

**KINGSHILL SOUTH FOOTBRIDGE
CIRENCESTER
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

For

ATKINS LIMITED


CA PROJECT: 2992
CA REPORT: 09196

NOVEMBER 2009

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CIRENCESTER
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date	24 November 2009
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date	27 November 2009
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signed	
date	27 November 2009
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Kingshill South Footbridge
Location: Cirencester, Gloucestershire
NGR: SP 0331 0098
Type: Evaluation
Date: 18 -19 November 2009
Location of Archive: To be deposited with the Corinium Museum, Cirencester
Site Code: KPB 09

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in November 2009 at the site of the proposed Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Three test pits were excavated.

Natural gravels and clays and alluvial deposits were identified and were overlain by subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological features were identified. Iron Age and Roman pottery sherds were recovered from the surface of the natural substrate in test pit 2.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2009 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Atkins Limited on the site of the proposed Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SP 0331 0098; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to provide information to assist design proposals for construction of a steel pedestrian and cycle bridge, between the Tesco superstore and an area of proposed new housing to the north of the A419 dual carriageway.
- 1.2 The requirement for archaeological evaluation was outlined in discussions between Mr Rob Woodside, Principal Heritage Consultant, Atkins Limited, and Mr Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council, the archaeological advisor to Cotswold District Council. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a subsequent detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2009) and approved by Mr Parry. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (English Heritage 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The site lies on the south-eastern outskirts of Cirencester, situated between the northbound carriageway of the A419 Cirencester-Swindon Road and an access road to the Tesco superstore at Kingsmeadow (Fig. 2). The site, currently under grass and utilised as a picnic area, is flat and lies at approximately 103m AOD.
- 1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Forest Marble Formation of the Great Oolitic Group, comprising mudstones and shell-detrital ooidal limestone, of the Middle Jurassic era together with Quaternary drift deposits of alluvium comprising silty-clay with gravel lenses (BGS 1998). Natural clays and gravels were encountered within all three test pits.

Archaeological background

- 1.5 Research indicates that the proposed development is sited in an area of archaeological potential; it lies approximately 400m to the south-east of the Silchester Gate of the Roman town of *Corinium* and adjacent to a main Roman road (Ermin Street) (Atkins 2009). Previous archaeological evaluations undertaken at the site of the Tesco superstore at the southern end of the proposed scheme, close to the line of Ermin Street, revealed a possible Roman field boundary, a possible cremation pyre and two possible cremations indicating the presence of an extra-mural cemetery in the area of the current Tesco superstore (Atkins 2009, table 1, ATK08). A more recent desk-based assessment and evaluation (ibid, table 1, ATK11) suggested that the whole area occupied by the existing superstore and car park was cleared in the late prehistoric period and subjected to repeated ploughing and flooding events throughout the Roman period, with Roman levels subsequently sealed by a deep layer of alluvium.
- 1.6 A glass cremation urn was found in c. 1765 (Atkins 2009, table 1, ATK05) on the island of land now located between the dual carriageway and the Roman road, although the precise location of the findspot is uncertain. In addition a series of surveys, desk-based studies and evaluations have identified prehistoric and Romano-British activity in the fields north of the dual carriageway. The proposed line of the bridge runs within the areas covered by desk-based assessment (ibid. table 1, ATK15), geophysical survey (ibid, table 1, ATK16), topographical survey (ibid, table 1, ATK17) and field evaluation (ibid, table 1, ATK19) From analysis of these reports the footprint of the proposed bridge also lies very close to features associated with 18th-century water meadows (Atkins 2009).

Archaeological objectives

- 1.7 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist Cotswold District Council in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.8 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of three test pits (test pits 1 to 3, each 1.5m in width and 1.5m in length) across the site (Fig. 2). Test pits 2 and 3 were located at two of the currently proposed bridge support points. Test pit 1 was re-sited in order to examine the location of a proposed geotechnical borehole, at the request of Rakesh Patel, Geotechnical Engineer, Gloucestershire Highways.
- 1.9 All three test pits were excavated by hand to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.10 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* (2003) but no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995).
- 1.11 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with the Corinium Museum along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-5)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively.

Test pits 1 to 3 (Figs 2 to 5)

- 2.2 Natural clays and calcareous gravels 104, 202, 203, 303, 304 and 305 were encountered at 0.33-0.85m below present ground level (bpgl). These were overlain by a root-affected alluvial clay 103 and silt-clay 102, by subsoil 101/201, a modern stony-clay dump deposit 302, containing abundant modern artefacts (not retained), which appeared to represent embankment material associated with construction of

the A419 and by topsoil and leaf mould 100/200/300. No archaeological features were encountered. One Iron Age pottery sherd and three sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the surface of gravels 202, which appeared extensively root-disturbed

The Finds Evidence

- 2.3 Small quantities of pottery, all of which were abraded, were recovered from the surface of gravels 202 in test pit 2 (Appendix B). An Iron Age body sherd in a quartz and limestone-tempered fabric was recovered together with three sherds identified as a Roman oxidized ware; one of these is Severn Valley ware and its form is a jar with out-curved rim.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Despite the proximity of the proposed development to known Roman burials and activity south-east of Roman *Corinium* (Holbrook 1994, Atkins 2009), the evaluation did not identify any Roman features or deposits within the site. The single Iron Age pottery sherd and three Roman pottery sherds recovered from the surface of the natural gravels within test pit 2 are all abraded and appear likely to reflect prehistoric and Roman activity within the wider locality.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Alistair Barber, assisted by Melanie Bell and Heather Griggs. The report was written by Alistair Barber. The illustrations were prepared by Peter Moore. The archive has been compiled by Heather Griggs, and prepared for deposition by Victoria Taylor. The project was managed for CA by Laurent Coleman

5. REFERENCES

Atkins 2009 *Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester. Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment*

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1998 *Cirencester, Solid and Drift Geology*. Sheet 235

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 *Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Holbrook, N. 1994 'Corinium Dobunnorum: Roman Civitas Capital and Roman Provincial Capital', in Gerrard, C & Darvill, T, *Cirencester: Town and Landscape*. Cirencester.

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Test pit 1 (103.63m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Deposit	Topsoil: dark grey-brown clay-silt			0.1	
101	Deposit	Subsoil: grey-brown clay-silt with occasional small limestone fragments			0.12	
102	Deposit	Yellow-brown silt-clay, root-affected.			0.4	
103	Deposit	Light-brown grey clay with occasional small limestone fragments			0.28	
104	Deposit	Grey-blue clay with abundant calcareous gravel inclusions				

Test pit 2 (103.44m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Deposit	Topsoil: dark grey-brown silt-clay			0.11	
201	Deposit	Subsoil: yellow-brown clay-silt			0.22	
202	Deposit	Natural geological substrate: yellow alluvial gravels, heavily root-affected; finds are therefore intrusive			0.12	RB
203	Deposit	Natural geological substrate: white alluvial gravels,				

Test pit 3 (103.66m AOD)

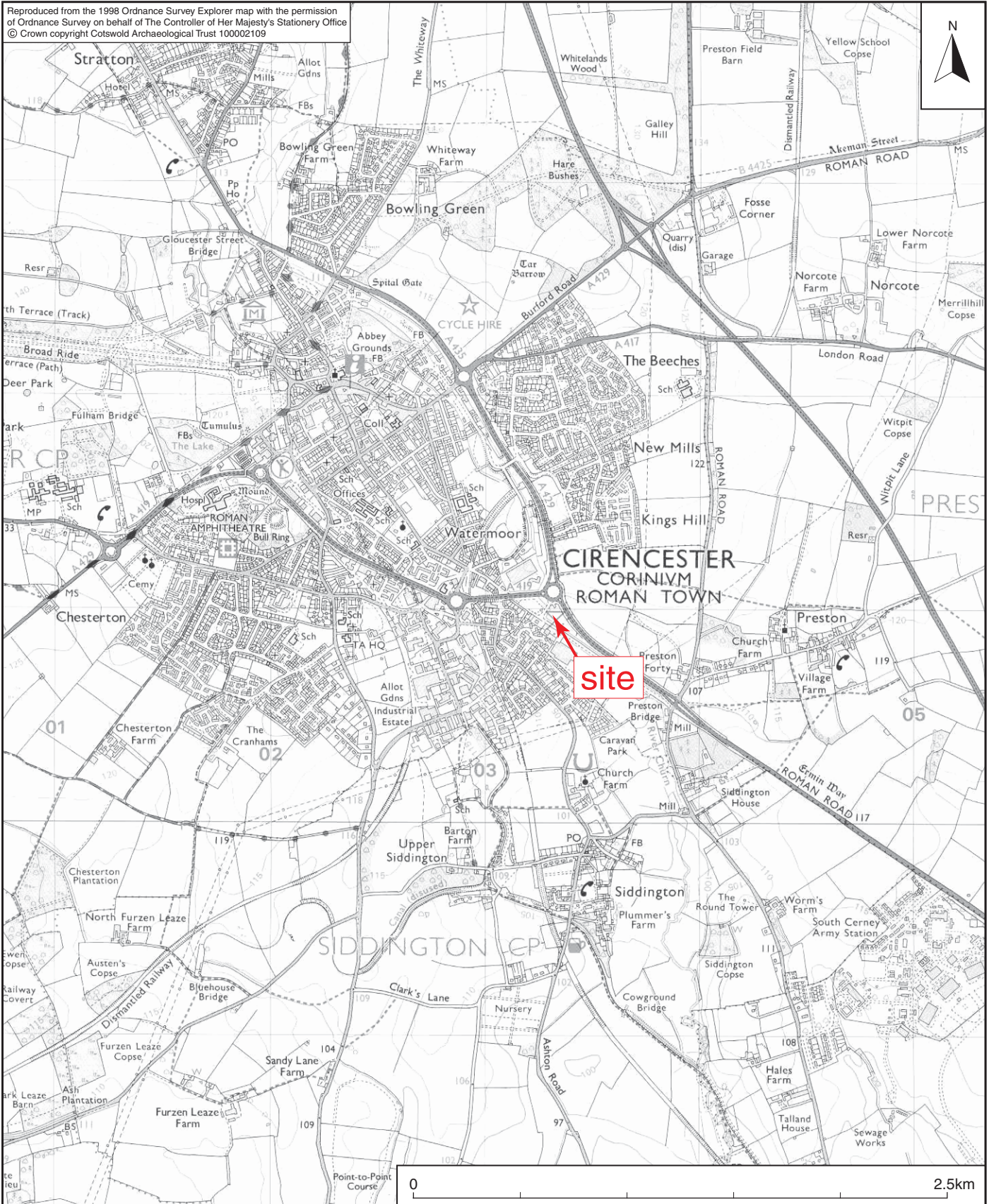
No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Deposit	Modern leaf-mould accumulation			0.15	
301	Deposit	Modern dump deposit/embankment material: redeposited yellow clay and limestone containing abundant modern brick fragments, tile, plastic, barbed wire (not retained)			0.2	
302	Deposit	Modern stony-clay dump deposit			0.15	
303	Deposit	Natural geological substrate: yellow-orange alluvial clay			0.1	
304	Deposit	Natural geological substrate: grey-blue alluvial clay			0.05	
305	Deposit	Natural geological substrate: yellow-blue alluvial clay with abundant calcareous gravel inclusions				

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Count	Weight (g)	Spot date
202	Roman pottery: oxidized ware, Severn Valley ware Iron Age pottery: quartz and limestone-tempered	3 1	14 4	RB

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Archaeological evaluation.	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in November 2009 at the site of the proposed Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Three test pits were excavated.</p> <p>Natural gravels and clays and alluvial deposits were identified and were overlain by subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological features were identified. Iron Age and Roman pottery sherds were recovered from the surface of the natural substrate in test pit 2.</p>	
Project dates	18-19 November 2009	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Archaeological Evaluation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Not known	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Kingshill South, Cirencester, Gloucestershire	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 0331 0098	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator		
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Laurent Coleman	
Project Supervisor	Alistair Barber	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Corinium Museum	Pottery
Paper	Corinium Museum	Trench Recording Sheets, Digital and B/W Photo Registers and photographs, Levels Register, Drawing Register
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA 2009 <i>Kingshill South Footbridge, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Archaeological Evaluation.</i> CA typescript report 09196		



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

**Kingshill South Footbridge
Cirencester, Gloucestershire**

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY

PJM

SCALE

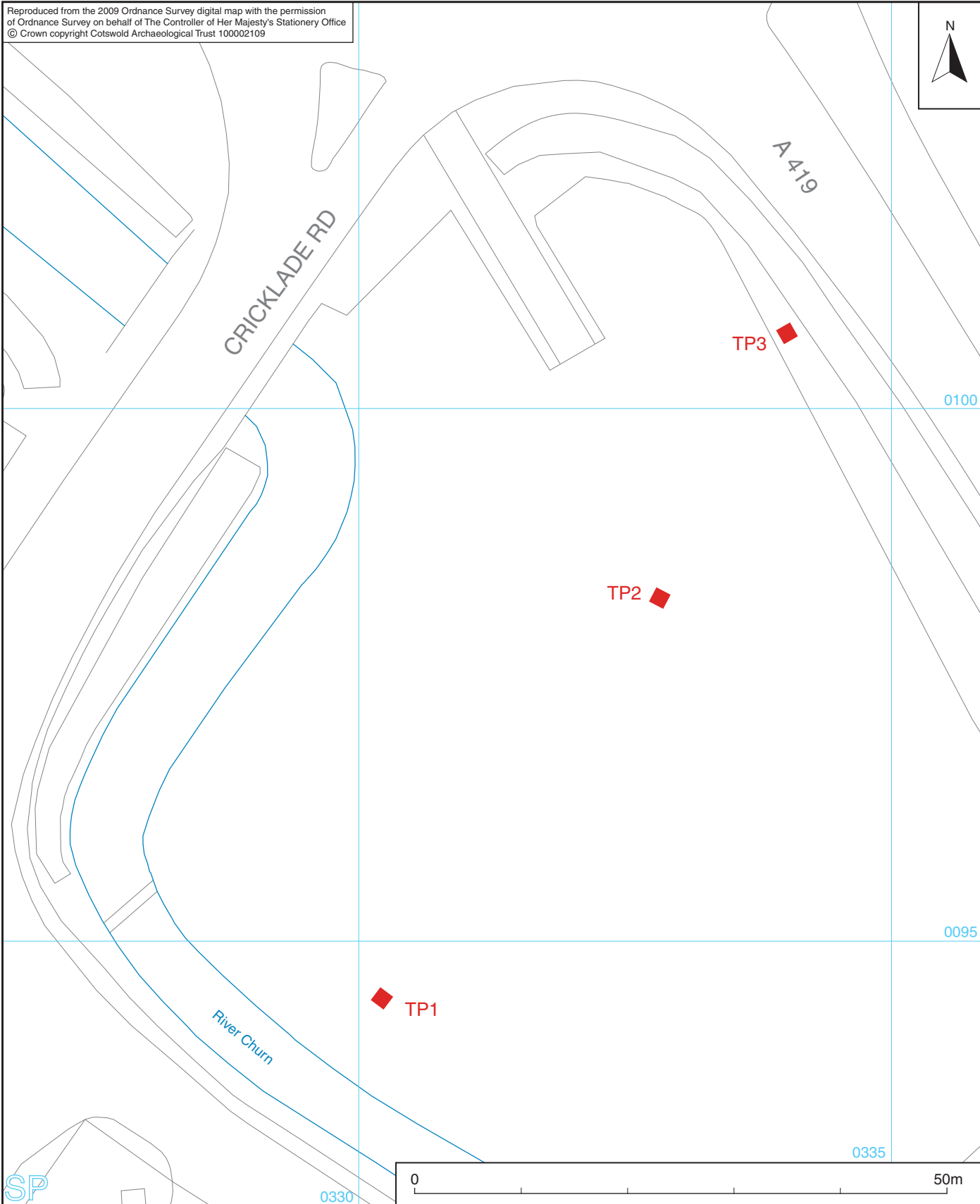
1:25,000@A4

PROJECT NO.

2992

FIGURE NO.

1



■ test pit



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Kingshill South Footbridge
Cirencester, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Test pit location

DRAWN BY

PJM

SCALE

1:1250@A4

PROJECT NO.

2992

FIGURE NO.

2



3



4

3 Test pit 1 looking north-east

4 Test pit 2 looking north-west



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Kingshill South Footbridge
Cirencester, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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SCALE

n/a

PROJECT NO.


2992

FIGURE NO.

3 & 4



5

5 Test pit 3 looking north-east	 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
	<small>PROJECT TITLE</small> Kingshill South Footbridge Cirencester, Gloucestershire			
	<small>FIGURE TITLE</small> Photographs			
	<small>DRAWN BY</small> PJM	<small>SCALE</small> n/a	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> 2992	<small>FIGURE NO.</small> 5