

**12 HIGH STREET  
MALMESBURY  
WILTSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

*For*

**VERITY & BEVERLEY**

*on behalf of*

**MS JULIE HOSKINS**

CA PROJECT: 3087  
CA REPORT: 10187

OCTOBER 2010


**COTSWOLD  
ARCHAEOLOGY**



12 HIGH STREET  
MALMESBURY  
WILTSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CA PROJECT: 3087  
CA REPORT: 10187

prepared by	Steven Sheldon, Project Supervisor
date	19 October 2010
checked by	Richard Young, Project Manager
date	19 October 2010
approved by	Mark Collard, Head of Contracts
signed	
date	20 October 2010
issue	01

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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** 12 High Street  
**Location:** Malmesbury, Wiltshire  
**NGR:** ST 9332 8715  
**Type:** Watching Brief  
**Date:** 20-23 August 2010  
**Planning Reference:** 09/01946/FUL  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes  
**Site Code:** HSR 10

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August 2010 during groundworks associated with the construction of a single storey extension at 12 High Street, Malmesbury.

No finds were retrieved during the course of the watching brief that pre-dated the modern period. The earliest deposit encountered appeared to comprise a make-up deposit of post-medieval/modern date into or onto which two walls had been built. The walls identified are likely to relate to 19th-century outbuildings depicted on the 1889 First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2010 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Verity & Beverley on behalf of Ms Julie Hoskins at 12 High Street Malmesbury, Wiltshire (centred on NGR: ST 9332 8715; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the construction of a single storey extension to the rear of the existing building (Wiltshire Council (WC) Planning ref: 09/01946/FUL). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2010) and approved by Ms Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Wiltshire County Archaeologist. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008), the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* document (Archaeology Service, Wiltshire County Council, 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2nd edition* (English Heritage 1992) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE)* (English Heritage 2006).

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The western half of the site is currently occupied by the Grade II Listed Building of 12 High Street, Malmesbury, the ground floor of which is a retail outlet run. The building faces directly onto Malmesbury High Street and is attached to other buildings on either side. The eastern half of site is occupied by outbuildings and a loading area that backs onto Cross Hayes car park. The site lies at approximately 89m AOD (Fig. 2).
- 1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as cornbrash, rubbly limestone of the Upper Jurassic era (BGS 1970).

### ***Archaeological background***

- 1.5 The hilltop location of Malmesbury, with natural protection afforded by the surrounding looping branches of the River Avon, and steep slopes from the plateau on which the historic core of the town lies, has evidence of human activity from early

prehistory. Excavations along the eastern side of the medieval town wall have uncovered a complex sequence of ramparts and ditches of a multivallate Iron Age hillfort, first established in the Early Iron Age (Longman 2006). There is documentary evidence for a 7th-century monastery at Malmesbury. In the later 9th century the hilltop community which had developed around the monastery within the defences of the earlier, Iron Age hillfort, was included by King Alfred in his burh system of defences for the kingdom of Wessex. By the time of the Norman Conquest, the monastery and town formed a significant economic, social and religious centre. Nothing is visible above ground of this early monastery or associated urban community and little is known of its extent or physical arrangement (beyond the evidence of the street plan of the historic core), although the evidence suggests that it most likely lay at the northern end of the plateau, in the area occupied by the later medieval abbey precinct. Late Saxon burials were excavated in 1993 by AC Archaeology near the Market Cross itself (Hawkes 1993). The present day abbey was built in the 12th century and is the third built on or near the same spot at the north end of the hilltop. The town was of strategic importance during the English Civil War, being a strong defensive position on the road between Oxford and Bristol. As the site lies in the centre of Malmesbury, close to the Abbey and Market Cross, the proposed works had the potential to uncover archaeological features and deposits of prehistoric to medieval date.

### ***Methodology***

- 1.7 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2010). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising the removal of an existing surface to the rear of the property and subsequent ground reduction (Fig. 2).
- 1.8 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.9 The archive is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. The site archive will be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes. 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 (FIG. 2)**

- 2.1 The earliest deposit encountered was grey silt clay 1004, which was first encountered at 0.35m below present ground level and that has been interpreted as a make-up deposit. At the southern edge of the trench this deposit was cut by construction cut 1006 for east/west aligned limestone block wall 1007. This wall was butted by modern concrete foundation 1005 (not illustrated). On the western edge of the trench make-up deposit 1004 was overlain by north/south aligned limestone wall 1003. On the eastern edge of the trench deposit 1004 was overlain by a very shallow spread of mortar and small limestone fragments 1009.
- 2.2 Wall 1007, wall 1003 and spread 1009 were sealed by modern make-up deposit 1002, which was overlain by gravel bedding layer 1001, which was in turn overlain by concrete floor slab 1000.

## **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 No finds were retrieved during the course of the watching brief that pre-dated the modern period. The absence of earlier archaeological deposits is no doubt a reflection of the shallow nature of the groundworks observed. The earliest deposit encountered appeared to comprise a make-up deposit of post-medieval/modern date into or onto which the walls identified during the course of the watching brief had been built. In all likelihood the walls identified relate to 19th-century outbuildings depicted on the 1889 First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

## **4. CA PROJECT TEAM**

Fieldwork was undertaken by Sian Reynish. The report was written by Steven Sheldon. The illustrations were prepared by Jon Bennett. The archive has been compiled by Steven Sheldon, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Richard Young.

## 5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1970 *Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 251: Malmesbury*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010 *12 High Street, Malmesbury, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

1889 *1st Edition OS 25" series*



**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

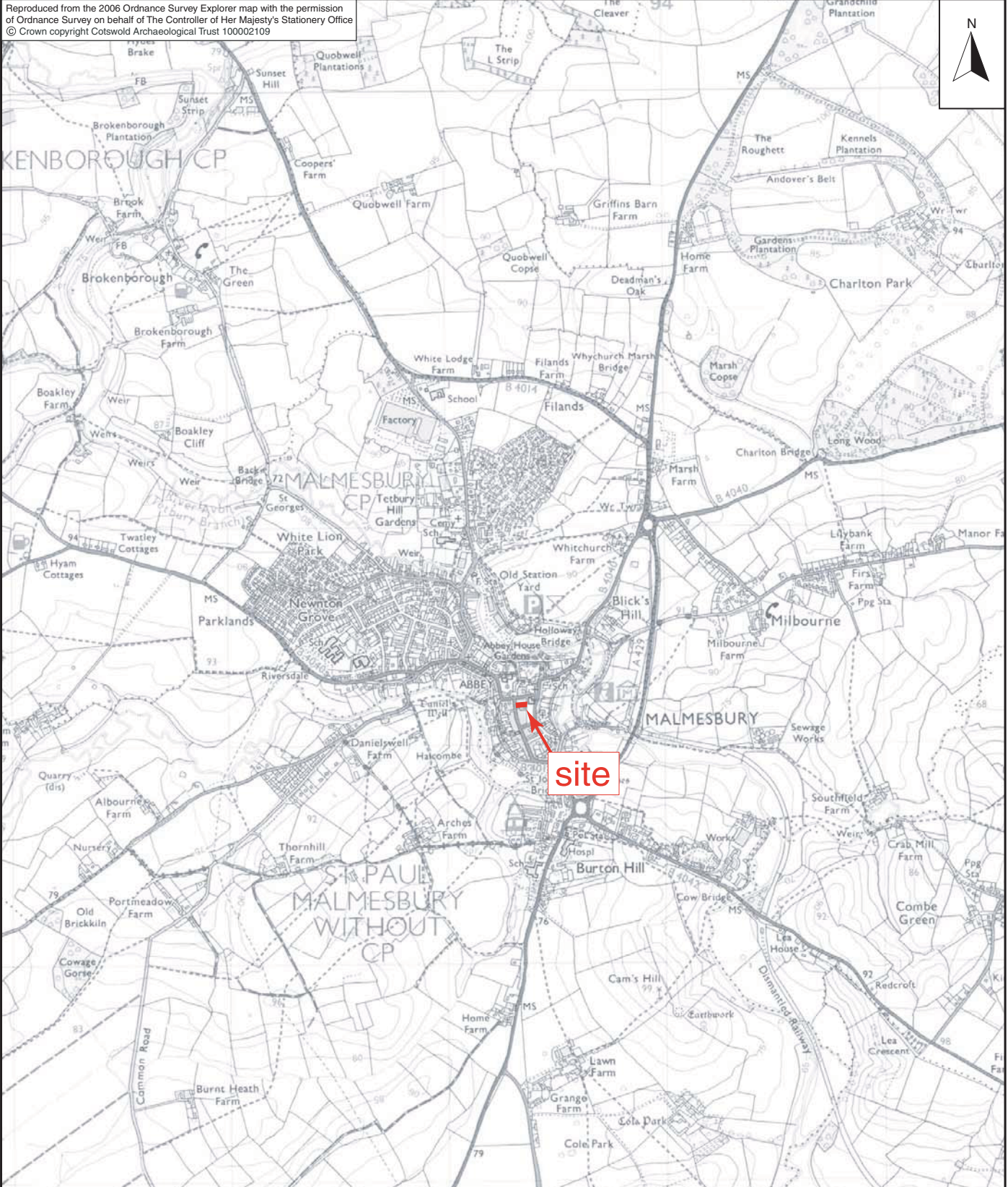
## Area 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Layer	Concrete floor slab			0.1	
1001	Layer	Gravel bedding for 1000			0.1	
1002	Layer	Make-up deposit: dark brown silt clay containing modern plastic, glass etc			0.15	
1003	Wall	Rough hewn, random coursed limestone wall bonded by friable grey brown mortar	1.67	>07	0.18	
1004	Layer	Make-up deposit: grey silt clay			>0.1	
1005	Wall	Modern concrete foundation wall				
1006	Cut	Rectangular shallow cut for wall 1007	>4.03	>0.55	N/A	
1007	Wall	Rough hewn, random coursed limestone wall bonded by friable grey brown mortar	>4.03	>0.55	0.18	
1008	Fill	grey silt clay	>4.03	>0.55	N/A	
1009	Layer	Mortar and small limestone fragments	>2.1	0.8	0.05	

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	12 High Street, Malmesbury, Wiltshire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in August 2010 during groundworks associated with the construction of a single storey extension at 12 High Street, Malmesbury.</p> <p>No finds were retrieved during the course of the watching brief that pre-dated the modern period. The earliest deposit encountered appeared to comprise a make-up deposit of post-medieval/modern date into or onto which two walls had been built. The walls identified are likely to relate to 19th-century outbuildings depicted on the 1889 First Edition Ordnance Survey map.</p>	
Project dates	20-23 August 2010	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	12 High Street, Malmesbury, Wiltshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	c. 495m <sup>2</sup>	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	ST 9332 8715	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Sian Reynish	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	n/a	None
Paper	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Context sheets, wall recording sheets, trench recording sheets, black and white photographs, site plan
Digital	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Digital photographs
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010 <i>12 High Street, Malmesbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report <b>10187</b>		

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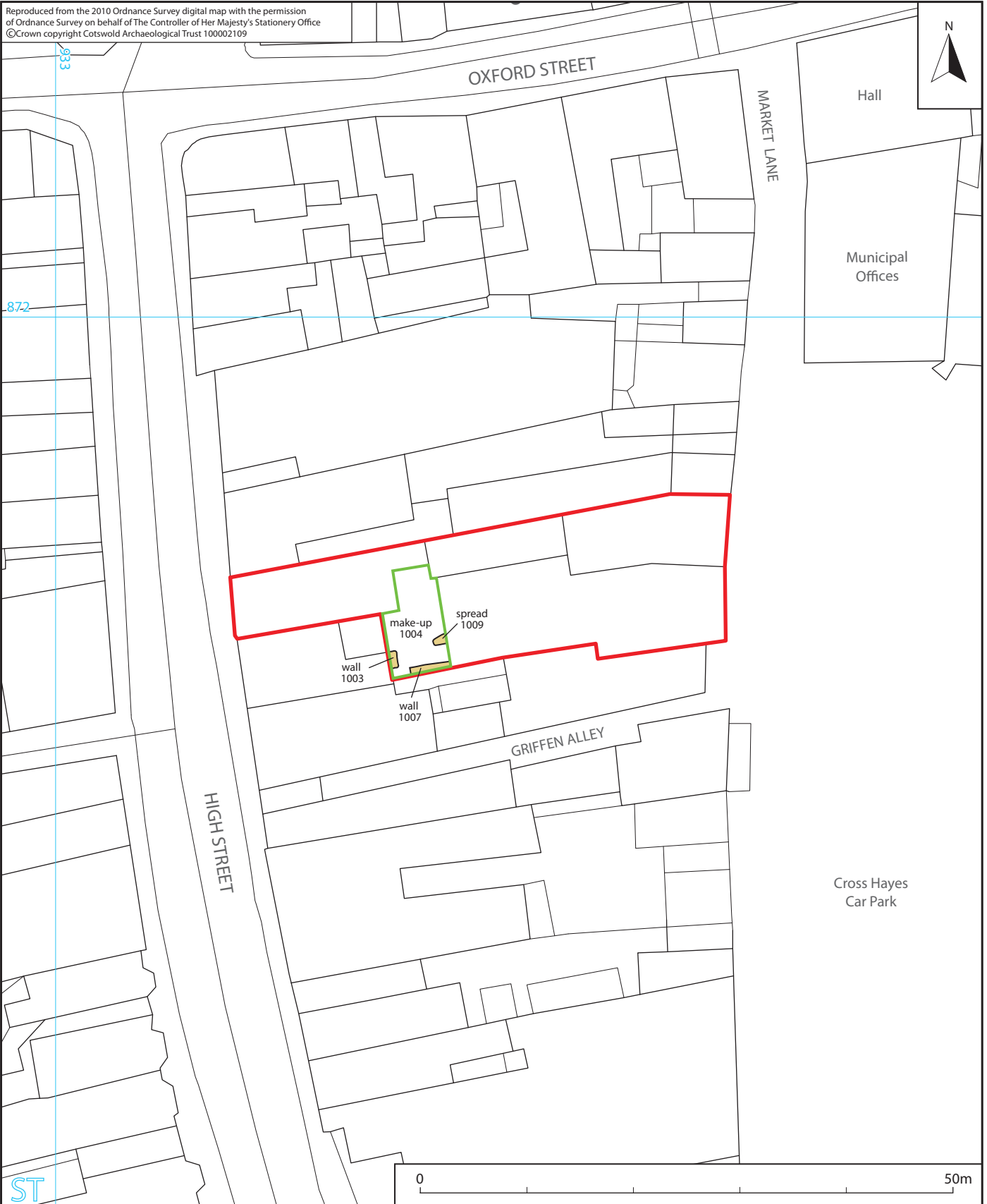


 **COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY**

PROJECT TITLE  
**12 High Street, Malmesbury  
 Wiltshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Site location plan**

DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
JB	1:25,000@A4	3087	<b>1</b>



- site
- area of observed groundworks showing archaeological feature



**COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY**

PROJECT TITLE  
**12 High Street, Malmesbury  
 Wiltshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**The site, showing archaeological  
 features**

DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
JB	1:500@A4	3087	<b>2</b>