

**LAND AT WISTLEY HILL
COBERLEY
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

For

**THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION PARTNERSHIP
(EDP)**

on behalf of

TOTI GIFFORD ESQ

CA PROJECT: 2791
CA REPORT: 09021

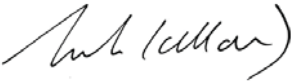
JANUARY 2009



LAND AT WISTLEY HILL
COBERLEY
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CA PROJECT: 2791
CA REPORT: 09021

prepared by	Sian Reynish, Project Supervisor
date	28 January 2009
checked by	Simon Cox, Head of Fieldwork
date	
approved by	Mark Collard, Head of Contracts
signed	
date	9 February 2009
issue	01

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	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. RESULTS (FIGS 2 & 3)	6
3. DISCUSSION.....	6
4. CA PROJECT TEAM	7
5. REFERENCES	7
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	7
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	8

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks and archaeological features (1:1000).
- Fig. 3 Ditch 104; section AA (1:10)

SUMMARY

Project Name: Land at Wistley Hill
Location: Coberley, Gloucestershire
NGR: SO 9825 1835
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 20 January 2009
Planning Reference: 08/03094/FUL
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Corinium Museum
Site Code: WIS 09

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of an access track leading from the A436 to new agricultural barns and feed silos on land at Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire.

The watching brief identified an undated ditch cutting the subsoil, orientated southwest/northeast. This was probably associated with a trackway on a similar alignment within Wistley Plantation, a tract of coniferous woodland established in the late 19 century, which was first depicted on the 1902 Second Edition Ordnance Survey 25" map. No artefactual material was recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2009, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP), on behalf of Toti Gifford Esq at Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SO 9825 2179; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the erection of a Cattle Shed and two off-feed silos, with provision of a hard surface access track from the A436 (Planning ref: 08/03094/FUL). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the excavation for the hard surface access track.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (EDP 2009) prepared by EDP, with a subsequent detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA. Both documents were approved by Cotswold District Council (CDC) acting on the advice of Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), the archaeological advisor to CDC. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001), *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995) and the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

The site

- 1.3 The site is located within a field at the top of Wistley Hill, bordered to the south by the A436, and is surrounded on all other sides by farmland and mixed woodland (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 280m AOD. Land within the field falls quite sharply downwards from south west to north east, with a rather less marked drop to the north.
- 1.4 The site covers an area of 0.28ha and is currently open, semi-improved grassland, now grazed by a small herd of young cattle. There are recently dismantled farm structures and one existing Dutch barn, situated on the lower lying ground.
- 1.5 The underlying drift geology of the area is mapped as Inferior Oolite of the middle Jurassic era (BGS 1962).

Archaeological background

- 1.6 The archaeological and historical context to the site area has previously been set out in a desk-based assessment, which was prepared by EDP in December 2008 (EDP 2008), and to which reference should be made for greater detail. In summary, the site is located within the boundary of an area recorded on the Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) as a possible Iron Age hillfort. Examination of historic maps and aerial photographs, as well as the completion of a site walkover survey, suggested a linear earthwork believed to be a rampart may instead derive from post-medieval (probably 19th-century) stone quarrying. However, the assessment also attested previously recorded evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the area surrounding the site. The former included a pit, containing Neolithic pottery, west of the site at Vineyards Farm, whilst Iron Age finds were also located close by.
- 1.7 A reference in W.L. Cox's "Prehistoric and Roman Sites of the Cheltenham Area", records double entrenchments running parallel to the A436 on Wistley Hill. Cox also adds that "...on top of the hill is a flat platform, which may be associated with these earthworks". The Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group also holds a record for the apparent location of interments, which were found on Wistley Hill near the road to "Cubberley", two fields west of the site boundary.
- 1.8 The A436, approximately 500 metres east of the site boundary, is believed to follow the course of a former Roman road, known as "Portstraet". This was a relatively minor thoroughfare, which is recorded in an Anglo-Saxon charter. In "Saxon Charters and Field Names of Gloucestershire", G.B. Grundy noted that the Portstraet was part of the Stow-on-the-Wold to Gloucester Road and followed the Cotswold Ridgeway. However, the Gloucestershire SMR notes that "...the precise course of this road is not certain, so it has been digitised only very tentatively".

Methodology

- 1.9 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2009). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising the excavation of an access track, which runs north from the A436 and then turns east to service the platform for the agricultural barns and feed silos (Fig. 2).

- 1.10 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.11 The archive from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. This will be deposited with Corinium 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.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2 & 3)

- 2.1 The natural geological substrate 104, consisting of a limestone brash, was revealed at an average depth of 0.28m below present ground level. This was overlain by a subsoil averaging 0.1m in thickness, which was in turn sealed by 0.18m of topsoil.
- 2.2 An undated ditch 104 was encountered within the northern part of the excavated track. It was orientated southwest/northeast, contained one fill 105, and cut the subsoil 102. The ditch was probably a drainage feature associated with a trackway on a similar alignment within the Wistley Plantation, which was first depicted on the 1902 Second Edition Ordnance Survey 25" map (see inset on Fig. 2).
- 2.3 No other features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above), the watching brief only identified a single undated ditch, probably associated with Wistley Plantation, within the area of observed groundworks. No other archaeological deposits were exposed within the excavated area. The presence of a surviving subsoil, albeit thin, may suggest that this is a result of a genuine absence of archaeological features in this area rather than truncation by the establishment of the 19th-century plantation or subsequent agricultural activity.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Sian Reynish. The report was written by Sian Reynish. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Sian Reynish, and prepared for deposition by Kathryn Price. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1962 *Geological survey of England and Wales: Cirencester. Sheet 235*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 *Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

EDP (The Environmental Dimension Partnership) 2008 *Land at Seven Springs, Coberley, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Assessment* EDP Ref **H_EDP906_01b**

EDP (The Environmental Dimension Partnership) 2009 *Land at Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire: Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1


No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
101	Layer	Topsoil			0.18	
102	Layer	Subsoil			0.1	
103	Layer	Natural substrate				
104	Cut	Ditch	>3.5	1.06	0.39	
105	Fill	Fill of 104	>3.5	1.06	0.39	

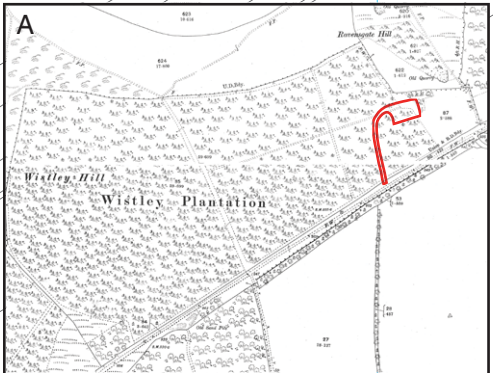
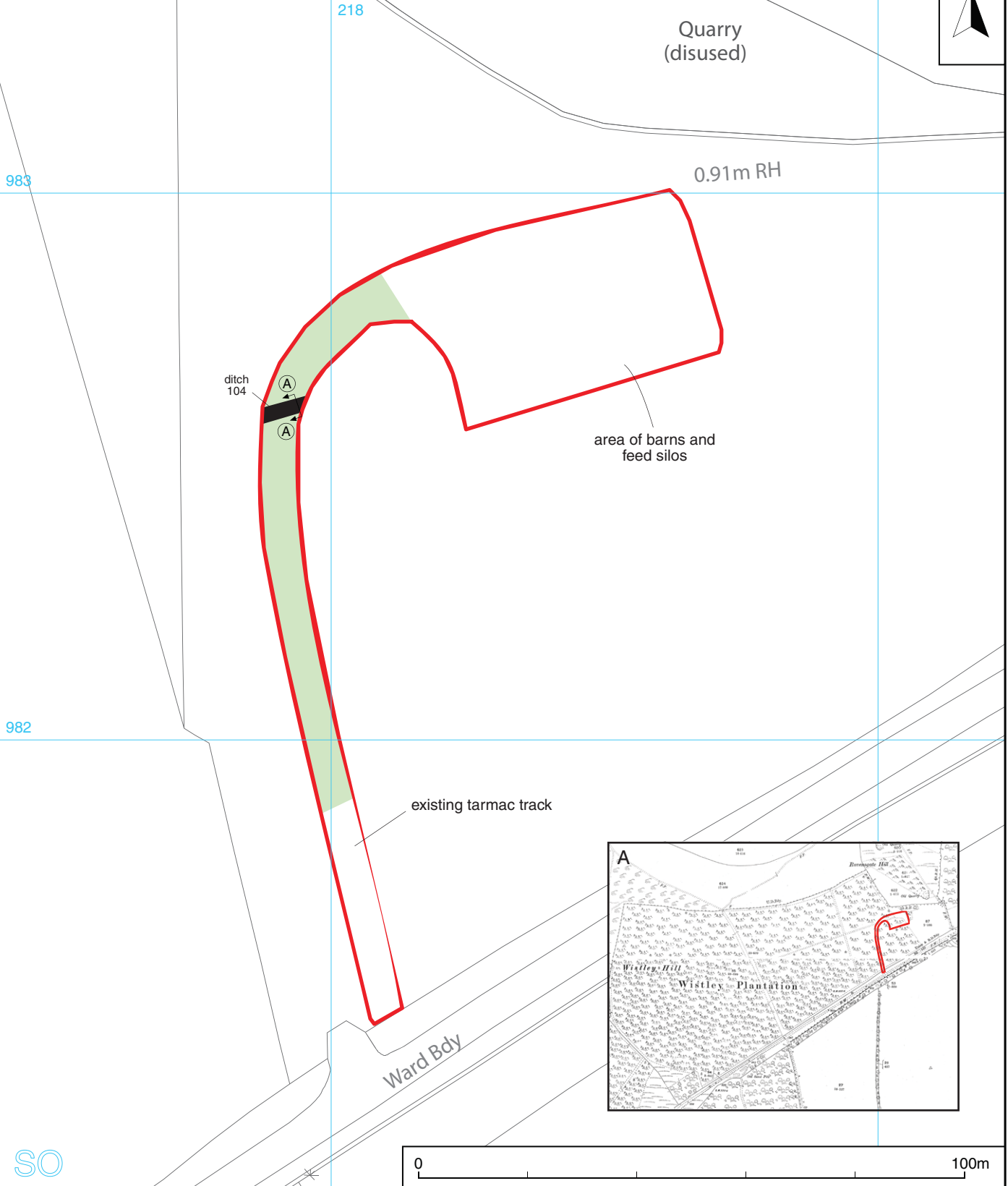
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land at Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of an access track leading from the A436 to new agricultural barns and feed silos on land at Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire.</p> <p>The watching brief identified an undated ditch cutting the subsoil, orientated southwest/northeast. This was probably associated with a trackway on a similar alignment within Wistley Plantation, a tract of coniferous woodland established in the late 19 century, which was first depicted on the 1902 Second Edition Ordnance Survey 25" map. No artefactual material was recovered.</p>	
Project dates	20 January 2009	
Project type	Archaeological Watching Brief	
Previous work	Archaeological Assessment (EDP 2008)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.28ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SO 9825 2179	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	EDP	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Simon Cox	
Project Supervisor	Sian Reynish	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	None	N/A
Paper	Corinium Museum	Trench Sheets, Context sheets, Section drawing and plan.
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 <i>Land at Wistley Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i>		

Reproduced from the 2005 Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office
 © Crown copyright Cotswold Archaeological Trust 100002109



 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
PROJECT TITLE Wistley Hill, Coberley Gloucestershire			
FIGURE TITLE Site location plan			
DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
LG	1:25,000@A4	2791	1



SO

- site
- area of observed groundworks
- archaeological feature



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

**Wistley Hill, Coberley
 Gloucestershire**

FIGURE TITLE

**The site, showing location of groundworks
 and archaeological features**

DRAWN BY

LG

SCALE

1:1000@A4

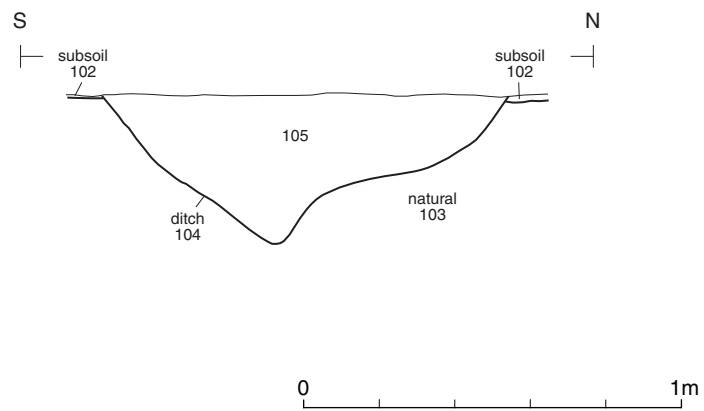
PROJECT NO.

2791

FIGURE NO.

2

A - extract from an Historic Map of 1900. showing ditch 104 in relation to the trackway



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Wistley Hill, Coberley
Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Ditch 104; section AA

DRAWN BY

LG

SCALE

1:20@A4

PROJECT NO.

2791

FIGURE NO.

3