

# Land at Owen Farm Staunton Road, Coleford Gloucestershire

**Archaeological Evaluation** 

for **David Wilson Homes** 

CA Project: 4018 CA Report: 12360

November 2012

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CA Project: 4018 CA Report: 12360

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date	16 November 2012
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date	22 November 2012
issue	01

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#### SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Land at Owen Farm

**Location:** Staunton Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire

**NGR:** SO 5705 1110

Type: Evaluation

**Date:** 13-15 November 2012

Planning Reference: P1251/12/FUL

**Location of Archive:** Dean Heritage Museum

Accession Number: SOYDH: 2012.69

Site Code: OSR 12

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in November 2012 at land at Owen Farm, Staunton Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Thirteen trenches were excavated.

A bank, five field boundary ditches and a modern pit with an associated spread of material caused by plough disturbance were identified during the evaluation. None of the archaeological features yielded any artefactual material pre-dating the modern period.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2012 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for David Wilson Homes at land at Owen Farm, Staunton Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR SO 5705 1110; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application (ref: P1251/12/FUL) for the construction of a residential development, with associated public open space, drainage and external works.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2012a) and approved by Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Field Work in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1996), 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).

#### The site

- 1.3 The proposed development area encloses an area of approximately 4.8ha, located to the east of Owen Farm, on the northern edge of Coleford. The site is bounded to the north-west by an unnamed road leading to Owen Farm, to the south-west by agricultural land, to the south-east by residential properties associated with the expansion of Coleford in the 20th-century, and to the north-east by residential properties along Staunton Road (B4228). The site is situated across two agricultural fields, which were fallow at the time of the site visit. The fields form part of a small valley on either side of a brook (*Sluts Brook*), which crosses north-west/south-east through the central area of the site, within a ditch along the central field boundary. In the north-eastern and south-eastern areas of the site ground level slopes down relatively steeply towards the brook descending from approximately 190m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) to 180m AOD.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Coleford Member Mudstone of the Carboniferous Period overlain in the central area of the site by alluvial deposits of the Quaternary period (BGS 2012). The Lower Trenchard Coal

seam crosses the site (Hart 1983). Light yellow and white mudstone or clay was observed in all of the trenches and was overlain by a thick layer of alluvial silt in Trench 7 and at the southern end of Trench 4.

#### Archaeological background

- 1.5 A desk-based assessment of the site was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in July/August 2012, and the results are briefly summarised here (CA 2012b). The site comprises agricultural land, most likely assarted from the Forest of Dean in the medieval period. The brook which crosses the site runs within a field boundary ditch, and in the mid 19th-century appears to have supplied water to industrial sites at the northern edge of Coleford. Other features depicted within the site on later 19th/20th-century historic mapping have been removed or filled in, including a ditch or former watercourse, a stone marking a footpath and a pond. The brook and any belowground remains of other features depicted on historic mapping/aerial photographs are of negligible archaeological and historic significance. A low level of prehistoric activity is recorded in the vicinity, including Neolithic worked flint recorded from the higher ground immediately west of the site and Bronze Age tools to the east.
- 1.6 A geophysical Magnetometer survey of the site was undertaken in late October 2012 (Stratascan forthcoming). The survey was only able to provide coverage of the northern field owing to dense undergrowth covering the southern field at the time of the fieldwork. The preliminary abstraction plot indicated a number of anomalies representing potential cut features. It was anticipated that anomalies in the southwestern third of the north field would relate to former stream courses, areas of alluvium and a historic field boundary (now removed); however linear features in the central part of the field were identified as potentially representing features of potential archaeological origin. A possible pond with feeder channel was shown in the eastern part of the field, close to the location of another infilled former pond shown on historic mapping near the eastern field boundary.

# Archaeological objectives

1.7 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance with the

Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IfA 2008). This information will enable the Forest of Dean District Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

## Methodology

- 1.8 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 13 trenches (30m by 1.8m), of the originally planned 16 trenches, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Following consultation with Charles Parry three trenches in the central area of the site (8, 9 and 10) were not excavated because the depth of the natural substrate in that part of the field was sufficiently below the level of the water table to make excavation impracticable. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) coordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual* (2012).
- 1.9 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).
- 1.10 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 no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (1995).
- 1.11 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble, and ultimately will be deposited with Dean Heritage Museum under accession number SOYDH: 2012.69. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

#### 2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-5)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Across the site modern ploughsoil sealed a thin reddish brown subsoil. The subsoil overlay the natural mudstone except in Trenches 4 and 7, where a layer of alluvial silt with frequent manganese was present below the subsoil, and in Trench 1 where a deposit of sandy bank material preserved a relic subsoil beneath.
- 2.3 Trenches 8, 9 and 10 were unexcavated due to adverse conditions, which meant that the linear geophysical anomalies in the central area of the site could not be investigated, however a similar anomaly in trench 7 could not be identified within the trench and these anomalies could be a result of geological changes associated with previous channels of Slut's Brook. Trenches 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 14 and 15 were devoid of any archaeological features. A modern ceramic field drain was identified in Trench 5, corresponding closely with a linear geophysical anomaly. Further ceramic field drains were identified in Trenches 13 and 14 and stone field drains were revealed in Trenches 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16. Field boundaries shown on an 1882 map were not identified in Trenches 3, 4 or 7. Ridge and furrow ploughing identified in the geophysical survey at the north of the site left no archaeological trace in Trenches 1, 2 or 3.

### Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)

2.4 Natural substrate 104 was sealed by subsoil 103, in turn sealed beneath a low bank of redeposited natural sand, 10m wide and a maximum of 0.31m in height, revealed in section. Bank 102 formed a linear positive feature aligned north-east/south-west and running approximately parallel with the current field boundary. The bank was sealed by subsoil 101, which was covered by topsoil 100.

#### Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

2.5 Natural substrate 605 was sealed at the north-east end of the trench by subsoil 602. The subsoil and natural substrate were cut by pit 607 which had a single fill, 606, containing 20th-century pottery and artefacts which were noted and discarded on site. Layer 601 was a spread of material caused by plough disturbance of the top of

pit 607, which preserved subsoil 602 beneath. It was in turn sealed by topsoil 600. Pit 607 and layer 601 correspond to the geophysical anomaly depicted at the northeast end of the trench.

#### Trench 12 (Figs 2 & 4)

Natural substrate 1202 was cut by undated ditches 1208, 1210 and 1211. Ditch 1208 was aligned north-east/southwest, approximately parallel with the modern field boundary; it had one fill, 1207. It was cut by undated ditch 1210, which had two fills, 1209 and 1210. Pit 1206 contained a deposit of burnt material and large stones. It was cut into fills 1207 and 1210 and appeared to be modern in date. Ditch 1211 was another north-east/south-west aligned feature, located in close proximity to ditches 1208 and 1210. The ditch contained two fills, 1212 and 1213. All features were sealed by subsoil 1201, which was covered by topsoil 1200.

#### Trench 16 (Figs 2 & 5)

2.7 Natural substrate 1602 was cut by undated ditch 1605, which had two fills (1603 and 1604). Ditch 1605 was aligned east-west and appeared unrelated to any of the other boundary ditches on site.

#### 3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The date and function of the bank identified in Trench 1 is unclear, although its alignment parallel to the extant field boundary and direction of the ridge and furrow depicted by the geophysical survey suggests a medieval or later agricultural function; perhaps a headland, or former field boundary. If a field boundary this would appear to pre-date the earliest cartographic depictions of the site (in 1608 and 1792; CA 2012, 14), and may be associated with a former medieval strip field system. The larger northern field was known as Porters Meadow in 1792, and the bank may define a narrow western strip of common land alongside a trackway which could have been set aside for communal grazing.
- 3.2 The undated ditches in Trench 12 most likely represent successive re-establishment of a former field boundary; indeed backfill 1213 of ditch 1211 was comprised mostly

of redeposited sandy natural material, possibly resulting from the excavation of the next in the series of ditches nearby. As with ditch 102, these features appear to represent a ditched boundary established prior to the earliest mapping of the site, and may represent further evidence of a strip field system.

#### 4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Christopher Leonard, assisted by Luke Brannlund, Jerry Stone and Sophie Wood. The report was written by Christopher Leonard. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Christopher Leonard, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

#### 5. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2012 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html Accessed 16 November 2012
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012a Land at Owen Farm, Staunton Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2012b Land at Owen Farm, Coleford, Gloucestershire: Heritage

  Desk-Based Assessment CA Report No. 12159
- DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 National Planning Policy

  Framework
- Hart C. 1983 Coleford: the history of a West Gloucestershire Forest Town, Allan Sutton

# **APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

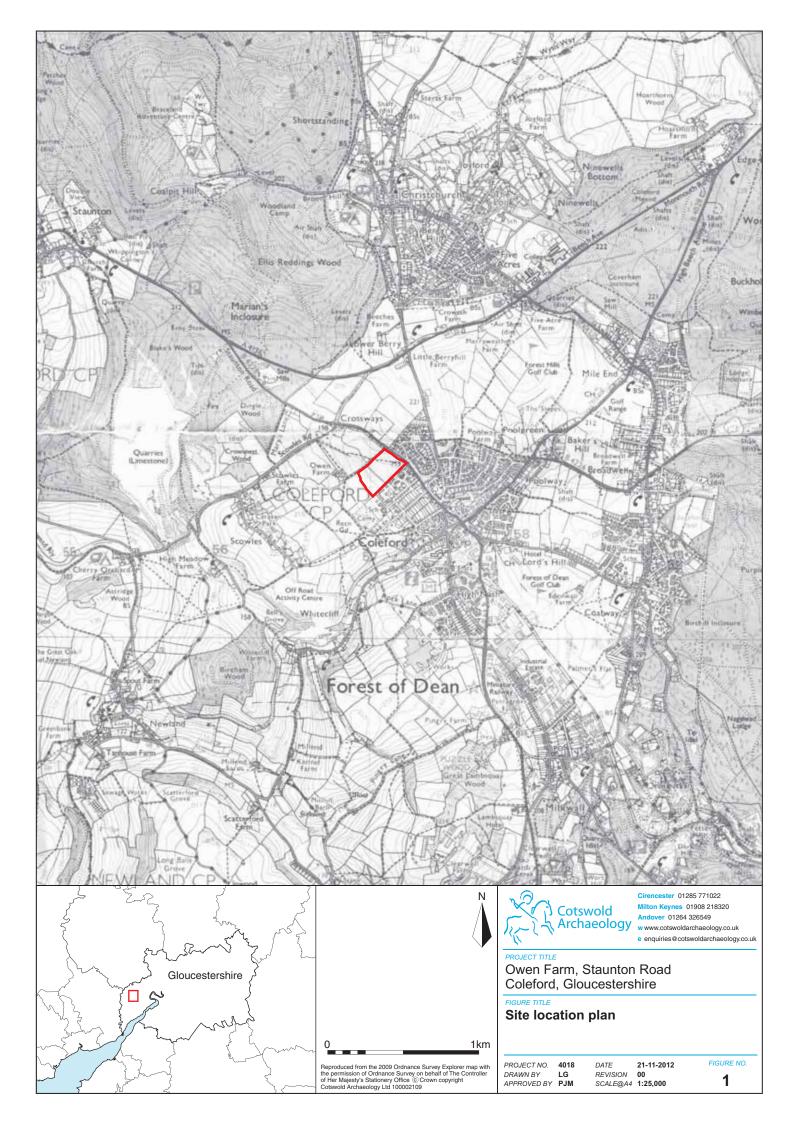
Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thick ness (m)	Spot- date
1	100	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.14	modern
1	101	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.23	
1	102	Layer		bank	light greyish yellow silty sand	>1.8	10.5	0.31	
1	103	Layer		relic subsoil	mid greyish brown clay silt	>1.8	11	0.15	
1	104	Layer		natural	light yellow sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
2	200	Layer		topsoil	mid greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.2	modern
2	201	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.22	
2	202	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
3	300	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.22	modern
3	301	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.16	
3	302	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
4	400	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.25	modern
4	401	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.41	
4	402	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
4	403	Layer		alluvium	mid reddish brown silt with frequent manganese	3.5	1.8		
5	500	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.26	modern
5	501	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.22	
5	502	Layer		natural	light yellowish grey sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
6	600	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.3	modern
6	601	Layer		spread of modern material	mid blackish grey sandy silt	>1.8	8.5	0.3	modern
6	602	Layer		relic subsoil	mid greyish brown clay silt	>1.8	8.5	0.08	
6	603	Cut		palaeochannel	shallow, irregular NE/SW channel	>1.8	7.9	0.14	
6	604	Fill	603	natural silting	mid reddish brown silt with frequent manganese	>1.8	7.9	0.14	
6	605	Layer		natural	light grey and yellow clay and gravel	30	1.8		
6	606	Fill	607	fill of pit	mid blackish grey sandy silt	>0.7	2	>0.12	modern
6	607	Cut		pit	unexcavated	>0.7	2	>0.12	modern
7	700	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.2	modern
7	701	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.25	
7	702	Layer		alluvium	mid reddish brown silt with frequent manganese	30	1.8	0.75	
7	703	Layer		natural	light grey and yellow clay	30			
11	1100	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.2	modern
11	1101	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.2	
11	1102	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow clay	30	1.8		
12	1200	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.3	modern
12	1201	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.2	
12	1202	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow clay and mudstone	30	1.8		
12	1203	Cut		ditch	unexcavated SE/NW ditch	1.9	0.7		
12	1204	Fill	120	fill of ditch	mid orange brown sandy silt	1.9	0.7		
12	1205	Fill	120	fill of pit	black sandy silt with frequent charcoal flecks and large	0.8	0.7	0.2	

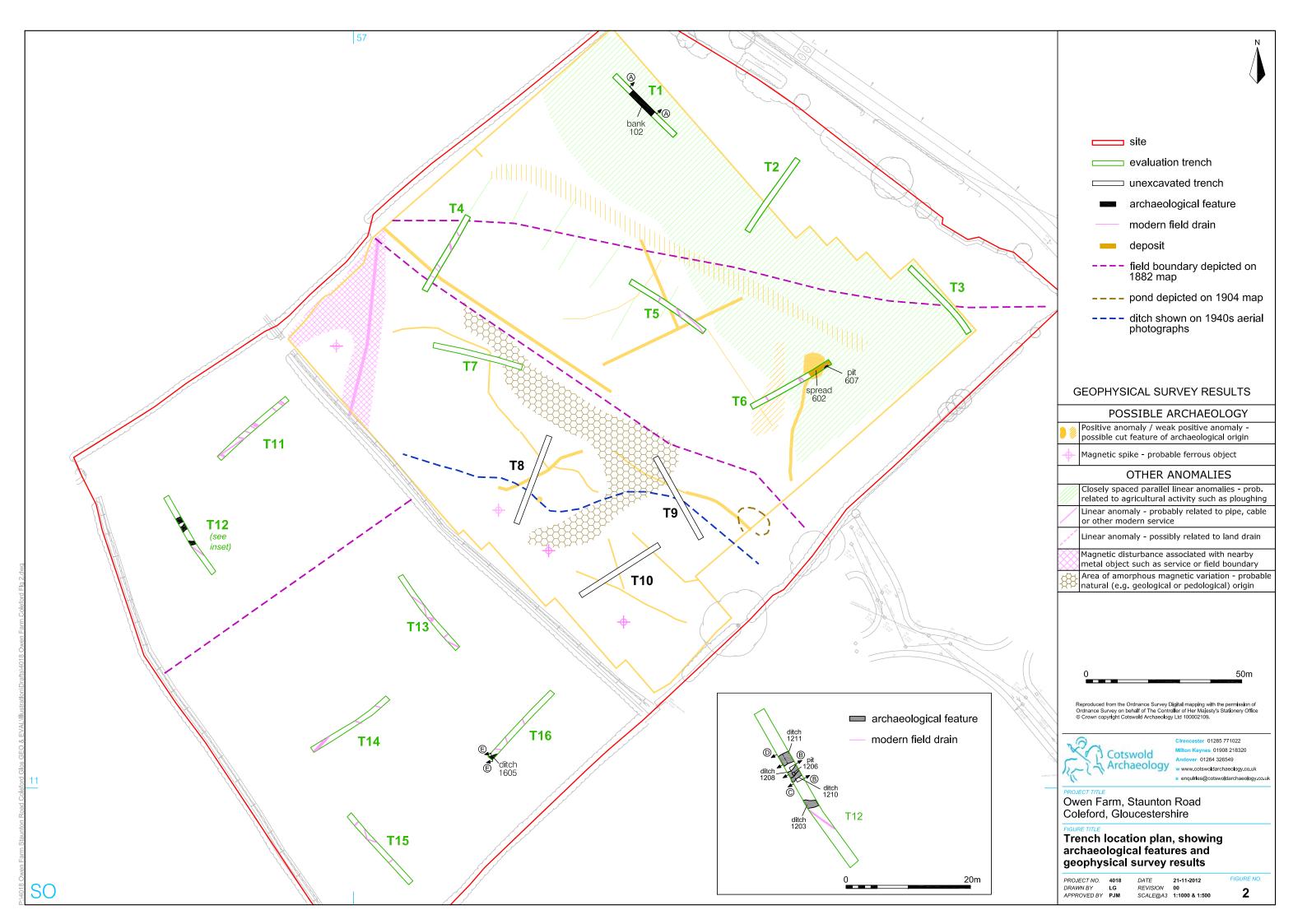
					rounded stones				
12	1206	Cut		pit	sub-circular, concave base	0.8	0.7	0.2	
12	1207	Fill	120	fill of ditch	mottled orange and grey sandy silt	>1.8	1.65	0.8	
12	1208	Cut		ditch	NE/SW aligned. Steep sides, concave base	>1.8	1.65	0.8	
12	1209	Fill	121	fill of ditch	mid greyish brown sandy silt with lenses of light yellowish brown sand	>1.8	>0.9	>0.3	
12	1210	Cut		ditch	NE/SW aligned. Shallow sides, flat base	>1.8	>0.9	>0.3	
12	1211	Cut		ditch	NE/SW aligned. Steep sides, concave base	>1.8	1.8	0.57	
12	1212	Fill	121	1st fill of ditch	mid brownish grey sandy silt	>1.8	1.8	0.22	
12	1213	Fill	121	2nd fill of ditch	mid brownish orange sandy silt	>1.8	1.8	0.35	
13	1300	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.25	modern
13	1301	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.16	
13	1302	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
14	1400	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.3	modern
14	1401	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.1	
14	1402	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow clay	30	1.8		
15	1500	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.26	modern
15	1501	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.07	
15	1502	Layer		natural	light orange/yellow sand and mudstone	30	1.8		
16	1600	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clay silt	30	1.8	0.08	modern
16	1601	Layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty sand	30	1.8	0.2	
16	1602	Layer		natural	light greyish yellow clay	30	1.8		
16	1603	Fill	160	1st fill of ditch	mid greyish brown clay silt	>1.8	0.6	0.12	
16	1604	Fill	160	2nd fill of ditch	mid yellowish grey clay silt	>1.8	1.02	0.14	
16	1605	Cut		ditch	E/W aligned. Moderately steep sides, concave uneven base.	>1.8	1.02	0.26	

# APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

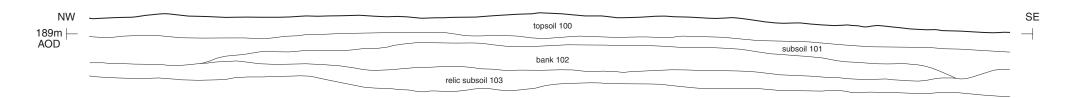
Project Name	Land at Owen Farm				
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in November 2012 at Land at Owen Farm, Staunton Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Thirteen trenches were excavated.				
	A bank, five field boundary ditches an associated spread of material caused by identified during the evaluation. None features yielded any artefactual materia period.	plough disturbance were e of the archaeological			
Project dates	12-15 November 2012				
Project type	Field Evaluation				
Previous work	Geophysical survey (Stratascan 2012) Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2012)				
Future work	Unknown				
PROJECT LOCATION					
Site Location	Staunton Road, Coleford, Gloucestershire				
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	4.8 ha				
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SO 5705 1110				
PROJECT CREATORS					
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology				
Project Brief originator	Gloucestershire County Council				
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology				
Project Manager	Simon Cox				
Project Supervisor	Christopher Leonard				
MONUMENT TYPE	None				
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None				
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content			
Physical	-	-			
Paper	Dean Heritage Museum/ SOYDH: 2012.69	Context sheets, registers etc			
Digital	Dean Heritage Museum/ SOYDH: 2012.69	Database, digital photos etc			
BIBLIOGRAPHY		<u> </u>			

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Trench 1; section AA



View of Trench 1, looking north. (Scale 1m)





Owen Farm, Staunton Road Coleford, Gloucestershire

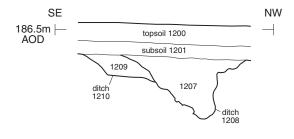
Trench 1; section and photograph

PROJECT NO. 4018
DRAWN BY LG
APPROVED BY PJM

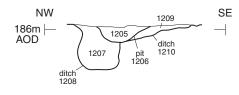
DATE 21-11-2012 REVISION 00 SCALE@A3 1:50

FIGURE NO. 3

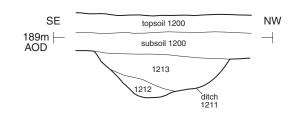
Trench 12; section BB



Trench 12; section CC



Trench 12; section DD





View of ditches 1208 and 1210, looking south-west. (Scales 1m)



View of pit 1206 and ditches 1208 and 1210, looking north-east. (Scale 1m)





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Trench 12; sections and photographs

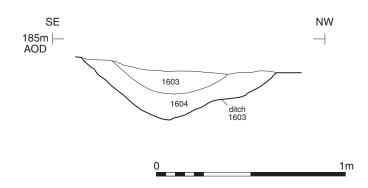
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FIGURE NO.

4

Trench 16; section EE



View of ditch 1603, looking south-west. (Scale 1m)





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PROJECT TITLE

Owen Farm, Staunton Road Coleford, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 16; section and photograph

 PROJECT NO.
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 DATE
 21-11-2012

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 PJM
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 1:20

FIGURE NO.

5