



Grange Farm Main Road, Cannington Somerset

Archaeological Excavation



for: RPS

on behalf of: Crest Nicholson (South West)

> CA Project: CR0585 CA Report: CR0585_1

> > March 2021



Grange Farm Main Road, Cannington Somerset

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CONTENTS

SUMMA	\RY	3
1.		4
2.	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
3.	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	5
4.	METHODOLOGY	6
5.	RESULTS	7
6.	THE FINDS	8
7.	DISCUSSION	9
8.	CA PROJECT TEAM	9
9.	REFERENCES	10
APPEN	DIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	11
APPEN	DIX B: THE FINDS	12
APPEN	DIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM	13

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Fig. 2 The site, showing excavation area and previous evaluation trenches (1:1250)
- Fig. 3 Excavation area, showing identified archaeological features (1:200)
- Fig. 4 Pits 1011 and 1013, and ditch 1016: sections (1:20) and photographs
- Fig. 5 Ditches 1009 and 1024: sections (1:20) and photographs

SUMMARY

Project name:	Grange Farm
Location:	Main Road, Cannington, Somerset
NGR:	32619 13905
Туре:	Excavation
Date:	11–15 January 2021
Planning reference:	Sedgemoor District Council 13/18/00040
Location of Archive:	Somerset County Museum and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Site Code:	GMC 21

In January 2021, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological excavation of land at Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset. The excavation area was located in the south-western part of the development area and was targeted upon a ditch identified during a preceding archaeological evaluation.

Two pits, containing pottery of Early to Middle Bronze Age date, were identified in the central-southern part of the stripped area. Although the exact function of these pits remains unclear, they are suggestive of a small area of activity, potentially of a seasonal or transient nature.

Three narrow ditches, one of which contained a residual worked flint flake of broad prehistoric date, were recorded in the central and southern parts of the stripped area. One of these ditches correlates closely to a ditch containing pottery of 2nd-century AD date previously identified during the preceding archaeological evaluation. The function of these ditches remains unclear, although the limited quantity of artefactual material recovered from these features during the current works suggests that they are set away from any focus of settlement and are perhaps most likely to be associated with agricultural activity.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In January 2021, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological excavation on land at Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset (centred at NGR: 32619 13905; Fig. 1). This excavation was undertaken for RPS, who were acting on behalf of Crest Nicholson (South West).
- 1.2. Outline planning permission for residential development of the site has been granted by Sedgemoor District Council (SDC; planning ref: 3/18/00040) conditional (condition 11) on a programme of archaeological work being undertaken. Following consultation between RPS Consulting and Steve Membery, Senior Historic Environment Officer, Somerset County Council, the archaeological advisor to SDC, it was determined that an area of archaeological excavation, centred on Trench 14 of a preceding archaeological trial-trench evaluation (AC 2018) undertaken within the site, would be required (see Fig. 2 of this report for location and extent).
- 1.3. The excavation was carried out in accordance with a WSI produced by RPS (2020) and an accompanying Archaeological Method Statement (AMS; CA 2020) both of which were approved by Mr Membery. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2014) the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* and accompanying *PPN3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.4. The overall development area is approximately 3ha in extent and currently comprises a single agricultural field immediately south-east of the village of Cannington. It is bounded to the south-west by the A39 (Main Road), to the north-west by residential properties, to the north-east by further agricultural land and to the south by a recently constructed flood alleviation channel beyond which is Grange Farm. The site lies at approximately 10.5m AOD and is broadly flat.
- 1.5. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Mercia Mudstone Group -Mudstone and Halite-stone of the Triassic Period (BGS 2020). No superficial deposits are recorded (ibid.). The natural substrate identified during the course of the excavation comprised mid red-brown silty gravels with frequent patches of light brown silty sand.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The site has previously been subject to geophysical survey (Stratascan 2013) and two phases of trial-trench evaluation (CA 2015 and AC 2018). The following is a brief summary of the results of these assessments, along with any other publicly available information pertinent to the site.
- 2.2. The previous archaeological investigations undertaken within the current site did not identify any finds or features of prehistoric origin (RPS 2020). A sub-rectangular enclosure of a possible prehistoric origin is recorded as a cropmark to the east of (and outwith) the site boundary (ibid.). Sherds of Bronze Age pottery, but no associated features, were retrieved during archaeological works 500m to the north-west of the proposed development area (CA 2010a).
- 2.3. Evidence for Roman activity is more numerous in the locality and includes a 2ndcentury Roman ditch recorded in Trench 14 of the preceding archaeological evaluation (AC 2018). A Roman ladder settlement, identified by geophysical survey and confirmed during evaluation trenching (CA 2013), lies *c*. 500m to the west of the current site, with Roman enclosures having previously been recorded *c*. 300m east of the proposed development area (CA 2015).
- 2.4. The previous archaeological investigations did not identify any finds or features of a Saxon or medieval origin (RPS 2020).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The general objectives of the archaeological excavation were to:
 - identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits/features at the site prior to their destruction by the proposed development;
 - recover and analyse any artefactual evidence;
 - sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use and economy;
 - report on and publish the archaeological results at a level appropriate to their significance; and
 - compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive.

- 3.2. The specific aims of archaeological works, as detailed in the WSI, were to:
 - clarify the presence/absence, extent, condition, nature, character, date and significance of any archaeological remains encountered;
 - Identify any artefacts relating to the occupation or use of the site;
 - Determine if the Romano-British ditch identified in the western part of the site is part of a larger archaeological site (for example field system/enclosure/settlement)

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The fieldwork comprised the excavation of an area measuring 20m x 20m in the location shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2), and followed the methodology set out within the WSI (RPS 2020) and AMS (CA 2020). The location of the excavation area was agreed with Mr Membery and was informed by the results of the preceding archaeological trial-trench evaluation (AC 2018). The excavation area was set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4: *Survey Manual*. The excavation area was 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*.
- 4.2. Overburden was stripped from the excavation area by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which was the level at which archaeological features were first encountered.
- 4.3. Archaeological features/deposits were investigated, planned and recorded in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual.
- 4.4. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential and samples were taken in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of *Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. In the event, none were sampled.
- 4.5. Artefacts were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation.

- 4.6. CA will make arrangements with Somerset County Museum for the deposition of the project archive and, subject to agreement with the legal landowner(s), the artefact collection. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).
- 4.7. 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 excavation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A. Details of the artefactual material recovered from the site are given in Section 6 and Appendix B.
- 5.2. A broadly analogous stratigraphic sequence was identified throughout the excavation area. Although the natural substrate was identified between 0.45m and 1.05m below the present ground level (bpgl), it was typically revealed between 9.5m AOD and 9.75m AOD, sloping gently from north-east to south-west. It was overlain by subsoil that displayed evidence of truncation in the western and central extent of the site where they were immediately sealed by modern overburden containing small quantities of construction debris, including geotextiles and plastics. Throughout the eastern part of the excavation area the subsoil was overlain by a thin, remnant, topsoil that was then sealed by the modern overburden. The latter was itself sealed by a modern topsoil deposit throughout the site.
- 5.3. All identified archaeological features were identified cutting the natural substrate and were sealed by subsoil 10003, which measured up to 0.3m in thickness.
- 5.4. Two small sub-circular pits, 1011 and 1013 (Fig. 4, sections AA and BB), were identified in the central-southern part of the stripped area. Both had a shallow irregular profile, measured 0.6m in diameter and contained a single fill, 1012 and 1014 respectively, from which Early to Middle Bronze Age pottery was retrieved. Two broken flint flakes were also retrieved from fill 1012 of pit 1011.

- 5.5. Sinuous north-east/south-west aligned ditch 1005/1016/1019 (Fig. 4, section CC) was identified in the northern half of the stripped area and correlates closely with the Roman ditch identified in Trench 14 of the preceding archaeological evaluation (AC 2018). It had a shallow, broadly flat-based, profile contained two fills and typically measured 1m in width and up to 0.35m in depth. A single flint flake was recovered from the latest fill of this feature, 1017.
- 5.6. North-west/south-east aligned ditch 1022/1024 (Fig. 5, section EE) was identified in the south-western part of the stripped area. It had an open 'U'-shaped profile and contained a single, undated fill 1023/1025. Ditch 1022/1024 was observed to turn slightly to the east near the southern baulk, possibly indicating that it represents a corner of a small paddock/enclosure.
- 5.7. Ditch 1009 (Fig. 5, section DD) was identified at the southern limit of the stripped area, immediately to the south-west of ditch 1022/1024. It had an irregular profile and a concave base and contained a single undated fill, 1010, which comprised degraded blue-white clays.

6. THE FINDS

6.1. Artefactual material dating to the prehistoric period was hand-recovered from three deposits – pit and ditch fills. Quantities of the artefact types are given in Appendix B and the pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. Fabric codes have been devised for the purpose of this report.

Pottery

6.2. Single unfeatured bodysherds (totalling 33g) were recorded from two deposits. The example from fill 1012 within pit 1011 presents in a grog-tempered fabric (GR) with the sherd from fill 1014 of pit 1013 being tempered with grog and quartz (GRQZ). This pottery is considered, on the basis of fabric and firing characteristics, most likely to be of Early to Middle Bronze Age date.

Lithics

6.3. Three worked flint flakes (10g) were retrieved from two deposits. Those from fill 1012 within pit 1011 are both broken. All are chronologically undiagnostic and only broad prehistoric dating is possible.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. The excavation identified a small number of archaeological features within the stripped area. These comprised two pits of probable Early to Middle Bronze Age date and three narrow ditches, one of which contained a broken flint flake.
- 7.2. The exact function of pits 1011 and 1013 remains unclear given the isolated nature of these features and the absence of further contemporary activity either within the site itself or within its immediate environs (see *Archaeological Background* above). However, it is possible that these pits represent small-scale, possibly seasonal or transient, activity away from any main area of Early to Middle Bronze Age settlement, should this have existed.
- 7.3. Ditch 1005/1016/1019 produced a single broken flint flake of broad prehistoric date; however this material is considered to be residual, given that a quantity of pottery of probable 2nd-century AD date was recovered from the fill of this feature during the preceding archaeological evaluation (AC 2018). Further Romano-British activity, comprising a ladder settlement and field enclosures has been identified *c*. 500m to the west and *c*. 300m to the east of the current site respectively (CA 2013, 2015) and it is possible that ditch 1005/1016/1019 is associated with this activity. However, the limited quantity of artefactual material recovered from this ditch during both the current works and the preceding evaluation suggests that it is set away from any focus of settlement, and is perhaps more likely to be associated with agricultural activity.
- 7.4. Ditches 1009 and 1022/1024 remained artefactually undated; although their proximity to ditch 1005/1016/1019 suggests that they may be at least broadly contemporary. The function of these ditches remains unclear however; if a Romano-British date can be accepted for these features, then they may conceivably form part of a wider agricultural landscape with ditch 1005/1016/1019.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

8.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Cliff Bateman assisted by Josh Nowlan. This report was written by Cliff Bateman with the finds reports being compiled by Jacky Sommerville. The report illustrations were prepared by Aleks Osinska. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon and Alex Thomson.

9. **REFERENCES**

- AC 2018 Land at Grange Farm, Cannington, Somerset: Results of an Archaeological Trench Evaluation. AC typescript report ACD1917/2/0
- BGS British Geological Survey 2020 Geology of Britain Viewer https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/ Accessed 9 February 2020
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010a Land at Cannington, Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation: CA typescript report **10071**
- CA 2010b Land Adjacent to Junction 24 of the M5, Bridgwater, Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report 10174
- CA 2010c Land at Haygrove Farm, Bridgwater, Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report 10204
- CA 2013 Cannington Flood Defence Scheme, Cannington, Somerset Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report **13617**
- CA 2015 Phase 2 Cannington Flood Defence Scheme, Cannington, Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report **15621**
- RPS 2020 Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset. Written Scheme of Investigation
- Stratascan 2013 Geophysical Survey Report: Cannington Stratascan typescript report No. J5754

Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)	Spot-date
1001	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay	>20	>20	0.2	
1002	Layer		Modern overburden/lev elling	Red-brown silty clays containing modern building waste	>20	>20	Up to 0.65m	
1003	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay	>20	>20	0.3	
1004	Layer		Natural substrate	Red-brown gritty clays containing frequent irregular gravels	>20	>20	>0.3	
1005	Cut		Ditch	East/west aligned moderately sloping sides to flat base	>20	1	0.25	
1006	Fill	1005	Fill of ditch	Mid orange-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones		1	0.25	
1007	Cut		Modern geotech pit	Steep sided, flat base	2.6	0.6	0.57	
1008	Fill	1007	Fill of geotech pit	Dark grey sandy clay modern building waste	2.6	0.6	0.57	
1009	Cut		Ditch	North-west/south-east aligned, moderately sloping sides to flat base	>3	1.18	0.35	
1010	Fill	1009	Fil of ditch	Grey-white clayey chalk		1.18	0.35	
1011	Cut		Pit	Sub-circular, moderately sloping sides to flat base	0.64	0.6	0.2	
1012	Fill	1011	Fill of pit	Mid orange-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones	0.64	0.6	0.2	EBA-MBA
1013	Cut		Pit	Sub-circular, moderately sloping sides to flat base	0.62	0.54	0.18	
1014	Fill	1011	Fill of pit	Mid orange-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones	0.62	0.54	0.18	EBA-MBA
1015	Layer		Buried topsoil	Mid grey-brown silty clay	5	5	0.08	
1016	Cut		Ditch	East/west aligned, moderately sloping sides to flat base	>20	1	0.22	
1017	Fill	1016	Fill	2 nd fill of ditch 1016. Mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones	>20	1	0.15	Prehistoric
1018	Fill	1016	Fill	1 st fill of ditch 1016. Mid grey-brown silty clay	>20	1	0.07	
1019	Cut		Ditch	East/west aligned moderately sloping sides to flat base	>20	0.87	0.28	
1020	Fill	1019	Fill	2 nd fill of ditch 1019. Mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones	>4	0.87	0.20	
1021	Fill	1019	Fill	1 st fill of ditch 1019. Mid grey-brown silty clay	>20	0.65	0.08	
1022	Cut		Ditch	North-west/south-east aligned, moderately sloping sides to flat base	>20	0.36	0.14	
1023	Fill	1022	Fill of ditch	Red-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones	>20	0.36	0.14	
1024	Cut		Ditch	North/south aligned, moderately sloping sides to flat base	>20	1	0.23	
1025	Fill	1024	Fill of ditch	Red-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones	>20	1	0.23	

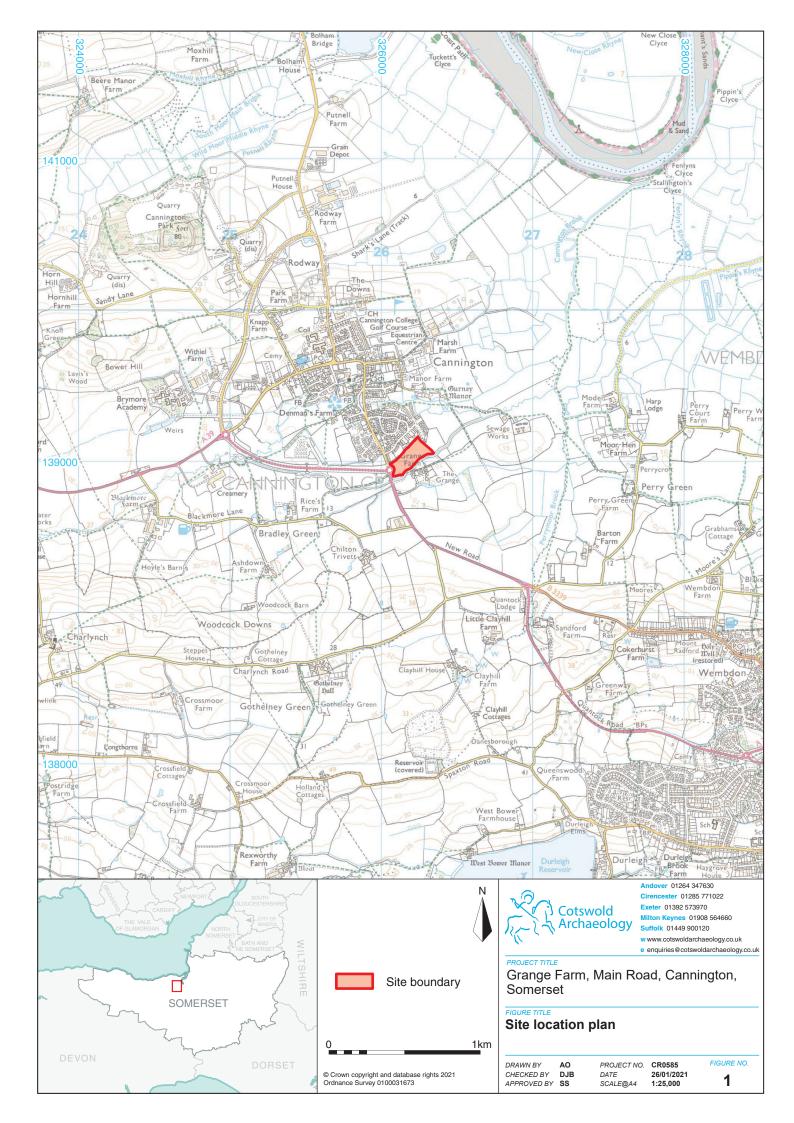
APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

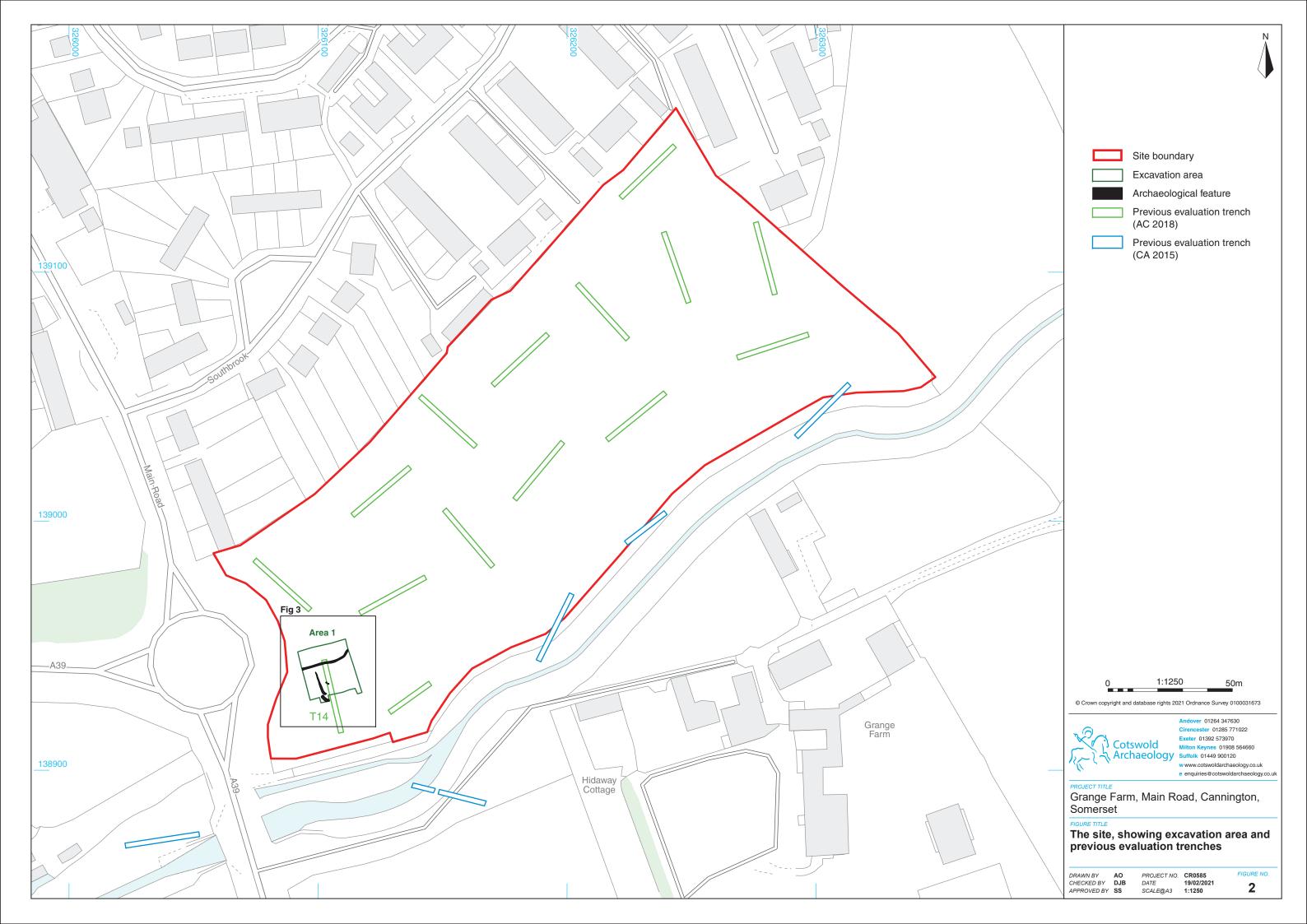
Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight	Spot-date
1012	Prehistoric pottery	Grog-tempered fabric	GR	1	31	EBA-MBA
	Flint	Flake		2	7	
1014	Prehistoric pottery	Grog-and-quartz tempered fabric	GRQZ	1	2	EBA-MBA
1017	Flint	Flake		1	3	-

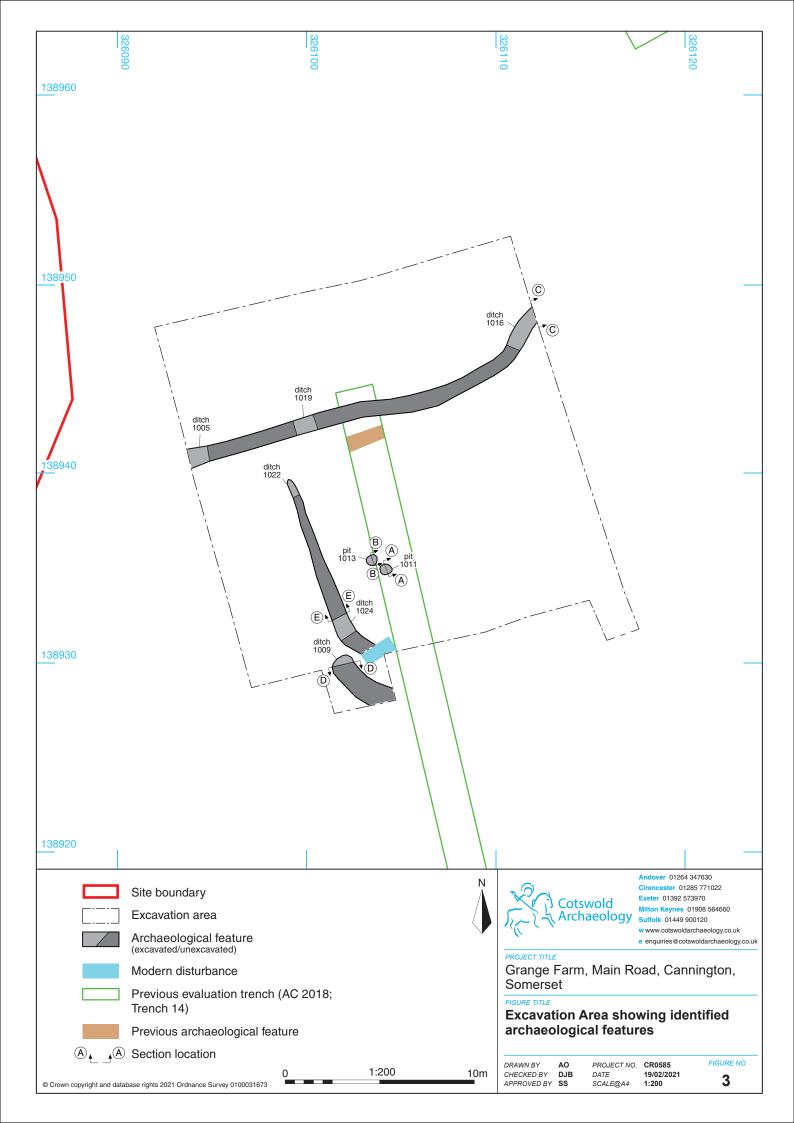
APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project name	Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington,	Somerset				
Short description	In January 2021, Cotswold Archa archaeological excavation of land at (Cannington, Somerset. The excavatio south-western part of the development	In January 2021, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological excavation of land at Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset. The excavation area was located in the south-western part of the development area and was targeted upon a ditch identified during a preceding archaeological				
	were identified in the central-southern Although the exact function of these	Two pits, containing pottery of Early to Middle Bronze Age date, were identified in the central-southern part of the stripped area. Although the exact function of these pits remains unclear, they are suggestive of a small area of activity, potentially of a seasonal or transient nature.				
	Three narrow ditches, one of which contained a residual work flint flake of broad prehistoric date, were recorded in the cent and southern parts of the stripped area. One of these ditch correlates closely to a ditch containing pottery of 2nd-century / date previously identified during the preceding archaeologic evaluation. The function of these ditches remains unclea although the limited quantity of artefactual material recover from these features during the current works suggests that the are set away from any focus of settlement and are perhaps mo- likely to be associated with agricultural activity.					
Project dates	11–15 January 2021	11–15 January 2021				
Project type	Archaeological Excavation	-				
Previous work	Field evaluation (AC 2018) Geophysics (Stratascan 2013)	Field evaluation (AC 2018)				
Future work	Unknown					
PROJECT LOCATION						
Site location Main Road, Cannington, Somerset						
Study area (m²/ha)	c.400m ²					
Site co-ordinates	32619 13905					
PROJECT CREATORS						
	Name of organisation Cotswold Archaeology					
	ject design (WSI) originator RPS					
Project Manager	Alex Thomson and Steven Sheldon					
Project Supervisor	Cliff Bateman					
	None					
SIGNIFICANT FINDS		None				
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive:	Content:				
Physical Bapar	Somerset County Museum	Pottery and worked flint				
Paper	Somerset County Museum	Context register, context sheets, drawn sections, photographic registers				
Digital Somerset County Museum Digital photographs						
BIBLIOGRAPHY						
	nge Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset	: Archaeological				
Excavation. CA typescript report CR0		-				

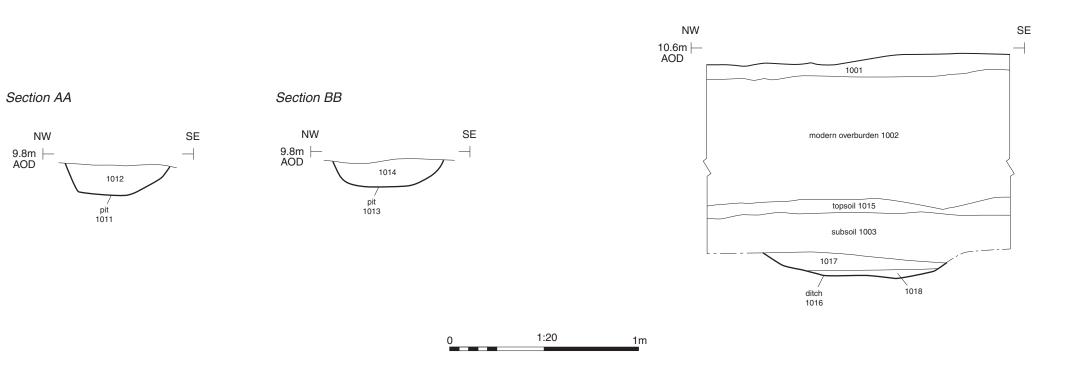
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Section CC





Pits 1013 (left) and 1011 (right), looking north-east (0.3m and 0.5m scales)



Ditch 1016, looking north-east (1m scale)



Andover 01264 347630 Cirencester 01285 771022 Exeter 01392 573970 Archaeology Milton Keynes 01908 564660 Suffolk 01449 900120 w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.

PROJECT TITLE Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset

FIGURE TITLE Pits 1011 and 1013, and ditch 1016: sections and photographs

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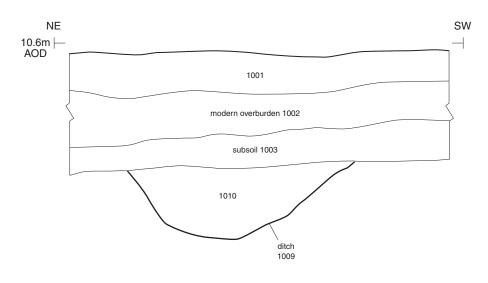
 PROJECT NO.
 CR0585

 DATE
 19/02/2021

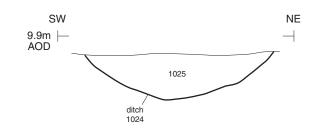
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 1:20

FIGURE NO. 4





Section EE







Ditch 1009, looking south-east (1m scale)



Ditch 1024, looking north-west (0.5m scale)





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PROJECT TITLE Grange Farm, Main Road, Cannington, Somerset

FIGURE TITLE Ditches 1009 and 1024: sections and photographs

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 PROJECT NO.
 CR0585

 DATE
 18/02/2021

 SCALE@A3
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FIGURE NO. 5



Andover Office

Stanley House Walworth Road Andover Hampshire SP10 5LH

01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11 Kemble Enterprise Park Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

Exeter Office

Unit 1, Clyst Units Cofton Road Marsh Barton Exeter EX2 8QW

t: 01392 573970

Milton Keynes Office

Unit 8 - The IO Centre Fingle Drive, Stonebridge Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK13 0AT

t: 01908 564660

Suffolk Office

Unit 5, Plot 11, Maitland Road Lion Barn Industrial Estate Needham Market Suffolk IP6 8NZ

t: 01449 900120

