



## Land East of Lower Road Stoke Mandeville Buckinghamshire

Archaeological Evaluation



for CgMs Consulting

on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd

CA Project: 660648 CA Report: 16100

Site Code: ELR16 Accession no: AYBCM: 2016.50

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#### SUMMARY

**Project location:** Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire

**NGR:** SP 83304 10672

Type: Evaluation

**Date:** 25th February . 8th March 2016

Planning reference: Aylesbury Vale District Council 15/04341/AOP

**Location of Archive:** Aylesbury Museum **Accession no:** AYBCM:2016.50

Site Code: ELR16

In February and March 2016, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land to the east of Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire. The results of the evaluation, which was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, acting on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd, will be submitted in support of an outline planning application to Aylesbury Vale District Council for the residential development of the land.

The trenches were distributed across three pasture fields on the northern edge of the modern village. Previous geophysical survey of the site had identified a series of furrows of medieval/post-medieval date; extant ridge and furrow earthworks were still evident in the western and central parts.

The evaluation revealed a concentration of poorly dated but probable late prehistoric features in trenches in the north-eastern corner of the site, features that were not detected by the geophysical survey. The features comprised part of a rectilinear ditch system, probably a sub-divided enclosure of at least two phases, along with pits and at least one, but probably two curvilinear ditches, possibly the remains of roundhouses. There was no dating evidence to securely date these features, but they were sealed by the subsoil suggesting that they probably predate the medieval period. Other undated features across the site may be the remains of an outlying field system associated with the settlement, though their sparse distribution prevents any definitive interpretation.

Medieval/post-medieval furrows were identified in trenches across the site and their alignments suggest that the site covers parts of two former open fields.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In February and March 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land to the east of Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire (site centred on NGR: SP 83304 10672; Fig. 1). The results of the evaluation, which was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, acting on behalf of Gladman Developments Ltd, will be submitted in support of an outline planning application to Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) for the residential development of the land (planning ref. 15/04341/AOP).
- The scope of the programme of archaeological investigation was determined following discussions between CgMs and Phil Markham, Buckinghamshire County Councilops Senior Archaeology Planning Officer (BCCSAPO), archaeological advisor to AVDC. The discussions, which were informed by the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment prepared by CgMs (2015), recommended geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation of the site prior to determination of the planning application. The geophysical survey was carried out in 2015 (GSB 2015) and revealed a series of parallel linear anomalies, interpreted as the remains of a medieval open field system.
- 1.3 The project was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by CA (2016) and abided by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologistsq Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation (CIfA 2014) and the Historic England (formerly English Heritage) procedural documents Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (EH 1991) and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide (EH 2006). The fieldwork was monitored by BCCSAPO, with a site visit being made on 2nd March 2016.

#### The site

1.4 The proposed development site, which covers an area of *c*. 6.3ha, is located immediately east of Lower Road at the north-western edge of the village of Stoke Mandeville. It comprises three large, pasture fields (the easternmost of which has been divided into smaller plots by timber fences), bounded to the north-west by arable fields, to the north-east by playing fields and a community centre, to the south-east and south by houses and gardens, and to the south-west by Lower Road. The study site is predominantly level and lies on an imperceptible slope that

descends from approximately 101m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the southeast down to c. 98m aOD in the north-west.

- 2.2 A ditch extends north to south through the west of the study site and two ponds lie immediately south of its southern boundary. Remnants of ridge and furrow earthworks are visible in the western part of the site, becoming less distinct in the eastern part.
- 2.3 The bedrock geology comprises undifferentiated mudstone, siltstone and sandstone of the Gault Formation and Upper Greensand Formation, deposited during the Cretaceous Period between 94 and 112 million years ago (BGS 2016). No superficial deposits have been mapped within the proposed development area. No geotechnical data for the study site is currently available, though an archaeological evaluation undertaken approximately 300m to the north recorded an underlying geology of Upper Greensand and Gault Clay overlain by ploughsoil of varying depth (Wessex 1995).

#### 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been presented in detail in the archaeological desk-based assessment prepared by CgMs (2015). This concluded that there are no designated or undesignated heritage assets within the site. The general archaeological background of the area is demonstrated by artefacts recorded during systematic fieldwalking in the vicinity of the site, and Bronze Age and Roman activity recorded during an archaeological evaluation *c*. 300m to the north (Wessex 2009).

#### Earlier prehistoric

2.2 A small number of worked lithic artefacts of Mesolithic and Neolithic date have been found during fieldwalking to the north and north-east of the site but not on the site itself, whilst the archaeological evaluation on the east side of Lower Road, some 300m to the north, recorded evidence of Middle to Late Bronze Age activity.

#### Later prehistoric and Roman

2.3 The study site lies within a well-settled Iron Age and Roman agricultural landscape, partly evidenced by archaeological fieldwalking to the north, north-west and southwest, and also attested at the evaluation to the north.

#### Early medieval (AD 410-1066) and medieval (1066-1539)

- 2.4 There is no evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity within 1km of the site, though medieval activity has been evidenced by fieldwalking data to the north, north-east and north-west. Additionally, possible medieval house platforms are recorded c. 500m south of the site, to the south-west of Stoke Mandeville village, medieval earthworks survive at Moat Farm, c. 650m to the west, and a possible medieval moated site lay at Hall End, c. 700m north-west of the site. The Domesday Survey of 1086 records the manor of Stoke Mandeville as Stoches, which also included a mill, the place-name being derived from stoc meaning an outlying farm or hamlet. The suffix Mandeville was first recorded in 1284 when the manor was in the ownership of the de Mandeville family. The original settlement of Stoke Mandeville was located approximately 2km to the south-east of the existing village. The demolished 12thcentury remains of the deserted church indicate the area of the former settlement, along with earth banks, watercourses and silted up pond. The medieval manor of Oldbury is recorded in Stoke Mandeville from 1409. Ridge and furrow on part of the study site suggests that it was in agricultural cultivation during the medieval period.
- 2.5 Aerial photographs show ridge and furrow earthwork features on the site though a geophysical survey of the site, carried out for CgMs as part of the current planning application, revealed no further anomalies of archaeological interest (GSB 2015).

#### Post-medieval/modern

2.6 The landscape surrounding Stoke Mandeville parish was enclosed by an Act of Parliament in December 1798. This process led to the reallocation of land into a field system that exists in the present field boundaries. Subsequent historic maps of the area consistently show the site lying in agricultural fields associated with farms and homesteads to the north of Stoke Mandeville, with no evidence of previous development in the post-medieval period, though a small pond in the north-western part of the study site had been filled in by the end of the 19th century.

#### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 As stated in the WSI (CA 2016), the objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. In accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014), the evaluation was designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains. The information gathered will enable relevant parties 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 assets conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of eighteen 30m trial trenches (540 linear metres at 1.8m wide) in the locations shown in Figure 2; one of these trenches (Trench 18) was excavated as a contingency (with the agreement of BCCSAPO and CgMs) to investigate the extent of archaeological features identified in the northern part of Field C. The trench plan was designed to sample a broad spatial range of locations across the site, though none of the trenches was specifically targeted as the previous geophysical survey had only identified furrows of medieval date, which were also clearly visible as surface features in Field A and to a lesser extent in Fields B and C. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS, and scanned for live services by trained CA staff using CAT and Genny equipment in accordance with the CA Safe System of Work for Avoiding Underground Services. The final as duggtrench plan was recorded with GPS.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by a JCB 3CX 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 geological substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007).

- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites (CA 2003); no deposits were encountered that were suitable for sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation (CA 2005).
- The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes. Subject to the agreement of the landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Aylesbury Museum along with the site archive (Accession no. AYBCM: 2016.50). A summary of information from this project will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

#### 5. EVALUATION RESULTS

5.1 Eighteen 30m trial trenches were excavated within the boundary of the proposed development area (Fig. 2), broadly in accordance with the trench plan agreed with BCCSAPO but including an additional trench to investigate features identified in the northern part of the site (Trench 18). Trenches 6 and 13 had to be moved slightly from their intended locations to avoid overhead power lines. The individual contexts associated with the features and deposits encountered by the evaluation are presented in detail in Appendix A and are summarised below. No archaeological remains were encountered within Trenches 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10 and 17.

#### General stratigraphy

5.2 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was recorded in all of the evaluation trenches, with a simple sequence of natural deposits overlain by subsoil and capped with modern topsoil. Natural deposits in each trench generally comprised clays or gravelly clays, varying in colour from light reddish brown to mid bluish grey, though there were also localised sandy patches. The surface of natural deposits generally lay between 0.4m and 0.9m below ground level (bgl), though this variation was largely a result of the undulating surface topography, which was particularly prominent in Field A where ridge and furrow earthworks were visible. Most features investigated were cut into the clay and sealed by subsoil between 0.10m and 0.59m thick, which generally comprised a mid greyish brown or brownish grey, silty clay, though exhibited a little variation across the site. Again, the thickness of the deposit

varied according to the nature of the surface topography, being particularly thick beneath positive surface features such as ridges and several areas where soil had been dumped at the edge of the site, probably following adjacent modern housing development. Medieval furrows cut into the subsoil but elsewhere the deposit was directly overlain by dark greyish brown silty clay to sandy silt topsoil between 0.2m and 0.36m thick, which was quite uniform across the site.

5.3 Only furrows of likely medieval origin were identified during the previous geophysical survey and consequently the evaluation did not target specific anomalies, rather it aimed to provide a broad spatial coverage across the site. A number of features were exposed across the site, most, with the exception of furrows being sealed by subsoil and there was a concentration of features in an area at the north of Field C, suggesting a possible focus of activity here. Very few finds were recovered from any of the features and they remain extensively undated. However, rather than simply describe these features as a broad undated group, it is suggested that there may have been a general late prehistoric phase of occupation on the site based on the stratigraphic position of features and the very limited artefactual assemblage.

#### Possible Late Prehistoric

No dateable evidence was recovered from the vast majority of features across the site; however, a series of features sealed beneath subsoil towards the northern end of Field C have been interpreted as having been related and are tentatively dated to the late prehistoric period.

#### Trench 12 (Figs 2 & 7)

Located approximately 4m from the northern end of Trench 12 was a large ditch (1203) on an approximate east to west alignment. The ditch exhibited a slightly asymmetric profile with moderately sloping, slightly convex sides and a gently concave base. It was up to 3.06m wide and 0.76m deep, containing two broad infilling deposits. The basal fill (1204) comprised a soft, dark reddish brown to mid bluish grey silty clay, 0.43m thick, which appeared to have accumulated naturally over time. It was overlain by up to 0.33m of soft, mid greyish brown silty clay (1205), which also appeared to have been the product of natural silting, though contained two fragments of indeterminate animal bone. No further associated features were identified within the trench, though given the scale of the ditch and the nature of features to the north and north-east (see below), it is suggested that the ditch may

have demarcated the edge of a small enclosed settlement, possibly of late prehistoric date.

#### Trench 13 (Figs 2, 6 & 8)

- Three linear ditches were exposed within Trench 13, which may have been associated with the possible settlement area enclosed by ditch 1203. The easternmost of these, ditch 1305 was 0.79m wide, 0.35m deep and aligned approximately north-west to south-east, with moderately sloping, slightly concave sides breaking to a gently concave base. The feature contained fill 1306, comprising a firm, mid brownish grey silty clay, which contained frequent angular flint nodules, suggesting it may have been deliberately backfilled, rather than silting up naturally, though no dateable artefactual material was present. On an approximately parallel alignment to ditch 1305 and a little more than 2m to the west was ditch 1307. This was 0.7m wide but just 0.07m deep, exhibiting gently sloping, concave sides and a concave base. It was filled with firm, mid orangey grey silty clay (1308), and appeared to have backfilled naturally, unlike the feature to the east, and also contained no dateable finds evidence.
- 5.7 Ditch 1307 was truncated by an approximately perpendicular linear ditch (1303), which was 0.77m wide and 0.5m deep, with a slightly asymmetric profile; the eastern side of the ditch exhibited a moderately sloping, slightly concave form, whilst the western side was a little more irregular. The base of the ditch was generally straight, though sloped gradually downwards to the north-west. The ditch was filled with a single deposit of firm, mid orangey grey silty clay, which contained a significant number of flint nodules, possibly suggesting deliberate infilling. In common with the other features in the trench, no dateable artefactual material was recovered.
- Two sub-phases of activity appear to have been represented by the features within Trench 13, though a lack of artefactual material has meant that dating is unclear. However, the features were most likely all related and probably belonged to a single broad phase of activity. The functions of the ditches could not be ascertained but it is thought likely that that they were elements of features within a small occupation site delineated by the large ditch in Trench 12.

#### Trench 14 (Figs 2, 6 & 9)

5.9 Trench 14, located to the east of Trench 13, contained further linear ditches that were most likely broadly associated with those in the latter trench. Towards the

centre of the trench was a north-east to south-west aligned linear ditch (1405), which was 1.04m wide and 0.29m deep, with steeply sloping, slightly concave sides and a gently concave base. On the base of the ditch was a 0.09m thick deposit of firm, light greyish brown silty clay (1406), which appeared to represent initial silting up of the feature. This was overlain by a more substantial deposit of firm, light greyish brown silty clay (1407), which probably represented further natural silting up of the ditch over an extended period of time. Neither of the backfilling deposits produced any dateable artefactual material. Further south was an approximately perpendicular ditch (1408), exhibiting a similar profile. This was a little more than 1m wide and 0.24m deep. It contained fill 1409, comprising a firm, light greyish brown silty clay, which appeared to have been the result of natural accumulation over a period of time and produced no dateable finds.

#### Trench 18 (Figs 2, 6 &11)

- As a result of the findings in Trenches 13 and 14 an additional trench (Trench 18) was opened in the area between these two interventions and further features of likely late prehistoric date were identified. Towards the north of the trench, part of a curvilinear ditch (1815) was exposed. This was 0.61m wide and 0.15m deep with a broadly symmetrical, concave profile, apparently having been heavily horizontally truncated, probably in antiquity. It contained deposit 1816, a soft, mid reddish brown sandy silt, which appears to have accumulated naturally after the ditch went out of use and consequently contained no finds. Extrapolation from the arc of the ditch present within the trench indicated that a circular or sub-circular feature approximately 8m to 10m in diameter was present. It is unclear what type of feature the ditch represented; it could possibly have been associated with a roundhouse of prehistoric date, though it lay partly beneath a raised topographical feature so may have been associated with a possible mound.
- 5.11 The curvilinear ditch was truncated to the south by an approximately north-east to south-west aligned linear ditch (1809), which was 1.48m wide and 0.45m deep, with moderately sloping, concave sides and a concave base. It was filled with a deposit of soft, mid greyish brown sandy silt (1810), which appeared to have naturally accumulated over time. A little more than 1m to the south of ditch 1809 was a large pit (1805) that extended beyond the eastern edge of the trench. It was slightly irregular in shape and measured at least 1.64m across with a depth of 0.39m. It had moderate to steeply sloping, concave to irregular sides and a concave base, and

was filled with a deposit of soft, mid greyish brown silty clay (1806), which appeared to have accumulated naturally and produced no dateable finds.

- 5.12 A little more than 9m to the south of pit 1805 and extending west of the evaluation trench was a second possible curvilinear ditch (1811), a terminus of which was located within the trench, suggesting a possible penannular feature. The ditch was 0.72m wide and just 0.14m deep, though as only a small part of the feature was present within the trench it was difficult to extrapolate its full diameter. It was filled with a deposit of soft, mid greyish brown silty clay (1812), which appeared to have accumulated naturally and contained no artefactual evidence. The full form and function of the ditch were not clear but it may have been a further dwelling structure of later prehistoric date.
- 5.13 Less than 2m to the south was another pit (1813) that extended beyond the western edge of the trench. The pit was sub-circular in plan with moderately sloping, concave to irregular sides and a concave to irregular base. It measured more than 2m across but was just 0.14m deep, having been backfilled with a deposit of soft, mid greyish brown silty clay 1814, which appeared to have accumulated naturally and produced no dateable finds. The function of the pit was unclear but was probably associated with other features to the north within the trench.
- 5.14 The evidence in general from Trench 18 suggests a number of features probably associated with a small settlement enclosed by the ditch in Trench 12 and associated with other features in Trenches 13 and 14. Negligible dateable material was recovered from any of the features but an occupation site of later prehistoric date is suggested.

#### Undated

5.15 In addition to the undated but likely late prehistoric features investigated in the northern half of Field C, there were further features elsewhere that were also undated but sealed by subsoil.

#### Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

5.16 Towards the centre of Trench 1 was a large, sub-circular pit (103) that extended beyond the northern edge of the trench. The pit measured at least 2.27m across and was 0.29m deep, exhibiting gently sloping, concave sides and a concave base. The fill (104) comprised soft, mid greyish brown silty clay that appeared to have

accumulated naturally, but which contained an indeterminate animal bone fragment, though no dateable finds. To the east of the pit was an approximately north-west to south-east aligned ditch (105), which was 0.64m wide and 0.18m deep. It exhibited moderately sloping sides that appeared slightly convex to the south-west and slightly concave to the north-east, whilst the base was flat. The fill (106) comprised soft, mid greyish brown silty clay that included some charcoal fragments and a significant quantity of angular flint nodules, suggesting it may have been deliberately backfilled.

#### Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

5.17 A little less than 10m from the eastern end of Trench 6 was north-east to south-west aligned ditch 603. It was 0.52m wide though a high water table prevented excavation to its full depth. It was filled with firm, dark brownish grey silty clay (604), which contained frequent frost-shattered flint nodules, possibly suggesting deliberate backfilling of the feature. No finds were recovered and it suggested that the ditch may have been associated with land division, possibly in the late prehistoric period.

#### Trench 7 (Fig. 2)

5.18 Towards the northern end of Trench 7 was another north-east to south-west aligned ditch 703, which was 1.01m wide and 0.27m deep. It exhibited a slightly asymmetric profile with a moderately sloping, concave northern edge and a steeply sloping, concave southern edge, whilst the base was gently concave. The single backfilling deposit 704 comprised a soft, mid greyish brown, silty clay that included some charcoal fragments and angular flint nodules, which was interpreted as having naturally accumulated. This may have been associated with the parallel feature in Trench 6 and therefore also possibly related to late prehistoric land division.

#### Trench 15 (Figs 2 & 10)

5.19 At the east end of Trench 15 and extending to the north, east and south of the trench was a large feature (1503) that measured at least 5.5m across and was 0.72m deep. It was filled with a stiff, mid brownish grey silty clay, which contained the articulated bones of a cattle lower hind leg that exhibited signs of butchery, though no dateable artefactual material. It was clear that the feature was very extensive and had probably mostly been backfilled by natural silting, though it was not clear whether it was a large pit, a pond or possibly the edge of a palaeochannel. The backfilled feature was sealed by subsoil so it too may have been of late prehistoric date.

#### Trench 16 (Fig. 2)

Within Trench 16 were two pits that had been sealed by subsoil deposits. Less than 10m from the northern end of the trench was pit 1605, which had an elliptical shape with gently sloping, concave sides and a flat base. It measured 2.66m north-west to south-east by 0.70m north-east to south-west but was just 0.13m deep. It was filled with a deposit of firm, mid greyish brown silty clay (1606), which appeared to have naturally accumulated and contained no dateable finds. Some distance to the south was pit 1603, which was sub-circular in plan with gently sloping, convex sides and a concave base. It measured 0.85m by 0.51m and was 0.14m deep, having been filled with a deposit of firm, light brownish yellow silty clay, which appeared to have accumulated naturally and contained no finds. It was difficult to interpret either of these features, though given their stratigraphic location, a late prehistoric date seems a possibility.

#### Medieval/post-medieval

5.21 In addition to the pits and ditches that were sealed by subsoil, there was a small number of further features that cut into the subsoil and appeared to be of medieval or post-medieval date.

#### Trench 9 (Fig. 2)

5.22 Towards the eastern end of Trench 9 was a linear feature (903) on an approximate north-west to south-east alignment. It was 1.14m wide and 0.28m deep. It had gently sloping concave sides, a concave base and was filled with a deposit of soft, mid greyish brown silty clay (904). It appeared to be the base of a furrow associated with the remnant ridge and furrow, still apparent in the surface topography of Fields A and B and aligned approximately parallel with the eastern and western boundaries of these fields.

#### Trench 11 (Fig. 2)

5.23 Approximately 7m from the western end of Trench 11 was a linear feature 1103 on a broad north-west to south-east alignment. It was 2.42m wide and 0.49m deep, exhibiting gently sloping, concave sides and a gently concave base. It was filled with a deposit of firm, mid greyish brown clayey silt (1104) and appears to have been another agricultural furrow, though ridge and furrow was not clearly observable in the surface topography in this area of Field C.

#### Trench 14 (Figs 2, 6 & 9)

- In addition to the likely late prehistoric features sealed by the subsoil in Trench 14, there were two further features that were of much later date. At the northern end of the trench was a linear feature (1403) aligned approximately north-east to south-west, 1.1m wide and cutting 0.11m into the natural clay. It had gently sloping, concave sides, a gently concave base and was filled with friable, light yellowish brown silty sand (1404), which produced a small fragment of post-medieval tile. This feature too, may have been the base of a furrow associated with medieval/early post-medieval agriculture but it lay on a perpendicular alignment to the remnant ridge and furrow topography visible in Field A and the bases of furrows in Trenches 9 and 11.
- 5.25 To the south, ditch 1408 was truncated by north-east to south-west aligned linear feature 1410, which was 1m wide and 0.23m deep, with steeply sloping, slightly concave sides and a concave base. It was filled with a firm, light yellowish grey silty clay (1411), which produced a fragment of post-medieval brick. The profile of the feature was slightly different to the furrows recorded elsewhere, though the limited dating evidence suggests a broadly contemporary date, but again it lay on a perpendicular alignment to ridges and furrows recorded elsewhere.

#### **6. THE FINDS** by Katie Marsden

6.1 Artefactual material recovered from the evaluation is quantified in Appendix B, Table 1 and discussed further below.

#### Pottery

One sherd of pottery (9g) of post-medieval date was recorded from topsoil 1400. The sherd is of a mottled brown glazed fabric, datable to the 18th century, and appears to be part of a small lid.

#### Ceramic Building Material

6.3 Three fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) were recorded from three deposits. Tile fragments were recorded from ditch 1403 (fill 1404) and topsoil 1600, whilst a brick fragment was recorded from ditch 1410 (fill 1411). All of the fragments were datable to the post-medieval period.

#### Other finds

One small featureless fragment of fired clay was recovered from ditch 1408 (fill 1409).

#### 7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

#### Animal Bone by Andy Clarke

- 7.1 A small assemblage of 12 fragments (564g) of animal bone was hand recovered from deposits 104, 1205 and 1504, respectively the fills of pit 103, ditch 1203 and pit 1503 (Appendix C, Table 1). The bone was well preserved, but was not found in association with any datable artefactual material.
- 7.2 Cattle (*Bos taurus*) was the only species identified from the remains of an almost complete lower hind leg, from the tibia to the distal phalanges recovered from pit 1503. Cut marks indicative of the dismemberment of a carcass immediately following slaughter were present on the both the tibia and metatarsal.
- 7.3 The potential amount of useful interpretative data to be gleaned from such a small assemblage is extremely limited. The combined factors of low recovery and absence of datable material, suggest that while there may be an origin in domestic waste, the assemblage is probably residual in nature.

#### 8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The evaluation demonstrated that across a large part of the site the only features of archaeological interest were the bases of furrows from remnant ridge and furrow agricultural systems. Towards the north-east of the site there was evidence of a small settlement, possibly dating to the later prehistoric period, though there was an absence of dateable artefactual material. A small number of further undated features sealed beneath subsoil may be related to this activity.
- 8.2 The highest concentration of features of archaeological interest was in the northern half of Field C at the north-east corner of the site. Four trenches in this area exposed a number of features of likely broadly contemporary date (though there were at least two sub-phases of activity present), which probably indicate a small, later prehistoric settlement in this area. At least one possible roundhouse and potentially a second

similar feature were recorded in Trench 18, with nearby pits possibly being associated features indicating some level of domestic activity. Parallel and perpendicular linear cut features in this trench and also Trenches 13 and 14 provide evidence of further possible structures within the settlement or possible site subdivision, whilst the large ditch exposed in Trench 12 potentially marked the southern edge of, and evidence for enclosure of the settlement. Undated linear features sealed beneath subsoil in Trenches 1, 6 and 7 in Field A may potentially provide evidence of landscape division contemporary with the settlement; the large feature in Trench 15 could potentially have been a watering hole, or at least provided a water supply that was exploited by occupants of the settlement, whilst pits in Trench 16 may also have been contemporary features.

- 8.3 Previous archaeological investigations in the area have revealed evidence of Middle to Late Bronze Age activity, whilst the site lies within an area known to have been agriculturally exploited during the Iron Age and Roman periods. Unfortunately the site has yielded no dateable finds from these periods. Roman sites, even small rural settlements in this area, would be expected to produce at least a small finds assemblages but no material of this date was recovered anywhere on site, which has led to the suggestion that the features in Field C, and possibly those elsewhere, are of late prehistoric date. A small settlement of Late Bronze Age to Iron Age date is therefore indicated at the north-east corner of the site, with a contemporary managed, agricultural landscape occupying a larger part of the site.
- 8.4 Following the backfilling of the likely later prehistoric features, there is no evidence for site exploitation for a considerable period of time, the next phase of detectable activity being agricultural exploitation during the medieval period. Remnant ridge and furrow agricultural features are clearly visible in the surface topography of Field A, less so in Field B though barely at all in Field C. The clearly defined ridge and furrow features in Field A run broadly parallel with the north-west to south-east aligned boundaries that separate the fields, suggesting that these boundaries may have early origins, or at least they respected the layout of the medieval field system. The furrows recorded archaeologically in Trenches 9 and 11 also followed the same alignment. It is likely that the ridge and furrow system was exploited into the early post-medieval period, possibly up to the time that much of the local area was enclosed in the late 18th century, though no dating evidence has come from the infill of the furrows investigated archaeologically.

- 8.5 Somewhat enigmatic archaeological evidence has come from two linear cut features in Trench 14, both of which were aligned north-east to south-west and therefore perpendicular to the general alignment of the ridge and furrow. Both of these features appeared to be sealed by the subsoil, which could suggest a broad contemporaneity with the potential late prehistoric features nearby; however, both yielded single fragments of post-medieval building material, clearly indicating a much later date or some form of intrusive activity. It is possible that in this area at the north-east of the site, where no remnant ridge and furrow is evident, that there were originally ridges and furrows on a perpendicular alignment, suggesting this area lay in a different field from the rest of the site when open field ploughing prevailed. Alternatively, the features in Trench 14 may not have been furrows at all and may instead have related to some other function such as post-medieval land division or drainage.
- 8.6 Overall, the possible later prehistoric settlement at the north-east of the site, along with likely contemporary features over a larger area, is of archaeological interest as it provides a useful addition to the record of known activity in the area over this broad time period. However, the lack of dating evidence has meant that at this stage only a very broad date range for this activity can be proposed. Evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity is much clearer with remnant ridge and furrow features being clearly visible in the western half of the site.

#### 9. CA PROJECT TEAM

9.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Peter Boyer, assisted by Mathieu Ferron, Andy Whelan, Mai Walker and Jon Whitmore. The report was written by Peter Boyer, with contributions from Katie Marsden and Andy Clarke, and the illustrations were prepared by Sam OdLeary. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans and prepared for deposition by Hazel OdNeill. The project was managed for CA by Simon Carlyle.

#### 10. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 <a href="https://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex">www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex</a>, accessed 29 January 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 Land East of Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation

CgMs (CgMs Consulting) 2015 Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: Land East of Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire, report **LM/19395** 

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Wessex (Wessex Archaeology) 1995 Lower Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Field Evaluation

#### **APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

Cxt.	Туре	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	(m)	(m)	D/T (m)	Spot Date
		1		Trench 1		•		
100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark black grey clayey silt			0.3	
101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silty clay			0.1	
102	Layer		Geology	Mottled yellow brown silty clay			>0.3	
103	Cut		Pit	Sub oval with gentle sides and flat base. Undated.	>1	2.27	0.29	Undated
104	Fill	103	Pit fill	Mid grey brown silty clay, loose. Undated	>1	2.27	0.29	
105	Cut		Boundary ditch	N-S linear, moderate sloping sides into flat base. Undated	>1	0.64	0.18	Undated
106	Fill	105	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay, soft. Undated	>1	0.64	0.18	
		*	1	Trench 2	1			
200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark red brown clayey silt, loose			0.28	
201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown clay silt, firm.			0.28	
202	Layer		Geology	Mid brown yellow silty clay, firm			>0.56	
202	Layer		Jeology	Tring Drown yellow silty diay, IIIII		<u> </u>	70.00	
				Trench 3				
300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.28	
301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown clayey silt, soft			0.3	
302	Layer		Geology	Mid brown yellow silty clay, firm			>0.58	
				Trench 4				
400	Layer	Τ	Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.3	
401	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.59	
402	Layer		Geology	Mid yellow brown silty clay, firm			>0.82	
				Trench 5				
500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.29	
501	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.48	
502	Layer		Geology	Mid brown yellow silty clay, firm			>0.77	
				Trench 6				
600	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.21	
601	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay, firm		1	0.47	
602	Layer	1	Geology	Mid brown yellow silty clay, firm			>0.68	
603	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned ditch. Unexcavated. Undated.	>1.6	0.52		Undated
604	Fill	603	Ditch fill	Dark brown grey, silty clay, firm	>0.6	0.52		
				Trench 7				
700	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey black clayey silt, friable			0.31	
701	Layer		Subsoil	Dark red brown silty clay, friable			0.3	
702	Layer		Geology	Mid yellow brown silty clay, soft			0.61	

Cxt.	Туре	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	(m)	(m)	D/T (m)	Spot Date
703	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned, moderately steep concave sides into concave base. Undated.	>1.5	1.01	0.27	Undated
704	Fill	703	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay, loose. Undated	>1.5	1.01	0.27	
				Trench 8				
800	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.27	
801	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown grey clayey silt, firm			0.43	
802	Layer		Geology	Mid yellow brown silty clay, firm			>0.7	
				Trench 9				
900	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey black clayey silt, friable			0.2	
901	Layer		Subsoil	Dark red brown silty clay, friable			0.22	
902	Layer		Geology	Mid yellow brown silty clay, soft			>0.44	
903	Cut		Furrow	NW-SE aligned, shallow concave profile	>1.5	1.14	0.06	Medieval/post- medieval
904	Fill	903	Furrow fill	Mid grey brown, silty clay, loose	>1.5	1.14	0.06	
		1		Trench 10				1
1000	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt, firm			0.24	
1001	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay, firm			0.36	
1002	Layer		Geology	Variable, light blue grey / light grey brown, light orange yellow silty clays			>0.6	
	·	<u>'</u>		Trench 11		•		_
1100	Layer	T	Topsoil	Dark grey brown clayey silt			0.3	
1101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silty clay			0.2	
1102	Layer		Geology	Mottled orange grey brown silty clay			>0.5	
1103	Cut		Furrow	N-S aligned, gentle sloping sides and base	>1.6	2.42	0.49	Medieval/post- medieval
1104	Fill	1103	Furrow fill	Mid grey brown, clayey silt, firm	>1.6	2.42	0.49	
				Trench 12			l.	<u>I</u>
1200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey black clayey silt, friable			0.24	
1201	Layer		Subsoil	Dark red brown silty clay, friable			0.24	
1202	Layer		Geology	Mid yellow brown silty clay, soft			>0.48	
1203	Cut		Ditch	E-W aligned, moderate convex sides into concave base. Undated	>1.5	3.06	0.76	Prehistoric
1204	Fill	1203	Ditch fill	Dark red brown and mid blue grey mix, silty clay, loose. Undated	>1.5	2.22	0.43	

Cxt.	Туре	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	(m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot Date
1205	Fill	1203	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown silty clay, soft. Undated	>1.5	3.06	0.32	
				Trench 13				
1300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark black brown sandy silt			0.35	
1301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silty clay			0.2	
1302	Layer		Geology	Mid yellow orange silty clay			0.55	
1303	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned, moderately sloping sides, shallow concave base. Undated	>2.3	0.77	0.5	Prehistoric
1304	Fill	1303	Ditch fill	Mid orange grey silty clay, firm, high concentration of flint inclusions. Undated	>2.3	0.77	0.5	
1305	Cut		Ditch	N-S aligned, moderately steep curving sides into shallow concave base. Undated.	>0.66	0.79	0.35	Prehistoric
1306	Fill	1305	Ditch fill	Mid brown grey silty clay, firm	>0.66	0.79	0.35	
1307	Cut		Ditch	N-S aligned, shallow concave profile. Undated	>1.6	0.7	0.07	Prehistoric
1308	Fill	1307	Ditch fill	Mid orange grey silty clay, firm. Undated	>1.6	0.7	0.07	
				Trench 14				
1400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt			0.29	
1401	Layer		Subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay			0.27	
1402	Layer		Geology	Light orange yellow to mid orange brown			>0.56	
1403	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned, gentle sloping sides and base. Undated	>1	1.1	0.11	Post-medieval
1404	Fill	1403	Ditch fill	Light yellow brown silty sand, friable	>1	1.1	0.11	
1405	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned, moderately steep sides, gently sloping base. Undated	>	1.04	0.29	Prehistoric
1406	Fill	1405	Ditch fill	Light grey brown silty clay, firm. Undated	>1	0.69	0.09	
1407	Fill	1405	Ditch fill	Light grey brown silty clay, firm. Undated	>	1.04	0.2	
1408	Cut		Ditch	NW-SE aligned, moderate sloping sides into gentle sloped base. Undated	>1	>0.5	0.24	Prehistoric
1409	Fill	1408	Ditch fill	Light grey brown silty clay, firm. Undated	>1	>0.5	0.24	
1410	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned ditch, moderately steep sides, flattish base. Undated	>1	1	0.23	Post-medieval
1411	Fill	1410	Ditch fill	Light yellow grey, silty clay, firm. Undated	>1	1	0.23	
				Trench 15				
1500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt			0.28	
1501	Layer		Subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay			0.4	
1502	Layer		Geology	Light orange yellow to mid orange brown			>0.68	
1503	Cut		Pit?	Sub circular in plan, sides and base not revealed. Undated	>5.5	>1.6	0.72	Undated

Cxt.	Туре	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	(m)	(m)	D/T (m)	Spot Date
1504	Fill	1503	Pit fill?	Mid brown grey, silty clay, firm. Undated	>5.5	>1.6	0.72	
				Trench 16				
1600	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown, silty clay, firm			0.25	
1601	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown, silty clay, firm			0.56	
1602	Layer		Geology	Mid orange yellow silty clay, compact			>0.56	
1603	Cut		Pit	Sub circular, shallow concave profile. Undated	0.85	0.51	0.14	Prehistoric?
1604	Fill		Pit fill	Light brown yellow, silty clay, firm. Undated	0.85	0.51	0.14	
1605	Cut		Pit	Sub oval, gently sloping sides, flat base. Undated	2.66	>0.7	0.13	Prehistoric?
1606	Fill		Pit fill	Mid grey brown, silty clay, firm	2.66	>0.7	0.13	
_			I 	Trench 17	1	<u> </u>		
1700	Layer		Topsoil	Dark black brown, clayey silt			0.3	1
1701	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown, silty clay			0.3	
1702	Layer		Geology	Mottled orange grey, silty clay.			>0.6	
		_		Trench 18				
1800	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown, silty sand			0.32	
1801	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown, silty clay			0.44	
1802	Layer		Geology	Light blue grey and mid orange brown silty clay			>076	
1803	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW aligned, gentle sloping sides, irregular base. Undated	>1.5	>1.25	0.39	Prehistoric
1804	Fill	1803	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown, silty clay, loose. Undated	>1.5	>1.25	0.39	
1805	Cut		Pit	Sub circular, moderately steep sloping sides, gently undulating base. Undated	>1	>1.64	0.39	Prehistoric
1806	Fill	1805	Pit fill	Mid grey brown, silty clay, loose. Undated	>1	>1.64	0.39	
1807	Cut		Ditch	Curvilinear, moderate sloped sides, gently curving base. Undated	6.2	0.98	0.25	Prehistoric
1808	Fill	1807	Ditch fill	Mid red brown, sandy silt, soft. Undated	6.2	0.98	0.25	
1809	Cut		Ditch	Curvilinear, concave profile. Undated	>1.8	1.48	0.45	Prehistoric
1810	Fill	1809	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown, sandy silt, soft. Undated.	>1.8	1.48	0.45	
1811	Cut		Ditch terminus	NW-SE aligned curvilinear, concave profile. Undated	>1.6	0.72	0.14	Prehistoric
1812	Fill	1811	Ditch fill	Mid grey brown, silty clay, soft. Undated	>1.6	0.72	0.14	
1813	Cut		Pit	Sub circular, moderate concave sides, uneven base. Undated	>0.89	2.08	0.14	Prehistoric
1814	Fill	1813	Pit fill	Mid grey brown, silty clay, soft. Undated	>0.89	2.08	0.14	

Cxt.	Туре	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	(m)	(m)	D/T (m)	Spot Date
1815	Cut		Ditch	N-S aligned curvilinear, moderately steep concave profile. Undated	>1	0.61	0.15	Prehistoric
1816	Fill	1815	Ditch fill	Mid red brown, sandy silt, soft. Undated	>1	0.61	0.15	

#### APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context

Context	Class	Description	Ct.	Wt. (g)	Spot-date
1400	Post-medieval pottery	mottled brown glazed	1	9	C18
1404	CBM	tile	1	5	Pmed
1409	Fired clay		1	1	
1411	CBM	Brick	1	8	Pmed
1600	CBM	tile	2	15	Pmed

#### APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

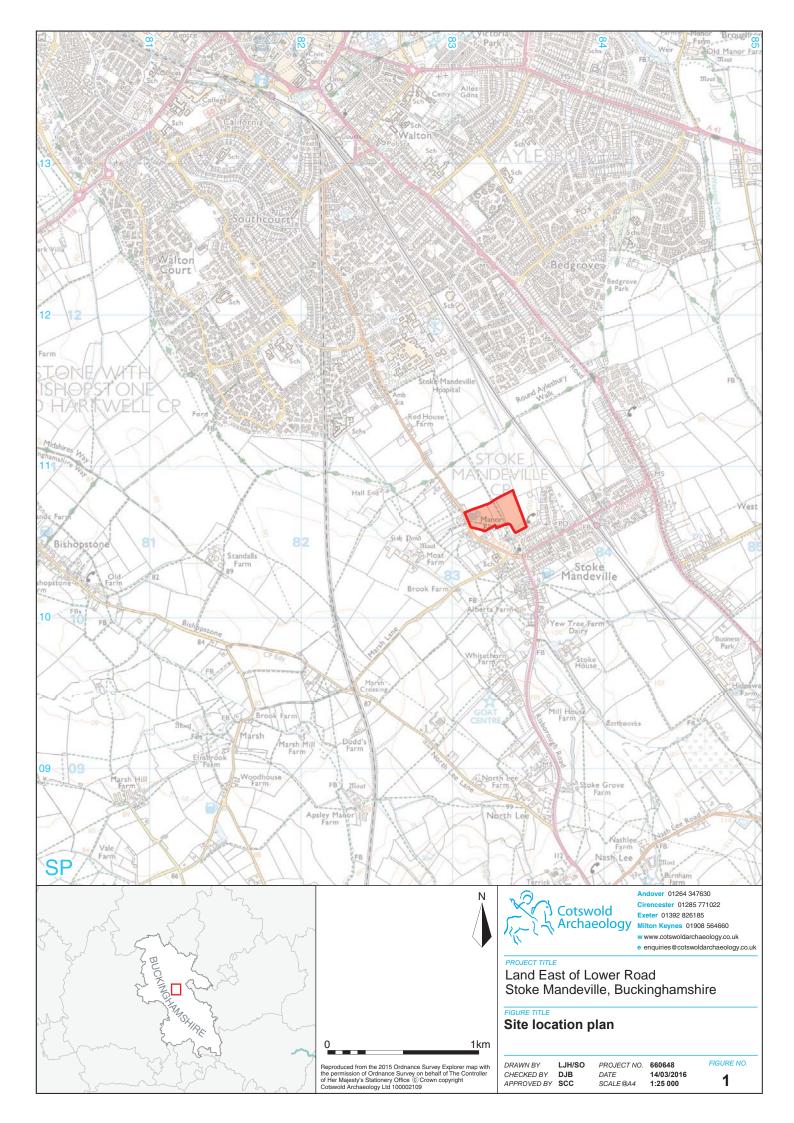
Table 2: Identified animal species by fragment count (NISP), weight and context

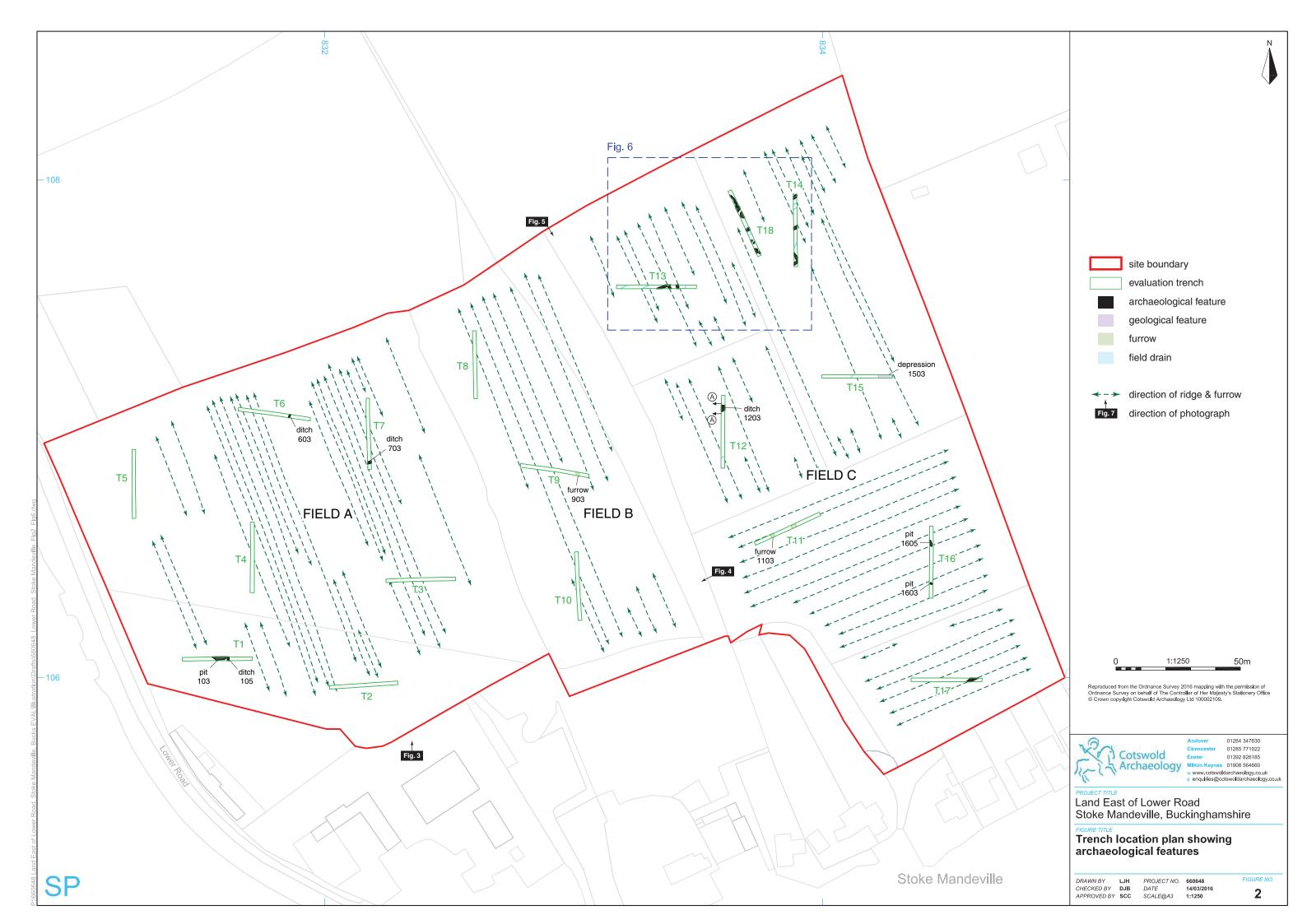
Cut	Fill	BOS	Ind	Total	Weight (g)
103	104		1	1	1
1203	1205		2	2	7
1503	1504	9		9	556
Total	<u>.</u>	9	3	12	
Weight		556	8	564	

BOS = Cattle; Ind = indeterminate

#### APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS					
Project name	Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buc	kinghamshire			
Short description	The evaluation revealed a concentration of poorly dated but probable late prehistoric features in trenches in the north-eastern corner of the site, features that were not detected by the geophysical survey. The features comprised part of a rectilinear ditch system, probably a sub-divided enclosure of at least two phases, along with pits and at least one, but probably two curvilinear ditches, possibly the remains of roundhouses. There was no dating evidence to securely date these features, but they were sealed by the subsoil suggesting that they predate the medieval period. Other undated features across the site may be the remains of an outlying field system associated with the settlement, though their sparse distribution prevents any definitive interpretation. Medieval/post-medieval furrows were identified in trenches across the site and their alignments suggest that it covers parts of two former open fields.				
Project dates	25th February 2016 . 4th March 20	16			
Project type	Field evaluation				
Previous work		Desk-based assessment (CgMs 2015); Geophysical survey (GSB			
Future work	Unknown				
Monument type	Prehistoric ditches, medieval ridge a	and furrow			
Significant finds	None				
PROJECT LOCATION					
Site location	Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buc	kinghamshire			
Study area	6.3ha				
Site co-ordinates	SP 83304 10672				
PROJECT CREATORS					
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology (CA)				
Project Brief originator	-				
Project Design (WSI) originator	CA				
Project Manager	Simon Carlyle (CA), Lorraine Mayo	(CgMs)			
Project Supervisor	Peter Boyer (CA)				
PROJECT ARCHIVE					
	Accession no: AYBCM: 2016.50	Content			
Physical	Buckinghamshire Museums	Pottery			
Paper	Service Site records				
Digital	Buckinghamshire HER	Report, digital photos			
BIBLIOGRAPHY					
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 Land Evaluation. CA typescript report <b>16100</b>	East of Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville, B	uckinghamshire: Archaeological			









- 3 General view of Field A looking north
- 4 General view of Field B looking west-south-west



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PROJECT TITLE

Land East of Lower Road Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

#### **Photographs**

DRAWN BY LJH
CHECKED BY DJB
APPROVED BY SCC

 PROJECT NO.
 660648

 DATE
 06/04/16

 SCALE@A4
 NA

FIGURE NOS. **3 4** 





General view of Field C looking south-south-east 5



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# FIGURE TITLE Photograph

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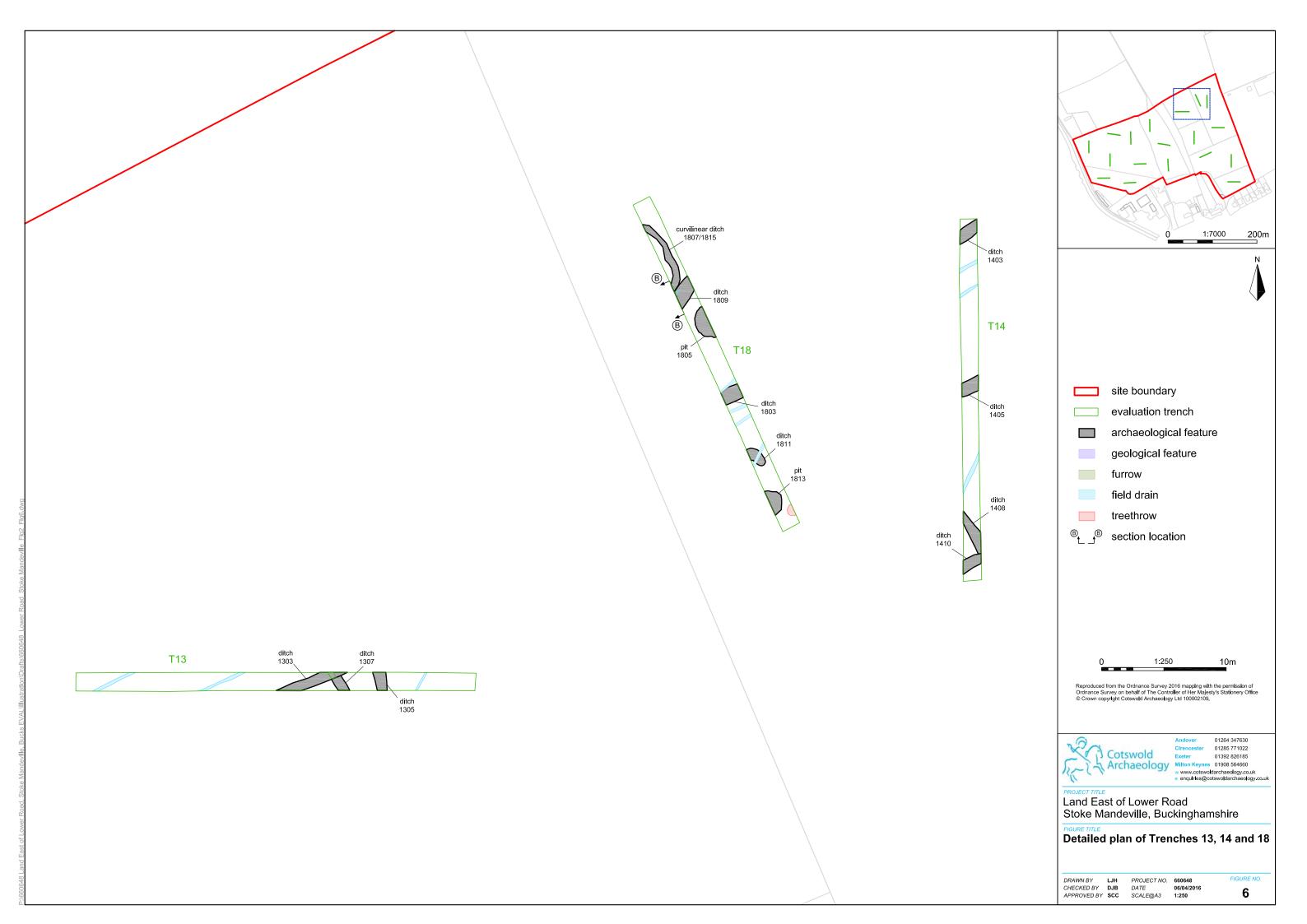
 PROJECT NO.
 660648

 DATE
 14/03/16

 SCALE@A4
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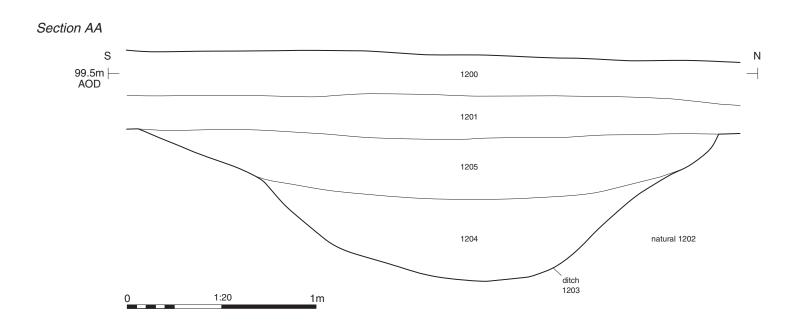
FIGURE NO.

5





Trench 12, looking south (1m scale)





Ditch 1203, looking west (1m scale)



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Land East of Lower Road
Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire

Trench 12: section and photographs

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7



Trench 13, looking east (1m scale)



Ditch 1303, looking south (1m scale)



Ditch 1305, looking north (1m scale)



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Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE
Trench 13: photographs

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Trench 14, looking north (1m scale)



Ditch 1405, looking south-west (1m scale)



Ditches 1408 (I) and 1410 (r), looking north-east (1m scale)



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Land East of Lower Road
Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE
Trench 14: photographs

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10 Trench 15 looking west (1m scale)



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Land East of Lower Road Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire

# FIGURE TITLE Photograph

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DATE 06/04/16

SCALE@A4 NA

FIGURE NO.

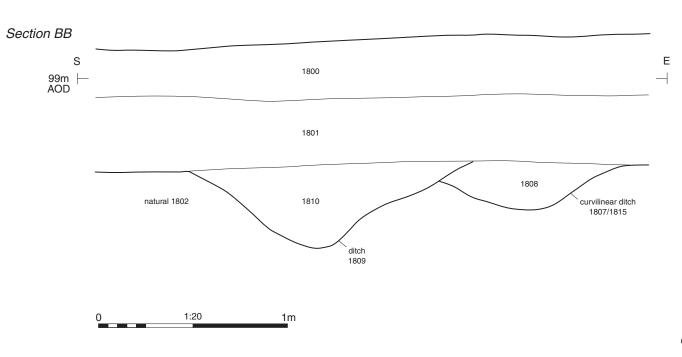
10



Trench 18, looking south (1m scales)



Pit 1805, looking north-west (1m scale)





Curvilinear ditch 1807/1815, looking north-west (0.5m scale)



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Trench 18: section and photographs

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11



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