

# Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1) Cricklade Wiltshire

*Archaeological Evaluation*



for  
GreenSquare Group

CA Project: 6063  
CA Report: 16225

November 2016



# Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1) Cricklade Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 6063  
CA Report: 16625



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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1)  
**Location:** Cricklade, Wiltshire  
**NGR:** SU 9734 3854  
**Type:** Evaluation  
**Date:** 31 October-2 November 2016  
**Planning Reference:** 15/08666/FUL  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with The Wiltshire Heritage Museum  
**Site Code:** PCR 16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in October and November 2016 on land at Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire. A total of four trenches were excavated.

A small quantity of abraded and highly fragmentary pottery of 12th to 15th-century date was recovered from the subsoil within a trench excavated in the north-eastern part of the site and is considered likely to derive from previous ploughing and/or manuring of cultivated fields.

No further finds, features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the evaluation





## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October and November 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for GreenSquare Group on land at Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire (centred on NGR: SU 9734 3854; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application to Wiltshire Council (WC) for the erection of 109 dwellings with associated landscaping, highways and service infrastructure (WC planning ref: 15/08666/FUL).
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, WC. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014).

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The total proposed development area is approximately 5ha in extent, and comprises part of a mid 20th-century housing estate located approximately 200m to the north-west of Cricklade town centre. The Phase 1 Area itself is approximately 0.21ha in extent and is located in the south-eastern corner of the wider development site (Fig. 2). The Phase 1 Area is currently occupied by residential properties and gardens, is broadly level and lies at approximately 86m AOD. It is bounded to the north-west by White Horse Road, to the south-east by a lane adjacent to Bath Road Cemetery and to the south-west and north-east by further residential properties and gardens.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Oxford Clay Formation - Mudstone of the Jurassic period (BGS 2016). The natural substrate, comprising compact mottled yellow-grey clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel, was identified in all of the excavated trenches.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Archaeological interest in the site arises primarily from its location, immediately to the north-west of Scheduled Monument *Cricklade Town Banks* (National Monument 1002997). The survival of the former bank and external ditches of the Saxon and Norman town have been demonstrated by previous archaeological investigations, notably in the south-western corner of the town.

2.2 No prehistoric features are recorded within, or in close vicinity to, the current site. The Cricklade Urban Assessment records that there are '*no prehistoric finds from the town itself, although an Iron Age spearhead was found near the route of the Roman road to the north and two unlocated Iron Age coins are recorded from the parish*' (WCAS 2004, 7).

2.3 The nature of Roman settlement at Cricklade remains uncertain. It is possible that it was a staging post on Ermin Street near the crossing of the Thames. There is also evidence for Roman occupation at Cricklade itself, including occupation layers recorded from St Sampson's School playing fields, and pottery and building debris at other locations in the town. A large ditch excavated in the north-eastern part of the town has been interpreted as a possible western boundary to Roman settlement (King 1993).

2.4 Cricklade was chosen as the site for a defended settlement or 'burh' in the late 9th century during the reign of King Alfred. Haslam (2006) defines several periods of construction of the defences and these are summarised below.

*Period 1 – c. AD 879-880 (Saxon)*

2.5 Period 1 comprised the major construction of the Saxon town defences in c. AD 879-880. The defences included a large 6m wide clay bank (its original height is not known) with three shallow ditches on its exterior. The highly regular layout of the defences indicates that they were contemporary with the streets within the defences, and thus part of a fortress and new settlement.

*Period 2 – early 10th century (Saxon)*

2.6 In the early 10th-century the defences were strengthened with a substantial stone wall on the exterior side of the bank, and the bank itself was most probably heightened. A small revetment wall was also constructed towards the inner side of the bank.

*Period 3 - early 11th century (Saxon)*

2.7 Possibly around AD 1016, an episode of widespread destruction of the defences occurred. The walls to the front and rear of the bank were destroyed, and the inner ditches filled with stones. There is evidence from

other Wessex fortresses (such as Wallingford, Christchurch and Lydford) that this formed part of a general policy of destruction by King Cnut.

#### *Period 4- Mid 12th century (Norman)*

- 2.8 This period marks the re-defence of the town. A substantial wooden palisade was built along the line of the former wall, and a further shallow ditch excavated. The innermost Saxon ditch was also re-excavated. Pottery evidence from archaeological excavations suggests that this took place in the mid 12th-century, and documentary evidence also supports this date. A medieval document, *Gesta Stephani*, mentions the construction of a 'castellum' at Cricklade by William of Dover in AD 1144, which may actually refer to the re-fortification of the whole town.
- 2.9 Evidence from historic mapping suggests that the current site, along with the majority of land to the north-west of the town banks, remained part of the agricultural hinterland of Cricklade until residential development of the area occurred in the last quarter of the 20th-century.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 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 *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the evaluation was designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains. The information gathered will enable WC 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).

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of four trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Trench 1 measured 15m in length and 1.6m in width, Trench 2 measured 12m in length and 1.6m in width and Trenches 3 and 4

measured 20m in length and 1.6m in width. Trench 1 was reduced slightly in length from that originally specified in the WSI due to the presence of modern services, with the approval of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4: *Survey Manual*.

- 4.2 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*.
- 4.3 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*. No deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 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 C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS (FIGS 2 & 3)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively.
- 5.2 A broadly comparable stratigraphic sequence was observed in all of the excavated trenches. The natural substrate, comprising compact mottled yellow-grey clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel, was encountered at between 0.4m and 0.52m below present ground level (bpgl). It was overlain by silt clay subsoil, measuring between 0.12m and 0.23m in thickness. Nine sherds of abraded 12th to 15th-century pottery were recovered from the subsoil horizon in Trench 4. The

subsoil was in turn overlain by topsoil, measuring between 0.26m and 0.33m in thickness.

- 5.3 The remains of a modern brick-built septic tank were identified cutting the subsoil towards the centre of Trench 2. A shallow and highly irregular feature was identified cutting the natural substrate immediately to the north-west of the septic tank. However, after investigation, this feature was determined to represent a tree-throw pit.

## 6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Artefactual material recovered from the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and discussed further below.

### Pottery

- 6.2 A total of nine sherds (14g) of Minety ware, of 12th to 15th-century date, were recorded from subsoil 4001 (Trench 4). The sherds are abraded and highly fragmented with a low mean sherd weight. All sherds are unfeatured and no rimsherds are present.

## 7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1 Despite the proximity of the Phase 1 Area to the known Saxon and Norman defences of Cricklade (see *archaeological background* above), no medieval features were identified during the evaluation. The sherds of 12th to 15th-century pottery, recovered from the subsoil horizon in Trench 4, may be broadly contemporary with the postulated re-fortification of Cricklade during the mid 12th-century (see *paragraph 2.8* above). However, the fragmentary and abraded nature of this pottery suggests that it is most likely to derive from past ploughing and/or manuring of cultivated fields. Evidence from the evaluation therefore indicates that the Phase 1 Area lay within the agricultural hinterland of Cricklade during the medieval period.
- 7.2 No further finds, features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the evaluation.

## 8. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 8.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Jay Wood, assisted by Sikko van der Brug. The report was written by Jay Wood. The finds report was written by Katie Marsden. The illustrations were prepared by Sam O'Leary. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon.

## 9. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology\\_viewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html) Accessed 16 November 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

King, J. 1993 *Proposed Doctors Surgery at High Street, Cricklade, Wiltshire: Report on the Results of an Archaeological Evaluation*

Haslam, J. 2006 'Excavations at Cricklade, Wiltshire 1975' (Published on the Council for British Archaeology website Internet Archaeology)

WCAS (Wiltshire County Archaeology Service) 2004 *The Archaeology of Wiltshire's Towns, An Extensive Urban Survey: Cricklade*





**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

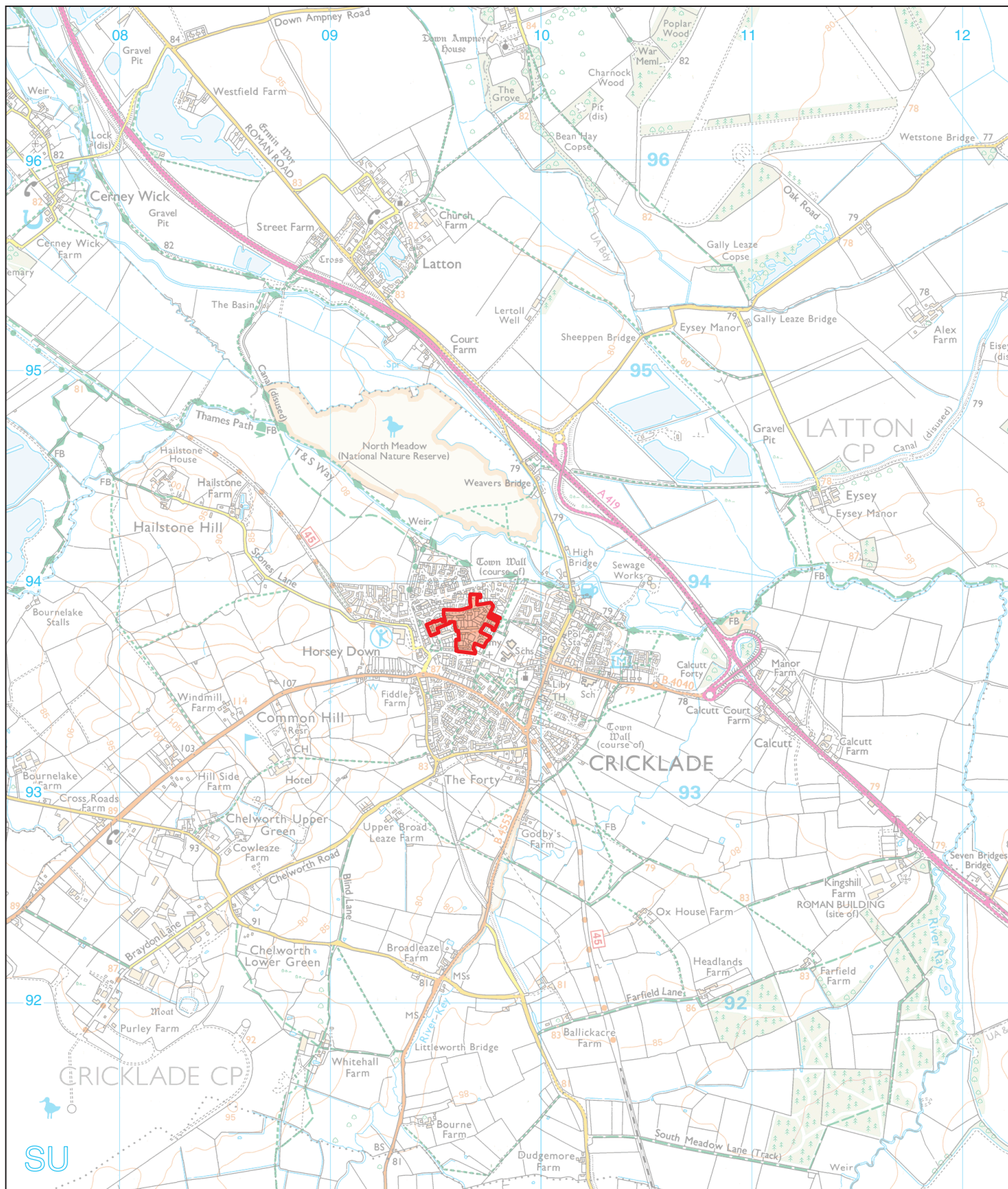
Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	1000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions.	>15	>1.6	0.26
1	1001	Layer		Subsoil	Light grey brown silt clay with frequent rounded pebble inclusions.	>15	>1.6	0.23
1	1002	Layer		Natural substrate	Compact mottled yellow-grey clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel	>15	>1.6	>0.11
2	2000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions.	>12	>1.6	0.33
2	2001	Layer		Subsoil	Light grey brown silt clay with frequent rounded pebble inclusions.	>12	>1.6	0.17
2	2002	Layer		Natural substrate	Compact mottled yellow-grey clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel	>12	>1.6	>0.15
2	2003	Cut		Construction cut for septic tank	Rectangular in plan. Not excavated	1.22	>1.12	N/A
2	2004	Structure	2003	Septic tank	Rectangular in plan. Not excavated	1.2	>1.1	N/A
2	2005	Fill	2003	Backfill of septic tank	Dark grey brown silt clay and mixed modern demolition debris	0.8	>0.65	N/A
2	2006	Cut		Tree-throw pit	Irregular, ephemeral tree-throw pit	1.1	0.8	0.12
2	2007	Fill	2006	Fill of tree-throw pit	Sterile, mid grey brown silt clay with frequent preserved tree roots	1.1	0.8	0.12
3	3000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions.	>20	>1.6	0.2
3	3001	Layer		Subsoil	Light grey brown silt clay with frequent rounded pebble inclusions.	>20	>1.6	0.32
3	3002	Layer		Natural substrate	Compact mottled yellow-grey clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel	>20	>1.6	>0.08
4	4000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown silt clay with occasional rounded pebble inclusions.	>20	>1.6	0.28
4	4001	Layer		Subsoil	Light grey brown silt clay with frequent rounded pebble inclusions.	>20	>1.6	0.12
4	4002	Layer		Natural substrate	Compact mottled yellow-grey clay with occasional patches of sand and gravel	>20	>1.6	>0.13

**APPENDIX B: THE FINDS**

Context	Class	Description	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Spot-date
4001	Medieval pottery	Minety ware	9	14	C12-C15

**APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in October and November 2016 on land at Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire. A total of four trenches were excavated.</p> <p>A small quantity of abraded and highly fragmentary pottery of 12th to 15th-century date was recovered from the subsoil within a trench excavated in the north-eastern part of the site and is considered likely to derive from previous ploughing and/or manuring of cultivated fields.</p> <p>No further finds, features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the evaluation</p>	
Project dates	31 October-2 November 2016	
Project type	Field Evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Cricklade, Wiltshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	0.21ha	
Site co-ordinates	SU 9734 3854	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon	
Project Supervisor	Jay Wood	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>	Intended final location of archive:	Content:
Physical	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Pottery
Paper	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Trench recording sheets, context recording sheets, photographic registers
Digital	Wiltshire Heritage Museum	Digital photographs
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 <i>Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report <b>16625</b>		



**Cotswold  
Archaeology**

Andover 01264 347630  
Cirencester 01285 771022  
Exeter 01392 826185  
Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

#### PROJECT TITLE

**Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1),  
Cricklade, Wiltshire**

#### FIGURE TITLE

**Site location plan**

0 1km

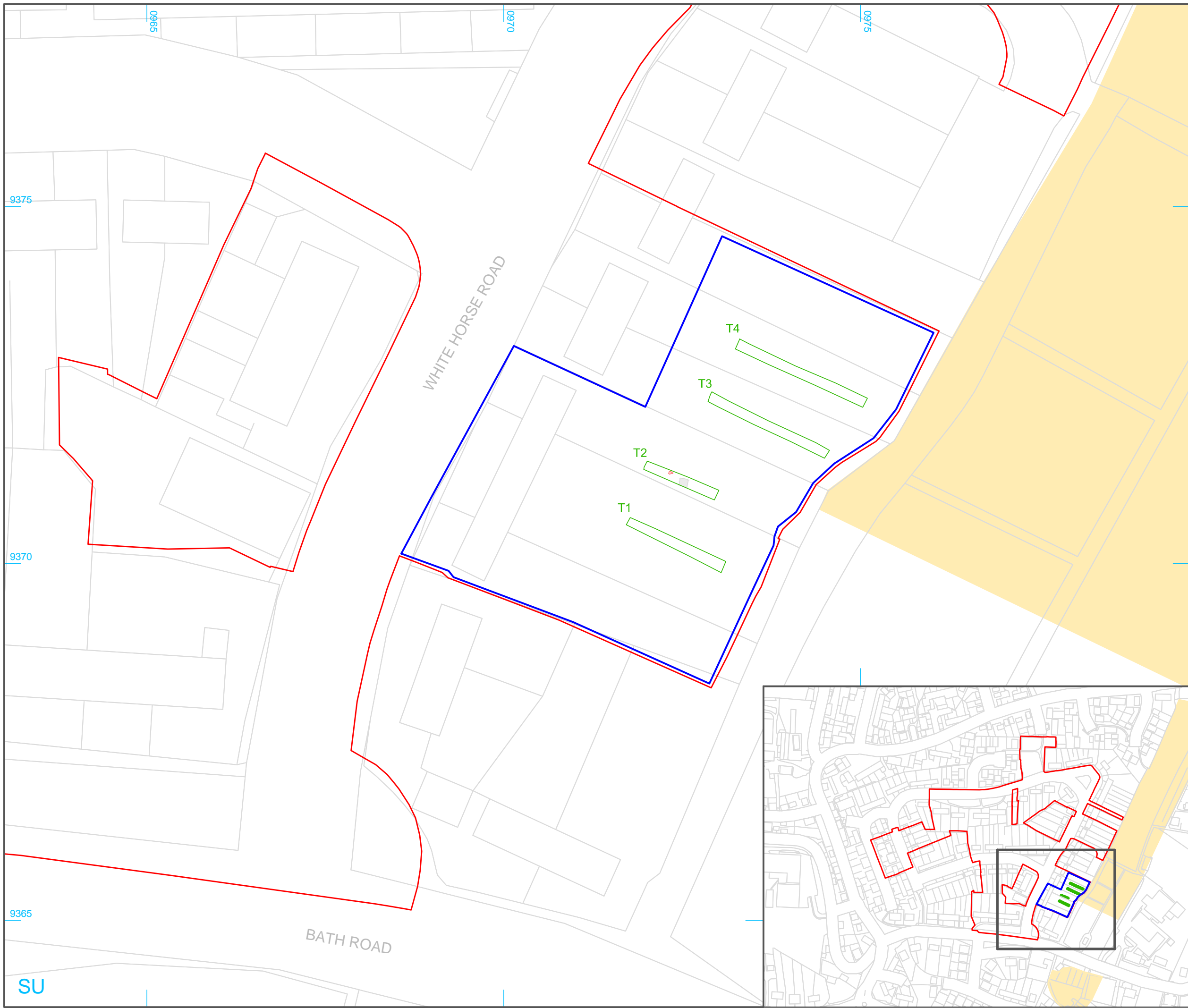
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APPROVED BY SS

PROJECT NO. 6063  
DATE 11/11/2016  
SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

**1**



- site boundary
- Phase 1 Area
- evaluation trench
- modern
- treethrow
- Scheduled Monument



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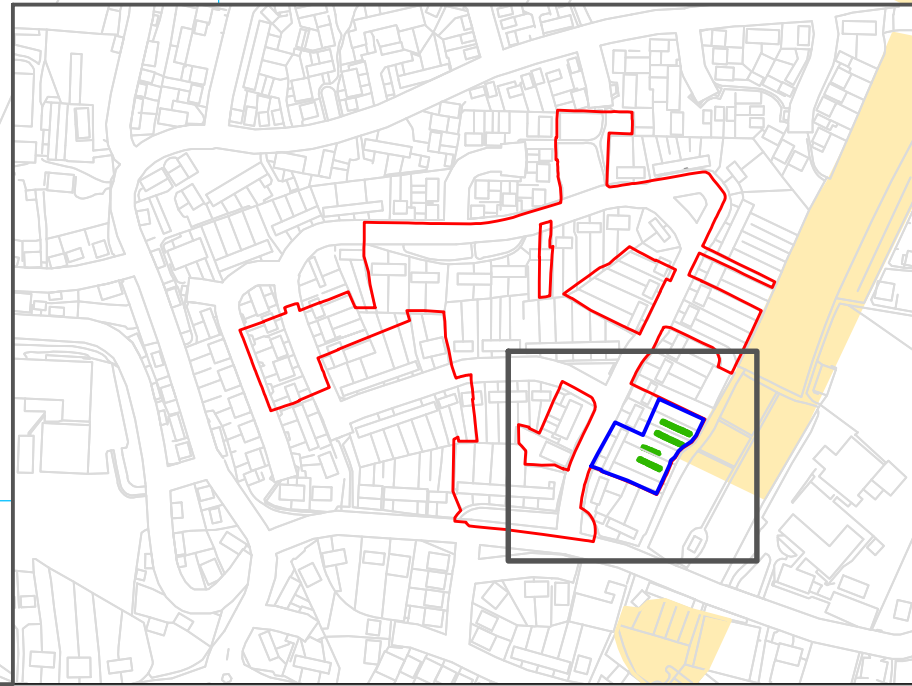
**Cotswold Archaeology**

Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1), Cricklade, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Trench location plan

DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	6063	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	11/11/2016	
APPROVED BY	SS	SCALE@A3	1:500 & 1:5,000 (inset)	<b>2</b>







Trench 1, looking south-east (scales 1m)



Trench 2, looking south-east (scales 1m)



Trench 3, looking south-east (scales 1m)



Trench 4, looking south-east (scales 1m)



**Cotswold  
Archaeology**

Andover 01264 347630  
Cirencester 01285 771022  
Exeter 01392 826185  
Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

**PROJECT TITLE**

Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 1),  
Cricklade, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**

**Photographs**

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CHECKED BY DJB DATE 11/11/2016  
APPROVED BY SS SCALE @A4 1:25,000

**FIGURE NO.**

**3**

#### **Andover Office**

Stanley House  
Walworth Road  
Andover  
Hampshire  
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

#### **Cirencester Office**

Building 11  
Kemble Enterprise Park  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

#### **Exeter Office**

Unit 53  
Basepoint Business Centre  
Yeoford Way  
Marsh Barton Trading Estate  
Exeter  
EX2 8LB

t: 01392 826185

#### **Milton Keynes Office**

41 Burners Lane South  
Kiln Farm  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK11 3HA

t: 01908 564660