Cotswold Archaeology

Land at Stratford Close
Aston Clinton
Buckinghamshire

Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

for

CgMs Consulting

on behalf of

Kier Living

CA Project: 669027

CA Report: 16425

October 2016

Andover Cirencester Exeter Milton Keynes

Land at Stratford Close
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CA Project: 669027
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Site Name:	Land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton
Location:	Buckinghamshire
NGR:	SP 87075 12119
Type:	Strip, Map and Sample Excavation
Date:	May 2016
Planning Reference:	AVDC: 14/03662/APP
Location of archive:	Buckinghamshire Museum Service
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A programme of archaeological investigation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between May and June 2016 at the request of CgMs (on behalf of Kier Living) at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire. An area of 0.28ha was excavated across the development area.

The excavation provided a window on part of a later prehistoric (c.1700-200BC) landscape (Figs 3, 4 and 5). The earliest activity in this landscape for which the excavation provided evidence was the construction and use of a Middle Bronze Age enclosure ditch in the central part of the excavated area, which probably originally enclosed part of a sub-rectangular settlement, along with several pits. By the Late Bronze Age this enclosure had gone out of use and the landscape had probably been converted to an agricultural function with the construction of a field system, consisting of north-west/south-east oriented rectilinear blocks of land defined by ditches. While the pottery from the fills of the field boundary ditches is Early or Middle Iron Age in date, this does not preclude the possibility that the field system was Late Bronze Age in origin, especially if the boundary ditches were recut, or cleaned out on a regular basis. The field system may, therefore, have been established in the Late Bronze Age and continued in use up to the end of prehistory, or even beyond. Whatever the date of the construction/abandonment of the field system by the Middle Iron Age the south-eastern corner of the excavated area had been turned over to settlement once more. A boundary ditch was constructed parallel to the south-western boundary of the field-system, indicating that the field boundary must have been visible in some way, if not still in use. To the south west of this Middle Iron Age boundary a small sub-circular ditched enclosure or penannular gully was constructed, along with a scatter of pits and postholes, mostly to its south-east. After the abandonment of the Middle Iron Age settlement the excavation area

appears to have been ploughed in the medieval period and continued in agricultural use until the present day.

This document presents a quantification and assessment of the evidence recovered from the excavation. It considers the evidence collectively in its local, regional and national context, and presents an updated project design for a programme of post-excavation analysis to bring the results to appropriate publication.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 During May and June 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological excavation on land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire (centred on NGR: SP 87075 12119; Fig. 1). The work was undertaken at the request of CgMs Consulting (on behalf of Kier Living) in accordance with a detailed WSI produced by CA (2016) and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA: Aylesbury Vale District Council) acting on the advice of Eliza Alqassar (archaeological planning advisor to the LPA). The fieldwork also followed *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2014), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015a) and accompanying Planning Policy Note 3 (PPN3): Archaeological Excavation (Historic England 2015b). It was monitored by Eliza Alqassar, including site visits on 25 May 2016.

Location, topography and geology

1.2 The site is located immediately to the south-west of Stratford Close and to the north-west of Weston Road, and is bordered to the north-west by agricultural land, to the north-east by industrial units, to the east and south by residential housing and to the west by Longhorn Farm (Fig. 2). The site lies on level ground at approximately 92.8m AOD.

1.3 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as undifferentiated Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone of the Gault and Upper Greensand Formations (BGS 2016). The soils revealed during excavation comprised grey/brown silty clays, with inclusions of flint gravel.

1.4 Prior to the start of the development programme the site comprised agricultural grassland, two prefabricated dwellings, gardens and yards.

Archaeological background

1.1 Archaeological interest in the site arises from a Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2014) and an archaeological evaluation consisting of nine trenches (Fig. 2), undertaken in March 2016 (CA 2016). The evaluation indicated the presence of an Iron Age enclosure along with Iron Age pottery and associated animal bone and given the presence of Iron Age coins and hearths found between 100 and 200m from the site (CgMs 2014), the site's close proximity to a water course (*c*.

100m to the east) and the relatively flat topography, there was therefore considered to be the potential for prehistoric agricultural activity associated with a nearby settlement. The evaluation also confirmed later medieval and post-medieval agricultural land use (plough furrows) with later land drains taking their alignment from the earlier furrows.

1.2 The archaeological background given below is a summary of the archaeological desk based assessment of the site prepared by CgMs (2014).

Iron Age/ Roman

1.3 No Iron Age activity is known from within the development area but it has been found in the form of a hearth, pottery and burnt limestone at Quaintways Farm (CgMs 2014). A number of Iron Age coins have also been recorded within a 1km radius of the site.

1.4 No Roman activity is known from the development area but the Roman Road from St Albans (Verulamium) to Cirencester (Corinium) known as Akeman Street (locally now the A41) dominates the landscape to the east of the site (CgMs 2014). An archaeological evaluation of land to the east of the site at the rear of Brook Street/London Road, Aston Clinton, in December 2009 recorded three ditches that were identified as Roman field boundaries (Holton 2009; CgMs 2014).

Early Medieval

1.5 Aston Clinton is recorded as a Manor in the Domesday Survey. During the early medieval period the development area is likely to have been used for agriculture (CgMs 2014).

Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern

1.6 During the medieval and post-medieval periods the development area comprised agricultural or horticultural land. It is shown as agricultural land in an air photograph of 1945 and by 2014 two prefabricated dwellings had been constructed, but otherwise the development area still consisted of agricultural land (CgMs 2014).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The aims of the excavation were to establish the character, quality, date, significance and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site.

2.2 The objectives of the excavation were laid out in a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by CA (April 2016) in accordance with the relevant standards and guidelines for archaeological excavation (see section 1.1), as follows:

- Record the nature of the main stratigraphic units encountered.
- Assess the overall presence, survival and potential of structural and industrial remains.
- Assess the overall presence, survival, condition, and potential of artefactual and ecofactual remains.

2.3 The specific aims of the excavation were to:

- Record any evidence of past settlement or other land use.
- Recover artefactual evidence to date any evidence of past settlement that may be identified.
- Sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use and economy.

2.4 In addition the following aims were drawn from the Solent-Thames Research Agenda:

- Evidence for woodland clearance and at what period this takes place, will be explored.
- The use of newly-cleared areas, perhaps as a result of climatic change, will be investigated where appropriate evidence survives.
- The possibility that clearance was associated with changes in the wider LIA economy will be explored.
- Any evidence for the location and exploitation of woodland will be explored through palaeo-environmental evidence.
- The formation of alluvial and colluvial deposits will be examined to assess their connection with farming and clearance.

- Where biological remains survive these will be examined to assess changes in agriculture, such as the introduction of new domestic animal species, perhaps including fowl, or the change to spelt and free-threshing varieties of wheat.
- It is known that Iron Age field systems survive on the site and the excavation will aim to identify their origin and purpose.
- Where the evidence exists, the investigation will assess whether the fields/enclosures were mainly created to control grazing; the importance of grassland management in the Iron Age economy, and the degree of specialisation of grazing, for example whether horse-raising was a major economic activity as in the Upper Thames Valley.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork commenced with the removal of topsoil and subsoil from the excavation area by two mechanical excavators equipped with toothless grading buckets under archaeological supervision. Topsoil and subsoil stripping was hampered occasionally by inclement weather.

3.2 The archaeological features thus exposed were excavated by hand to the base of the archaeological stratigraphy. The original excavation sampling strategy comprised a 25% sample of all linear and curvilinear features, 50% of all pits and 100% of all postholes. However, a reduced sampling strategy for linear and curvilinear features (as appropriate to each feature) was agreed with Eliza Alqassar during the excavation. No stone structures, other buildings, kilns or burials were encountered. All features were planned and recorded in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2013). Deposits were assessed for their environmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The taking and processing of environmental and other samples from archaeological sites* (CA 2012), and eight deposits were deemed suitable for environmental sampling. All artefacts recovered from the excavation were retained in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of finds immediately after excavation* (CA 1995).

4 RESULTS

4.1 This section provides an overview of the excavation results; detailed assessments of the recorded contexts, finds and environmental samples (biological evidence) are to be found the appendices. Features have been assigned to three provisional periods based on artefact spot dating and the morphology, fill characteristics and spatial distribution of features. Given the morphological characteristics and spatial distribution of the features and the quality of the spot dating obtained from the ceramics a high level of confidence can be placed in the provisional interpretation.

- Period 1: Middle Bronze Age
- Period 2: Late Bronze Age
- Period 3: Middle Iron Age
- Period 4: Medieval to Post-Medieval

Period 1: Middle Bronze Age (Figs 3 and 4)

4.2 The Middle Bronze Age enclosure ditch (Ditch F) measured approximately 35m in length and was orientated north-west/south-east, returning to the north-east at its north-western end and running beyond the limit of excavation to the north-west. A narrow south-west-facing entrance in the south-western arm of the ditch, approximately 0.6m wide, was defined by rounded terminals and the south-eastern end of the ditch was defined by a similar rounded terminal. There was no evidence for a south-eastern boundary for the enclosure, however, this is not completely unusual for Middle Bronze Age enclosures in Southern England, which were sometimes defined by L-shaped ditches complemented by banks or fence-lines that seem, in some cases, to have been removed by later ploughing (Stansbie and Laws 2004). The fills of the enclosure ditch produced a modest assemblage of Middle Bronze Age pottery.

4.3 The area enclosed measured at least 95m by 26m, but could have been much larger. Just inside the south-western boundary of the enclosure, to the south-east of the entrance, were two sub-circular pits (1082 and 1084), measuring 0.38m and 0.44m in diameter respectively, which may have been contemporary with the occupation of the enclosure. In the same area just outside the south-western enclosure ditch was a third similar pit (1099), which was oval in plan and measured 0.94m in length by 0.40m in width. No prehistoric pottery was

recovered from the fills of the pits, however, their spatial relationship with Ditch F suggests a Middle Bronze Age date.

Period 2: Late Bronze Age (Fig. 3)

4.4 Probable Late Bronze Age activity consisted of the construction and use of a rectilinear field-system, characterised by sub-rectangular enclosures defined by north-west/south-east and south-west/north-east-oriented boundary ditches. While the fills of the boundary ditches produced a small amount of pottery of broadly later prehistoric date, the general morphology of the enclosures suggests a Late Bronze Age date. Parts of three enclosures (Enclosure 1, Enclosure 2 and Enclosure 3) were visible within the excavated area and all were oriented north-west/south-east. The most north-easterly of these enclosures (Enclosure 1), was defined by two ditches: ditch A, oriented north-west/south-east, and ditch B, oriented south-west/north-east. Ditch A was truncated to the north-west and south-east by medieval plough furrows, while Ditch B extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north-east The interior of Enclosure 1 thus mostly lay beyond the limit of excavation to the north-east, however, an area of the enclosure measuring approximately 16m by 6.5m was visible within the excavated area.

4.5 To the south-west of Enclosure 1 lay a second enclosure (Enclosure 2) defined by ditch C, oriented north-west/south-east, and ditch D, oriented south-west/north-east, which extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north-west and north-east respectively. The enclosure defined by these ditches measured approximately 50m north-west/south-east by 18m south-west/north-east, but extended beyond the limits of excavation both to the north-west and to the east and so could have been considerably larger.

4.6 A third enclosure (Enclosure 3) lay to the south-west of Enclosure 2 on the same alignment. Enclosure 3 was defined by north-west/south-east-oriented ditch G and south-west/north-east-oriented ditch E, which extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north-west and south-west respectively. Enclosure 3 measured approximately 55.5m north-west/south-east by 16.8m south-west/north-east, but like Enclosure 2 extended beyond the limit of excavation to the north-west and so could have been much larger.

Period 3: Middle Iron Age (Figs. 3 and 5)

4.7 The Middle Iron Age settlement was defined on its north-eastern side by a curvilinear ditched boundary (Ditch H) (Figs 3 and 5) measuring approximately 41m in length and extending beyond the limits of excavation to the north-west and south. At its southern end this boundary was defined by two parallel ditches for a length of approximately 10.3m, indicating that the boundary may have been partially recut at some point in the history of the settlement. The space enclosed or bounded by ditch H measured at least 43.7m north-east/south-west by 19.3m east-west, however, the settlement may have extended beyond the limits of excavation to the north, west and south and so may have been larger than this. Middle Iron Age settlement activity to the south-west of ditch H comprised a sub-circular ditched enclosure, or penannular roundhouse gully (J) in the north-central part of the settlement area, and a scatter of pits (O) in the south-eastern part of the settlement area. Both groups of features lay close to the inside of the settlement boundary ditch (H).

4.8 Enclosure/penannular gully J defined an area approximately 11.7m in diameter and was open to the east, with clear rounded ditch terminals at the end of both its northern and southern arms. It contained a north-east/south-west-orientated row of three subcircular postholes (1062, 1064 and 1066) in its south-eastern corner, measuring 0.52m in diameter on average. Pit scatter O comprised nine subcircular features (1019, 1021, 1031, 1033, 1045, 1047, 1049, 1114, and 1144) measuring between 0.25m and 1.08m in diameter by between 0.11m and 0.36m in depth. In addition, two larger oval pits, N/1012 measuring approximately 1m in length by 0.65m in width, and 1035 measuring 2.04m in length by 0.43m in width, both of which had been recut at least once lay within this group and may have been contemporary with it. The fills of Enclosure/penannular gully J, Ditch H and the pits making up pit scatter O produced sherds of Middle Iron Age/later prehistoric pottery. In addition a series of 8 environmental samples (100 litres) were taken from Ditch H, Enclosure/Penannular gully J and pit 1045.

Period 4: Medieval to post-medieval (Figs 2 and 3)

4.9 Medieval to post-medieval activity within the excavation area was characterised by north-east/south-west orientated plough furrows. In addition there were three undated features. Ditch I was a north-east/south-west orientated linear ditch approximately 16.7m in length, which cut Middle Iron Age boundary ditch H but

produced no other dating evidence. To the south-west of Ditch I, in the south-western corner of the excavation were two unexcavated and unnumbered pits, probably of post-medieval date.

5 FACTUAL DATA AND STATEMENTS OF POTENTIAL

Stratigraphic Record: factual data

5.1 Following the completion of the fieldwork an ordered, indexed, and internally consistent site archive was compiled in accordance with specifications presented in the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (Historic England 2015a). A database of all contextual and artefactual evidence and a site matrix was also compiled and cross-referenced to spot-dating. The fieldwork comprises the following records:

Context sheets	105
Plans (1:10, 1:20, 1:100)	0
Sections (1:10, 1:20)	33
Sample sheets	8
Digital photographs	180
Matrices	1

5.2 The survival and intelligibility of the site stratigraphy was good with archaeological remains having survived as negative features. Despite a relative paucity of stratigraphic relationships, most features have been assigned a preliminary period based on context dates and/or spatial association.

Stratigraphic record: statement of potential

5.3 A secure stratigraphic sequence is essential to elucidating the form, purpose, date, organisation and development of the various phases of activity represented. This will be achieved through the further integration of the ceramic dating evidence with the stratigraphic sequence. The refined sequence will then serve as the spatial and temporal framework within which other artefactual and biological evidence can be understood.

5.4 The stratigraphic record forms a complete record of the archaeological features uncovered and the quality of the stratigraphic and spatial relationships between the different landscape elements, combined with good quality ceramic dating, means that there is good potential for elucidating the function and development of the site. Although the site was heavily ploughed during the medieval period

and subsequently, removing all vertical stratigraphy and potentially any evidence for occupation layers, middens, etc; evidence for settlement dating to the Middle Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age periods, and a field system probably dating to the Late Bronze Age, survived as a series of discrete features (pits and postholes), as well as boundary and enclosure ditches, and these features contained occupation debris, including material culture and ecofactual data deriving from the occupation of the settlements and the construction and use of the field system. The potential for interpreting the function and organisation of the settlements and fieldsystem, the formation of the sequence and the way of life of the inhabitants of the settlements is therefore good.

5.5 One of the most valuable aspects of this project lies in in its potential for integration into our wider understanding of the archaeological sequence in its region and potentially the wider UK sequence.

Artefactual record: factual data

5.6 All finds collected during the excavation have been cleaned, marked, quantified and catalogued by context. All metalwork has been x-rayed and stabilised where appropriate.

Type	Category	Count	Weight (g)
Pottery	Prehistoric	167	1351
	Roman	1	1
	Post-medieval/modern	4	66
	Total	*172*	*1418*
Flint	Worked/burnt	6	66
Fired Clay	All	7	41
Brick/tile	All	5	67
Metals	Iron	2	11

5.7 The finds assemblage consists of a small assemblage of later prehistoric ceramics, a single sherd of early Roman ceramic and four sherds of post-medieval ceramics, along with a fragment of possible Middle to Late Bronze Age fired-clay cylindrical loomweight. In addition there was a very small and residual worked flint assemblage, probably dating to the Early Neolithic or Bronze Age, two fragments of possibly medieval or post-medieval iron and four fragments of medieval or post-medieval brick and tile.

Worked flint

5.8 A total of five worked flints (66g), and one piece of burnt unworked flint, were recovered from the hand-excavation of six deposits. The flints comprised three flakes (two of which were broken) and two retouched items. The flake from fill 1138 of Period 2 Ditch E is chunky and irregular: it is consistent with Bronze Age dating. The other two flakes are chronologically undiagnostic and are residual in Middle Iron Age features. A retouched distal flake fragment suggestive of dating earlier in the prehistoric period, possibly the Early Neolithic was recovered from fill 1073 of an unspecified ditch.

Pottery

5.9 A small pottery assemblage, amounting to 172 sherds (1418g), was recorded. The large majority of the material dates to the later prehistoric period, primarily to the Middle Iron Age (*c.* 400-100 BC). A small number of sherds are provisionally dated to the Middle Bronze Age, and to the Roman and post-medieval periods. The large majority comprises sherds in handmade fabrics where the principle inclusion is quartz (111 sherds or 66%) or crushed, calcined flint (31%); the remainder is made up of a small number of grogged or calcareous (fossil shell or limestone) types. A rim sherd from a large thin-walled vessel probably comes from a 'fineware' bowl possibly of globular form. Rim sherds from deposits 1044, 1065 and 1127 are from vessels of similar form, most likely jar-proportioned and of globular profile with short, upright necks. Rim tops are plain/simple or are decorated with fingertip impressions A small rim sherd from deposit 1046 may come from a vessel with undifferentiated neck, most likely an barrel-shaped or ovoid form. Decoration, other than the fingertipping to the rim top described above, is limited to scoring.

Fired clay and ceramic building material

5.10 Only very small quantities of fired or burnt clay were recorded, all coming from Periods 1 and 3. A single fragment recorded from Period 1 Ditch F (fill 1113) may be a portion of a clay loomweight of cylindrical form, a type with Middle and Late Bronze Age associations. Ceramic building material, consisting of small flat tile and brick fragments considered to date to the later medieval or post-medieval periods, was recorded from two deposits.

Metal finds

5.11 Two metal items, both of iron were recorded. Their condition is poor, with surfaces obscured by corrosion and soil/ small stones. Neither piece is dateable by its form, or is attributable to a specific function.

Artefactual record: statements of potential

Worked flint

5.12 The lithic assemblage is extremely small and all is likely to be residual. The technology hints at Early Neolithic and Bronze Age activity but this is far from certain. The recording which has been carried out for the purpose of this assessment is sufficient for archive purposes. A short note summarising the lithics should be included in any publication of the site. It will not be necessary to include any lithic illustrations.

Pottery

5.13 The pottery assemblage is small and limited in its range, although it represents the only artefactual material from the site of use for dating. Most significant 'intrinsically' is material from Period 1 (Ditch F), provisionally dated to the Middle Bronze Age. Pottery of this period, in particular 'finewares' are infrequently recognised from this period in Buckinghamshire (Kidd 2006) and publication of groups, however small, is regarded as important. The remaining, mainly Middle Iron Age, pottery is less significant. This period is better represented in the archaeological record in this area, although there refinement of chronologies is problem that persists (ibid.).

Fired clay and ceramic building material

5.14 In view of its fragmentary and largely indeterminate character the recorded material is of limited significance and merits no further work. Should this be required for publication, a short description of the object fragment from Ditch F, might be adapted from the report presented here.

Metal finds

5.15 The metal finds are considered of minimal archaeological significance. Further recording or analysis is not warranted and neither item need be retained.

Biological record: factual data

5.16 All ecofacts recovered from the excavation have been cleaned, marked, quantified and catalogued by context. A total of eight bulk samples were taken for the recovery of environmental remains.

Type	Category	Count
Animal bone	Fragments	145
Samples	Environmental	8

Animal bone

5.17 A total of 145 fragments of animal bone weighing 1475g was recovered during the excavation. This material came from features belonging to all 4 provisional periods, although the majority belonged to Periods 2 and 3. Of this total 30 fragments weighing 600g came from undated features, 7 fragments weighing 8g came from Period 1 features, 41 fragments weighing 623g came from Period 2 features, 60 fragments weighing 226g came from Period 3 features and 7 fragments weighing 18g came from Period 4 features. The bulk of the material therefore came from the probable Late Bronze Age field system and Middle Iron Age settlement.

Palaeo-environmental Remains

5.18 A series of eight environmental samples (100 litres of soil) were taken from ditch H, drip gully J and posthole 1045 with the intention of recovering environmental evidence of domestic or industrial activity on the site during the Middle Iron Age (Period 3). The samples were processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2). The samples were assessed and full details can be seen in Appendix 3.

5.19 Small quantities of charcoal fragments greater than 2mm were recovered in a number of the samples but no charred plant remains were recorded in these samples.

5.20 The small numbers of mollusc shells observed within these samples included those of the open country species *Pupilla muscorum*, *Vallonia costata, Vallonia excentrica, Helicella itala* and *Vertigo pygmaea*, the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and *Cochlicopa* sp., the shade-loving species *Carychium tridentatum* and *Aegopinella nitidula*, and the aquatic species *Anisus leucostoma* and *Galba truncatula*.

Biological record: statements of potential

Animal bone

5.21 Given the small size of the assemblage further recording and analysis will be deferred to the excavation report stage of the project. The material nevertheless has some potential to inform on the agricultural economy of the Bronze and Iron Age settlements and field systems and full recording is therefore recommended.

Palaeo-environmental remains

5.22 There is no potential for the analysis of the charcoal assemblages to provide detailed information on the species composition and the management and exploitation of the local woodland resource due to the small quantities of charcoal present.

5.23 No charred plant remains were recovered, so there is no potential for analysis to provide any information, even limited, on the nature of the settlement and surrounding environment, and the range of crops and local crop processing activities during Period 3.

5.24 The mollusc assemblages have been identified and there is no potential to augment the picture of the local landscape further due to the low number of shells recovered in these samples.

5.25 No further work is recommended on these samples.

6 SUMMARY STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

6.1 The potential for further analysis and understanding of the site is good. There is potential for further integration of the ceramic dating with the stratigraphic sequence and therefore refinement of the chronological development of the later prehistoric landscape and settlement. In addition, further refinement of understanding of the animal bone assemblage has the potential to further elucidate the nature of occupation and agricultural activity on the site during the later prehistoric period.

6.2 All areas of the site had generally moderate survival of archaeological deposits. The amount of vertical truncation by medieval and modern agriculture cannot be reliably estimated, but is probably average for rural sites in the region. However, the scarcity of postholes and absence of beam-slots, together with the

shallowness of surviving enclosure ditches suggests that there may have been a significant loss of structural evidence or shallow boundaries. The stratigraphic potential of the archive is therefore moderate.

6.3 The earliest activity recorded on site comprised a Middle Bronze Age enclosure boundary ditch (Ditch F). Unfortunately any evidence for occupation or other activity within the enclosure appears to have been truncated by later agricultural activity. However, ceramics from the ditch fills and a scatter of pits towards the south-eastern end of the ditch, provides some potential for further understanding of the nature of occupation. Additionally, the presence of the ditch itself and its form, provides potential for further understanding of the nature and location of Middle Bronze Age settlement within the later prehistoric landscape. The Middle Bronze Age ceramic assemblage itself will also make a significant contribution to our understanding of the regional ceramic assemblage.

6.4 Following the abandonment of the Middle Bronze Age enclosure the site was turned over to agricultural use, with the construction of a rectilinear field system at some point probably in the Late Bronze Age. The use of this field system may have continued through the later prehistoric period and even beyond and its layout and spatial/stratigraphic relationship with the subsequent Middle Iron Age settlement therefore provides good potential for understanding the organisation and use of the later prehistoric landscape. In addition, material culture and animal bone assemblages from the fills of the field boundary ditches provide moderate potential for insight into the nature of Late Bronze Age agricultural activity in the landscape.

6.5 The final phase of activity recorded on site consisted of a Middle Iron Age settlement comprising a boundary ditch (Ditch H), a scatter of pits (O) and a sub-circular enclosure or penannular roundhouse gully (J). The evidence of Middle Iron Age settlement provides good potential for the elucidation of the nature of settlement of this period in the wider region. Ceramic and animal bone assemblages from the fills of the pits and ditches provide moderate potential for understanding the nature of occupation and day to day routines of the inhabitants.

6.6 The original objectives of the excavation were to: record the nature of the main stratigraphic units encountered, assess the overall presence, survival and

potential of structural and industrial remains and to assess the overall presence, survival, condition and potential of artefactual and ecofactual remains (see section 2.2). All three of these objectives have been achieved: a complete record of the features encountered during the excavation has been created, including a record of their stratigraphic relationships to one another. Little evidence for structural or industrial remains was encountered, although ditch J may represent a penannular roundhouse gully. In addition, small assemblages of ceramics and animal bone have been recovered and assessed (see sections 5.9 and 5.17).

6.7 The original specific aims of the excavation were to: record any evidence of past settlement or other land use, recover artefactual evidence to date any evidence of past settlement that may be identified, and to sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use and economy (see section 2.3). Again all three of these specific aims have been met. The excavation recorded evidence of Middle Bronze Age settlement, probable Late Bronze Age field systems and Middle Iron Age settlement. An artefact assemblage comprising pottery and fired clay was recovered along with an assemblage of animal bones, although no charred plant remains were present in the recovered soil samples.

6.8 In addition a number of specific research aims were drawn from the Solent-Thames research agenda (Lambrick 2014). These included recording any evidence of woodland clearance and its relationship to the Late Iron Age economy, recording any evidence for the location and exploitation of woodland, assessing any evidence for the formation of alluvial and colluvial deposits and their relationship to farming and woodland clearance, the recovery of biological remains in order to examine changes in agriculture and the identification of any Iron Age field-systems and their origin and purpose, including the role of grazing in the Iron Age economy. Unfortunately the charcoal, molluscan and animal bone assemblages recovered during the excavation were too small for any firm conclusions about woodland clearance, alluviation/colluviation or agriculture to be drawn and assessment of the stratigraphic evidence, combined with assessment of the ceramics suggests that the field systems were in fact probably Late Bronze Age in date.

6.9 The proposed further analysis of this archive would result in an academic report, including a descriptive narrative of the stratigraphic sequence, detailed analysis

of the Middle Bronze Age pottery assemblage and a discussion drawing the stratigraphic, artefact and animal bone data together and interpreting the site in its regional and national context. Such a report would be deposited as a typescript report on the CA website and published in summary form in a suitable academic journal such as *Records of Buckinghamshire*.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 The archive is currently held at CA offices, Milton Keynes, whilst post-excavation work proceeds. Upon completion of the project and with the agreement of the legal landowners, the site archive and artefactual collection will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum (accession number: TBC), which has agreed in principle to accept the complete archive upon completion of the project.

8 UPDATED AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

8.1 The archaeological sequence is primarily of local and regional significance and the following updated aims and objectives have therefore largely been defined by reference to the *Solent-Thames research framework for the historic environment: resource assessments and research agendas* (Hey and Hind 2014). A smaller number of aims and objectives relating to the wider national context of the site sequence have been defined with reference to the following publications: *Land, power and prestige* (Yates 2007), *The prehistory of Britain and Ireland* (Bradley 2007) and *The dynamics of social change in Later Iron Age eastern and south-eastern England c. 300BC-AD43* (Hill 2007). To fulfil the potential of the site data, the following updated objectives have been set out to provide a framework for the proposed further analysis:

General

Objective 1: Refining ceramic chronologies.

8.2 The later prehistoric chapters of the Solent-Thames Research Agenda Lambrick (2014), in common with other regional and national research agendas (Haselgrove 2001; Kidd 2006, Watt 2011) identifies ceramic chronology and particularly the scientific dating of ceramic sequences as a priority for the

period. The Stratford Close ceramic assemblage is small and does not seem likely to offer good opportunities for chronological refinement, either using scientific dating or otherwise, however, the analysis of the ceramic assemblage will identify any potential for refinement of the ceramic sequence that does exist.

Middle Bronze Age

Objective 2: Establish the nature of and regional distinctiveness of the Middle Bronze Age Occupation

8.3 The analysis will further investigate whether the L-shaped Middle Bronze Age ditch partially enclosed a settlement and will compare the form of the ditch and associated settlement evidence with examples drawn from the wider regional and supra-regional literature; in order to understand the place of any settlement within the wider landscape.

Late Bronze Age

Objective 3: Establish the chronological origins of field system construction in this region of the Vale of Aylesbury

8.4 Work by Yates (2007) and Lambrick (2014) suggests that despite widespread evidence for field systems in Southern England generally (ibid.), this part of South East England (The Vale of Aylesbury and the Thame Valley) is relatively unexplored in terms of Late Bronze Age field-system construction. This being so, the discovery of elements of a field system is significant in its own right and the dating of its construction is an important question. The analysis stage of this project will therefore further investigate the date of field-system construction, by refining our understanding of the stratigraphic archive. Of particular significance will be the date of the initial construction of the fieldsystem; whether Late Bronze Age or later and its longevity; whether it continued in use alongside the Middle Iron Age settlement.

Middle Iron Age

Objective 4: Continuity of land use: did the probable Late Bronze Age field system continue in use up to or beyond the establishment of the Middle Iron Age settlement?

8.5 The layout of the Middle Iron Age settlement and particularly its boundary ditch which appears to have run roughly parallel to the probable Late Bronze Age field system and respected its spatial integrity, suggests that the field system may have continued in use through the Iron Age and perhaps even beyond. The analysis of the archive will therefore seek to refine our understanding of the

ceramic assemblage from the field system, with the aim of refining its chronology.

Objective 5: Understanding the place of the Middle Iron Age settlement in contemporary settlement expansion in South-Eastern England

8.6 Hill (2007, 23) argues that there is evidence for Middle and Later Iron Age infilling of previously unsettled or lightly settled areas in southern and eastern areas of England, both of areas around existing settlements and larger landscapes with low settlement densities. The analysis will therefore investigate whether the settlement at Aston Clinton is an example of this infilling, by examining the wider archaeological literature to place it in a regional and supra-regional context.

9 PUBLICATION

9.1 The results from the investigations of Stratford Close, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire are of regional significance and merit publication. The excavation of Later Bronze Age/Early Iron Age settlement and field systems is unusual in this part of the Vale of Aylesbury and the potential continuity of the field system into the Middle Iron Age is significant. It is proposed that a detailed excavation report is made available online, including on the CA website, and that a summary account is placed in *Records of Buckinghamshire*.

Synopsis of Proposed Summary Report

Later prehistoric settlement and field-systems at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire, excavations May 2016

by Dan Stansbie

Introduction	150
The Middle Bronze Age Enclosure, Late Bronze Age fieldsystem and Middle Iron Age Settlement	400
The artefactual and ecofactual evidence	500
Discussion	400
Acknowledgements	50
Total Words	1500
	3 pages

Illustrations

Location plan and site plan 1 page

10 PROJECT TEAM

10.1 The analysis and publication programme will be quality assured by **Martin Watts MCIfA** (Head of Publications: HoP) and managed by **Dan Stansbie ACIfA** (Post-excavation Manager: PXM), who will produce the report as senior author and co-ordinate the work of the following personnel:

Dan Stansbie (Post-excavation manager: PXM):
Post-excavation phasing, draft report preparation, research and archive

Ed McSloy MCIfA (Senior Finds Officer: SFO):
Specialist report preparation and liaison, post-excavation phasing.

Lucy Martin ACIfA (Senior Illustrator: SILL):
Production of all site plans, sections and artefact drawings (exc. pottery)

Jon Bennett ACIfA (Geomatics Officer: GO):
GIS applications

10.2 The final publication report will be edited and refereed internally by CA senior project management, and externally refereed by Dr Tom Moore (University of Durham).

11 TASK LIST

TASK	PERSONNEL	DURATION/ COST
Project Management		
	SPM	**1.5**
Stratigraphic Analysis		
	PO	**1.5**
	FO	
Research, comparanda		
	PO	**1**
Pottery		
Analysis and report	SFC	3
Illustration	SI	1
Lithics		
Report preparation	SAuth	0.13
Fired Clay and CBM		
Report preparation	SAuth	0.13
Preparation of publication report		
Abstract and introduction	PO	0.13
	SI	
Excavation results	PO	0.5
	SI	1
Compilation of specialist reports, tables etc.	PO	0.13
Discussion, conclusions	PO	0.13
	SI	
Acknowledgements, bibliography	PO	0.13
Submission to external referees		
Editing	SPM	1
Revisions	PO	1
SUBMISSION OF PUBLICATION TEXT		
Archive		
Research archive completion	PO	0.50
	FO	
Microfilm		FEE
Deposition		FEE
Publication		
Printing	SANHS	FEE

12 TIMETABLE

12.1 For a typescript and summary or journal article publication project, CA would normally aim to have completed a draft excavation report within sixth months of approval of the updated publication project design, and a publication draft within a further 3 months. A detailed programme can be produced if desired on approval of the updated publication project design.

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APPENDIX 1: STRATIGRAPHIC ASSESSEMENT BY DAN STANSBIE

A total of 148 contexts were recorded during the excavation. Three context numbers were assigned to deposits of geological origin and the remaining contexts were assigned to periods as detailed below:

Table 1: Number of contexts by period

Period	**No. of contexts**
Period 0 Unphased	25
Period 1 Middle Bronze Age (1500BC-1100BC)	17
Period 2 Late Bronze Age (1100BC-700BC)	31
Period 3 Middle Iron Age (400BC-100BC)	57
Period 4 medieval to post-medieval (AD450-AD1800)	15

Potential for further analysis

The preservation of the archaeological sequence and the recovered artefactual evidence means that a comprehensive phasing can be achieved for the majority of excavated contexts. In order to achieve this further stratigraphic analysis will be undertaken on 130 contexts provisionally assigned to Periods 1-3 and those that are currently unphased. Further analysis will not be required for those contexts provisionally assigned to Period 4 (medieval to post-medieval).

APPENDIX 2: LITHICS ASSESSMENT BY JACKY SOMMERVILLE

A total of five worked flints (66g), and one piece of burnt unworked flint, was recovered from the hand-excavation of six deposits.

The artefacts were recorded according to broad artefact/debitage type and catalogued directly onto a Microsoft Access database. A basic level of recording was carried out due to the very small assemblage size. Attributes recorded included: raw material; colour; weight; degree of edge damage (microflaking) and rolling (abrasion); and presence of breakage and/or burning.

Provenance

All of the lithics were recovered from cut features: ditches, gullies and a furrow. Single broken flakes were retrieved from Period 3 features: drip gully 1043 and ditch 1057. Both features were dated to the Middle Iron Age on the basis of associated pottery and the flints were heavily rolled and edge damaged. The remaining worked flints were recorded from undated features and are also in poor condition, suggesting that they too have been redeposited.

Raw material and condition

The raw material was flint in all cases. The retouched flint from 1073 was brown and fine-grained; the remainder was grey. Where cortex was retained (three items) it was abraded or pitted, suggesting a secondary source such as river gravels.

Range and variety

Primary technology

The flints comprised three flakes (two of which were broken) and two retouched items. The flake from fill 1138 of Period 2 Ditch E is chunky and irregular: it is consistent with Bronze Age dating. The other two flakes are chronologically undiagnostic and are residual in Middle Iron Age features.

Secondary technology

Furrow fill 1072 produced a redeposited scraper/notch made on a thermal blank. One narrow edge features quite steep retouch, with a small spur in the centre. An area of regular, semi-abrupt retouch has formed a notch on one of the lateral edges. This tool is broadly prehistoric in date.

A retouched distal flake fragment was recovered from fill 1073 of an unspecified ditch. The flint was good quality and chocolate brown. The distal ends of the dorsal lateral edges had been finely retouched into a rough point. There was also an area of shallow retouch on the right ventral edge and the break surface featured very fine, steep retouch. The narrow, thin blank and the fineness of the retouch are tentatively suggestive of dating earlier in the prehistoric period, possibly the Early Neolithic.

Statement of potential

The lithic assemblage is extremely small and all is likely to be residual. The technology hints at Early Neolithic and Bronze Age activity but this is far from certain. The recording that has been carried out for the purpose of this assessment is sufficient for archive purposes.

APPENDIX 3: POTTERY ASSESSEMENT BY ED MCSLOY

Introduction/Methodology

A small assemblage, amounting to 172 sherds (1418g), was recorded. The large majority of the pottery dates to the later prehistoric period, primarily to the Middle Iron Age (c. 400-100 BC). A small number of sherds are provisionally dated to the Middle Bronze Age, and to the Roman and post-medieval periods. Recording undertaken as part of this assessment has included quantification (sherd count and weight) by fabric. In addition, vessel form/rim morphology, decoration and evidence for use as carbonaceous and other residues, have been recorded.

The assemblage was derived from 40 separate deposits (including three recorded at the time of the evaluation). Most material (75% by sherd count) was recorded from ditch fills, with the remainder mainly from pits/postholes. Context group size is small, with only five deposits producing 10 or more sherds (to a maximum of 23 sherds). The prehistoric pottery is fairly well broken-up, this reflected in a mean sherd weight of 8g. Sherd surfaces are typically well-preserved, and abrasion minimal.

Prehistoric Pottery: Range and variety

Fabrics

Assemblage range (fabrics) is set out in table 1. The large majority comprises sherds in handmade fabrics where the principle inclusion is quartz (111 sherds or 66%) or crushed, calcined flint (31%); the remainder made up of a small number of grogged or calcareous (fossil shell or limestone) types. Most material is of likely local origin, the source for the dominant quartz-tempered fabrics almost certainly the local Upper Greensand. Material possibly not of local origin comprises the few sherds in shell or limestone–tempered fabrics which might have originated from the Jurassic geology of Oxfordshire or Bedfordshire/Northamptonshire.

Vessel form/decoration

The scarcity of ‘featured’ sherds (rim, base or decorated) in the assemblage means that few vessel forms could be identified with certainty. A rim sherd from a large thin-walled vessel in a fine flint-tempered fabric (FFT) from ditch fill 1113, probably comes from a ‘fineware’ bowl possibly of globular form. Rim sherds in fabric QZ from deposits 1044 (two vessels), 1065 and 1127 are from vessels of similar form, most likely jar-proportioned and of globular profile with short, upright necks. Rim tops are plain/simple or are decorated with fingertip impressions (those from 1044 and1065). A small rim sherd in the same fabric from deposit 1046 may come from a vessel with undifferentiated neck, most likely an barrel-shaped or ovoid form jar. A single vessel base in fabric QZ was recorded from deposit 1117. This was flat, with the base angle thickened/splayed. One vessel (fabric FFT) from deposit 1119 preserves part of a perforated lug. Decoration, other than the fingertipping to the rim top described above, is limited to scoring. This was recorded on two vessels (four sherds) from deposits 1044 and 1058 and consists of vertical or oblique, crossed lines to the vessel’s exterior.

Evidence for Use

Evidence for use was limited to internal carbonaceous residues recorded on four sherds (deposits 1058 and 1065) which were suggestive of use as cooking vessels.

Stratigraphy/chronology (table 2)

Period 1 (*Middle Bronze Age*)

Earliest elements in the assemblage are the mainly coarser and thick-walled (up to 15mm) flint-tempered fabrics, for which Middle Bronze Age dating is considered probable. In addition, a single abraded sherd in coarse grog-tempered fabric GRC is probably of this date, but was residual in an Iron Age-dated deposit (evaluation ditch fill 206). The majority of material of this period, including a group of 15 sherds from deposit 1113, relates to Period 1/Ditch F. Rim sherds from this group were limited to the vessel from deposit 1113, thought to represent a fineware bowl, probably related to Globular 'Urns' present among the Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury style. It is undecorated, although well made with smoothed surfaces and a finely squared rim top.

Period 2 (Late Bronze Age/earlier or Middle Iron Age)

The very small quantities of pottery (9 sherds weighing 23g) from features attributable to this period comprise unfeatured bodysherds in quartz or finer flint-tempered fabrics. In addition a small scrap of Roman samian was recorded (below), although it is thought likely to be intrusive.

Albeit that its derivation from secondary ditch fills means that the pottery recorded from this phase may not relate to the construction or initial use of these features, the prevalence of the quartz-tempered fabric argues against a date as early as the Late Bronze Age. A broadly Iron Age date range is preferred, conceivably broadly contemporaneous with the (Middle Iron Age) activity to the west.

Period 3 (Middle Iron Age)

Pottery relating to Period 3 features (113 sherds, weighing 960g) accounts for the large majority of the prehistoric assemblage. The range of fabrics, in particular the abundance of (primarily) quartz-tempered types, is most consistent in this region with the Middle Iron Age (*c*. 400/300-100 BC). The persistence of flint-tempering into this period is evidenced elsewhere in the region and can no longer be regarded as a wholly 'early' trait. Indications of Middle Iron Age dating come from the vessel forms/decoration described above; the globular profile jars with plain or fingertip-decorated rims. The finger-impressed decoration and scoring similarly are characteristic of Middle Iron Age styles, including the 'Scored ware' tradition (Elsdon 1992; Knight 2002) dominant in this period in the central eastern region.

Roman

A single small and abraded sherd (1g) of Central Gaulish samian was recorded from Period 2 Ditch C (fill 1107). It can be dated to the 2nd century AD although is very likely intrusive within its context, possible as the result of the furrows which truncated Ditch C.

Post-medieval

Pottery amounting to 4 sherds (66g) was recorded, all coming from furrows. A press-moulded slipware sherd (50g) in a hard red fabric from Period 4 furrow fill 1076 probably dates to the 18th century. Three sherds (16g) from Period 4 furrow 1003 occur in the same pale-fired internally glazed earthenware fabric. Broad dating in the mid 16th to 18th century range is suggested.

Statement of Potential and Recommendations for Further Analysis

The pottery assemblage is small and limited in its range, although it represents the only artefactual material from the site of use for dating. Most significant 'intrinsically' is material from Period 1 (Ditch F), provisionally dated to the Middle Bronze Age. Pottery of this period, in particular 'finewares' are infrequently recognised from this period in Buckinghamshire (Kidd 2006) and publication of groups, however small, is regarded as important. The remaining, mainly Middle Iron Age, pottery is less significant. This period is better represented in the archaeological record in this area, although there refinement of chronologies is problem that persists (*ibid*.).

Recording of pottery undertaken ahead of assessment is sufficient for purposes of the archive and for further analysis. It is recommended that a short report be produced characterising the prehistoric pottery and supported by illustration of selected vessels (up to 5). Analysis of the Middle Bronze Age elements would be enhanced by (library-based) research, permitting consideration of new material from the region added since Kidd's survey (ibid.).

Summary

Research/Reporting	3 days (SFC)
Illustration	1 day (SI)

APPENDIX 4: FIRED CLAY AND CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL BY ED MCSLOY

Only very small quantities of fired or burnt clay were recorded, all coming from Periods 1 and 3 (table 1). A single fragment recorded from Period 1 Ditch F (fill 1113) preserves smoothed surfaces and appears to represent an object. It is of approximate rounded form (*c*. 100mm in diam.), with a flattened 'base' and may be a portion of a clay loom weight of cylindrical form, a type with Middle and Late Bronze Age associations. The remainder of this assemblage, consists of small and amorphous fragments for which original function or dating cannot be known.

Ceramic building material, consisting of small flat tile and brick fragments considered to date to the later medieval or post-medieval periods, was recorded from two deposits (table 1). All was heavily fragmented and the small piece from Period 3 Ditch H undoubtedly intrusive in its context.

Statement of Potential and Recommendations for Further Analysis

In view of its fragmentary and largely indeterminate character the recorded material is of limited significance and merits no further work. Should this be required for publication, a short description of the object fragment from Ditch F, might be adapted from the report presented here.

Table 2: Fired/burnt clay and ceramic building material summary.

Material	Context	Perd	Feat. label	Description	Ct.	Wt. (g)
fired/burnt clay	1097	1	ph	Amorphous. Dense, dark grey	2	9
	1113	1	Ditch F	Object fragment. Buff-fired	1	22
	1102	3	Ditch H	Amorphous. Buff-fired	3	9
	1127	3	Ditch H	Crumb. Buff-fired	1	1
Total					***7***	***41***
CBM	1105	3	Ditch H	Tile. Hard, red fabric. (post-medieval)	1	2
	1004	4	furrow	Tile. Hard, red fabric. (post-medieval)	4	65
Total					***5***	***67***

APPENDIX 5: METAL FINDS ASSESSEMENT BY ED MCSLOY

Two metal items, both of iron were recorded. Condition is poor, with surfaces obscured by corrosion and soil/ small stones. Neither piece is dateable by its form, or is attributable to a specific function. The item from Period 3 (Middle Iron Age) Ditch H fill 1105 consists of a length of strip measuring 31mm long x 6mm in width. Iron Age dating for this item is suggested by the phasing, although the presence of post-medieval tile from the same deposit hints that it might also be a late intrusion. Medieval or later dating is probable for the second iron item which was recovered from Period 4 furrow fill 1073. It consists of an approximately triangular sheet fragment (45mm long x 26mm in width), with a circular rivet hole central to the broken edge.

Statement of Potential and Recommendations for Further Analysis

The metal finds are considered of minimal archaeological significance. Further recording or analysis is not warranted and neither item need be retained.

APPENDIX 6: ANIMAL BONE ASSESSEMENT BY DAN STANSBIE

A total of 145 fragments of animal bone weighing 1475g was recovered during the excavation. This material came from features belonging to all 4 provisional periods, although the majority belonged to Periods 2 and 3. Of this total 30 fragments weighing 600g came from unphased features, 7 fragments weighing 8g came from Period 1 features, 41 fragments weighing 623g came from Period 2 features, 60 fragments weighing 226g came from Period 3 features and 7 fragments weighing 18g came from Period 4 features. The bulk of the material therefore came from the probable Late Bronze Age field system and Middle Iron Age settlement.

Given the small size of the assemblage further recording and analysis will be deferred to the publication stage of the project.

APPENDIX 7: PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BY SARAH WYLES

A series of eight environmental samples (100 litres of soil) were taken from ditch H, drip gully/enclosure J and posthole 1045 with the intention of recovering environmental evidence of domestic or industrial activity on the site during the Middle Iron Age (Period 3). The samples were processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2).

The samples were examined for the recovery of charred material (Table 3). The presence of mollusc shells has also been recorded in the majority of these samples. Nomenclature is according to Anderson (2005) (Table 4) and habitat preferences according to Kerney (1999) and Davies (2008).

Period 3 (Middle Iron Age)
Charred plant remains and charcoal
Small quantities of charcoal fragments greater than 2mm were recovered from fills 1102 of section 1101 (sample 5) and 1105 of section 1103 (sample 6) of ditch H, and fills 1044 of section 1043 (sample 3) and 1133 of section 1132 (sample 8) of drip gully/enclosure J. This is likely to be wind-blown hearth material. There is no indication of any industrial processes taking place from the samples

No charred plant remains were recorded in these samples.

Molluscs
The small numbers of mollusc shells observed within the samples from ditch H (samples 1, 2, 5 and 6) included those of the open country species *Pupilla muscorum*, *Vallonia costata, Vallonia excentrica* and *Vertigo pygmaea,* the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and the shade-loving species *Carychium tridentatum*.

The mollusc assemblages from drip gully/enclosure J (samples 3, 7 and 8) included low numbers of shells of the open country species *Vallonia costata, Vallonia excentrica* and *Vertigo pygmaea,* and the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus.*

Fill 1046 of posthole 1045 (sample 4) contained shells of the open country species *Vallonia costata, Vallonia excentrica, Pupilla muscorum* and *Helicella itala*, the intermediate species *Cochlicopa* sp., the shade-loving species *Aegopinella nitidula* and the aquatic species *Anisus leucostoma* and *Galba truncatula*.

The small mollusc assemblages are suggestive of a well-established open environment with some areas of longer grass during this period. There is also an indication of occasional flooding and seasonal desiccation in the vicinity of posthole 1045.

Potential

There is no potential for the analysis of the charcoal assemblages to provide detailed information on the species composition and the management and exploitation of the local woodland resource due to the small quantities of charcoal present.

No charred plant remains were recovered, so there is no potential for analysis to provide any information, even limited, on the nature of the settlement and surrounding environment, and the range of crops and local crop processing activities during Period 3.

The mollusc assemblages have been identified and there is no potential to augment the picture of the local landscape further due to the low number of shells recovered in these samples.

No further work is recommended on these samples.

Table 3 Assessment table of the palaeoenvironmental remains

Feature	Context	Sample	Vol (L)	Flot size (ml)	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Charred Other	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
Period 3 - Middle Iron Age										
Ditch H										
1012	1013	1	8	10	60	-	-	-	-	Moll-t (**)
1014	1015	2	8	10	70	-	-	-	-	Moll-t (**)
1101	1102	5	10	10	70	-	-	-	-/*	-
1103	1105	6	8	20	70	-	-	-	*/*	Moll-t (*)
Drip gully J										
1043	1044	3	8	5	60	-	-	-	-/*	Moll-t (*)
1128	1129	7	9	25	70	-	-	-	-	Moll-t (*)
1132	1133	8	17	30	70	-	-	-	*/*	Moll-t (*)
Posthole										
1045	1046	4	32	40	70	-	-	-	-	Moll-t (**), Moll-f (*)

Key: * = 1–4 items; ** = 5–20 items; *** = 21–49 items; ****= 50–99 items; ***** = >100 items, Moll-t = land snails, Moll-f = aquatic snails

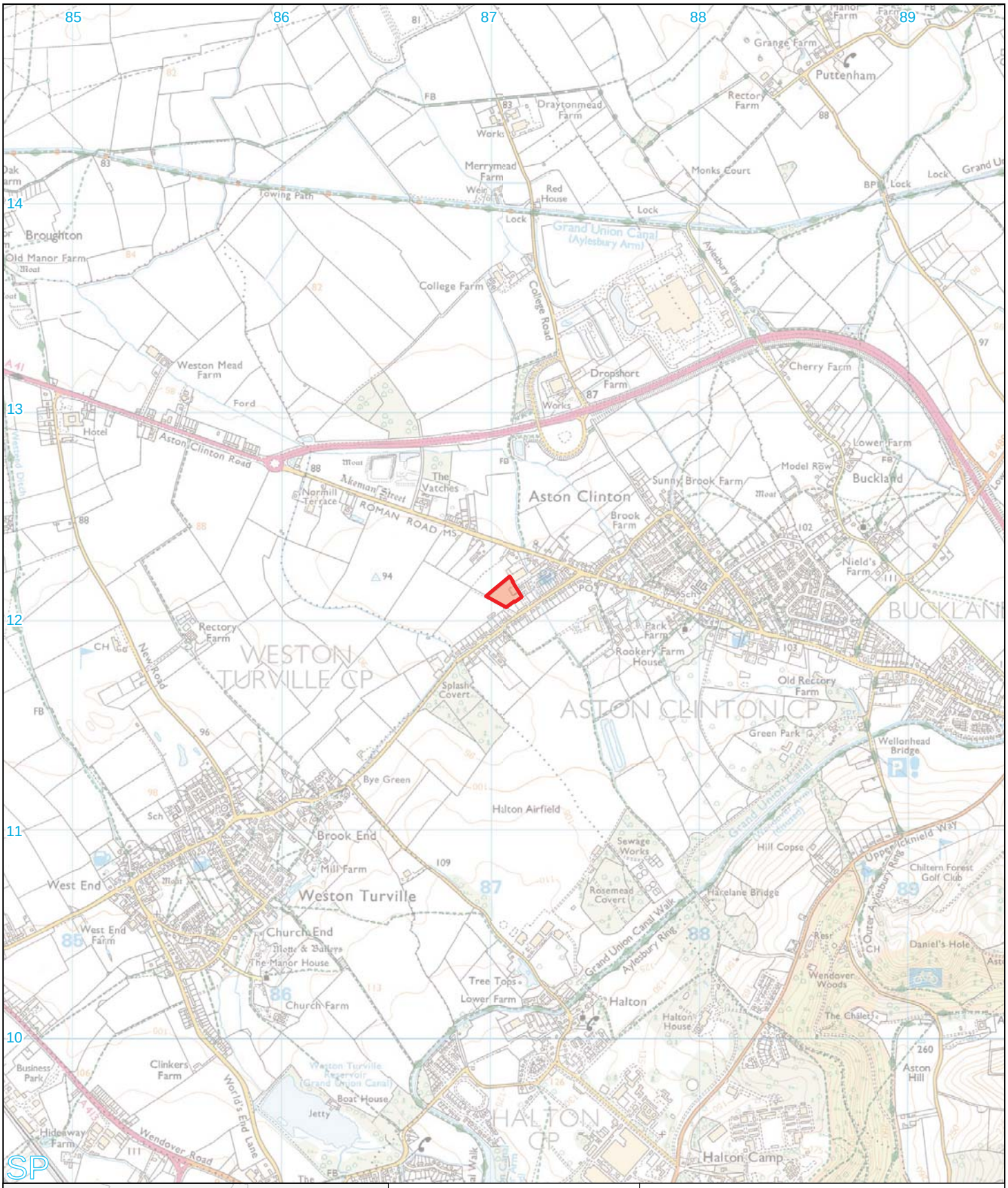
Table 4 Mollusc shells

Phase	Period 3 - Middle Iron Age							
Feature Type	Ditch H				Drip gully J			Posthole
Feature	1012	1014	1101	1103	1043	1128	1132	1045
Context	1013	1015	1102	1105	1044	1129	1133	1046
Sample	1	2	5	6	3	7	8	4
Vol (L)	8	8	10	8	8	9	17	32
Flot size (ml)	10	10	10	20	5	25	30	40
Roots %	60	70	70	70	60	70	70	70
Open country species								
Pupilla muscorum	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	1
Vertigo pygmaea	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Vallonia costata	1	3	-	1	-	1	1	1
Vallonia excentrica	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	5
Helicella itala	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Intermediate species								
Trochulus hispidus	-	4	-	1	-	-	1	-
Cochlicopa sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Shade-loving species								
Carychium tridentatum	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aegopinella nitidula	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Aquatic species								
Anisus leucostoma	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Galba truncatula	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

APPENDIX 8: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land at Stratford Close Aston Clinton Buckinghamshire	
Short description	A programme of archaeological investigation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between May and June 2016 at the request of CgMs (on behalf of Kier Living) at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire. An area of 0.28ha was excavated across the development area. The excavation revealed evidence for later prehistoric settlement and agricultural activity, comprising a Middle Bronze Age enclosure overlain by part of a possible Late Bronze Age field-system, which was itself contiguous with a Middle Iron Age settlement consisting of a boundary ditch, a sub-circular enclosure and several pits. This document presents a quantification and assessment of the evidence recovered from the excavation. It considers the evidence collectively in its local, regional and national context, and presents an updated project design for a programme of post-excavation analysis to bring the results to appropriate publication.	
Project dates	May and June 2016	
Project type	Excavation	
Previous work	Archaeological evaluation Cotswold Archaeology (CA 2016)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Land at Stratford Close/Aston Clinton /Buckinghamshire	
Study area (M^2/ha)	0.28ha	
Site co-ordinates	SP 87075 12119	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Buckinghamshire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Greatorex	
Project Supervisor	Joe Wheelan	
MONUMENT TYPE	BTUF; RTSN	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.) Buckinghamshire Museum Services	Content

Physical		Ceramics, animal bone, metalwork, environmental residues
Paper		Site day book, context register, context sheets, drawing register, sections, registered artefact register, sample register, photographic register, matrices
Digital		Database, digital photos, digital matrix
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Land at Stratford Close Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire, Post Excavation and Updated Project Design.* CA Report **16425**		



N

0 1km

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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	669027	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	05/09/2016	1
APPROVED BY	DS	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

Site area

Excavation area / evaluation trench

Archaeological feature

Furrow

Modern

Field drain

Treethrow

N

0 50m

1:1000

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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton
Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

Site plan

DRAWN BY	LM	PROJECT NO.	669027	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	22.9.16	2
APPROVED BY	DS	SCALE@A4	1:1000	

Excavation area
Field drain
Treethrow
Unphased

Period 1 Middle Bronze Age (excavated/unexcavated)
Period 2 Late Bronze Age (excavated/unexcavated)
Period 3 Middle Iron Age (excavated/unexcavated)
Period 4 Medieval - Post-medieval (excavated/unexcavated)
Modern

N

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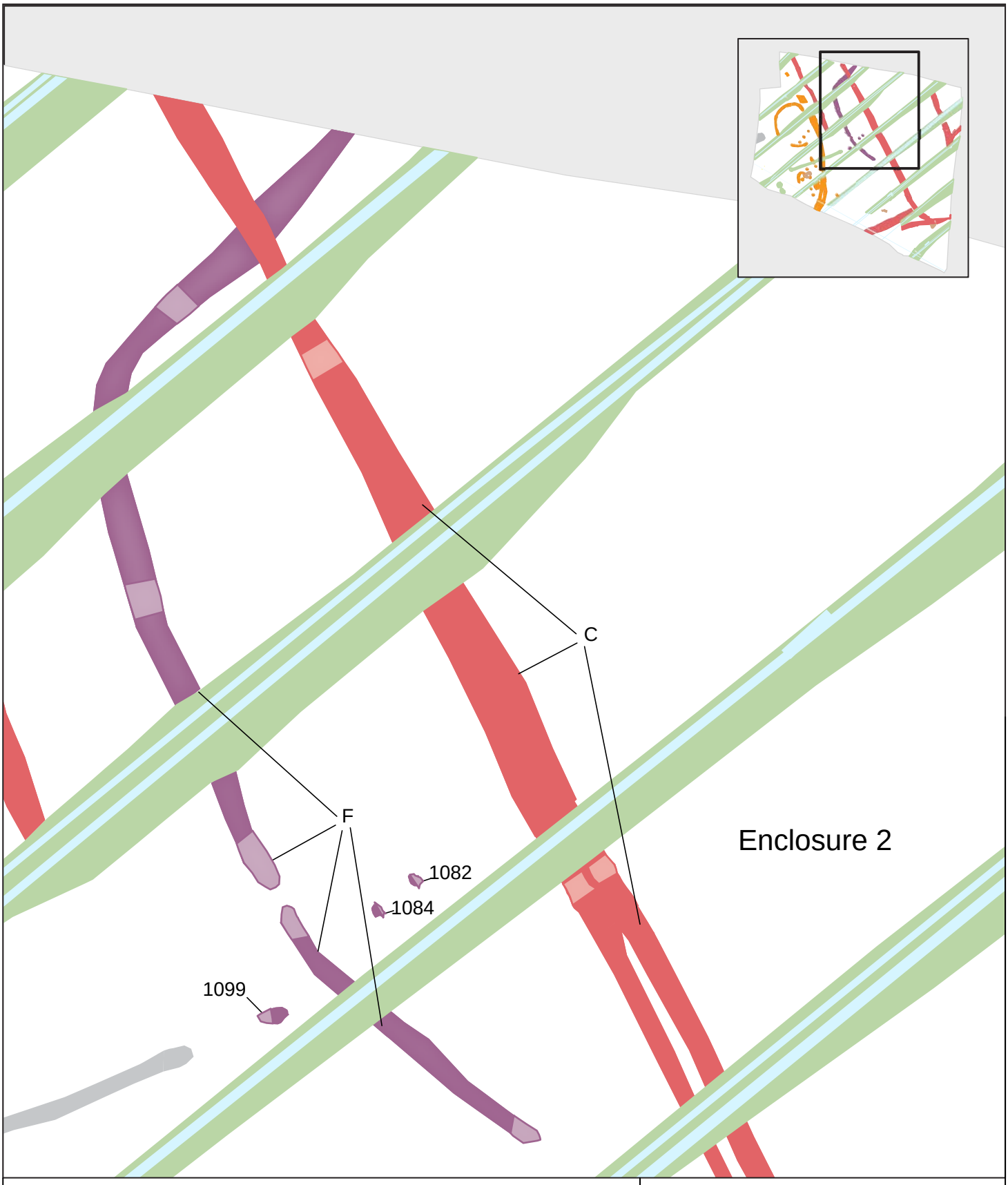
PROJECT TITLE
Land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE
Phased site plan

DRAWN BY	LM	PROJECT NO.	669027	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	22.9.16	3
APPROVED BY	DS	SCALE@A4	1:400	



Excavation area / evaluation trench

Field drain

Unphased

Period 1 Middle Bronze Age (excavated/unexcavated)

Period 2 Late Bronze Age (excavated/unexcavated)

Period 4 Medieval - Post-medieval (excavated/unexcavated)

0 5m

1:150

N

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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

The Middle Bronze Age Enclosure

DRAWN BY	LM	PROJECT NO.	669027	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	22.9.16	4
APPROVED BY	DS	SCALE@A4	1:150	

Excavation area / evaluation trench

Field drain

Treethrow

Unphased feature

Period 1 Middle Bronze Age (excavated/unexcavated)

Period 2 Late Bronze Age (excavated/unexcavated)

Period 3 Middle Iron Age (excavated/unexcavated)

Period 4 Medieval - Post-medieval (excavated/unexcavated)

Modern

N

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PROJECT TITLE

Land at Stratford Close, Aston Clinton Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

The Middle Iron Age Settlement

DRAWN BY	LM	PROJECT NO.	669027	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	22.9.16	5
APPROVED BY	DS	SCALE@A4	1:200	

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