

26 Linkmead  
Stratton on the Fosse  
Radstock  
Somerset

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING &  
RECORDING

WRITTEN SCHEME  
OF INVESTIGATION

January 2021

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Stratton on the Fosse

Looking after the past, today...





26 Linkmead  
Stratton on the Fosse  
Radstock  
Somerset

for

**C1 project code: C1/AMR/21/LSS**

**Future Build South-West Ltd**

#### WSI

|             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Prepared by | Tara Fairclough |
| Date        | 20/01/21        |

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#### PROJECT DETAILS

|                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Client project/scheme ref.       | N/A                       |
| Planning Application ref.        | 2020/0732/FUL             |
| Local Planning Authority         | Mendip District Council   |
| Scheduled Monument Consent ref.  | N/A                       |
| Historic Environment Record ref. | 45005                     |
| Collecting Museum                | South West Heritage Trust |
| Museum accession code            | TTNCM 5/2021              |
| OASIS reference                  | contexto1-412979          |

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Front cover image: extract from 25" Ordnance Survey map, 1886

## Summary

*Context One Heritage & Archaeology has been instructed to carry out archaeological monitoring and recording during development groundworks as a condition of granting planning permission for the construction of a dwelling at 26 Linkmead, Stratton on the Fosse, Radstock, Somerset. The project has been commissioned by Future Build South-West Ltd.*

*There are no records of any previous archaeological activity on the Site although it faces onto the Fosse Way Roman Road and within proximity of an extensive area of Roman settlement including the remains of a high status building and associated field system. The Somerset Historic Environment Record also identifies a range of multi-period heritage assets in the wider environs of the Site.*

*Historic map regression assessment indicates that the Site was part of a pasture field from at least the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the construction of the present dwellings by 1930.*

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) has been instructed to carry out archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition (5) of granting planning permission (planning reference: 2020/0732/FUL) for the construction of a dwelling at 26 Linkmead, Stratton on the Fosse, Radstock, Somerset (the 'Site') (**Figure 1**). The project has been commissioned by Future Build South-West Ltd.

1.2 The monitoring and recording was requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Mendip District Council (MDC) on the advice of the county Historic Environment Service (HES), South West Heritage Trust (SWHT). In the Case Officer Report for MDC Ms Lorna Elstob (Case Officer, MDC) stated:

*"No development shall commence, except archaeological investigation work, until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme of archaeological work should provide a controlled watching brief during ground works on the site, with provision for excavation of any significant deposits or features encountered, and shall be carried out by a competent person(s) and completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.*

*Reason: The site is within an area of significant archaeological interest and the Council will wish to examine and record items of interest discovered in accordance with Policy DP3 of the Mendip District Local Plan Part 1: Strategy & Policies 2006-2029 (Adopted 2014). This is a condition precedent because archaeological remains and features may be damaged by the initial development works."*

1.3 The programme of archaeological works will comprise four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which sets out the project strategy (this document); archaeological monitoring and recording; post-excavation and report production; and archive preparation and deposition.

1.4 The requirement follows advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 199 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (DCLG 2019). The client and/or agent will ensure that the archaeological works are implemented as described below in order to avoid breach of the imposed condition.

## 2. The Site

2.1 The Site (centred on NGR ST 65917 51172) covers c. 1,230 square metres and is located at the northern tip of Stratton on the Fosse c. 2km south-south-west of Midsomer Norton and Radstock (**Figure 1**). The Site is bounded to the east by the Fosseway A367 and to the south by residential housing with agricultural land to the north and west. The Site is largely situated on level ground at an average height of c. 164m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The recorded geology for the Site is Mercia Mudstone Group (marginal Facies) - Conglomerate (BGS 2021). No drift geology is recorded. The soils are characterised as freely draining slightly acid loamy soils (CSAIS 2021). The Site currently comprises an overgrown garden with a mixture of lawn, hardstanding and some tree cover.

2.2 Relevant heritage assets within a 500m radius of the Site have been tabulated below alongside a brief summary. Baseline data was drawn from records held by Somerset County Council as part of the Historic Environment Record (**HER**); Historic England (**HE**) National Heritage List for England; historic mapping including the Tithe map and Ordnance Survey (OS) maps; historic aerial imagery; and the DTM 1m LiDAR composite data collected in 2019.

| HER/HE ref. | Description   | Period      |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| 24992       | Hammer stone find, Stratton on the Fosse                                    | Prehistoric |
| 15723       | Flint scatter, E of Stratton on the Fosse                                   | Prehistoric |
| 24990       | Roman occupation and burial, Killings Knap, Stratton on the Fosse           | Roman       |
| 15308       | Roman coin hoard find, Ten Acre Field, north of Downside Abbey              | Roman       |
| 44773       | Roman settlement, N of Stratton on the Fosse                                | Roman       |
| 55101       | Fosse Way, Roman road   | Roman       |
| 32896       | Possible Roman villa, Stratton on the Fosse                                 | Roman       |
| 25527       | Excavations (1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 ), north of Stratton on the Fosse | Roman       |
| 57105       | Geophysical Survey (1995)   | Roman       |

|               |   |               |
|---------------|---|---------------|
| 25151/1345110 | Grade I Listed Building - Church of St Vigor and churchyard, Stratton on the Fosse                  | Medieval      |
| 29151         | 18 <sup>th</sup> century turnpike road, Oakhill to Whitepost  | Post-medieval |
| 16847/1058638 | Milepost, Fosse Way, S of Killing's Knapp, Stratton on the Fosse – early 19 <sup>th</sup> century   | Modern        |
| 21614/1058633 | Grade I Listed Building - Downside Abbey church, Fosse Way, Stratton on the Fosse                   | Modern        |
| 20470/1295178 | Grade II* Listed Building - Downside Abbey monastery and cloister, Fosse Way, Stratton on the Fosse | Modern        |
| 25167         | Fishponds associated with the Abbey, Stratton on the Fosse  | Modern        |
| 17007         | Burial Ground, Downside Abbey, Stratton on the Fosse  | Modern        |
| 16768         | St Benedict's RC Church, Fosseyway (A.367), Stratton on the Fosse                                   | Modern        |
| 17001         | Burial Ground, St Benedict's Church, Stratton on the Fosse  | Modern        |
| 29189         | Downside Abbey Village, Gas works   | Modern        |
| 29190         | Gas works, Downside Abbey, Stratton-on-the-Fosse  | Modern        |
| 44098         | Earthwork enclosures, Tynings Farm, Chilcompton   | Undated       |

- 2.3 There is artefactual evidence for prehistoric activity within the vicinity of the Site and a number of undated earthworks may also date to this period. The Site lies along the route of the Fosse Way, a principal Roman Road that once linked Exeter in the south-west to Lincoln in the east Midlands. Excavations and a geophysical survey undertaken in the field immediately north of the Site, between 1994 – 1998 by Richard Maggs and the pupils of Downside Abbey School, uncovered evidence for Roman settlement including a high status building with columned entrance facing the Fosse Way and an extensive field system (**Figure 1**). A coin hoard containing over 500 bronze coins dating to the early 4<sup>th</sup> century was discovered c. 300m to the north-west of this building in the adjacent field. Other *nuclei* of Roman settlement have been identified within the environs of Site and these include a possible Roman villa located c. 400m to the south-west and Roman occupation and burial recorded c. 500m to the north-north-east. There is scant evidence for the medieval and post-medieval periods; The parish Church of St Vigor is thought to date from the 12<sup>th</sup> century; the remains of a farmstead dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century was discovered during the excavations mentioned above; a handful of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings; and the 18<sup>th</sup> century turnpiking of the Fosse Way. The construction of Downside Abbey in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century along with its Abbey Church of St Gregory the Great and other associated structures have done much to reanimate the HER for Stratton on the Fosse in the most recent past.
- 2.4 Historic map regression analysis indicates that the Site formed part of a pasture field known as 'The four Acres' in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Linkmead residential development is first seen on the Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1930. An examination of the DTM 1m LiDAR composite data collected in 2019 shows a slight depression to the north where the area of Roman settlement is but no indication of potential buried remains on the Site itself.

### 3. Archaeological aims and research objectives

3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring will be to:

- identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during groundworks;
- determine the character of the archaeological remains, where present;
- recover environmental information, which may provide further information relating to the local historic environment of the area;
- provide sufficient information to enable further mitigation strategies to be determined, where appropriate

3.2 The research objectives will be to:

- determine whether there is any evidence specifically relating to the Fosse Way, including any associated roadside remains and/or those associated with the Roman settlement immediately to the north

## 4. Methodology

- 4.1 All archaeological work will be carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (December 2014, updated October 2020) and in accordance with the *Somerset Archaeological Handbook* (2018). C1 will adhere to the *Code of Conduct* of the CIfA (December 2014, revised 2019), and *Regulations for professional conduct* (CIfA, May 2019) at all times. The fieldwork methodology is summarised below.
- 4.2 C1 will give notification of the commencement of the works to the HES, and arrangements will be made for a representative to visit the Site and monitor archaeological fieldwork, if appropriate. Monitoring will continue until the deposition of the Site archive.
- 4.3 Prior to the commencement of Site works, the excavation methodology will be agreed between those responsible for carrying out the groundworks and C1 to ensure that all parties are aware of the monitoring requirements.
- 4.4 An archaeologist will be on Site to monitor all specified groundworks with the aim of identifying and recording any archaeological features/deposits present. Provision must be made to allow extra time for the appropriate excavation and recording of features revealed as a result of groundworks. Areas of the Site that have been subject to appropriate monitoring will be identified to the groundwork contractor so that work here might continue without archaeological supervision. It is expected that all groundworks carried out with a machine will be fitted with a toothless grading bucket.
- 4.5 By default, core details of the deposit sequence across the Site will be recorded on C1 *pro-forma* profile forms in digital format using iPad mini tablets. The frequency with which profiles are recorded will be based entirely on any variation of the deposit sequence. Spoil will be examined for the retrieval of artefacts and will be scanned with a metal detector for the recovery of metal objects, where possible.
- 4.6 Suspected archaeological features/deposits will first be assessed to determine the level of investigation needed to characterise them satisfactorily. This may not always require sampling through manual excavation, particularly for low-grade layers where it can be demonstrated that they will not provide any research value. However, in most instances, manual excavation will be required.
- 4.7 Any archaeological features/deposits will be recorded using standard C1 *pro-forma* feature intervention recording forms and/or context forms in digital format using iPad mini tablets. Stratigraphic relationships will be recorded using a “Harris-Winchester matrix” diagram. Soil colours will be logged using a Munsell soil colour chart. Any features will be drawn on dimensionally stable media at suitable scales. This is usually 1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections. All archaeological remains will be levelled to Ordnance Datum, either directly with an Emlid Reach RTK GPS unit or by means of a temporary bench mark, using an Ordnance Survey bench mark. A photographic record of the monitoring and recording will be carried out, and will involve the sole use of digital images. This will include photographs illustrating in both detail, and general context, the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 4.8 Wherever possible, features/deposits to be excavated will be carried out with the aim of producing at least one representative cross-section. Small discrete features will be fully excavated; larger discrete features will be half-sectioned (50% excavated); and long linear features will be sample excavated along their length (usually a 10% sample) with investigative excavations distributed along the exposed length of any such feature and to investigate terminals, junctions and relationships with other features. However, it should be recognised that the extent to which a feature/deposit is excavated and the percentage that it can be sampled will, to an extent, rely on how much is exposed through groundworks whilst also taking into account health and safety considerations.
- 4.9 In the event that complex and deep stratigraphy is encountered, it may not be possible to fully excavate such features/deposits due to the constraints of groundwork operations and/or health and safety considerations.

In these circumstances, other methods such as the use of manual augering will be considered to yield information that might not otherwise be possible.

- 4.10 Should significant palaeoenvironmental deposits be exposed, provision will be made to consult a geoarchaeologist with relevant experience to advise on the initiation of a suitable sampling strategy. This may include a specialist site visit. Sampling might be carried out by members of the excavation team or by relevant specialists as deemed appropriate. When samples are to be collected, the exact sampling strategy will reflect the complexity of the site and its spatial and chronological extent. This strategy will be determined using guidance set out by English Heritage (Campbell et al. 2011).
- 4.11 Any human remains that are encountered will initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected. Should it become necessary to remove any human remains from the Site, a Ministry of Justice licence will be obtained and any conditions attached complied with. The removal of human remains will be done with due reverence and in accordance with current best-practice and legal requirements. The site will be adequately screened from public view during excavation.
- 4.12 If human remains are not to be removed, a minimum record will be made before backfilling and this will include noting the position of grave cut, alignment, burial position and stratigraphic relationships. If possible, a rapid skeletal study will also be carried out and this might comprise a metrical (age, sex and height) and pathological (disease, injury or deprivation) examination.
- 4.13 If items that may be subject to the Law of Treasure Trove are recovered, the appropriate authorities will be notified (in accordance with The Treasure Act 1996, Code of Practice, England and Wales issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 1996).
- 4.14 In the event of particularly significant discoveries being made, the HES will be informed and a Site meeting will be held to discuss and implement any specific requirements.
- 4.15 Any variation of the above will be undertaken in agreement with the HES.

## 5. Report

- 5.1 For Sites that yield limited results, an illustrated summary report will be completed within three months following completion of fieldwork, subject to the appropriate assessment of any finds. This document will be produced in accordance with the standards set out in the documents Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991) and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015). The report will comprise the following layout:

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Cover page         | Site address; form of investigation; report date   |
| Information matrix | Report author/contributors; planning application reference; HER reference; HES reference; ADS reference; OASIS reference; museum accession code; internal report review matrix |
| Summary            | Non-technical summary of monitoring results  |
| Introduction       | Planning background; archaeological justification for works  |
| The Site           | Summary of archaeological background; Site setting; topography; recorded geology; soils description  |
| Methodology        | Groundwork and archaeological methodology employed   |
| Results            | Description of the results   |
| The Finds          | Assessment of finds including specialist contributions; finds tables   |
| Discussion         | Interpretation of the results; significance of the heritage assets encountered; confidence rating of the results   |
| Archive            | Table of written/digital-born to be archived (if applicable); Table of finds/ecofacts to be archived (if applicable);  |
| Acknowledgements   | List of people/organizations that assisted the completion of the project   |
| Bibliography       | List of sources consulted  |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Figures    | Figure 1 – Site setting showing groundworks; location of features/deposits; north arrow; scale bar<br>Figure 2+ – plans and sections of features at appropriate scales; north arrow; scale bar; key to drawing conventions<br>Additional figure (if applicable) – Site interpretation |
| Plates     | Images of significant features/deposits including view from and scales; general shots of the monitoring work; Site setting; significant finds (if applicable)   |
| Appendices | Context summary; finds tables (if applicable); research material (if applicable)  |

#### **Dissemination: report**

5.2 Copies of the report will be submitted to the following:

- client and/or agent
- the HES so that it can be included as part of the county Historic Environment Record (HER)
- the ADS, via OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations – <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>)

#### **Dissemination: publication**

5.3 By default, a short entry will be prepared for publication in the summary section of the next county archaeological journal or equivalent periodical. If particularly significant archaeological features/deposits/finds are encountered, then these are likely to merit wider publication in line with NPPF (para. 199). This might include the production of an article in a county journal; a specialist journal; a standalone monograph or popular publication. The requirement for such a publication, including any further analysis that may be necessary, will first be confirmed with the HES. Once a publication strategy has been agreed, a separate Publication Project Design will be compiled for approval by the HES.

## **6. The finds**

6.1 Bulk finds from all periods and/or mass produced post-medieval artefacts encountered during the investigation may be noted but not collected if they are considered to be surplus to future research needs. If some form of retention is considered necessary, then a sampling strategy will be initiated following consultation with the HES. Depending on the character of other bulk assemblages, a discard policy/sampling strategy will be discussed with the HES as such assemblages are encountered.

6.2 All other finds collected during the course of the investigation will be removed from Site for processing in preparation for assessment and archiving/discard. Vulnerable finds may require immediate protection once excavated and this will be carried out by the field team in accordance with prevailing guidance (Watkinson, D. & Neal, V. 2001). Provision will be made for further specialist treatment of finds by a conservator for long-term curation, where necessary.

6.3 All finds recovered from the monitoring excluding metalwork, will be washed, air-dried and bagged in preparation for assessment. Upon completion of the assessment report, finds may be further retained for full analysis as part of any analytical report/publication work.

6.4 Specialists that will be asked to carry out an assessment of the main finds groups are as follows:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Ceramics          | Lorraine Mephram (Wessex Archaeology Finds Service)<br>Mark Corney (freelance)<br>Rachel Hall (freelance) |
| Animal bone       | Dr Clare Randall FSA (freelance)  |
| Human bone        | Dr Clare Randall FSA (freelance)  |
| Metalwork         | Dr Jörn Schuster (Archaeological Small Finds)   |
| Stone             | Dr Cheryl Green FSA (C1)  |
| Flint             | Dr Rebecca Devaney (freelance)  |
| Glass             | Dr Rachel Tyson (freelance)   |
| Tobacco clay pipe | Marek Lewcan (freelance)  |



|                       |                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Environmental remains | Alys Vaughan-Williams (freelance) |
| Charcoal              | Dr Imogen Poole (freelance)       |
| Conservation          | Wessex Archaeology Finds Service  |
| Geoarchaeology        | ARCA, University of Winchester    |

- 6.5 Other specialists may be invited to provide advice or assessment depending on the nature of the artefact/ecofact assemblage.

## 7. Archive

- 7.1 The NPPF requires that an archaeological archive arising from development works is made publicly accessible (para. 199). The archive comprises two parts: the paper/digital archive including site records and images; and the artefact/ecofact assemblage.

### Paper/digital archive

- 7.2 Where archaeological features/deposits are recorded, the archive generated from this usually comprises site records, drawings and photographs either in paper format or born-digital data. Within three months of the conclusion of a project this is normally transferred into the care of a Trusted Digital Repository such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) as scanned paper records or native born-digital data. The digital archive will be compiled in accordance with the standards and requirements of the ADS, as set out on their website.

- 7.3 If no archaeological evidence is encountered, all relevant data will be incorporated into the assessment report and the paper/digital archive will be stored on the C1 cloud storage server or discarded.

### Physical archive

- 7.4 The artefact/ecofact assemblage is the legal property of the landowner (excluding human remains and any items that fall under The Treasure Act 1996). However, in accordance with NPPF (para. 199), there is a presumption that the landowner will transfer ownership of this assemblage to a receiving institution (usually a museum) once it has been fully assessed and/or analysed. Receiving institutions store the assemblage and make it publicly accessible. In the event that the designated museum cannot receive the physical archive, the material will be stored for a time-limited period with C1.

- 7.5 Regardless of the destination of the artefact/ecofact assemblage, an ordered archive will be prepared in accordance with prevailing standards for deposition (Museum and Galleries Commission, 1992) and will be formally transferred within three months of final report submission.

## 8. Other considerations

- 8.1 The archaeological works will be undertaken with due consideration for any biodiversity issues as covered by the NERC Act, 2006. In particular, such conflicts may arise where archaeological investigations/excavations have the potential to have an impact upon protected species and/or natural habitats e.g. SSSI's, National Nature Reserves, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites, County Wildlife Sites etc.

- 8.2 The current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines will be adhered to on site. C1 has Professional Indemnity insurance with £1 million cover, Public Liability insurance with £5 million cover and Employer's Liability insurance with £10 million cover. A copy of Liability Cover Summary is available on request.

- 8.3 C1 endeavours to carry out all archaeological work to the highest possible standards and adhere to all current ClfA Standards and Codes of Conduct. All work is internally monitored by C1 Senior Management in order to ensure best-practice.

## 9. Bibliography

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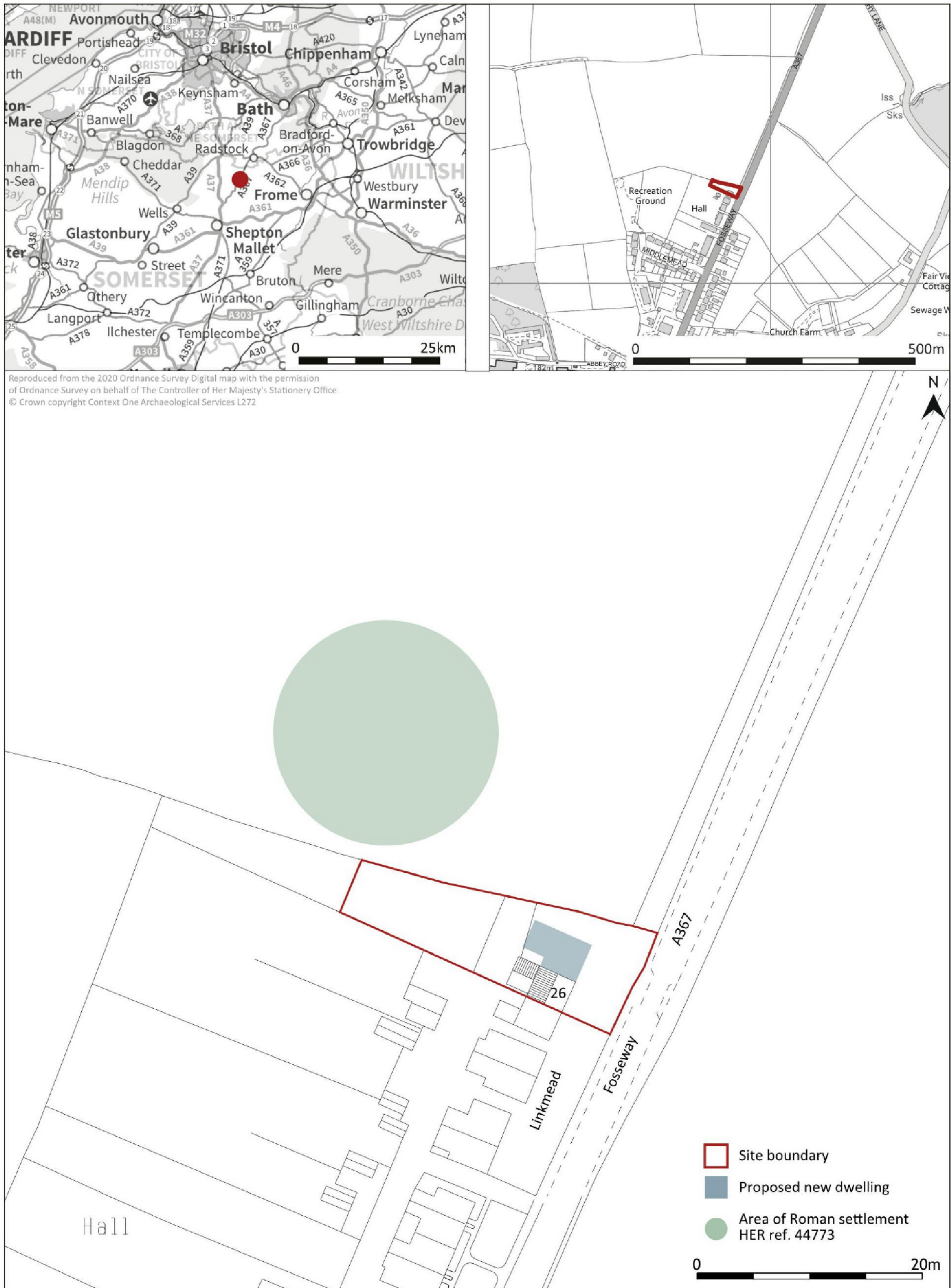


Figure 1. Site setting



Hillside : Hunger Hill : East Stour : Gillingham : Dorset : SP8 5JS

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