

**Land off Old Bowden Way
Milborne Port
Somerset**

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Canadian Solar UK Projects Ltd

CA Project: 880163
CA Report: 17005

January 2017



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 Somerset

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land off Old Bowden Way
Location:	Milborne Port, Somerset
NGR:	ST 6815 1968
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	22 December 2016
Planning Reference:	15/02187/FUL
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with the Somerset Museums Service
Accession Number:	TTNCM 2/2017
Site Code:	OBW 16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2016 on land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset. Four trenches were excavated.

The evaluation identified a pit and a ditch in the north-western part of the site. The pit contained three abraded sherds of possible later Iron Age pottery and may, therefore, represent some limited prehistoric activity at the site. The pottery sherds were, however, very abraded and eroded and may have been residual within a later feature. The ditch was undated artefactually but ran parallel to the existing field boundaries and may therefore be later medieval or post-medieval in origin.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Canadian Solar UK Projects Ltd on land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset (centred on NGR: ST 6815 1968; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has granted planning permission for the development of a solar farm at the site (planning ref.: 15/02187/FUL). Condition 4 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. The scope of this trial trench evaluation was defined subsequently in consultation with Steve Membery of the South West Heritage Trust (SWHT), the archaeological advisors to SSDC.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Steve Membery. The evaluation also followed *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development site is approximately 8.4ha in extent. It is located immediately south of Old Bowden Way and approximately 700m north-east of the historic core of Milborne Port. The site currently comprises two fields bounded by mature hedgerows. A drainage ditch runs north/south through the central part of the site.
- 1.5 The site slopes gently downwards from c. 85m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the north-west to c. 76m AOD in the south-east.
- 1.6 The underlying geology of the site is mapped as Lower Fuller's Earth Member mudstone of the Jurassic Period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2016).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The site has been the subject of a desk-based heritage assessment (CA 2014) and a geophysical survey (GSB Prospection Ltd 2015). The following text is summarised from these sources.

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43)

2.2 There is limited evidence for prehistoric activity in the area of the evaluation site. The cropmarks of a possible ring ditch have been identified approximately 45m east of the site. There is a possible Iron Age promontory fort on Barrow Hill, approximately 1.1km north-west of the site.

Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

2.3 Previous archaeological works c.1.6km south-west of the evaluation site recorded Roman pottery and structural remains, which have been interpreted as the remains of a possible villa.

Early medieval (AD 410–1539), medieval (AD 410–1539) and post-medieval (1540–1800)

2.4 Milborne Port appears to have been established in the early medieval period. The evaluation site is likely to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland to the settlement from the early medieval period onwards. Cartographic sources from the 18th and 19th centuries document the construction of farm buildings within the site.

Geophysical survey

2.5 The geophysical survey identified two linear anomalies interpreted as being potentially archaeological in nature. Also identified were a series of weak linear trends corresponding to known former field boundaries, and a large discrete anomaly in the location of a former barn/building depicted on the 1839 Tithe Map. Several anomalies of uncertain origin were detected; it was considered unlikely that these were archaeological in origin, although this possibility could not be ruled out entirely.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 As defined by the WSI (CA 2016), the objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource at the

proposed development site. This information will enable SSDC to identify and assess the significance of any heritage assets at the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage conservation and the proposed development, 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 Figure 2. All trenches were 30m long and 2m wide. 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 a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which was the level at which archaeological features were first identified. Where archaeological features 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 recovered artefacts were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 The artefacts (subject to the agreement of the legal landowner) and the project archive will be deposited with the Somerset Museums Service (accession number TTNCM 2/2017). A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts can be found in Appendix A. Details of the artefactual material recovered from the site can be found in Section 6 and Appendix B.
- 5.2 The natural substrate was identified at a depth of 0.3m below present ground level in all four trenches. In the western field (T1 and T2), the natural substrate comprised firm limestone bedrock with patches of light yellow clay; in the eastern field (T3 and T4), the natural substrate comprised compact yellowish grey clay. The natural was sealed directly by modern topsoil in all four trenches.
- 5.3 Archaeological features were identified in T1 only. T3 contained a modern stone drain that correlated broadly to a linear geophysical anomaly. T2 contained an irregular geological feature in the broad location of a geophysical anomaly. The weak linear geophysical anomaly targeted by T2 was on the line of an existing footpath.

Trench 1

- 5.4 Two archaeological features were identified in T1. Both were cut at the level of the natural substrate and were sealed directly by the topsoil.
- 5.5 Sub-oval pit 102 was identified in the central part of the trench. This pit had a bowl-shaped profile, with steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 1, Sec. AA). The pit was not fully exposed within the trench, but was 0.88m wide and 0.4m deep. It contained a sequence of four fills (103, 104, 105 and 106). A small amount of degraded pottery of possible later Iron Age date was recovered from second fill 104. Pit 102 corresponded to a discrete geophysical anomaly.
- 5.6 Ditch 107 was identified in the south-western end of T1. This ditch was north-west/south-east orientated and correlated closely to a linear geophysical anomaly. Ditch 107 was 0.83m wide and 0.2m deep, with irregular, stepped sides and a flat base (Fig. 1, Sec. BB). It contained two sedimentary fills (108 and 109), neither of which produced any dating evidence.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 Fill 104 of pit 102 (T1) produced three abraded sherds (2g) of pottery tempered with calcite and limestone. In the absence of form or decoration, this pottery has tentatively been dated to the later Iron Age on the basis of fabric and firing characteristics (Allen 1998).

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The evaluation identified a pit and a ditch in T1. Pit 102 contained three abraded sherds of possible later Iron Age pottery, and may therefore represent some limited prehistoric activity within the site. The pottery sherds were, however, very abraded and eroded and may have been residual within a later feature. Ditch 107 was undated artefactually but ran parallel to the existing field boundaries and may therefore be later medieval or post-medieval in origin.
- 7.2 There was a variable correspondence to the geophysical survey results (GSB Prospection Ltd 2015). Both of the archaeological features recorded in T1 were in the locations of geophysical anomalies. Other anomalies tested by T2–T4 were not, however, found to correspond to below-ground archaeological features, although there was a broad match between individual anomalies and an area of geological variation (T2) and a modern drain (T3). The weak linear geophysical anomaly targeted by T2 was on the line of an existing footpath.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Orellana, assisted by George Gandham. This report was written by Jonathan Orellana. The finds report was written by Jacky Sommerville. The report illustrations were prepared by Sam O’Leary. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Jessica Cook. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

9. REFERENCES

- Allen, J. R. L. 1998 ‘Late Iron Age and Earliest Roman Calcite-tempered Ware from Sites on the Severn Estuary Levels: Character and Distribution’ *Studia Celtica* **XXXII**, 27–41

British Geological Survey 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>
Accessed 6 December 2016

Cotswold Archaeology 2014 *Milborne Port Solar Farm, Milborne Port, Somerset: Desk-Based Assessment* CA Report No. **14245**

Cotswold Archaeology 2016 *Milborne Port Solar Farm, Milborne Port, Somerset: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

GSB Prospection Ltd 2015 *Milborne Port Solar Farm, Somerset: Geophysical Survey Report*
GSB report **G1585**



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

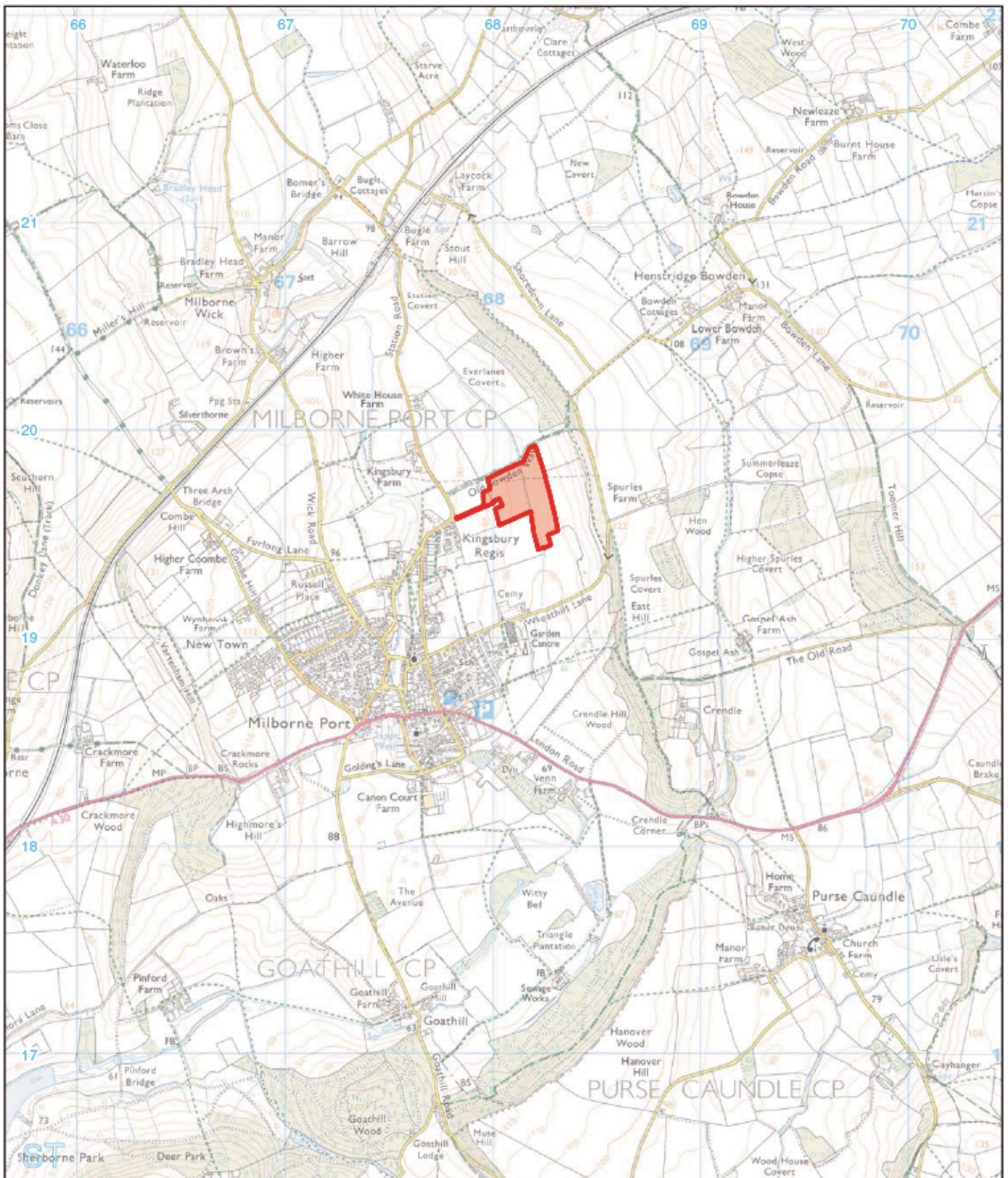
Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	100	layer		topsoil	dark brown sandy clay with occasional small stones			0.3	
1	101	layer		natural substrate	limestone bedrock and light yellowish brown clay				
1	102	cut		pit	sub-oval in plan, steep sides and flat base	>0.4	0.88	0.4	
1	103	fill	102	1st fill of pit	mid yellowish brown clay silt with frequent small stones	>0.4	0.4	0.2	
1	104	fill	102	2nd fill of pit	mid greyish brown clayey sand	>0.25	0.35	0.18	LIA
1	105	fill	102	3rd fill of pit	mid brown sandy silt	>0.35	0.5	0.09	
1	106	fill	102	4th fill of pit	light brown sandy silt	>0.35	0.88	0.1	
1	107	cut		ditch	NW/SE orientated, asymmetrical stepped sides and flat base	>0.75	0.83	0.2	
1	108	fill	107	1st fill of ditch	mid reddish brown silty clay	>0.75	0.58	0.13	
1	108	fill	107	2nd fill of ditch	light yellowish brown silty clay	>0.73	0.83	0.06	
2	200	layer		topsoil	loose light brownish grey sandy clay with occasional small stones			0.35	
2	201	layer		natural substrate	limestone bedrock and light yellowish brown clay				
3	300	layer		topsoil	light brownish grey silty clay			0.35	
3	301	layer		natural substrate	compact light yellowish grey clay				
4	400	layer		topsoil	light brownish grey silty clay			0.35	
4	401	layer		natural substrate	compact light yellowish grey clay				

APPENDIX B: FINDS CONCORDANCE

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
104	Late prehistoric pottery	Calcite-and-limestone tempered fabric	CCLS	3	2	LIA

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset: archaeological evaluation	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2016 on land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset. Four trenches were excavated. The evaluation identified a pit and a ditch in the north-western part of the site. The pit contained three abraded sherds of possible later Iron Age pottery and may, therefore, represent some limited prehistoric activity at the site. The pottery sherds were, however, very abraded and eroded and may have been residual within a later feature. The ditch was undated artefactually but ran parallel to the existing field boundaries and may therefore be later medieval or post-medieval in origin.	
Project dates	22 December 2016	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Desk-Based Assessment (CA2014) Geophysical Survey (GSB Prospection Ltd 2015)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset	
Study area (m ² /ha)	8.4ha	
Site co-ordinates	ST 6815 1968	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Jonathan Orellana	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Somerset Museums Service TTNCM 2/2017	Pottery
Paper	Somerset Museums Service TTNCM 2/2017	Context sheets, trench forms, section drawings
Digital	Somerset Museums Service TTNCM 2/2017	Digital photos, digital survey
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Cotswold Archaeology 2017 <i>Land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report 17005	



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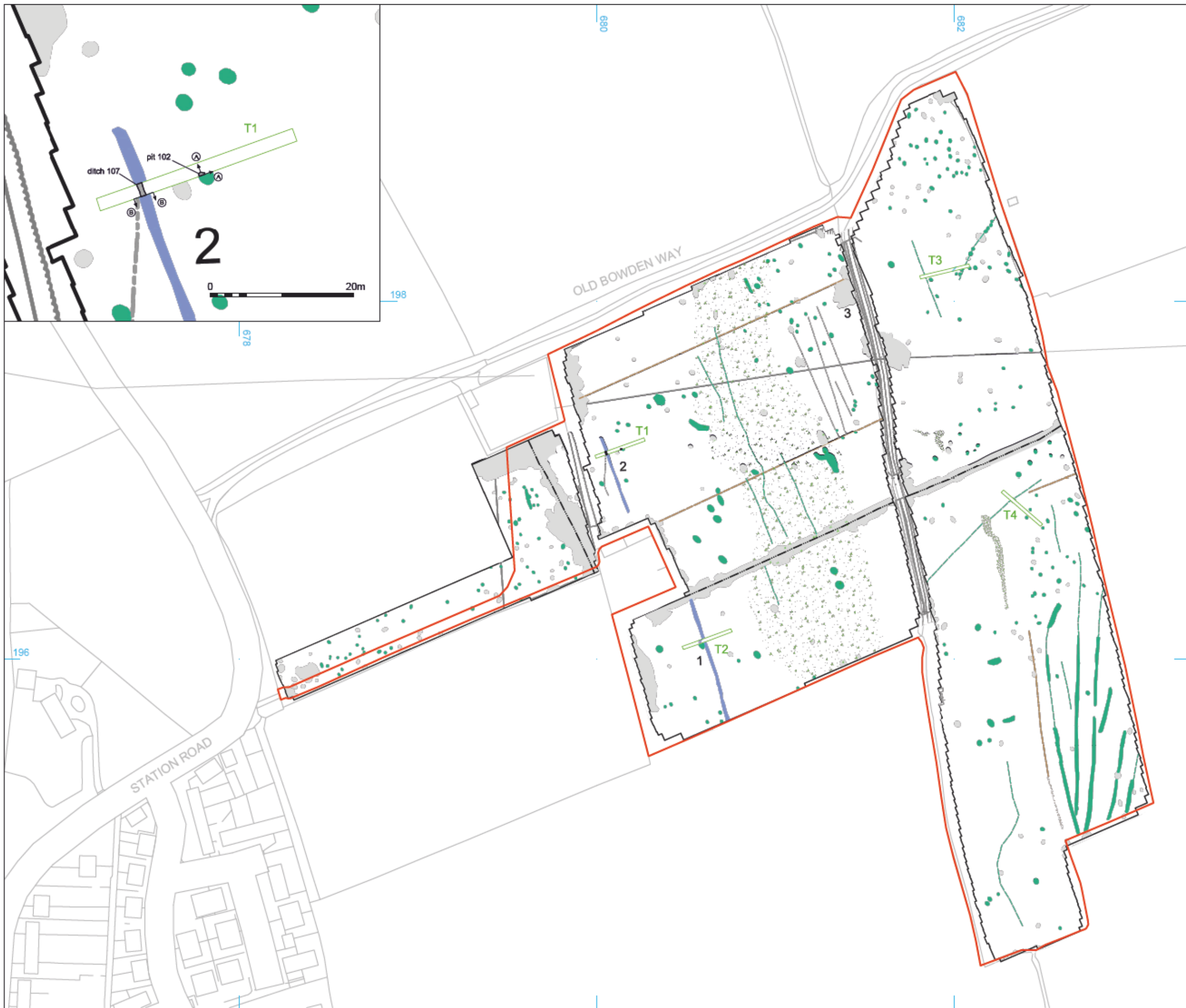
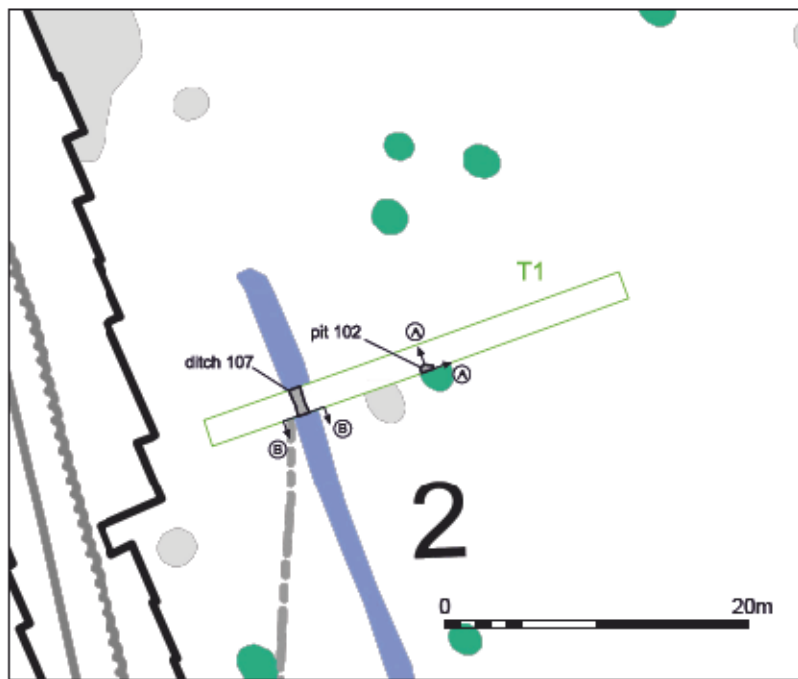
PROJECT TITLE
 Land of Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port
 Somerset

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

0 1km

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DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	880163	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	10/01/2016	1
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- site boundary
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- geological feature
- field drain
- section location

Geophysical Survey Key
(GSB Propection Ltd 2015)

- ?Archaeology
- Old Field Boundary (weak response / trend)
- Uncertain Origin (discrete anomaly / trend)
- Increased Natural Response (geology)
- Ferrous
- Drain
- Pipe



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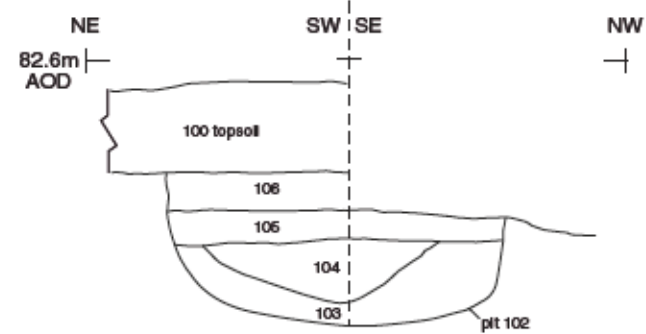
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PROJECT TITLE
Land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port Somerset

FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results

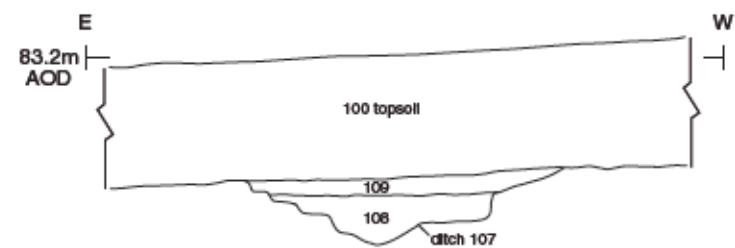
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APPROVED BY IB	SCALE A3 1:2,000 & 1:500 (inset)	2

Section AA



Pit 102, looking south-west (0.3m scale)

Section BB



Ditch 107, looking south-east (1m scale)




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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
 Trench 1: sections and photographs

DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	880163	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	19.01.17	3
APPROVED BY	IB	SCALE@A3	1:20	

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