

B0421: Castle Green/Castle Bow, Taunton, Somerset.

A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording



B0421: Castle Green/Castle Bow, Taunton, Somerset.

A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

for

Wessex Water plc

by



Brickfield Offices, Maperton, Wincanton, Somerset. BA9 8EG.

T: 01963 824696

E: mail@contextone.co.uk

W: www.contextone.co.uk

COAS reference: C1/WBF/11/CGT

National Grid Reference: centred on ST 22540 24760

Wessex Water plc scheme reference: B0421

Somerset Historic Environment Record reference: PRN 31519

Somerset Museums Service Accession number: TTNCM 98/2011

OASIS reference: contexto1-116065

Scheduled Monument Consent number: S29180

COAS project team:

Project Director: Richard McConnell

Fieldwork Manager: Stuart Milby

Post-excavation Manager: Dr Cheryl Green

Fieldwork: Pete Fairclough, Luke Jarvis, Stuart Milby, Holly Rodgers

Report: Dr Cheryl Green

Illustration: Tara Fairclough

September 2014

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd shall retain the copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other projected documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Design/Specification/Written Scheme of Investigation.

Front cover image: View through entrance to Castle Bow with pits 8 & 26 beyond, from the east.
© Context One Archaeological Services 2014

Contents

Non-technical summary.....	i
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Site location, topography and archaeological background.....	1
3. Methodology.....	3
4. Results.....	5
5. The finds.....	6
6. Discussion.....	7
7. Archive.....	7
8. COAS acknowledgements.....	7
9. Bibliography.....	7
Appendices	
Appendix 1. Context summary.....	9
Illustrations	
Figure 1. Site setting.....	2
Figure 2. Detailed site setting showing archaeological landscape, locations of pits and Plan 1.....	4
Plates	
Plate 1. Profile 7 (from N; 2 x 1m scales).....	5
Plate 2. Profile 2 (from N; 2 x 1m scales).....	5
Plate 3. Pit 34 showing old road surface (3400) (from N; 0.5m scales).....	6
Plate 4. Pit 31 (from SW; 1m scales).....	6
Plate 5. Profile 31 showing post-medieval layers (from S; 1m scales).....	6
Plate 6. Pit 31 showing foundation (3106) (from N).....	6
Plate 7. Pit 31 showing foundation (3106) (from NW; 0.2m scales).....	6

Non-technical summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a phased program of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with a replacement water main at Castle Green, Castle Bow, Taunton, Somerset, between 4 March 2013 and 9 February 2014. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water Plc under a Term Agreement with COAS.

The monitoring programme was requested by Mr Hugh Beamish (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage) following a consultation request by Ms Ruth Hall (Senior Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc) on the potential archaeological impact of the scheme. The existing water main extends beneath the grounds of Taunton Castle, a scheduled monument (Scheduled Monument (SM) Number: 22851) also encompassing an earlier ninth century cemetery and a Civil War siege work. The remainder of the scheme lies within an area of High Archaeological Potential, as defined in policy EN23 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan, and crosses the Saxon and medieval cores of the town (Gathercole 2002).

Despite the potential for significant mid- to late Saxon and medieval remains across the Site, development excavations did not reveal any evidence of activity from these periods. Evidence was limited to several post-medieval and modern deposits. In addition, in Corporation Street an earlier 20th century road surface and a rough stone foundation probably representing a small boundary wall were identified. A small assemblage of post-medieval finds were also observed within post-medieval deposits in Corporation Street. Characterised as typical of domestic refuse, the assemblage was considered to be of limited research value and therefore was not collected.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a phased program of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with replacing a water main at Castle Green, Castle Bow, Taunton, Somerset (the 'Site'). The programme was carried out over 31 days between 4 March 2013 and 9 February 2014. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water Plc under a Term Agreement with COAS.
- 1.2 The monitoring programme was requested by Mr Hugh Beamish (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage) following a consultation request by Ms Ruth Hall (Senior Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc) on the potential archaeological impact of the scheme. The existing water main extends beneath the grounds of Taunton Castle, a scheduled monument (**Scheduled Monument (SM) Number: 22851**). In addition, the remainder of the scheme lies within an area of High Archaeological Potential, as defined in policy EN23 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan, and crosses the Saxon and medieval cores of the town (Gathercole 2002).
- 1.3 The requirement followed advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).
- 1.4 The programme of archaeological works comprised four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy; monitoring and recording during development groundworks; post-excavation and report production; and archive deposition. The WSI for the first phase of works was approved by Mr Beamish prior to the commencement of any Site works. Addendums to the WSI were submitted to and approved by Mr Beamish during the course of the scheme, relating to minor alterations as works proceeded.

2. Site location, topography and archaeological background

- 2.1 The Site incorporated several streets within the centre of Taunton, the County Town and administrative centre of Somerset (**Figure 1**). The scheme was centred on the Castle Green area, the historic core of Taunton, and also included part of Corporation Street. The ground was fairly level at c. 15-20m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 2.2 The archaeological background for the Site was drawn from the Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) and from the National Heritage List for England maintained by English Heritage. Relevant Heritage Assets are located and enumerated on **Figure 2**. Taunton Castle is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, with the scheduled area covering the central area of the Site (**SM 28551** on **Figure 1**; **3** on **Figure 2**). The scheduling relates to the shell keep castle which is part of the associated outer bailey; an earlier ninth century cemetery which underlies the northern part of the castle; and a Civil War siege work.
- 2.3 The List Entry for Taunton Castle states that the extant fabric (the inhabited parts of which are Grade I Listed) dates from the 13th century, having developed from an earlier Norman motte-and-bailey. The castle site was utilised throughout the post-medieval period and successive redevelopments have led to integration of much of the monument into the modern town centre. The Grade I Listed Castle Bow (**2** on **Figure 2**) was once the east gate to the castle precinct and now forms part of the Castle Hotel.
- 2.4 The earliest archaeological features identified within the Site area are human burials, including 12 skulls, found during the replacement of the floor at the local history library in 1972 (**1** on **Figure 2**). A radiocarbon determination of AD 860+/-70 was obtained from a bone sample. This, together with the wide occurrence of further human remains, suggests the presence of a cemetery dating from the Saxon period underlying the northern part of the castle site. The cemetery may be associated with Taunton's minster church which is thought to have been constructed in the mid-Saxon period and subsequently relocated in the 12th century.

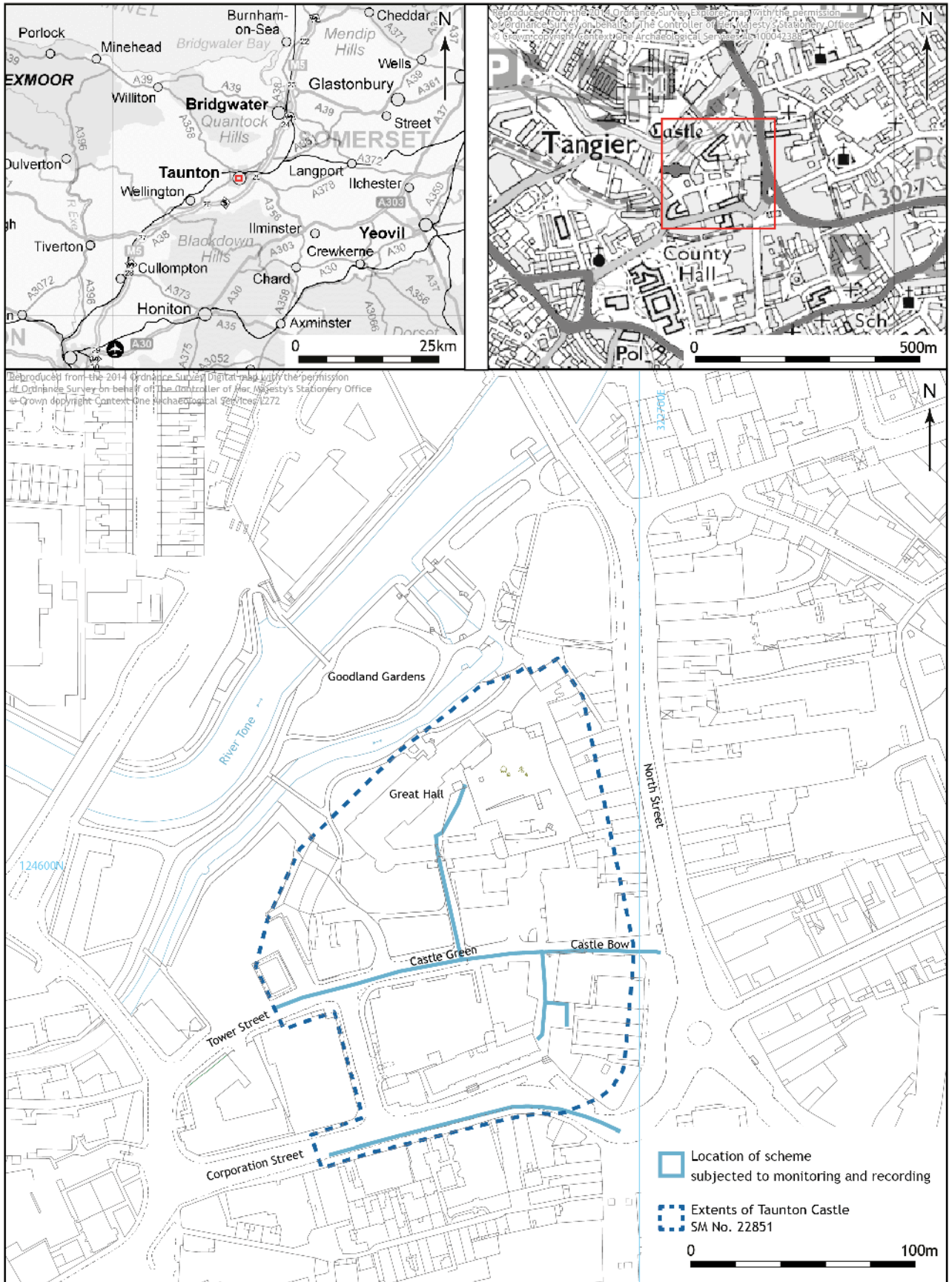


Figure 1. Site setting

- 2.5 Three previous archaeological investigations are recorded within the Site area. These comprise two watching briefs which identified the castle bank (4 on Figure 2) and the top fill of the castle ditch (6 on Figure 2) comprising a deposit of clay and slates. During the re-laying of a road surface, the castle ditch was observed and described as a large feature with a dark fill against the natural red clay (5 on Figure 2).

3. Methodology

Development groundworks methodology

- 3.1 A number of methods were employed during the laying of the replacement water main. These included pipe bursting, slip-lining and open cut trenching. Entry/exit pits were excavated for the pipe bursting and slip-lining, although much of this work was carried out within the existing pipe trench. A series of 19 pits were excavated varying considerably in size, though typically in the region of 1.0-2.5m squared and approximately 1.0m deep. The excavations were carried out using a 360 degree tracked machine fitted with a 0.40m wide toothed bucket.

Excavation methodology

- 3.2 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook* issued by Somerset County Council in 2011, and the codes, standards and guidelines set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, rev. 2012; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2008). Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 3.3 All archaeological features/deposits encountered were cordoned off to permit investigation and recording where preservation *in situ* was not considered possible. All archaeological remains were sampled by manual excavation to establish stratigraphic relationships, recover sufficient artefacts to establish 'absolute' dates, determine feature/deposit morphology and character, and to recover any palaeoenvironmental indicators.
- 3.4 All features and deposits were drawn on dimensionally stable media at scales of 1:20 (plans) and 1:10 (sections) including representative sections and plans of the trenches. All features/deposits were recorded using standard COAS *pro-forma* recording sheets. Stratigraphic relationships were recorded using a "Harris-Winchester matrix" diagram. Soil colours were logged using a Munsell soil colour chart.
- 3.5 The location, extent and altitude of archaeological features and deposits were mapped relative to the National Grid and Ordnance Datum using a TopCon GRS-1 Global Positioning System (GPS) receiving real-time calibrations to produce accuracies of 1-2cm. Where accurate readings could not be achieved with the GPS, archaeological features and deposits were plotted using measured using tapes and offsets from nearby buildings.
- 3.6 Profile sections of the deposit sequence across the Site were recorded using standard COAS *pro-forma* profile sheets. Each profile was recorded as a graphical representation accompanied by a brief description. Photographs including a suitable scale were also taken and the location recorded. Any dateable material found within a deposit was also noted. The frequency with which profile sections were recorded was based entirely on any variation of the deposit sequence.
- 3.7 All deposits were recorded as individual contexts and ascribed a unique number. Contexts referenced in this report are presented in standard terms, e.g. (100), (203).
- 3.8 Bulk finds from all periods and/or mass produced post-medieval artefacts encountered during archaeological monitoring were noted but not collected as they were considered to be surplus to future research needs.
- 3.9 A photographic record of the fieldwork comprised digital images in .jpg format and monochrome prints. As a minimum, the record included photographs of each profile section, the Site setting and development works.

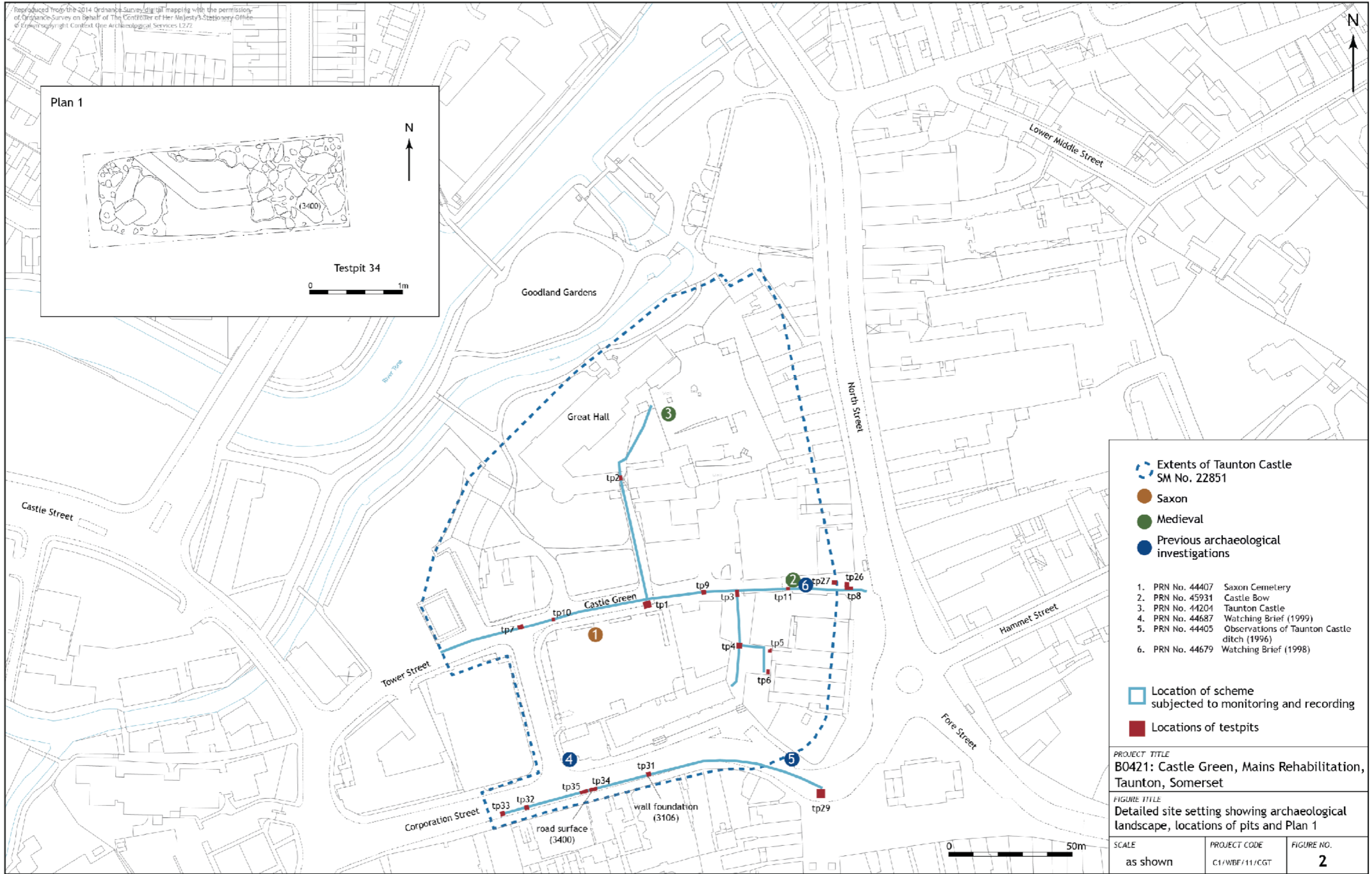


Figure 2. Detailed site setting showing archaeological landscape, locations of pits and Plan 1

4. Results

- 4.1 Variable deposit sequences were encountered during the monitoring programme, sealed beneath the modern surfaces and underlying make-up layers.
- 4.2 Along Castle Green, pit 1 and pit 3 did not penetrate beneath the modern deposits, which extended to a depth of 0.9m deep. Further west along Castle Green, in Pit 7 a reddish brown (5Y 3/2) redeposited clay (702) was encountered at a depth of 0.4m below the modern paving, containing occasional charcoal and chips of white stone measuring <0.02m diameter (**Plate 1**). Nearby, in pit 10 the heavily mixed and compacted redeposited clay (1002) was recorded as very dark grey brown (10YR 3/2) containing angular stones measuring <0.03m diameter and CBM fragments measuring <0.15m diameter. This overlay the natural comprising dark brown (10YR 3/3) clay (1003) with rare stones measuring <0.03m diameter. Near the centre of Castle Green, in pits 4, 5, 6 and 9, and at the junction with Castle Green and North Street, in pit 8, the same redeposited clay ((402) (502) (602) (802) & (902)) as in pit 7 was recorded at a depth of 0.7m below the modern paving. In the same area, within pit 11 was a redeposited clay (1103) with gravel above modern pipes and overlying the natural clay (1104) at a depth of 0.7m below the modern paving. In the proximity of the medieval Great Hall, pit 2 recorded modern backfill (201) of the pre-existing pipe trench below modern paving (200) (**Plate 2**).
- 4.3 In Corporation Street, pit 34 exposed an earlier road surface (3400) beneath the modern tarmac and overlying a water main assumed to be c. 100 years old (**Plate 3**). The undisturbed surface comprised roughly laid lias stones each measuring between 0.05m square and 0.3m wide by 0.4m long by 0.2m deep bonded with red clay (see **Plan 1**; **Figure 2**).
- 4.4 Immediately to the east, pit 31 revealed several post-medieval deposits beneath the modern tarmac and underlying modern layer (3101), all of which had been disturbed by the modern 1998 water main (**Plate 4**). At a depth of 0.6m below the tarmac, a dark brown soft to friable silt layer (3102) measuring 0.4m deep, overlay a band of slate (3103), which in turn covered a deposit (3104) which was the same as the uppermost silt deposit (3102) (**Plate 5**). Animal bone, glass and clay pipe was observed throughout all three deposits but not collected, with 17th century clay pipe observed at the lowest point. In the south-east corner of the pit was a poorly constructed wall foundation (3106) constructed above the post-medieval deposit (3104) (**Plates 6 & 7**). This comprised three squared random courses of Hamstone blocks measuring between 0.08m wide by 0.25m long and 0.25m wide by 0.38m long and 0.15m deep, with mortar joints measuring 0.01m wide filled with a soft bonding material. The foundation was visible for a width of 0.49m and a height of 0.29m within the pit. Redeposited red clay (3105) was exposed in the north-west corner of the pit.



Plate 1. Profile 7 (from N; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 2. Profile 2 (from N; 2 x 1m scales)



Plate 3. Pit 34 showing old road surface (3400) (from N; 0.5m scales)



Plate 4. Pit 31 (from SW; 1m scales)



Plate 5. Profile 31 showing post-medieval layers (from S; 1m scales)



Plate 6. Pit 31 showing foundation (3106) (from N)



Plate 7. Pit 31 showing foundation (3106) (from NW; 0.2m scales)

5. The finds

- 5.1 The post-medieval finds observed in pit 34 comprised post-medieval tobacco clay pipe, glass and animal bone.

6. Discussion

- 6.1 Despite the potential for significant mid- to late Saxon and medieval remains across the Site, development excavations did not reveal any evidence of activity from these periods. Within the scheduled area (SM 28551), encompassing the medieval castle, an earlier ninth century cemetery and a Civil War siege work, evidence was limited to several post-medieval and modern deposits, with structural remains in two pits.
- 6.2 Along Castle Green, undated redeposited clay layers observed beneath the modern deposits in most of the pits, did not yield any finds or human remains, although generally this layer had been previously disturbed by pipe trenching. Within Corporation Street, one pit uncovered an early 20th century paved road surface beneath the modern make-up and tarmac. In a further pit immediately to the east were a series of three post-medieval deposits dating from the 17th century. A section of a rough stone foundation constructed above the lowest of these layers must be of a similar date or later and most likely represented a small boundary wall. A small assemblage of post-medieval finds were observed within the post-medieval deposits in Corporation Street, characterised as typical of domestic refuse and considered to be of limited research value.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The project archive is currently held by COAS and consists of the following:

Item	Number	Format
Profile record sheets	13	Paper
Site sketch plans	3	Paper
Masonry record sheets	2	Paper
Context record sheets	2	Paper
A4 scale drawings	3	Permatrace
Graphics register	1	Paper
Photographic register	7	Paper
Digital images	322	.JPG

- 7.2 The paper archive has been scanned as a single file in .PDF format and will form part of the physical Site archive to be deposited with Somerset County Museum.
- 7.3 Copies of this report will be deposited with English Heritage, with the client/agent and included as part of the Somerset Historic Environment Record.
- 7.4 In compliance with condition (f) of the Scheduled Monument Consent (S29180), an OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations - <http://oasis.ac.uk/england>) has been completed and the digital project report deposited with the Archaeology Data Service, via the OASIS form.

8. COAS acknowledgements

- 8.1 We would like to thank the following for their contribution to the successful completion of this project:

Mr Hugh Beamish, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage
 Ms Ruth Hall, Senior Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc.

9. Bibliography

Department for Communities and
 Local Government (DCLG) 2012

Gathercole, C., 2002

National Planning Policy Framework, London: Her
 Majesty's Stationery Office

An archaeological assessment of Taunton, Somerset

Extensive Urban Survey, Somerset County Council

Institute of Field Archaeologists (IfA),
June 1985 (rev. November 2012)

Code of Conduct. Reading: IfA

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA),
September 1990 (rev. October 2008)

Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology. Reading: IfA

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA),
October 1994 (rev. October 2008)

Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief. Reading: IfA

Membery, S., Brunning, R., Croft, R.,
Payne, N. and Webster, C., 2011

Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook. Somerset County Council

Milby, S., 2012

Written Scheme of Investigation for Intensive Archaeological Monitoring and Recording: B0421 Castle Green/ Castle Bow, Taunton, Somerset. Context One Archaeological Services Ltd, unpublished

Appendix 1: Context summary

CONTEXT NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS/DEPTH
3400 (TP34)	C20	Layer	Block surface. Comprises rough laid blocks imbedded in redeposited red clay (3401). Overlay a c. 100 year old water pipe.	Tarmac	-	3401	-	-	0.15m
3010 (TP301)	MOD	Layer	Road make-up. Included blue lias fragments measuring on average 0.20 x 0.10m surrounded by mixed deposit. Above layer of disturbed material (3011) above water main.	Tarmac	-	3011	>1.2m	>0.4m	0.30m
3102 (TP31)	Post-med	Layer	Backfill. Dark brown silt. Clay pipe at base of deposit & early glazed ware. Finds observed but not collected. Covered by mixed deposit (3101) and overlying a band of slate (3103). Back fill deposit disturbed by 1998 water main. Very similar to (3104)	3101	-	3103	-	-	0.40m
3103 (TP31)	Post-med	Layer	Slate	3102	-	3104	-	-	0.04m
3104 (TP31)	Post-med	Layer	Backfill. Same as (3102). Foundation (3106) built above this layer in SE corner of TP31	3103, 3106	-	-	-	-	-
3105 (TP31)	NAT	Layer	Re-deposited natural clay. Exposed at NW corner of TP	3104	-	-	-	-	-
3106 (TP31)	MOD	Structure	Foundation. Poorly constructed of random coursed rubble. Exposed 3 courses of ?Hamstone, each block measuring between 0.08m x 0.25m and 0.25m x 0.38m x 0.15m. Soft bonding material, mortar joints measuring 0.02m	3101	-	3104	-	0.49m	0.29m