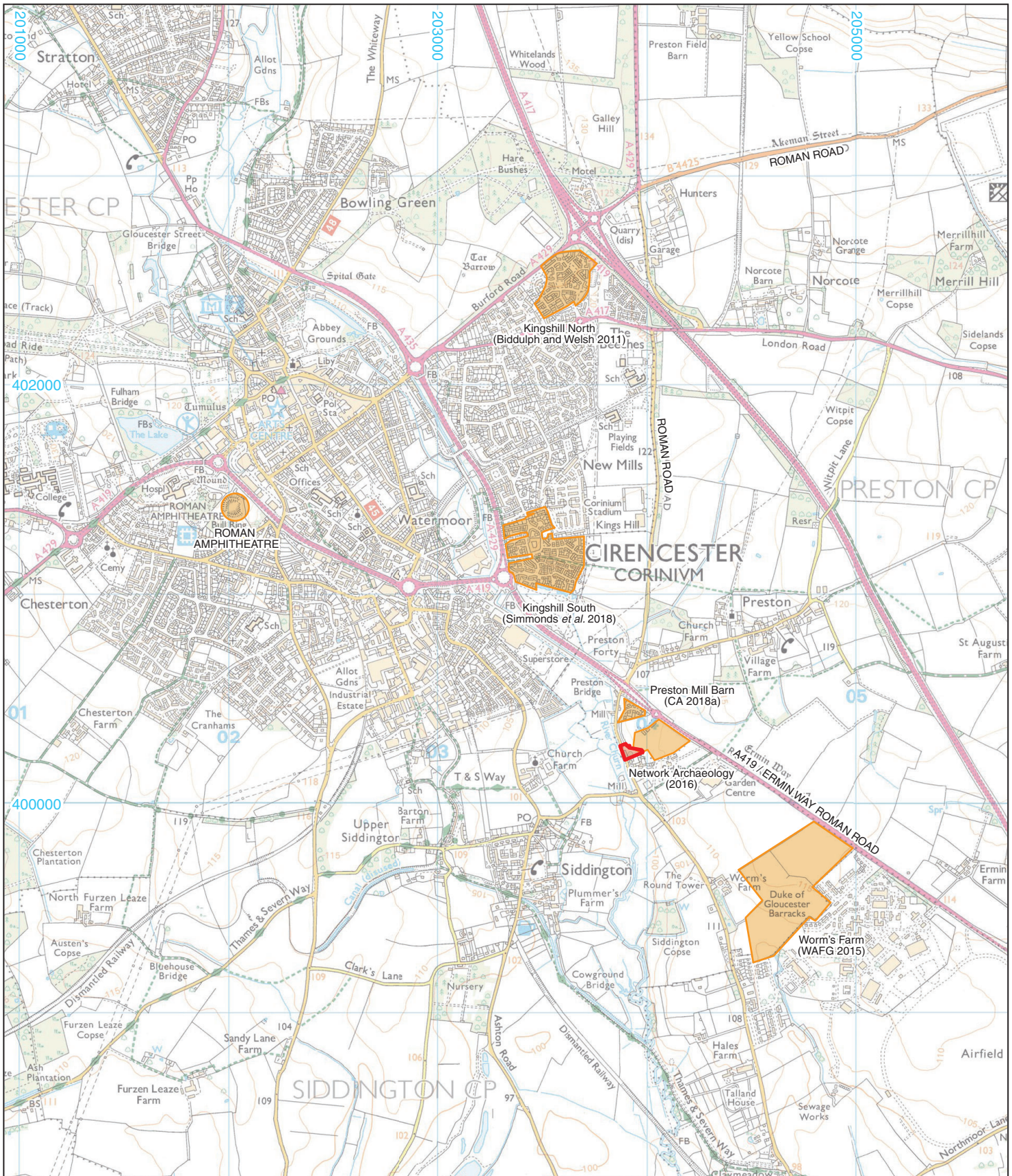
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PROJECT TITLE
 Siddington Park, Cirencester,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	CR1014	FIGURE NO.	1
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	21/09/2022		
APPROVED BY	MF	SCALE@A4	1:25,000		



- Site boundary
- Observed groundworks



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PROJECT TITLE
 Siddington Park, Cirencester,
 Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 The site, showing monitored
 groundworks

DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	CR1014	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	21/09/2022	2
APPROVED BY	MF	SCALE@A3	1:500	



Monitored groundworks, looking west



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PROJECT TITLE

Siddington Park, Cirencester,
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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

DRAWN BY HMM PROJECT NO. CR1014
CHECKED BY DJB DATE 22/09/2022
APPROVED BY MF SCALE@A4 NA

FIGURE NO.

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