

**Charlton Common  
Filton  
Bristol**

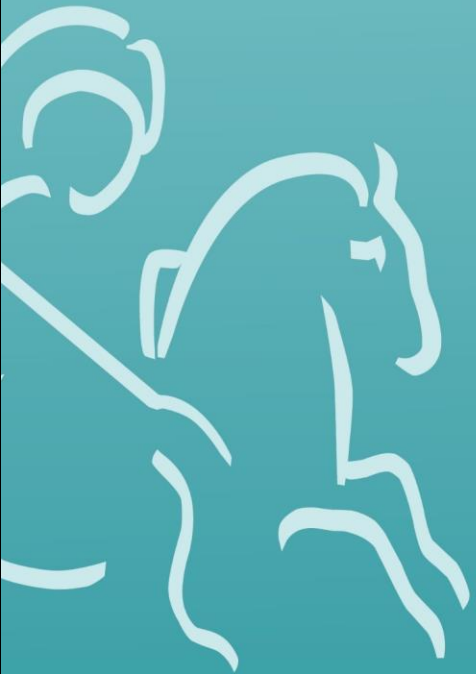
*Archaeological Watching Brief*



*for:*  
Orion Heritage Ltd

CA Project: CR1104  
CA Report: CR1104\_1

March 2023



# Charlton Common Filton Bristol

## *Archaeological Watching Brief*

CA Project: CR1104  
CA Report: CR1104\_1

Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	20/03/2023	Craig Jones	Niomi Edwards	Internal review	General edit	Richard Greatorex

*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.*

<b>Cirencester</b> Building 11 Cotswold Business Park Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6BQ  t. 01285 771 022	<b>Milton Keynes</b> Unit 8, The IO Centre Fingle Drive, Stonebridge Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK13 0AT  t. 01908 564 660	<b>Andover</b> Stanley House Walworth Road Andover Hampshire SP10 5LH  t. 01264 347 630	<b>Suffolk</b> Unit 5, Plot 11 Maitland Road Lion Barn Industrial Estate Needham Market Suffolk IP6 8NZ  t. 01449 900 120
<a href="mailto:e.enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk">e. enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk</a>			

---

## CONTENTS

SUMMARY .....	3
1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	5
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	9
4. METHODOLOGY.....	10
5. RESULTS.....	10
6. DISCUSSION.....	10
7. CA PROJECT TEAM.....	11
8. REFERENCES.....	11
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS .....	12
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	13

---

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1      Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Figure 2      Site plan showing monitored groundworks (1:500)
- Figure 3      Trench 1 Photographs
- Figure 4      Trench 2 Photographs



---

## SUMMARY

<b>Project name:</b>	Charlton Common
<b>Location:</b>	Filton, Bristol
<b>NGR:</b>	358594 179877
<b>Type:</b>	Watching brief
<b>Date:</b>	16 May 2022
<b>Planning reference:</b>	PT15/4165/F
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)

In May 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with development at Charlton Common, Filton Bristol.

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

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In May 2022, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol centred at National Grid Reference (NGR): 358594 179877 (see Figure 1). This watching brief was undertaken for Orion Heritage Ltd (hereafter referred to as “the client”)

1.2. South Gloucestershire Council has granted planning permission for residential development of the site (planning ref: PT15/4165/F). Condition 10 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with an approved WSI. Condition 10 states:

*‘Prior to the commencement of any groundworks whatsoever, including any earth movement or remediation works, a programme of archaeological work and subsequent detailed mitigation and publication strategy, including a timetable for the mitigation strategy (phase 1), must be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Thereafter the approved programme of mitigated measures (phases 2, 3) and method of publication (phase 4) shall be implemented in all respects. The condition requires a four phased approach, comprising field evaluation and production of mitigation and publication strategy (phase 1), open area excavation where necessary (phase 2), watching brief where necessary (phase 3) and publication/archiving as appropriate (phase 4).*

*Reason: In the interest of archaeological investigation or recording, and to accord with policies CS9 and CS26 of the adopted South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy. Pre commencement is required so that any archaeology is not damaged.’*

1.3. The scope of this watching brief was defined by the archaeological advisor to South Gloucestershire Council (hereafter referred to as “the curator”). The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Orion Heritage (2022) and approved by the curator.

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 site comprises an open area of rough grassland, to the south of Filton Airfield and the adjacent area of Charlton Common to its east. The site is bound to the north and west by agricultural fields and to the south by the Avonmouth Link Railway, where it enters Charlton Common Tunnel. The site lies at approximately 64m above Ordnance datum (aOD), sloping gently downwards from the north of the study site at 66m aOD down to 60m aOD at the southwest corner.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Westbury Formation and Cotham Member- Mudstone and Limestone, which formed 209.5 and 201.3 million years ago in the Triassic period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2023).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The following background information is a succinct summary of the results of a Desk Based Assessment (DBA) carried out by CgMS (2016).

### Neolithic – Bronze Age (4000 BC – 700 BC)

- 2.2. The HER does not contain any heritage assets from within the study site. Approximately 650m to the north and 925m to the north and east of the study site are a series of circular and sub circular cropmarks identified by aerial photography (SGHER8146, SGHER5241, SGHER14611). Although unconfirmed, these cropmarks have been attributed to the Neolithic or late Prehistoric periods. A general background of activity from the Neolithic period is present in the Filton area, which has been interpreted as being evidence indicating the presence of farming in the area of Filton during the Neolithic period (La Trobe-Bateman and Evans 2001). In the wider area surrounding Filton there is antiquarian evidence for a Neolithic chamber tomb near to Horfield Common, approximately 2.5km to the south of the study site.
- 2.3. Funerary monuments from the Bronze Age have been noted approximately 1.7km north of the study site in the vicinity of St Swithins Farm (SGHER 1088). No such activity is known within the 1km search radius of the study site. Further afield, an extensive settlement including a hut circle, ditch, post holes, flints and pottery has been excavated at Webbs Wood, Bradley Stoke, approximately 4km northeast of the study site (La Trobe-Bateman and Evans 2001). A number of pits containing Bronze Age pottery have been found near to Harry Stoke, approximately 4km east of the study site (ibid).

---

### **Iron Age- Roman (700 BC – AD43)**

- 2.4. Iron Age occupation activity is represented by an extensive Iron Age settlement site found approximately 750m north of the study site (SGHER11360, SGHER 11299, SGHER 8145). In addition to this, the cropmarks identified 650m and 925m to the north and east of the study site may also be attributed to the late Prehistoric period (SGHER8146, SGHER5241, SGHER14611). Further evidence from aerial photographs, comprising a rectilinear feature approached by track ways interpreted as a settlement site (SGHER 11131) has been observed approximately 1.5km to the east, in the vicinity of Gypsy Patch Lane. A geophysical survey conducted 1km to the west of the study site also revealed potential Iron Age or Romano-British features (interpretation based on their shape and form).
- 2.5. The only definite evidence for Romano-British settlement within Filton is a quern stone discovered in the garden of the rectory in the years preceding 1914 (La Trobe-Bateman and Evans 2001), which is situated approximately 1.6km southeast of the study site. However, it is likely that there was a continuity of settlement on the Iron Age settlement site identified 750m north of the study site. The probable line of a Roman Road (Sea Mills to Gloucester) is located 1.4km to the northwest of the study site. There is also evidence in the wider vicinity for activity from this period. An extensive settlement from this period has been excavated in Bradley Stoke (ibid), approximately 4km northeast of the study site.
- 2.6. A coin hoard is mentioned within the HER as being within 'Filton' (SGHER 4739); although its precise position is unknown. La Trobe-Bateman and Evans (2001) suggest that it may be in the vicinity of the settlement at Bradley Stoke mentioned above, or may be within the boundaries of Filton Airfield, to the north of Filton Bridge, which is approximately 2km east of the study site.
- 2.7. La Trobe-Bateman and Evans (2001) observe that in the Saxon period Filton formed part of the lands of Berkeley Abbey, which suggests that an existing Roman or possibly pre-Roman estate or land holding had been transferred to a nearby ecclesiastical establishment. This was a common occurrence in other parts of Britain.

### **Anglo-Saxon (AD410 – 1066)**

- 2.8. There are no heritage assets from this period within the study site. The former Charlton village noted in the HER is considered to be of Saxon in origin (HER 9724). It is thought that Charlton itself was the principal village at this time in the large manor

---

of Westbury (Burchill and Coxah, 1989). It is known that nearby Filton was part of the land holdings of Berkeley Abbey by the 9th Century, and a manorial complex and chapel within the parish is implied by the visit of Abbott Tilhere in AD770. Additionally, the place names of both Filton and Charlton, have Saxon origins (La Trobe-Batemans and Evans, 2001). The settlement at Charlton was destroyed in 1946 prior to the construction of Filton Airfield (Wessex Archaeology 2011). The 20th century extent of the former settlement is recorded in the HER, the study site lies beyond its southern extent and is likely to have been situated beyond the historic core of settlement at this time.

2.9. There is limited archaeological evidence within the Charlton and Filton area for activity in this period. A number of objects were noted in 1863/64 as having come from the Stoke Gifford area, although the precise location is uncertain. The date of their reporting suggests that they may have been recovered during the construction of the Bristol and South Wales railway, and if so this would mean that they were away from the study site. It has been suggested that they are representative of a pagan Viking burial (La Trobe-Bateman and Evans 2001).

2.10. Whilst there is undoubtedly activity from this period within the Parish of Henbury, which includes Charlton, there is no record of activity either on the study site or in its immediate vicinity. The study site is likely to have been situated within the surrounding agricultural land of Charlton. Based on current evidence, a low potential for activity of this period is identified for the study site. Such activity may be limited to former agricultural practices.

#### **Medieval (1066 – 1539)**

2.11. As mentioned above, the study site is situated beyond the mapped extent of the former 20th century settlement extent of Charlton. The Medieval settlement of Charlton is known to have originally covered a larger footprint than that of the extant village during the mid-20th century (Wessex Archaeology 2011). The village is shown to have extended south into what is currently Elm Farm (SGHER2983), c.600m west of the study site.

2.12. Early 19th century mapping shows that settlement activity is focused along Fishpool Lane and Charlton Common. This mapping also depicts the presence of two buildings and associated enclosed land at the northern tip of the study site. The origins of this dwelling is unknown, but may have been established during the mid-17th or 18th

---

century (similar to that of the nearby Grade II listed Cedar House) when the surrounding landscape was subject to enclosure. It remains uncertain whether former Medieval settlement activity extended along the southern extents of Charlton Common and into the eastern extent of the study site.

#### **Post-medieval – modern (1540 – present)**

- 2.13. Recorded across the south-eastern extent of the study site is the former route of a tree avenue (SGHER19900).
- 2.14. The earliest plan of the area held by Bristol Record Office is an 1816 map of the Tithing of Charlton. This map depicts the study site as being predominantly enclosed agricultural land and an area of Charlton Common, apart from a small enclosure in the north-eastern corner which contains two structures. Within Charlton Common a tree avenue is shown, as noted in the HER, crossing the south-eastern extent of the study site. A pond is depicted encroaching into the northern tip of the study site. No apportionment was available at the record office to give an indication of the land use, but the shape and size of the enclosed land associated with the structures suggest it represents a house and garden.
- 2.15. The structures noted within the northern extent of the study site have been removed by the Ordnance Survey map of 1881. Also removed are the land parcel boundaries enclosing the land upon which the structures sat. Additional field boundaries have been removed along the southern edge of the study site. Two ponds are now depicted within the northern tip of the study site. The tree avenue continues to be shown across the south-eastern extent of the study site.
- 2.16. By 1915 the Avonmouth Link Railway (SGHER16323) (constructed in the late 19th century) abuts the southern site boundary. The Charlton Halt, situated to the immediate south of the study site (SGHER5049), was opened in 1910 and subsequently closed in 1915. The locally listed Accommodation Bridge is also located to the south of the study site (SGHER14843). The study site itself remains unchanged, although a footpath is noted to run through the agricultural land across the western and central part of the study site.
- 2.17. In 1946 much of the village of Charlton was destroyed by the construction of the Brabazon runway at Filton Airfield. The 1954 Ordnance Survey shows that the central and western part of the study site is now designated as a sports ground. A pavilion is situated in the north tip of the study site and a public footpath runs along the site's

---

northern boundary. The tree avenue within Charlton Common is no longer depicted on the Ordnance Survey mapping. Kennels are shown to the immediate east of the study site and Charlton Road has been extended to the north-east and abuts the south-eastern site boundary.

- 2.18. The 1974 Ordnance Survey shows the extent and location of Filton Airfield in relation to the study site. No further changes to the study site are noted.
- 2.19. The western and central part of study site remains designated as sports ground up to present day, although it is likely the site became disused towards the end of the 20th century. The pavilion is removed sometime after 2008.
- 2.20. Historic map evidence illustrates that the majority of the study site remained an area of enclosed agricultural land throughout the Post-Medieval period and was designated as a sports ground in the mid-20th century. The eastern extent of the study site lies within Charlton Common, and similarly would have remained an area of common land and pasture throughout the Post-Medieval and Modern period, with a discrete area of ground disturbance associated with ponds in the northern tip of the study site. Agricultural practices and possible minor landscaping associated with the conversion of the western and central part of the study site into a sports ground may have truncated earlier archaeological deposits present within the study site. Excluding the potential structural remains of a former dwelling situated in the northern tip of the study site, a very low potential for archaeological activity of the Post-Medieval and Modern period is considered for the study site, such activity is likely to be limited to that of former agricultural activity.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1. The general objectives of the watching brief were:
- to monitor the development groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits/features thus revealed;
  - 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 intrusive groundworks associated with the proposed development. These works comprised the machine excavation of trenches for the installation of kerbs (Figure 2).
- 4.2. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3. CA will make arrangements with the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 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).
- 4.4. 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

- 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 was not revealed in either trench (see Figures 3 and 4). Both trenches were excavated through topsoil (**100** and **200**) to a depth of 0.33m and 0.27m below present ground level respectively.
- 5.3. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and 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 features or deposits is likely the result of the limited nature of the observed groundworks.

---

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Katherine Hebbard. This report was written by Craig Jones. The report illustrations were prepared by Helena Munoz-Mojado. The project was managed for CA by Richard Greatorex.

## 8. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2022 *BGS Geology Viewer* <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> Accessed 3 March 2023

Burchill, R and Coxah, M 1989 Excavations at Elm Farm, Charlton, Almondsbury

CgMS 2016 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Land off Charlton Road, Filton, South Gloucestershire*

La Trobe-Bateman, E and Evans, D R 2001 *South Gloucestershire Extensive Urban Survey Archaeological Assessment Report: Filton*

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2021 *National Planning Policy Framework*

Orion Heritage Ltd 2022 *Land off Charlton Road, Filton, Bristol: Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation*

Wessex Archaeology 2011 *Wyck Beck Road, Cribbs Causeway, Filton, Bristol. Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*

---

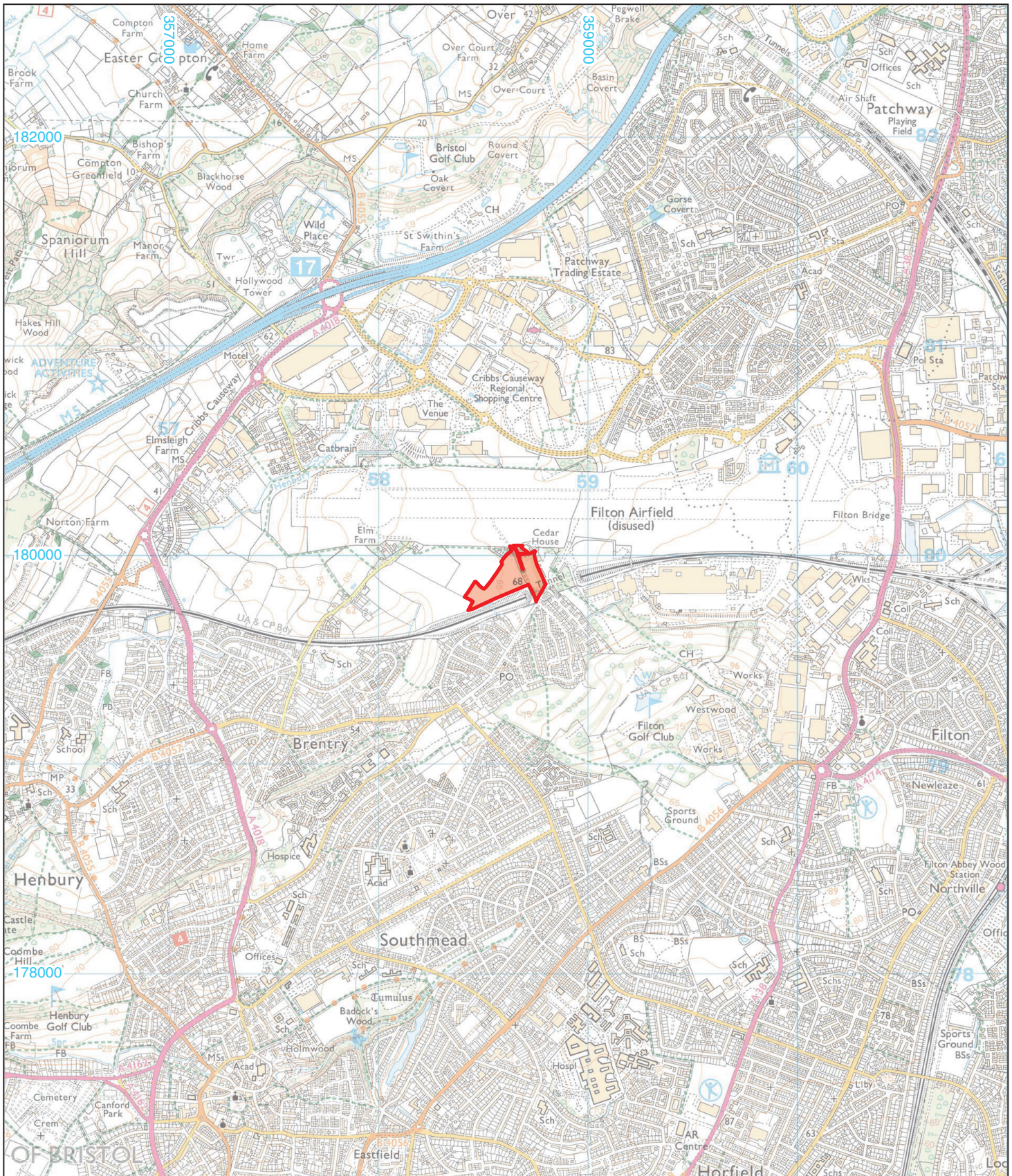
## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		topsoil	dark grey brown friable clayey silt	8.5	1	0.33	
2	200	Layer		topsoil	dark grey brown friable clayey silt	8.5	1	0.27	

## APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol	
Short description	<p>In May 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with development at Charlton Common, Filton Bristol.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	16 May 2022	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Watching Brief and Evaluation	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site location	Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol	
Study area (m <sup>2</sup> /ha)		
Site co-ordinates	358594 179877	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator		
Project design (WSI) originator	Orion Heritage Ltd	
Project Manager	Richard Greatorex	
Project Supervisor	Katherine Hebbard	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	<b>Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical	N/A	
Paper	Bristol Museum and Art Gallery	Context sheets, etc
Digital	ADS	Digital photos etc
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Cotswold Archaeology 2023 <i>Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA typescript report <b>CR1104_1</b>		





 Site boundary



© Crown copyright and database rights 2023  
Ordnance Survey 0100031673



**Andover** 01264 347630  
**Cirencester** 01285 771022  
**Milton Keynes** 01908 564660  
**Suffolk** 01449 900120  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

**PROJECT TITLE**

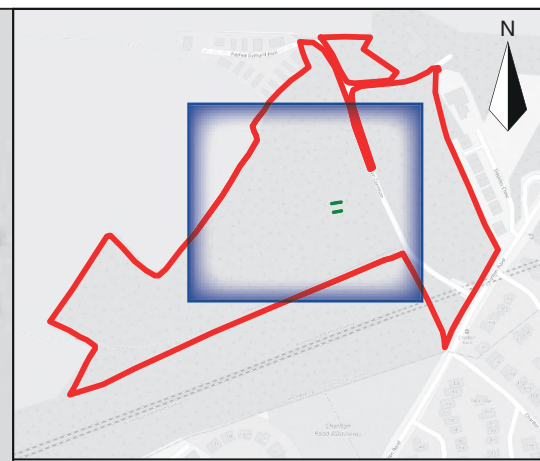
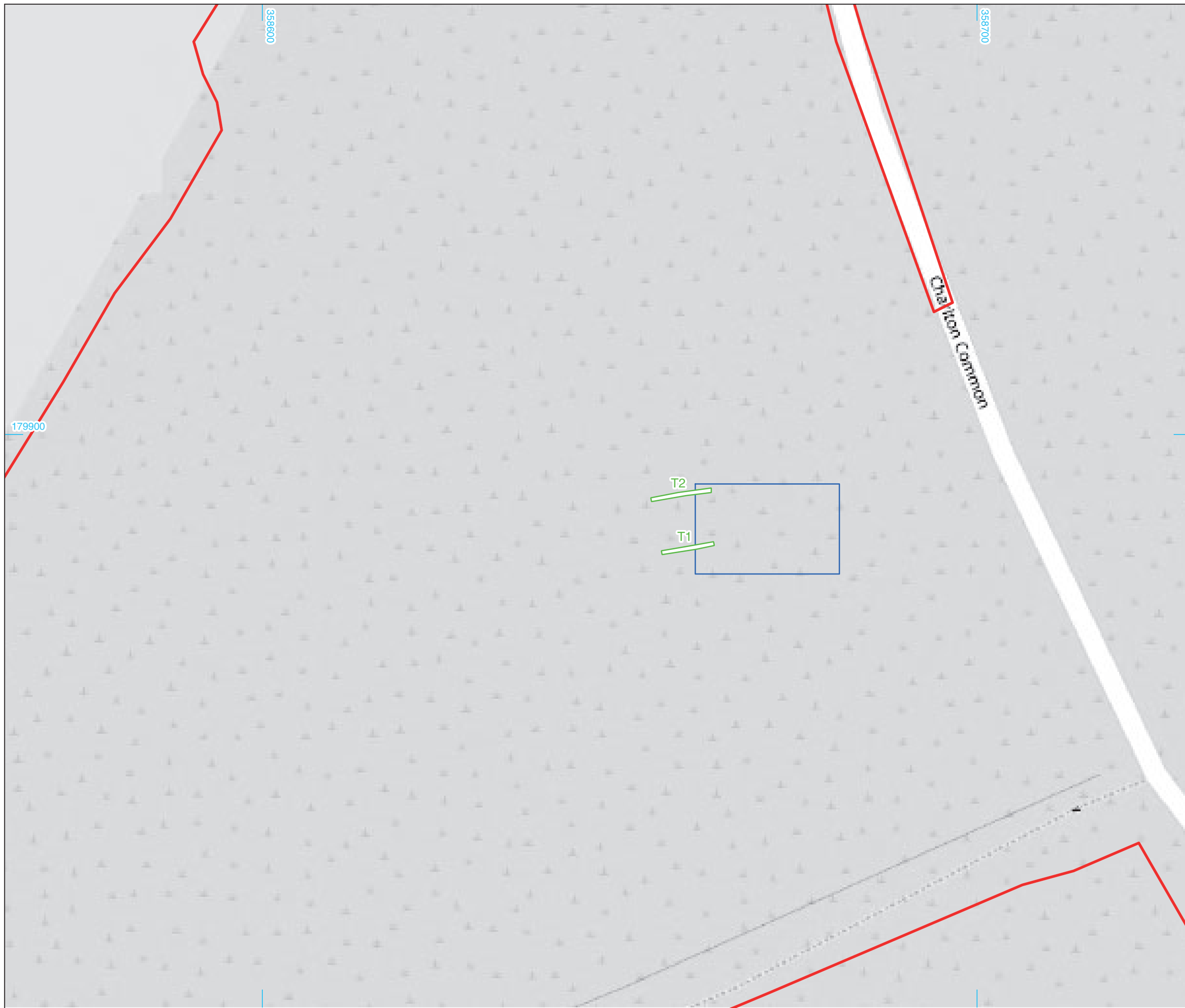
Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol

**FIGURE TITLE**

Site location plan

<b>DRAWN BY</b>	<b>HMM</b>	<b>PROJECT NO.</b>	<b>CR1104</b>	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b>	<b>DJB</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>14/03/2023</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<b>CJ</b>	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	<b>1:25,000</b>	





- Site boundary
- Proposed watching brief area
- Monitored groundworks



© OpenStreetMap (and) contributors, CC-BY-SA, Esri Community Maps Contributors, Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS

Cotswold Archaeology

Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
 Suffolk 01449 900120  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

**PROJECT TITLE**  
Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol

**FIGURE TITLE**  
Site plan showing monitored groundworks

<small>DRAWN BY</small> HMM	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> CR1104	<small>FIGURE NO.</small> 2
<small>CHECKED BY</small> DJB	<small>DATE</small> 14/03/2023	
<small>APPROVED BY</small> CJ	<small>SCALE</small> @A3 1:500	





Trench 1, looking south-west (1m scale)



Trench 1, representative section, looking north-west (1m scale)



Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
 Suffolk 01449 900120  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

PROJECT TITLE

Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 1: photographs

DRAWN BY	HMM	PROJECT NO.	CR1104
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	14/03/2023
APPROVED BY	CJ	SCALE@A4	NA

FIGURE NO.

3





Trench 2, looking south-west (1m scale)



Trench 2, representative section, looking north-west (1m scale)



Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
 Suffolk 01449 900120  
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk  
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

Charlton Common, Filton, Bristol

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 2: photographs

DRAWN BY HMM PROJECT NO. CR1104  
 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 14/03/2023  
 APPROVED BY CJ SCALE@A4 NA

FIGURE NO.

4



**Andover Office**

Stanley House  
Walworth Road  
Andover  
Hampshire  
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

**Cirencester Office**

Building 11  
Cotswold Business Park  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

**Milton Keynes Office**

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

t: 01908 564660

**Suffolk Office**

Unit 5, Plot 11, Maitland Road  
Lion Barn Industrial Estate  
Needham Market  
Suffolk  
IP6 8NZ

t: 01449 900120

e: [enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

