

**SMALLBROOK HOUSE
MARSH ROAD
STAVERTON
WILTSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

For

L.A. PROPERTY

CA PROJECT: 3320
CA REPORT: 11016

JANUARY 2011




**COTSWOLD
ARCHAEOLOGY**



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CA PROJECT: 3320
CA REPORT: 11016

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|-------------|--|
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| date | 24 January 2011 |
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| date | 26 January 2011 |
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| signed |  |
| date | 26 January 2011 |
| issue | 01 |

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Smallbrook House
Location: Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire
NGR: ST 8590 6031
Type: Evaluation
Date: 13-14 January 2011
Planning Reference: W/10/03883/FUL
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Trowbridge Museum
Site Code: SBH 11

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2011 at Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire. Four trenches were excavated.

A possible former palaeochannel and ditch, both containing Roman pottery, were identified at the southern end of the site on a similar alignment to comparable features previously recorded just over 50m to the west of Smallbrook House. In the northern part of the site an undated east/west aligned ditch was revealed. An undated possible tree-throw pit and a modern pit were also identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2011 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for L.A. Property at Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton (centred on NGR: ST 8590 6031; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application (ref: W/10/03883/FUL) made to Wiltshire Council for the redevelopment of the Smallbrook House site.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a request for archaeological evaluation, contained within a letter dated 13 December 2010, by Mr David Vaughan (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council), and with a subsequent detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2011) and approved by David Vaughan. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for archaeological Fieldwork in Wiltshire* (Wiltshire County Council 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006). It was monitored by David Vaughan, including a site visit on 14 January 2011.

The site

- 1.3 The site is situated in Staverton, to the north-west of Trowbridge, Wiltshire (Fig. 1). The site slopes from approximately 40m AOD in the north-east to approximately 38m AOD in the south-west. The site is bounded to the north by Marsh Road, to the east by Smallbrook Gardens, to the south and south-east by an existing residential development, and to the west by the Old Vicarage (Fig. 2).
- 1.4 The Proposed Development Area (PDA) comprises approximately 0.39ha of land. The bulk of the northern half of the site is occupied by Smallbrook House with its gardens containing large, mature trees, and a smaller house immediately to the west (Brookfield House) with gardens. A large greenhouse and conservatory occupy the majority of the south-west corner of the site while the remaining portion of the site is currently in use as a private car park.

- 1.5 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Kellaways Clay Member of the Middle Jurassic with superficial head clay, silt, sand and gravel (BGS 2011). The natural substrate encountered on the site was clay.

Archaeological background

- 1.6 The surrounding area contains several archaeological sites recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), including a ring ditch (SMR Ref. ST85NE630) and a rectangular enclosure (SMR Ref. ST86SE602). In addition, cartographic sources identify that an area to the west of the current PDA was formerly known as 'Blacklands', a name that is often synonymous with Roman and medieval activity.
- 1.7 A programme of archaeological investigation of the 'Blacklands' site, comprising evaluation trenching in 2002 (CAT 2002), geophysical survey (Stratascan 2004) and additional evaluation trenching in 2004 (CA 2004), and archaeological excavation in 2007 (CA 2009), was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology approximately 50m to the west of the current PDA (see Fig. 2). In total, an area approximately 1.3ha in size was examined.
- 1.8 Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age activity was represented by an isolated pit within the northern part of the site, and by a shallow ditch set parallel with a north-west/south-east-aligned palaeochannel which crossed through the southern part of the site. A Middle Bronze Age pit was also recorded. Within the south-western and south-eastern parts of the site, immediately north-east of a palaeochannel that bisected the site were concentrations of pits, ditches, postholes, and stakeholes that appear to represent settlement remains of Late Bronze Age and Iron Age date (CA 2009).
- 1.9 A series of north-west/south-east and north-east/south-west-aligned ditches, associated with pottery of 1st to 2nd-century date, represent elements of an Early Roman field system set parallel with the, by then, silted palaeochannel. Curvilinear gullies, and circular arrangements of postholes, appear to identify locations of several Early Roman round houses within the northern part of the site (ibid. 2009).
- 1.10 Identified Late Roman features included a series of ditches cut along the length of the former palaeochannel, three charcoal-rich pits possibly representing flues for ovens, kilns or other industrial features, and four human burials. Towards the end of the Roman period parts of the site were overlain by artefact-rich dumps of soil, and a

series of rubble spreads lain across the southern boundary ditches appear to denote former causeways or bridging points in the area of the former palaeochannel. Architectural fragments recovered from these rubble spreads suggest the presence of a high status Roman building in the site vicinity (ibid. 2009).

- 1.11 Anglo-Saxon activity was attested from a shallow, sub-rounded depression in the south-eastern part of the site which yielded a single sherd of 5th to 7th-century pottery. A concentration of medieval features, including layers, gullies, a pit and posthole in the south-eastern part of the site were associated with pottery of 13th to 14th-century date (ibid, 2009).
- 1.12 To the west of Smallbrook House, an Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Exercise was carried out by the Avon Archaeology Unit (AAU) in 2006 at the Old Vicarage (see Fig. 2). An irregular grid of north/south and east/west orientated ditches dating to the Roman period was identified and found to contain a relatively large assemblage of Roman pottery. The recovery of nine fragments of Roman ceramic tile comprising box-flue tile and roof tile (*tegulae*) may also attest to the presence of a substantial Roman building in the vicinity of the site. An assemblage of flint artefacts (comprising waste flakes and a small number of tools) dating from the Neolithic to Early Bronze Age periods was also recovered during the excavation of the Roman features. A small quantity of pottery dating to the Iron Age was also recovered (Ducker 2006).

Archaeological objectives

- 1.13 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 Wiltshire Council in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.14 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of four trenches (Trench 1, 9.75m by 4m max.; Trench 2, 17.25m by 1.6m; Trench 3, 13m by 1.6m; Trench 5, 10.5m by 1.6m) in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). With the approval of David

Vaughan, all trench locations were modified to take into account access issues and ground conditions on site. The WSI stipulated three trenches within the grounds of Smallbrook House and two contingency trenches in the grounds of the neighbouring Brookfield House to the west. Only the northern of these two contingency trenches (Trench 5) was excavated. Trenches were set out by hand and surveyed using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2009).

- 1.15 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision 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).
- 1.16 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) and two deposits (104 and 106) were sampled. However, following discussions with David Vaughan the samples were subsequently discarded. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (1995).
- 1.17 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 Trowbridge 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 & 3)

- 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.
- 2.2 A sandy yellow clay natural substrate was revealed in all trenches. In Trenches 1, 2 and 3 this was overlain by a subsoil layer, probably slightly truncated, which was in

turn overlain by the modern car park surface, while in Trench 5 the slightly deeper subsoil was overlain by topsoil planted to lawn.

Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.3 At the southern end of Trench 1 the natural clay was cut by possible palaeochannel 105, aligned north-west/south-east, its single fill 106 containing one small, abraded sherd of Roman pottery dating to the 2nd to 4th Centuries AD. This feature was not fully excavated, although the profile of the southern half was revealed. Fill 106 was cut by a shallow ditch on a similar alignment, with a width of 0.9m and a depth of 0.23m, containing single fill 104 from which six abraded sherds of Roman pottery dating broadly to the Roman period were recovered, as well as one moderate sized piece of iron smelting slag. These features are on a similar alignment as a palaeochannel and Roman and medieval ditches identified in previous works some 50m to the north-west of the site (CA 2007). The archaeological deposits within Trench 1 were overlain by subsoil 101 with a depth of 0.22m, which was in turn overlain by modern car park surface 100 with a depth of 0.3m.

Trench 2 (Fig. 2)

- 2.4 Trench 2 revealed no significant archaeological remains. The natural clay substrate revealed within the trench was overlain by subsoil 202 with a depth of 0.2m, which was in turn overlain by modern car park surface 200/201 with a depth of 0.26m. A single tree-throw pit (204) was recorded and other root disturbance observed.

Trench 3 (Fig. 2)

- 2.5 Trench 3 revealed natural clay substrate, sealed by subsoil 302 with a depth of 0.18m, which was overlain by modern car park surface 300/301 with a depth of 0.28m. A modern pit or disturbance containing glass and flower pot fragments (not recovered), as well as tree-root disturbance, was observed within the trench.

Trench 5 (Figs 2 & 3)

- 2.6 The natural clay substrate within Trench 5 was cut by undated ditch 503 aligned east/west, containing two fills (504 and 505). Upper fill 505 contained frequent charcoal flecks and was sealed by subsoil layer 501 with a depth of 0.29m, which

was in turn covered by topsoil layer 500 with a depth of 0.42m. A modern land drain aligned north/south cut the subsoil and ditch fills.

The Finds

- 2.7 A small quantity of artefactual material was recovered from two deposits and consisted of Roman pottery, industrial residue and a fragment of fired clay (Appendix B).
- 2.8 Roman pottery was noted from deposits 104 (fill of ditch 103) and 106 (fill of palaeochannel 105). Fabrics identified from deposit 104 were reduced coarseware and oxidized fabric all probably local in origin and dated broadly to the Roman period. A single abraded sherd in Dorset Black-Burnished ware was recovered from deposit 106 and dates to the 2nd to 4th century AD.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 In the southern part of the site it was apparent that the topsoil had been removed prior to the laying of the existing parking area surface, though significantly deeper truncation does not appear to have occurred as subsoil survived beneath the car park make-up. Possible palaeochannel 105 and associated ditch 103 are on a similar alignment to features of both Roman and medieval date excavated in previous archaeological work a short distance to the north-west (CA 2007), but the abraded nature and small quantity of Roman pottery retrieved precludes conclusive dating and interpretation of these features.
- 3.2 Undated ditch 503 in the northern part of the site probably functioned as a field boundary or drainage ditch. Fills 504 and 505 were sealed by subsoil layer 501.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by David Parry, assisted by Anthony Beechey and Donal Lucey. The report was written by David Parry. The illustrations were prepared by

John Bennett. The archive has been compiled by David Parry, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

5. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2011
http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html accessed 26
January 2011
- CAT (Cotswold Archaeological Trust) 2002 *Land between New Terrace and Marina Drive, Staverton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA Report No. **02005**
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004 *Land South of New Terrace, Staverton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA Report No. **04166**
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- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 *Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation*
- Ducker, R. 2006 *Site at The Old Vicarage, Staverton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Exercise (Watching Brief)*
- Stratascan 2004 *Geophysical Survey Report: Staverton Marina, Wiltshire*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

| No. | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Spot-date |
|-----|-------|--|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 100 | Layer | Hardcore and gravel parking area surface | | | 0.3 | Modern |
| 101 | Layer | Subsoil – dark yellow sandy clay | | | 0.22 | |
| 102 | Layer | Natural greyish yellow clay | n/a | n/a | n/a | |
| 103 | Cut | Ditch | n/k | 0.9 | 0.23 | |
| 104 | Fill | Fill of ditch 103 | n/k | 0.9 | 0.23 | RB |
| 105 | Cut | Possible palaeochannel | n/k | 2 | 0.6 | |
| 106 | Fill | Fill of 105 | n/k | 2 | 0.6 | C2-C4 |

Trench 2

| No. | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Spot-date |
|-----|-------|---|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 200 | Layer | Gravel parking area surface | | | 0.08 | Modern |
| 201 | Layer | Hardcore makeup for gravel parking area | | | 0.18 | Modern |
| 202 | Layer | Subsoil – dark yellow sandy clay | | | 0.2 | |
| 203 | Layer | Natural greyish yellow clay | | | n/a | |
| 204 | Cut | Cut of probable treethrow | 1.15 | 1.15 | 0.16 | |
| 205 | Fill | Lower fill of 204 | 0.6 | 1.15 | 0.13 | |
| 206 | Fill | Upper fill of 204 | 0.60 | 0.67 | 0.1 | |

Trench 3

| No. | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Spot-date |
|-----|-------|---|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 300 | Layer | Gravel parking area surface | | | 0.1 | Modern |
| 301 | Layer | Hardcore makeup for gravel parking area | | | 0.18 | Modern |
| 302 | Layer | Subsoil – dark yellow sandy clay | | | 0.18 | |
| 303 | Layer | Natural greyish yellow clay | | | n/a | |

Trench 5

| No. | Type | Description | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Spot-date |
|-----|-------|---------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 500 | Layer | Garden topsoil | | | 0.42 | |
| 501 | Layer | Subsoil – mid yellow brown sandy clay | | | 0.29 | |
| 502 | Layer | Natural greyish yellow clay | | | n/a | |
| 503 | Cut | Ditch | u/k | 0.7 | 0.43 | |
| 504 | Fill | Lower fill of 503 | u/k | 0.7 | 0.43 | |
| 505 | Fill | Upper fill of 503 | u/k | 0.58 | 0.18 | |

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS


| Context | Description | Ct. | Wt. | Date |
|----------------|---|------------|------------|-------------|
| 104 | Industrial waste: dense iron smelting slag | 1 | 231 | RB |
| | Roman pottery: greyware, black-sandy fabric, local oxidized | 6 | 10 | |
| 106 | Fired clay | 1 | 5 | C2-C4 |
| | Roman pottery: abraded Dorset Black-Burnished ware | 1 | 2 | |

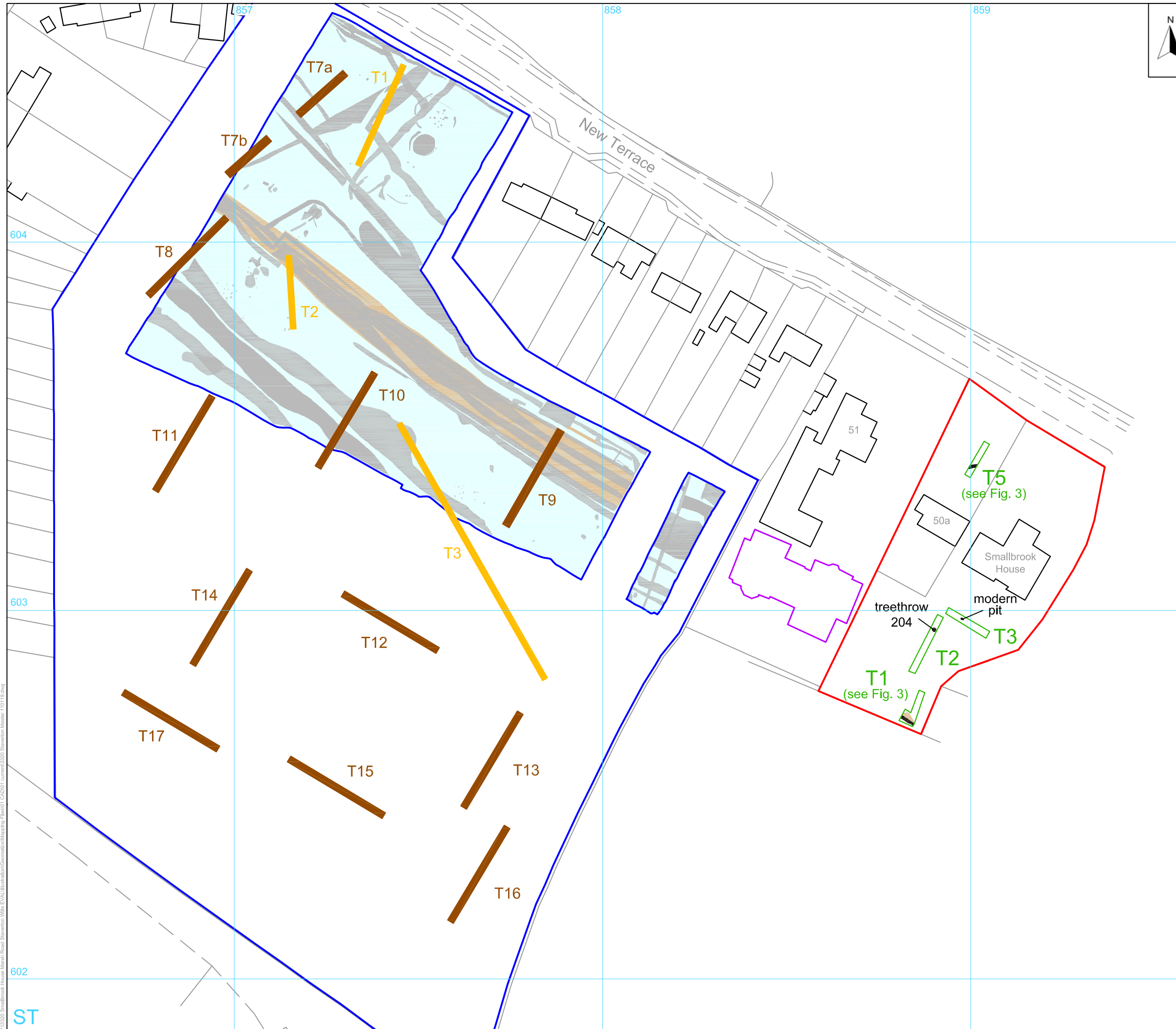
DRAFT

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

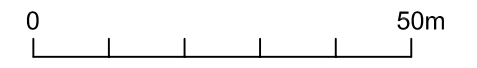
| PROJECT DETAILS | | |
|---|---|--|
| Project Name | Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire | |
| Short description | <p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2011 at Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire. Four trenches were excavated.</p> <p>A possible former palaeochannel and ditch, both containing Roman pottery, were identified at the southern end of the site on a similar alignment to comparable features previously recorded just over 50m to the west of Smallbrook House. In the northern part of the site an undated east/west aligned ditch was revealed. An undated possible tree-throw pit and a modern pit were also identified.</p> | |
| Project dates | 13-14 January 2011 | |
| Project type | Evaluation | |
| Previous work | n/a | |
| Future work | Unknown | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | | |
| Site Location | Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire | |
| Study area (M ² /ha) | 0.39ha | |
| Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference) | ST 8590 6031 | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | |
| Name of organisation | Cotswold Archaeology | |
| Project Brief originator | Wiltshire Council | |
| Project Design (WSI) originator | Cotswold Archaeology | |
| Project Manager | Simon Cox | |
| Project Supervisor | David Parry | |
| MONUMENT TYPE | | |
| | None | |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS | | |
| | None | |
| PROJECT ARCHIVES | | |
| | Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.) | Content |
| Physical | Trowbridge Museum | Ceramics, iron slag |
| Paper | Trowbridge Museum | Context sheets, registers, A4 permatrace |
| Digital | Trowbridge Museum | Digital photos |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | | |
| CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 <i>Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 11016 | | |



| | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|  COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY | | | |
| PROJECT TITLE Smallbrook House, Marsh Road Staverton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire | | | |
| FIGURE TITLE Site location plan | | | |
| DRAWN BY | SCALE | PROJECT NO. | FIGURE NO. |
| JB | 1:25,000@A4 | 3320 | 1 |



- ▬ site boundary
- ▬ evaluation trench showing archaeological features
- palaeo-channel
- ▬ evaluation trench (CAT 2002)
- ▬ evaluation trench (CA 2004)
- watching brief (AAU 2006)
- excavation area showing archaeological features (CA 2007)



PROJECT TITLE
Smallbrook House, Marsh Road, Staverton, Wiltshire

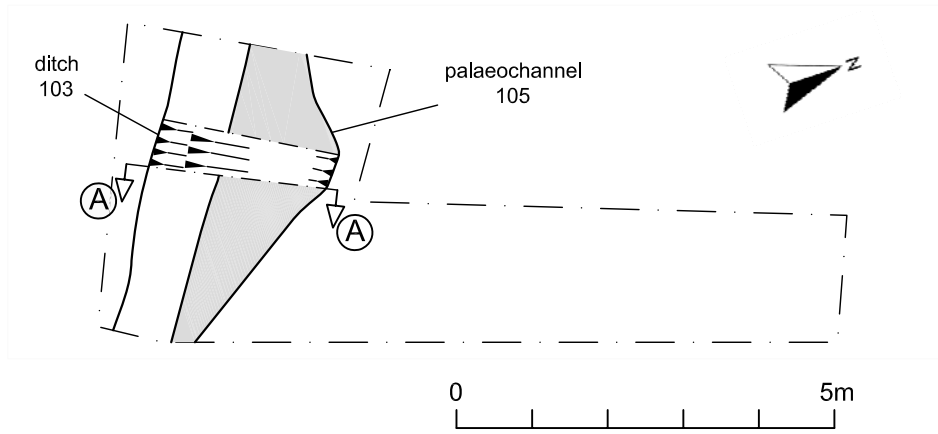
FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan, showing archaeological features and previous archaeological works

| DRAWN BY | SCALE | PROJECT NO. | FIGURE NO. |
|----------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| JB | 1:1000@A3 | 3320 | 2 |

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ST

Trench 1; Plan

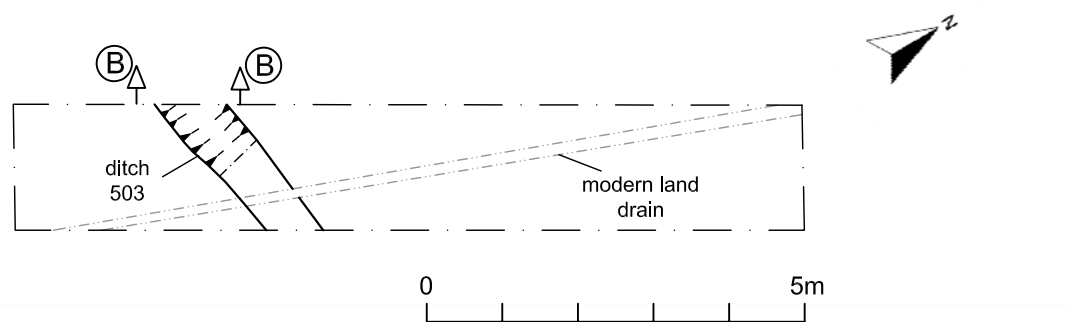


North-west facing section of ditch 103 and palaeochannel 105, looking south-east (1m scale)

Section AA



Trench 1; Plan



South-east facing section of ditch 503, looking north-east (1m scale)

Section BB

