

Land Adjacent to New Cottages  
Townwell  
Cromhall  
South Gloucestershire



for  
Bilfinger GVA (Bristol)

on behalf of  
The Tortworth Estate  
Company

CA Project: 6036

October 2017



Land Adjacent to New Cottages  
Townwell  
Cromhall  
South Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Fieldwork Summary

CA Project: 6036



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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Land Adjacent to New Cottages
<b>Location:</b>	Townwell, Cromhall, South Gloucestershire
<b>NGR:</b>	369629 190624
<b>Type:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>Date:</b>	2 and 3 November 2016
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	South Gloucestershire Council Planning reference: PT16/4003/RVC
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Bristol's Museums, Galleries and Archives
<b>Site Code:</b>	NCT 16

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during the excavation of drainage trenches on land adjacent to New Cottages, Townwell, Cromhall, South Gloucestershire.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the current phase of groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks (1:200)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Bilfinger GVA (Bristol), on behalf of The Tortworth Estate Company, during the excavation of drainage trenches on land adjacent to New Cottages, Townwell, Cromhall, South Gloucestershire (centred at NGR: 369629 190624; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken as part of a condition attached to planning consent for the erection of two semi-detached dwellings, construction of vehicular access and associated works (South Gloucestershire Council (SGC); Planning ref: PT16/4003/RVC, condition 4). Further groundworks associated with the development have not, as yet, been undertaken but will be subject to a further phase of archaeological watching brief, if required by SGC.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016) that was approved by Dr Paul Driscoll, Archaeology and HER Officer, SGC. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014).

### **The site**

- 1.3 The development area is approximately 0.07ha in extent, and comprises an undeveloped parcel of grassland. The site is bounded to the west by further grassland, to the north and south by residential properties and to the east by the B4058 (Bristol Road). The site lies at approximately 64m AOD, and is broadly level.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Clifton Down Limestone Formation – Limestone of the Carboniferous Period (BGS 2017). No superficial deposits are recorded (*ibid.*). The natural substrate, comprising compact limestone brash with frequent patches of red-grey clay, was identified throughout both of the excavated drainage trenches.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has not been subject to previous archaeological assessment; however a nearby area has been subject to a desk-based cultural heritage assessment (CA 2008). The following is a brief summary of relevant information taken from this assessment, along with any other publically available information pertinent to the site.

### *Prehistoric and Roman*

- 2.2 Evidence of prehistoric activity in the vicinity of Cromhall is limited to the chance find of a Neolithic flint axe, recorded c. 550m to the south-west of the current site (CA 2008). Cromhall Roman villa is located c. 850m to the south-west of the current site; excavations undertaken at the villa complex during the 19th-century revealed evidence of a hypocaust and mosaic pavement (*ibid.*). No further demonstrably Roman features or sites are known in the immediate area.

### *Medieval*

- 2.3 The name Cromhall is derived from the Old English words crumb (or crumbe) meaning 'bent' or 'crooked' and halh, meaning a 'nook or corner of land' (Smith 1964) and probably refers to a bend in the Cromhall Brook, located c. 400m to the west of the present settlement (CA 2008). The medieval (13th to 14th-century) church of St. Andrew is located to the east of this bend and medieval settlement is likely to have been focussed within its immediate vicinity (*ibid.*). The current site is located c. 200m to the north-east of the church, and it is therefore likely to be within the agricultural hinterland of any settlement during the medieval period.

### *Post-medieval/modern*

- 2.4 The character of settlement in Cromhall appears to have changed during the post-medieval/modern periods, with any earlier nucleated settlement around the church becoming dispersed into a number of small hamlets or isolated farmsteads (*ibid.*).
- 2.5 The 1880-1881 First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map shows the current site forming part of a much larger field. A row of cottages and their associated gardens are shown immediately to the north of the current site on this map. The 1903 edition of the OS map shows the site being used as 'allotment gardens' however the site appears to have reverted to agricultural usage by the time of production of the 1923 OS map when the current site is again shown as forming part of a larger field.

## **3. RESULTS (FIG. 2)**

- 3.1 This section provides an overview of the results of the archaeological watching brief undertaken during the excavation of the drainage trenches.
- 3.2 The natural substrate, comprising compact limestone brash with frequent patches of red-grey clay, was identified in Trenches 1 and 2 at a typical depth of 0.45m bpgl.

The natural substrate was sealed by subsoil, typically 0.2m in depth, which was in turn sealed by topsoil.

- 3.3 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see *archaeological background* above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the observed drainage trenches.

#### 5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 2 October 2017

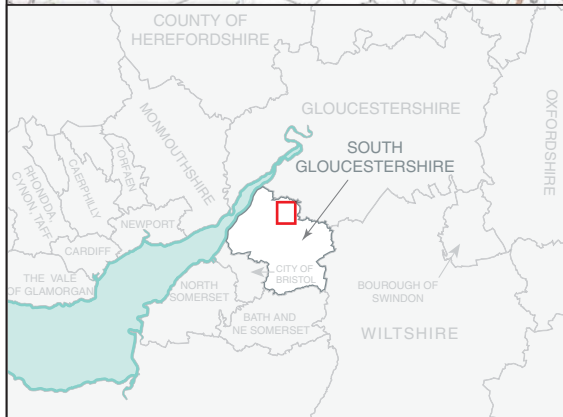
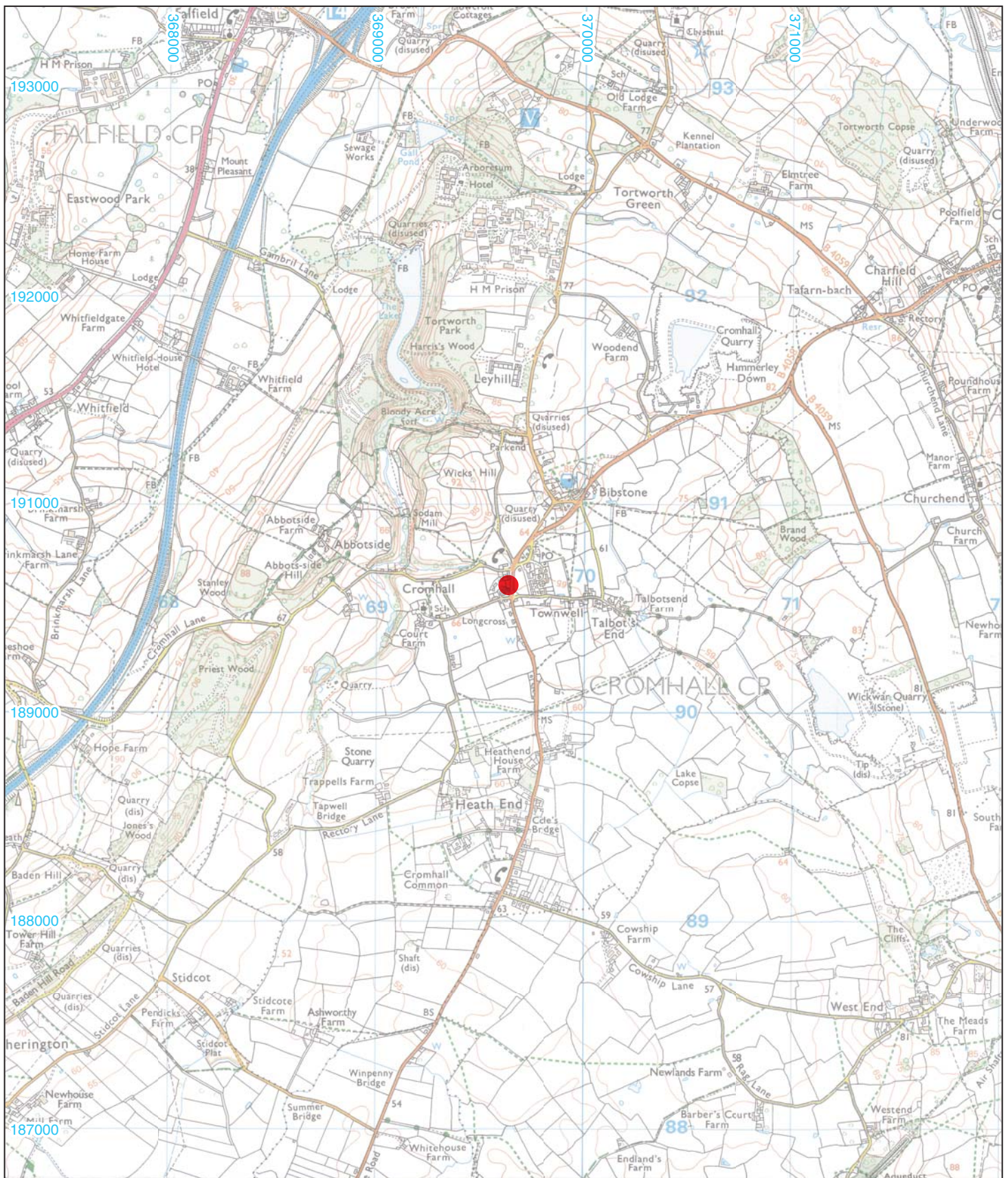
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 *Cromhall Quartzite Quarry, Cromhall, South Gloucestershire: Cultural Heritage Assessment*, CA Report No. **08096**

Smith, A. 1964 *The Place Names of Gloucestershire, Part I*. Cambridge.



## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>15	>0.8	0.25
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Light red brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>15	>0.8	0.2
1	102	Layer		Natural substrate	Compact limestone brash with frequent patches of red grey clay	>15	>0.8	>0.2
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>8	>0.8	0.25
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Light red brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>8	>0.8	0.2
2	202	Layer		Natural substrate	Compact limestone brash with frequent patches of red grey clay	>8	>0.8	>0.2



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Land Adjacent to New Cottages, Townwell,  
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**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

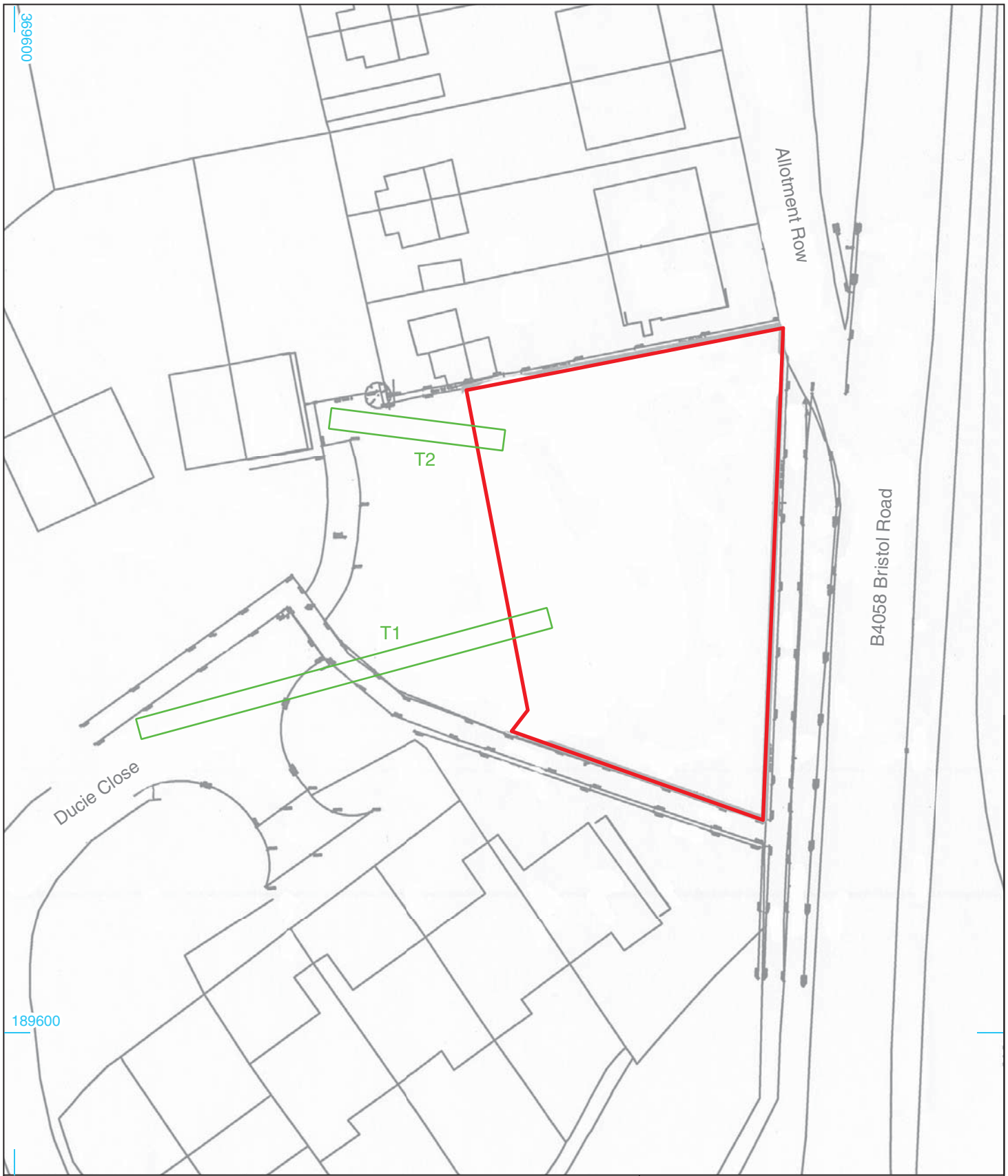
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**FIGURE NO.**  
**1**





- Site boundary
- Area of observed groundworks



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PROJECT TITLE  
**Land Adjacent to New Cottages, Townwell, Cromhall, South Gloucestershire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Area of observed groundworks**

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DRAWN BY	AO	PROJECT NO.	6036	FIGURE NO.	2
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