



Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a) Cricklade Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation



for GreenSquare Group

CA Project: CR0018 CA Report: CR0018_1

June 2019



Andover Cirencester Exeter Milton Keynes Suffolk

Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a) Cricklade Wiltshire

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CONTENTS

SUMM	ARY	2
1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	4
3.	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	6
4.	METHODOLOGY	6
5.	RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)	7
6.	THE FINDS	7
7.	THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE	8
8.	DISCUSSION	9
9.	CA PROJECT TEAM	10
10.	REFERENCES	10
	IDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	
APPEN	IDIX B: THE FINDS	12
	IDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE	
APPEN	IDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM	13

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Fig. 2 Trench location plan showing identified archaeological features, previous evaluation trenches and extent of Scheduled Monument (1:300/1:2,500)
- Fig. 3 Trench 2: section and photograph (1:20)
- Fig. 4 Photographs

SUMMARY

Project Name:	Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a)
Location:	Cricklade, Wiltshire
NGR:	409776 193809
Туре:	Evaluation
Date:	20 - 21 May 2019
Planning Reference:	15/08666/FUL, Condition 8
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Site Code:	CUR19

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2019 on land at Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a), Cricklade, Wiltshire. Two trenches were excavated.

A pit containing medieval pottery of 11th to 15th-century date, as well as fragments of domestic animal bone and charred cereal remains, was identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2019 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for GreenSquare Group on land at Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a), Cricklade, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 409776 193809; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent, granted by Wiltshire Council (WC; planning ref: 15/11230/FUL), for the erection of 109 dwellings with associated landscaping, highways and service infrastructure, following the demolition of 65 existing dwellings. The consent was granted on condition that a programme of phased archaeological work was undertaken (Condition 8). An archaeological evaluation during Phase 4a of the development was recommended by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, WC.
- 1.2 The current evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). It was monitored by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger.

The site

- 1.4 The development area as a whole 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 4a development area is approximately 0.2ha in extent and is located in the north-eastern corner of the wider development site (see Fig. 2). The Phase 4a area is currently occupied by four residential properties and associated gardens, is broadly level and lies at approximately 86m AOD. It is bounded to the north-west by White Horse Road, to the north-east by further residential premises and gardens, to the south-east by the Scheduled Monument *Cricklade Town Banks* (National Monument 1002997) and to the south-west by an unnamed pedestrian lane.
- 1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Oxford Clay Formation -Mudstone of the Jurassic period (BGS 2019). The natural geological substrate, comprising yellow and grey clays, was identified in both 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 the Scheduled Monument *Cricklade Town Banks*. 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, although it is possible that it was a staging post on Ermin Street near a crossing of the River Thames. Evidence for Roman occupation at Cricklade includes occupation layers recorded from St Sampson's School playing fields (*c*. 100m to the south-east of site), and pottery and building debris from 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 the 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; the site lies outside of these defences. 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 that 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 defended area and thus part of a fortress and new settlement (*ibid*.).

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 (*ibid*.).

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 (*ibid*.). 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-instated. 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 that may actually refer to the refortification 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 defences, remained part of the agricultural hinterland of Cricklade until residential development of the area occurred in the last quarter of the 20th-century.
- 2.10 An archaeological evaluation undertaken by CA in 2016 (CA 2016), in the Phase 1 Area of the development, identified no features or deposits of archaeological interest (see Fig. 2 for location and extent). However a small quantity of abraded and highly fragmentary pottery of 12th to 15th-century date was recovered from the subsoil within one of the excavated trenches. This material was considered most likely to derive from previous ploughing and/or manuring of cultivated fields (*ibid*.).

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* (CIfA 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 two trenches located within the gardens of the current residential properties (see Fig. 2 for location and extent). Trench 1 measured 16m long and 1.8m wide and was moved and shortened slightly due to the presence of modern services. Trench 2 measured 19m long and 1.8m wide. The 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 Both 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*. An environmental sample was recovered from a medieval pit (see Section 7.2-7.4 below). 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 D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, finds and environmental evidence are to be found in Appendices A, B and C respectively. A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was observed in both trenches with only one archaeological feature, in Trench 2, being observed.
- 5.2 The natural geological substrate was recorded in both trenches at an average depth of 0.8m below present ground level (bgpl). The natural substrate and identified archaeological feature were sealed by 0.35m of silty-clay subsoil, which was covered by isolated modern levelling deposits measuring up to 0.4m in thickness, and 0.3m of modern garden soils.

Trench 2

5.3 Within the north-western extent of Trench 2, pit 2004 was identified (Fig. 3, Section AA). It was sub-circular in plan and measured 1.33m in length, 1.11m in width and 0.24m in depth. It contained two silty-clay fills, 2005 and 2006. Fourteen sherds of pottery dating to the 11th to 15th century were recovered from the earliest fill, 2005, as well as 10 fragments of animal bone, an fragment of iron and a fragment of burnt flint. An environmental sample taken of fill 2005 (sample no. 200) noted the presence of charcoal, high quantities of charred cereal remains and snail shells (Appendix C, Table 2).

6. THE FINDS

6.1 Artefactual material was hand-recovered from fill 2005 within pit 2004. The recovered material dates to the medieval period. Quantities of the artefact types are given in Appendix B. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd

count/weight per fabric and fabric codes have been devised for the purpose of this report.

Pottery

6.2 The pottery totals 14 sherds (82g), with two ware types represented. Cotswold oolitic limestone-tempered ware (COT) dates to the 11th to 13th centuries and these sherds include several from a jar with a sagging base. Kennet Valley ware, which was manufactured in Berkshire, is of late 11th to 15th century date.

Other finds

6.3 A heavily corroded fragment of iron (4g) was retrieved from pit fill 2005. Its original form could not be established. An indeterminate fragment of burnt flint (73g) was also recovered from the same deposit.

7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Animal Bone

7.1 Animal bone amounting to ten fragments (37.4g) was recovered via hand excavation and bulk soil sampling from fill 2005 within pit 2004 in association with artefactual material dating broadly to the medieval period (see Appendix C, Table 1). The bone was highly fragmented and only moderately well preserved. However, it was possible to confirm the presence of sheep/goat (*Ovis aries/Capra hircus*) and pig (*Sus scrofa*) from, respectively, a partial pelvis and a fragment of mandible. No evidence of butchery was observed.

Plant Macrofossils

- 7.2 A single environmental sample (sample no. 200; 20 litres of soil) was processed from fill 2005 of pit 2004 with the intention of recovering environmental evidence of industrial or domestic activity on the site. It was also anticipated that the environmental assemblage would aid in the dating of this feature and in the interpretation of its function. The sample was processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No.2).
- 7.3 Preliminary identifications of cereals are noted in Table 2 (Appendix C), following nomenclature as provided by Zohary *et al* (2012) for cereals. The presence of mollusc shells has also been recorded, following nomenclature according to

Anderson (2005) and habitat preferences according to Kerney (1999) and Davies (2008).

- 7.4 The flot from the sample contained a high percentage of rooty material and uncharred weed seeds. The charred material was poorly preserved with much of the charcoal being heavily silt impregnated; consequently, wood species identification was unsuccessful.
- 7.5 The sample contained moderately high quantities of charred cereal grains which include indeterminate cereal grain fragments and free-threshing wheat (*Triticum turgidum/aestivum* type) grain fragments. A small number of glume/rachis fragments were also recorded during this assessment but due to the poor preservation levels further species identification could not take place. No other charred plant remains were recorded from within the sample. Moderate quantities of terrestrial snail shells belonging to the open country species *Pupilla muscorum* and *Vallonia* sp., the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus*, the shade loving species *Oxychilus cellarius* and the marsh species *Succinea/Oxyloma* sp. were recovered from the sample. Low quantities of aquatic snail shells including the shells of the snail species *Bithynia* sp. were also noted.
- 7.6 This environmental assemblage is likely to be representative of dumped domestic settlement waste and is suggestive of settlement activity in the immediate vicinity of this feature. Due to the presence of free-threshing wheat, which became the predominant wheat from the post Roman period in this part of Britain (Greig 1991), the environmental assemblage supports the 11th to 15th-century date suggested by the recovered artefactual material.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The results of the evaluation, whilst broadly consistent with previous work within the site (CA 2016), indicate that limited activity of medieval date may survive within the area.
- 8.2 Pit 2004 identified within Trench 2 contained material dating to the 11th to 15thcenturies, along with charred cereal remains. The original function of this pit remains unclear; however, the quantity of domestic waste recovered suggests that it may

have functioned as a refuse pit. It is possible that this activity relates to the use of the known Saxon and Norman defences just to the east of site and it is broadly contemporary with the later Saxon and medieval activity seen within the wider Cricklade area (see Archaeological Background above).

8.3 The modern levelling deposits observed throughout the evaluation are most probably associated with the landscaping for the current residential gardens, although only limited truncation of the subsoil horizon was observed.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

9.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Monica Fombellida assisted by Gary Baddeley. The report was written by Monica Fombellida and Sara-Jayne Boughton. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Jacky Sommerville, Sharon Clough and Emma Aitken respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled, and prepared for deposition, by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon and Alex Thomson.

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Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	1000	Layer		Garden soil	Dark grey brown silt	>16	>1.8	0.2	
1	1001	Layer		Levelling deposit	Red brick fragments within a mid- grey yellow clay silt matrix	6	>1.8	0.3	
1	1002	Layer		Levelling deposit	Mid grey brown silt with glass inclusions	1.2	>1.8	0.28	
1	1003	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silt clay	>16	>1.8	0.4	
1	1004	Layer		Natural substrate	Grey and yellow mottled clay	>16	>1.8	n/a	
2	2000	Layer		Garden soil	Dark grey brown silt	>19	>1.8	0.4	
2	2001	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown silt clay	>19	>1.8	0.3	
2	2002	Layer		Natural substrate	Grey and yellow mottled clay	>19	>1.8	n/a	
2	2003	Layer		Levelling deposit	Redeposited natural. Mid grey yellow silty clay with limestone inclusions	1.6	>1.8	0.4	
2	2004	Cut		Pit	Subcircular pit with concave sides and base	1.33	1.11	0.24	
2	2005	Fill	2004	1st fill of pit	Light brown grey silt clay with small limestones inclusions	1.2	1.11	0.21	LC11-C15
2	2006	Fill	2004	2nd fill of pit	Light yellow grey silt clay with small limestone inclusions	0.68	0.71	0.1	
2	2007	Layer		Levelling deposit	Mid grey brown silt with glass inclusions	1.4	>1.8	0.2	

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Table 1: Finds concordance

Context	Category	Description	Fabric	Count	Weight	Spot-date
			Code		(g)	
2005	Medieval pottery	Cotswold oolitic limestone-tempered	COT	9	64	LC11-C15
	Medieval pottery	ware Kennet Valley ware	κνw	5	18	
	Iron	Fragment		1	4	
	Industrial waste			1	4	
	Burnt flint			1	73	

APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Table 1: Identified animal species by fragment count (NISP) and weight and context.

Cut	Fill	O/C	SUS	ММ	BB SS	Total	Weight (g)
2004	2005	1	1	4	4	10	37.4
Total		1	1	4	4	10	
Weight		11	18	8	0.4	37.4	

O/C = sheep/goat; SUS = pig; MM = sheep size mammal; BB SS = unidentifiable burnt bone from bulk samples; Ind = indeterminate

Table 2: Assessment of Environmental Evidence

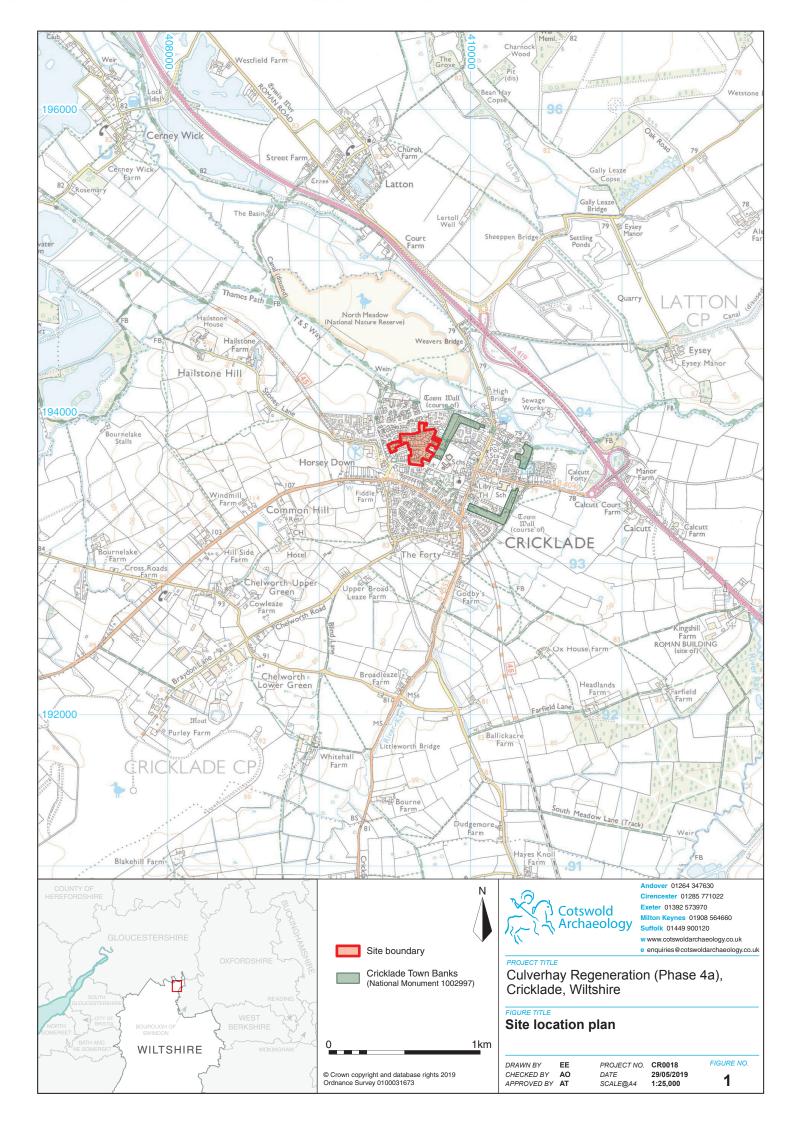
Feature	Context	Sample	Vol (L)	Flot size (ml)	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Cereal Notes	Charred Other	Charcoal > 4/2mm	Other
Pit 2004	2005	200	20	120	85	****	*	indet grain, f-t wheat, glume/rachi s	-	****/*****	moll-t***, moll-a**, brnt bn*, sab*

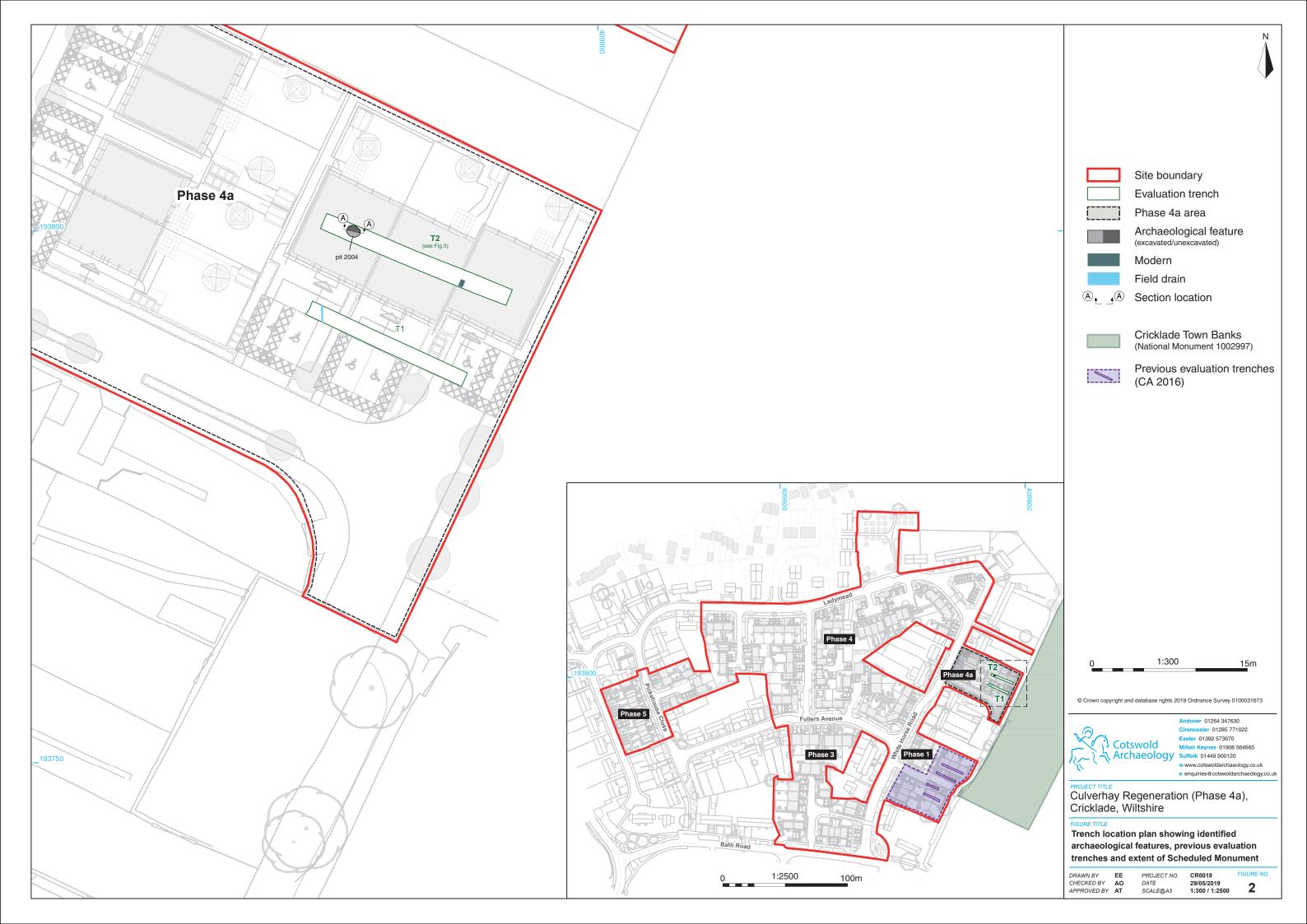
Key: * = 1–4 items; ** = 4–20 items; *** = 21–49 items; **** = 50–99 items; ***** = >100 items

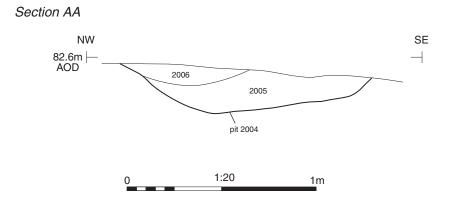
moll-t = terrestrial mollusc, moll-a = aquatic/freshwater mollusc, sab = small animal bone, brnt bn = burnt bone

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name	Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4	la), Cricklade, Wiltshire:				
Short description	Archaeology in May 2019 on I	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2019 on land at Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a), Cricklade, Wiltshire. Two trenches were excavated.				
	A pit containing medieval pottery well as fragments of domestic a remains, was identified.	of 11th to 15th-century date, as animal bone and charred cereal				
Project dates	20-21 May 2019					
Project type	Archaeological Evaluation					
Previous work	None					
Future work	Unknown	Unknown				
PROJECT LOCATION						
Site Location	Cricklade, Wiltshire					
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.2 ha	0.2 ha				
Site co-ordinates	409776 193809	409776 193809				
PROJECT CREATORS						
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	Cotswold Archaeology				
Project Brief originator	Wiltshire Council					
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology					
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon and Alex Thomso	วท				
Project Supervisor	Monica Fombellida					
MONUMENT TYPE	None					
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None					
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content				
Physical	Wiltshire Heritage museum	Pottery, animal bone				
Paper	Wiltshire Heritage museum	Trench record sheets, context record sheets, photographic registers, sample sheets.				
Digital	Wiltshire Heritage museum	Digital photographs				
BIBLIOGRAPHY						
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Pit 2004, looking north-east (1m scale)

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PROJECT ITLE Culverhay Regeneration (Phase 4a), Cricklade, Wiltshire
FIGURE TITLE Trench 2, section and photograph
DRAWN BY EE PROJECT NO. CR0018 FIGURE NO. CHECKED BY AO DATE 29/05/2019 APPROVED BY AT SCALE@A4 1:20 3



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



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

No.	Cotsv Archa	vold aeology	Andover 01264 347 Cirencester 01285 Exeter 01392 5739 Milton Keynes 019 Suffolk 01449 9001 w www.cotswoldarch e enquiries@cotswo	771022 70 08 564660 20 aeology.co.uk
PROJECT TITLE Culverha Cricklade	4a),			
FIGURE TITLE Photogr	aphs			
DRAWN BY CHECKED BY APPROVED BY	EE AO AT	PROJECT NO. DATE SCALE@A4	CR0018 29/05/2019 NA	FIGURE NO.



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