

**6 Battlewell  
Purton  
Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

*for*  
**Hannick Homes**


CA Project: 3628  
CA Report: 11307

December 2011

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Purton  
Wiltshire

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CA Project: 3628  
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date	16 December 2011
issue	01

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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	6 Battlewell
<b>Location:</b>	Purton, Wiltshire
<b>NGR:</b>	SU 0804 8730
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	28 November – 1 December 2011
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	11/02322/FUL
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum
<b>Site Code:</b>	BWP 11

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in November and December 2011 at 6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire. Four trenches were excavated.

A drying oven of Roman date and two Roman post holes of 2nd-century AD date were identified. A modern linear feature and pit were also identified.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November and December Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Hannick Homes at 6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: SU 0804 8730; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken prior to determination of a planning application made to Wiltshire Council (WC; ref: 11/02322/FUL) for the construction of five detached dwellings at the request of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, WC.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2011) and approved Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, the archaeological advisor to WC. 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* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006). It was monitored by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, including a site visit on 29 November 2011.

### **The site**

- 1.3 The proposed development area encloses an area of approximately 0.26ha, and currently comprises a single dwelling with associated garage, garden and hardstanding. The site lies at approximately 137m AOD on relatively flat ground and is bounded to the north, east and west by residential properties and to the south by fields (Fig. 2). The underlying solid geology of the site is mapped as Stanford Formation Limestone of the Oxfordian Age (BGS 2011).

### **Archaeological background**

- 1.4 A number of different sites and findspots are recorded close to the proposed area on the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record. Those closest to the proposed development area are as follows:
- Four Romano-British pottery kilns along with traces of a substantial stone building were excavated in 1975 (HER number: SU08NE300) along Dogridge, less than 100m to the north of the development area. The pottery found in association with the kilns was 2nd century AD in date (Anderson 1980).

- Iron-Age pottery fragments (HER number: SU08NE203) and 2nd-4th century AD Romano-British pottery sherds, tesserae, tiles and box flue-tiles (HER number: SU08NE303) were uncovered along Dogridge 200m to the north of the development area.
- Medieval pottery rims and body sherds, probably of Minety Ware of 14th-century date (HER number: SU08NE468) have been uncovered along Dogridge 200m to the north of the development area.
- Romano-British pottery, tesserae, tiles, flooring material found with animal bones within an occupation layer were found in 1972 (HER number: SU08NE304) along Restrop View 200m to the north of the development area.
- An Iron-Age bronze coin of Amminus (HER number: SU08NE202) was uncovered at 47 Paven Hill, some 350m to the north of the site.
- A Romano-British building with the remains of a tessellated pavement were found in 1896 (HER number: SU08NE305) located north-west of the intersection between Pavenhill and Paven Close, some 350m north of the site. Coins of Claudius (1st?), Constantine, Magnentius & Decentius were also found.

### **Archaeological objectives**

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

### **Methodology**

- 1.6 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 4 trenches, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Trench 1 was 10 m in length, Trench 2 was 14m in length, Trench 3 was 29m in length and Trench 4 was 6m in length. All four trenches were 1.3m in width. The location of the trenches varied from those agreed in the WSI due to buried services, overhead cables and mature trees. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2009).
- 1.7 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).

- 1.8 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 one sample was taken and processed. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (1995).
- 1.9 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 Wiltshire Heritage Museum, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix E, 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, finds and environmental sample (palaeoenvironmental evidence) are to be found in Appendices A, B and C respectively. Details of the relative heights of the principal deposits and features expressed as metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) appear in Appendix D.
- 2.2 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was observed within the trenches. The natural geological substrate, 102, 202, 302 and 402, consisting of a yellow limestone brash with a yellow silty sand matrix was revealed between 0.34m - 0.78m below present ground level (bpgl). Within Trenches 2 and 3 this was overlain by a make-up deposit, 203 and 303, comprising greyish brown clayey silt with large limestone inclusions. All trenches were sealed by subsoil and topsoil deposits. Trenches 2 and 4 were devoid of any archaeological deposits.



**Trench 1 (Fig. 2)**

- 2.3 A modern linear feature 103 cutting the subsoil was identified in trench 1.

**Trench 3 (Figs 2 & 3)**

- 2.4 A drying oven, 312, was identified within the southern end of Trench 3 cutting the natural substrate. The drying oven appeared to be T-shaped in plan (with a possible projection beyond the cross piece) and comprised two, parallel limestone and mortar walls, 316 and 318, within a cut 312. A circular stoke hole 312 was located at its northern end.
- 2.5 The stone walls consisted of approximately five courses of irregular limestone blocks approximately 0.36m in width with a mortar bonding material. A number of the stones showed signs of extended periods of exposure to heat. Butting the base of these walls was a possible stone slab floor, 314, however this was only partially exposed so is unclear how far it extends. Between these two walls were three layers of backfilling. The lowest layer, 320, was only visible in section so it is unclear how far this extends. Backfill 320 was fairly similar to the main rubble backfill of the stoke hole, 315. However stoke hole backfill 315 was formed after the formation of the second backfill of the drying oven; mixed mortar and limestone backfill 317, which could be the remnant of the roof or top of the walls of the drying oven. The upper backfill 319 of the drying oven consisted of dark greyish brown silt, which also covered the walls and was fairly similar to make-up deposit 303 which sealed the oven. Recovered from fill 319 was a beaker base of North Wiltshire colour-coated pottery of likely 2nd-century AD date, 13 animal bone fragments and three fragments of Roman ceramic building material, one of which was a piece of imbrex.
- 2.6 The stoke hole was roughly circular in plan with a small step on the northern side, and contained two fills. The lower fill, 313, contained small amounts of charcoal and frequent well-preserved carbonised plant macrofossils identified from a sample recovered (see below). The upper fill, 315, which filled the bulk of the stoke hole, contained 12 sherds of Roman pottery dating to the 3rd to 4th century AD, 10 fragments of Roman ceramic building material, five animal bones, a large nail or spike and two large limestone blocks both roughly squared and exhibiting a surface that had been exposed to an extended period or periods of heat.
- 2.7 Postholes, 304 and 306, were also identified within Trench 3 to the north of the drying oven 312. These have both been dated to the Roman period, with central



Gaulish samian of 2nd-century AD date recovered from the fill of 304, and a fragment of Roman ceramic building material recovered from the fill of 306.

- 2.8 Modern pit 310 cutting the subsoil was identified in trench 1.

### ***The Finds***

- 2.9 The finds assemblage recovered from the evaluation is summarised in Appendix B. The pottery assemblage consisted of 15 sherds of pottery weighing 123g. In addition, ceramic building material, iron, stone and animal bone were recovered. The assemblage was recovered from seven stratified contexts and could be dated to the Roman period. The level of preservation was good with the pottery exhibiting limited levels of abrasion. Where mentioned, the Dorset Black-burnished ware vessel forms are referenced to Seager-Smith and Davies (1993).

### ***Pottery***

- 2.10 The Roman pottery assemblage consisted of a small number of sherds (15) with a limited range of fabric types recorded. A bodysherd of oxidised ware was recovered from backfill of stoke hole 315 and an abraded sherd of Oxford red/brown slipped ware was recorded from make-up deposit 303. The oxidised ware could be broadly dated from the mid 1st to 4th century AD; the Oxfordshire ware sherd to the mid 3rd to 4th century AD.
- 2.11 Joining rim sherds from a flanged dish or bowl (Black-burnished ware type 25) of mid 3rd to 4th century AD date and a jar rim sherd (Black-burnished ware type 2) of 2nd century AD date were recovered from stoke hole fill 315. A beaker base of North Wiltshire colour-coated ware was recorded from drying oven backfill 319 and was of likely 2nd-century AD date.
- 2.12 Three Roman greyware sherds, of a local north Wiltshire type, were recovered from stoke hole fill 315. Two sherds exhibited decoration as a combed wavy pattern to the vessel girth. A small rim sherd of central Gaulish samian was recorded from fill 305 of posthole 304 and was of 2nd-century AD date.

### ***Other finds***

- 2.13 Fragments of Roman ceramic building material were recovered from contexts 301, 303, 307, 309, 315 and 319. The majority of the material was abraded and fragmentary. A piece of imbrex was recorded from deposit 319. Thick fragments of

ceramic building material from deposits 315 and 319 were interpreted as Roman brick based on a thickness range of 38 to 42mm.

- 2.14 Two large limestone blocks were recovered from deposit 315. Both had been roughly squared and exhibited a surface that had been exposed to an extended period or periods of heat.

### ***Palaeoenvironmental Evidence***

- 2.15 One environmental sample (3 litres of soil) was retrieved from the site with the intention of recovering evidence of industrial or domestic activity and material for radiocarbon dating. The sample was processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2).
- 2.16 Sample 1 was recovered from stoke hole fill 313 within drying oven 312. The material recovered (Appendix C) consisted of small amounts of charcoal (too small to identify) and frequent well-preserved carbonised plant macrofossils consisting of carbonised cereals (spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*), oat (*Avena* spp)), cereal chaff (spelt glume bases, awn fragments, carbonised arable weed seeds including chess (*Bromus* spp) and stinking chamomile (*Anthemis cotula*) and weed seeds indicative of a disturbed environment including fat hen/goosefoot spp (*Chenopodium* spp) dock spp (*Rumex* spp), thistle spp (*Cirsium* spp/*Carduus* spp) and vetch/vetchlings (*Vicia* spp/*Lathyrus* spp). Spelt was a typical crop cultivated during the Roman period (Cool 2006, 69). Although no finds were recovered from fill 313, Roman finds were recovered from the upper fills of the drying oven and this together with the presence of spelt and the T-shape suggests a Roman date.

## **3. DISCUSSION**

### ***Roman***

- 3.1 A drying oven, 312, was identified within the southern end of the Trench 3. It is possible that this drying oven is connected with the four 2nd-century AD Romano-British pottery kilns excavated in 1975 along Dogridge, less than 100m to the north of the development area. Examples of drying ovens are found in association with kilns on other site. This is most likely due to the fact that before firing could take place vessels generally had to be dried to reduce excess water. The most frequently recorded pottery dryer comprised a T-shaped channel (Swan 1984, 47). It has been

suggested that there is little doubt from the grain found in pottery dryers on other kiln site that they often have dual purposes and were also used to dry grain (Swan 1984, 47). The presence of spelt within the stoke hole of the drying oven could suggest that this dryer is also a grain dryer. Additionally, within the stoke hole of grain dryers there is occasionally a step or seat and the flue, when not cut into the natural stone, is usually lined with local stone, re-used stone or tile. This stone lining has a breadth of between 0.3m-0.6m (Morris 1979, 10). Both of these features were present in drying oven 312. The dating of drying ovens is not precise, but T-shaped drying ovens seem to appear in the 2nd century AD and continue in use until the 4th century AD (Morris 1979, 20), which fits with the finds from the backfill. This would also mean the drying oven and the nearby pottery kilns could be contemporary on stylistic grounds.

- 3.2 A substantial proportion of pottery dryers were situated within structures, however not all were (Swan 1984, 48). Therefore it is possible that the postholes 304 and 306 located to the immediate north of the dryer could have formed part of a post-built shelter.

#### 4. CA PROJECT TEAM

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

#### 5. REFERENCES

Anderson, A.S. 1980 *Romano-British Pottery Kilns at Purton*. Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine, Volumes **72/73** for 1977/1978

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Cool, H.E.M. 2006 *Eating and Drinking in Roman Britain*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press



CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 *6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Morris, P. 1979 *Agricultural Buildings in Roman Britain*. BAR British Series **70**.

Swan, V.G. 1984 *The Pottery Kilns of Roman Britain*. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Supplementary Series: **5**, 47 and 48.



**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

## Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil			0.24	
101	Layer	Subsoil			0.1	
102	Layer	Natural Substrate				
103	Cut	Modern ditch	1.6	>1.2	>0.6	
104	Fill	Fill of 103	1.6	>1.2	>0.6	

## Trench 2

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Topsoil			0.26	
201	Layer	Subsoil			0.18	
202	Layer	Natural Substrate				
203	Layer	Modern make-up			0.16	

## Trench 3

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Layer	Topsoil			0.3	
301	Layer	Subsoil			0.22	
302	Layer	Natural Substrate				
303	Layer	Modern make-up			0.26	
304	Cut	Cut of possible post hole		0.6	0.26	
305	Fill	Fill of 304		0.6	0.26	MC1-LC2
306	Cut	Cut of possible post hole	>0.4	>0.2	0.16	
307	Fill	Fill of 306	>0.4	>0.2	0.16	Roman
308	Cut	Cut of irregular linear most likely natural undulation	>1.2	0.52	0.06	
309	Fill	Fill of 308 most likely 303	>1.2	0.52	0.06	Roman
310	Cut	Cut of large modern pit	>2.55	>1.2	>0.5	
311	Fill	Fill of 310	>2.55	>1.2	>0.5	
312	Cut	Construction cut of drying oven with stoke hole	>5.34	>1.2	0.76	
313	Fill	Primary dark fill of stoke hole	>1	0.8	0.04	
314	Masonry	Possible floor of drying oven	>0.46	1.38	0.07	
315	Fill	Secondary backfill of stoke hole	1.6	1.3	0.76	MC3-C4
316	Masonry	Western wall of drying oven	>0.63	>0.2	>0.75	
317	Fill	Mortar backfill of drying oven	>1.71	0.68	0.24	
318	Masonry	Eastern wall of drying oven	>3.77	0.36	>0.6	
319	Fill	Soft black upper backfill of drying oven	>2.66	0.68	0.3	C2
320	Fill	Rubby clay lower backfill of drying oven	>0.14	0.68	0.19	

## Trench 4

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
400	Layer	Topsoil			0.24	
401	Layer	Subsoil			0.41	
402	Layer	Natural Substrate				

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
301	CBM: tile fragments	3	98	Roman
303	Roman Pottery: Oxfordshire red/brown slipped ware	1	8	MC3-C4
	CBM: tile fragments	2	52	
305	Roman pottery: samian (central)	1	<1	MC1-LC2
	Bone: animal	3	1	
307	Fired clay: amorphous fragment	1	1	Roman
309	CBM: tile fragments	6	108	Roman
315	Roman pottery: Oxidised Severn Valley ware, Dorset Black-burnished ware, grey-ware	12	75	MC3-C4
	Iron: large nail or spike	1	102	
	CBM: Tile and brick fragments	10	624	
	Stone: one roughly squared ashlar	2	11800	
	Bone: animal	5	36	
	Coal	2	4	
319	Roman pottery: North Wiltshire colour coated ware	1	39	C2
	CBM: Imbex and tile/brick fragments	3	114	
	Animal bone	13	131	

## APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Sample No	Context No	Volume (L)	Percentage of sample processed	Flots	Flot Weight (g)	Material	Weight (g)	Identification (where applicable)
1	313	3	100%	1mm and 0.25mm 1mm and 0.25mm	8	Charcoal	0.2	Too small to identify
						Plant macrofossils	0.2 plus flots	<i>Anthemis cotula</i> (Stinking chamomile) + <i>Avena</i> spp (Oat) + <i>Bromus</i> spp (Chess) ++ <i>Chenopodium</i> spp (Fat hen/goosefoot spp) + <i>Cirsium</i> spp/ <i>Carduus</i> spp (Thistle spp) + Poaceae (Awn fragments) + Poaceae (Glume bases) ++++ Poaceae (Indeterminate grains) ++ <i>Rumex</i> spp (dock spp) ++ <i>Triticum spelta</i> (Spelt grains) +++ <i>Triticum spelta</i> (Spelt glume bases) ++++ <i>Vicia</i> spp/ <i>Lathyrus</i> spp (vetch/vetchlings) +

## Key

+ = 1-5 fragments

++ = 6-20 fragments

+++ = 21-40 fragments

++++ = 40+ fragments



**APPENDIX D: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES**

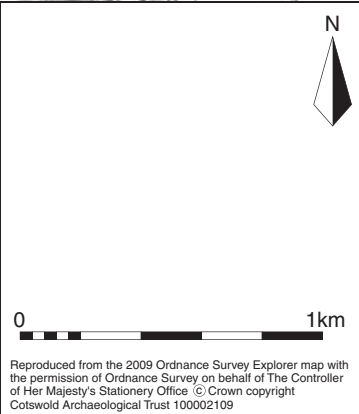
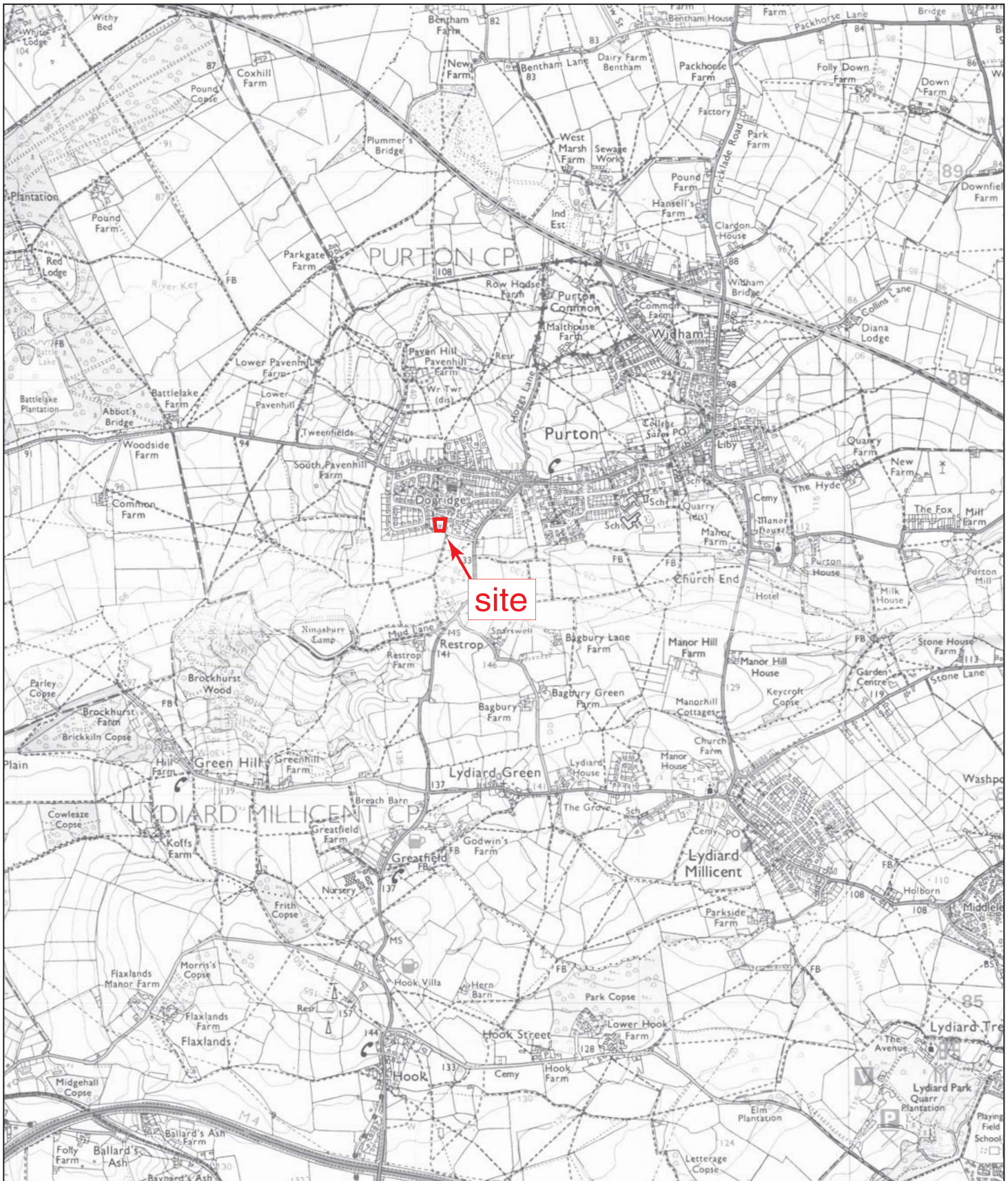
Levels are expressed as metres below current ground level and as metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), calculated using a Leica 1200 series SmartRover GPS.

	Trench 1	Trench 2	Trench 3	Trench 4
Current ground level	0.00m (137.89m)	0.00m (137.50m)	0.00m (137.53m)	0.00m (137.30m)
Top of Roman feature			0.67m (136.86m)	
Top of Natural Substrate	0.34m (137.55)	0.6m (136.90m)	0.78m (136.75m)	0.65m (136.65m)
Limit of excavation	0.42m (137.47m)	0.62m (136.88m)	0.82m (136.71m)	0.68m (136.62m)

Upper figures are depth below modern ground level; lower figures in parentheses are metres AOD.

## APPENDIX E: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in November and December 2011 at 6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire. Four trenches were excavated. A drying oven of Roman date and two Roman post holes of 2nd-century AD date were identified. A modern linear feature and pit were also identified.	
Project dates	28 November – 1 December 2011	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire	
Study area	0.26ha	
Site co-ordinates	SU 0804 8730	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Wiltshire Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Sian Reynish	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	Drying oven	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Pottery, large iron nail or spike, ceramic building material and animal bone
Paper	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Trench sheets, context sheets, sections and plan, bulk finds and photographic registers
Digital	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Digital plan, digital photographs
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 <i>6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 11307		



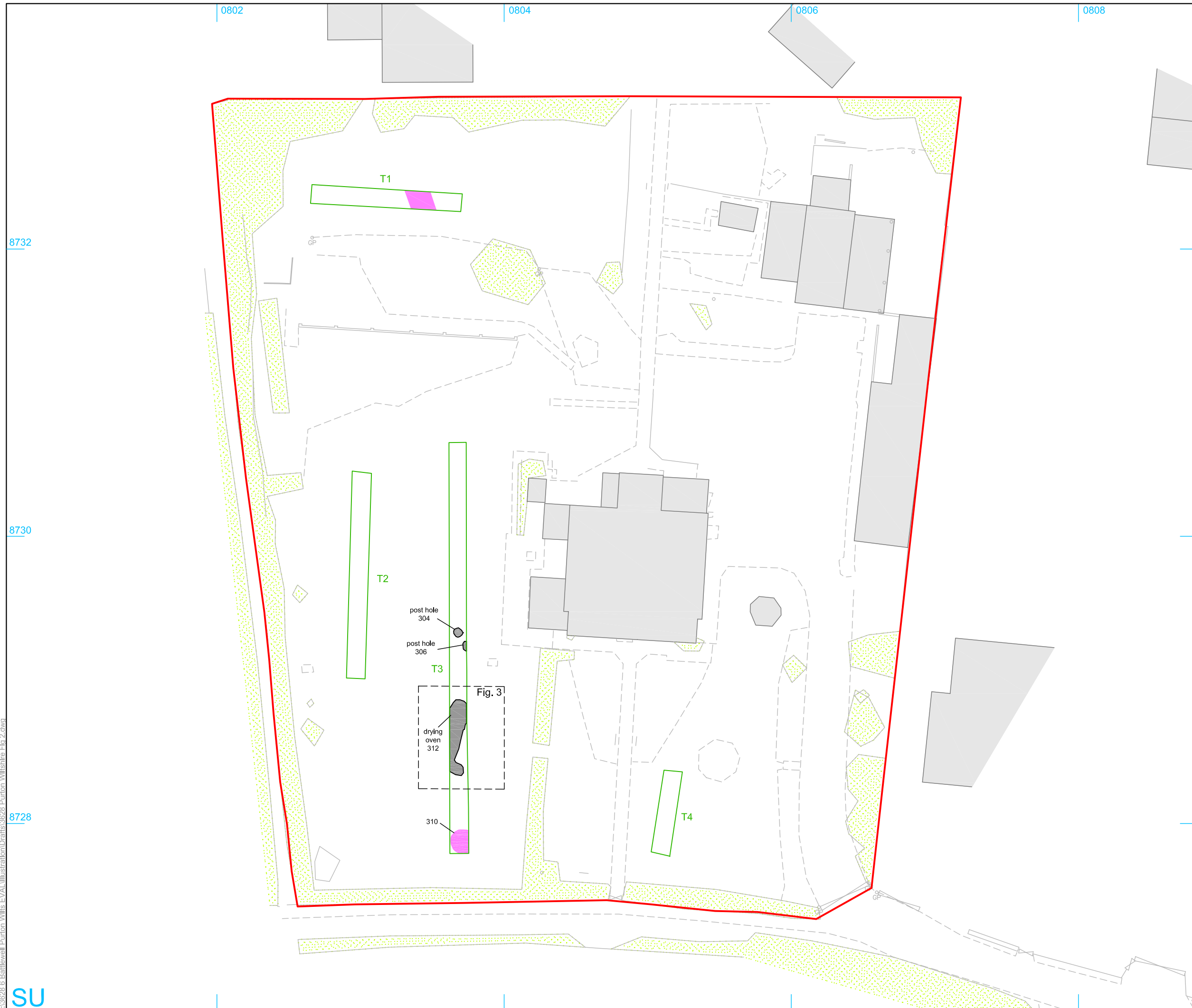
t 01285 771022  
 f 01285 771033  
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk  
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

**PROJECT TITLE**  
 6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 3628	DATE 13-12-2011	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY JB	REVISION 00	1
APPROVED BY PJM	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	

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- ▬ site
- ▬ evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- modern



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PROJECT TITLE  
**6 Battlewell, Purton, Wiltshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench location plan, showing archaeological features**

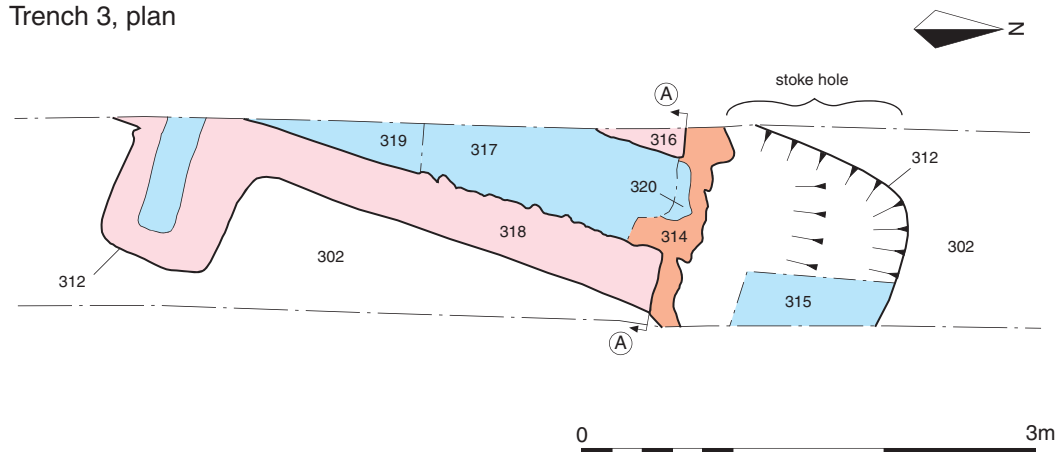
PROJECT NO.	3628	DATE	13-12-2011	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	JB	REVISION	00	<b>2</b>
APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE@A3	1:250	

P:\3628 6 Battlewell Purton Wils EVAL\Illustration\Drawings\628 Purton Wiltshire Fig 2.dwg

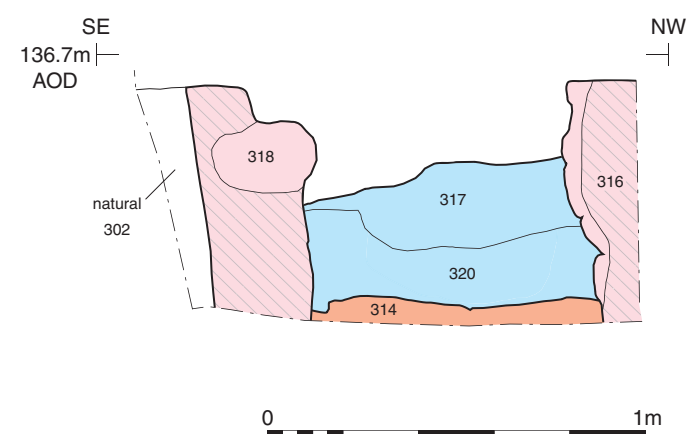




Trench 3, plan



Trench 3, section AA



- stone walls of possible drying oven
- mortar covering stone walls of possible drying oven
- slabs at base of stoke hole
- backfill



Trench 3, drying oven 312, looking north (scales 1m)



Trench 3, drying oven 312, looking south (scales 1m)