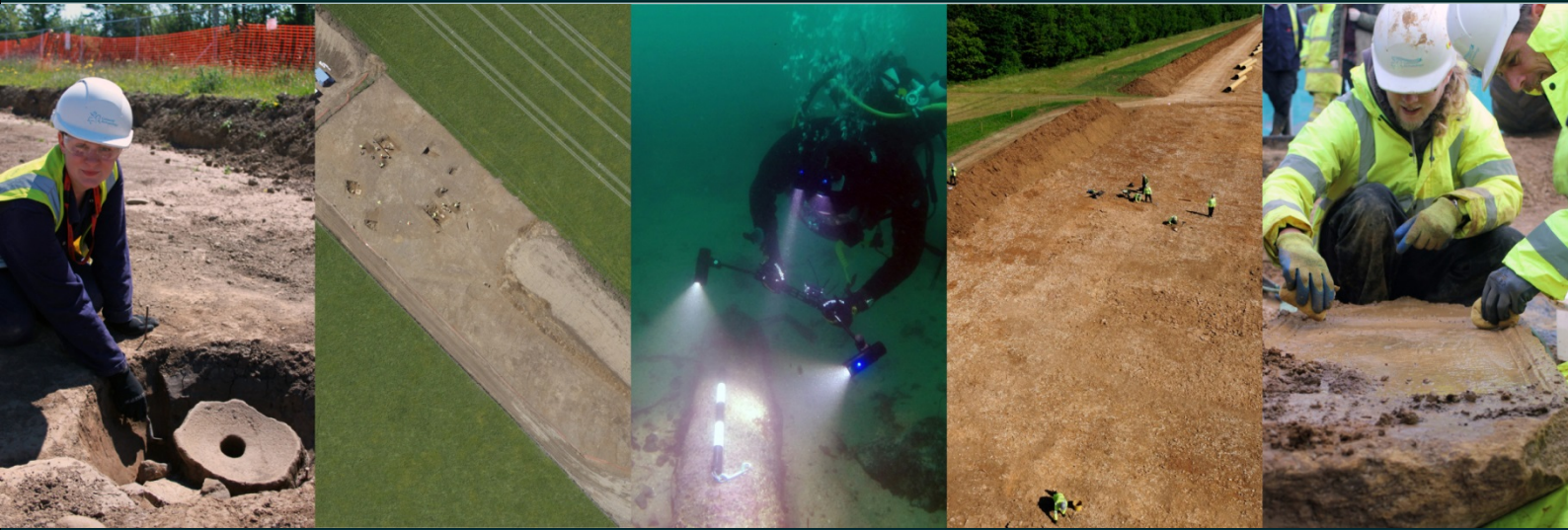


**Southern Parcel (Phase 2)
Land East of Sams Lane
Blunsdon
Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation



for:
Castlewood Commercial Properties Ltd

CA Project: CR0391
CA Report: CR0391_1
SMAG Accession No.: TBC

June 2020



Southern Parcel (Phase 2) Land East of Sams Lane Blunsdon Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: CR0391
CA Report: CR0391_1

Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	23 June 2020	Liam Wilson	Alex Thomson	Final	-	Martin Watts

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- *In June 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on the southern parcel (Phase 2) of land to the east of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire.*
- *This was in accordance with a requirement from the Wiltshire Council Archaeologist for pre-determination archaeological evaluation at the site, in relation to Swindon Borough Council planning application reference S/OUT/19/1267 for residential development*
- *A total of 14 trenches were excavated.*
- *The evaluation identified an undated ditch and agricultural furrows of probable medieval or post-medieval date. Residual finds of prehistoric flint and Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery were recovered from later deposits.*

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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 Trench location plan showing archaeological features and deposits and geophysical survey results (1:1000 & 1:500)

Fig. 3 Trench 10: section (1:20) and photograph

SUMMARY

Project name:	Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams Lane
Location:	Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire
NGR:	415448 190638
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	15–19 June 2020
Planning reference:	Swindon Borough Council ref: S/OUT/19/1267
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
Site Code:	SOPA20

In June 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on the southern parcel (Phase 2) of land to the east of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire. A total of 14 trenches were excavated.

The evaluation identified an undated ditch and agricultural furrows of probable medieval or post-medieval date. Residual finds of prehistoric flint and Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery were recovered from later deposits.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In June 2020, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation on the southern parcel (Phase 2) of land to the east of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 415448 190638; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for Castlewood Commercial Properties Ltd.
- 1.2. An outline application has been made to Swindon Borough Council (SBC) for the development of up to 115 dwellings, open space, landscaping and associated works (SBC planning ref: S/OUT/19/1267).
- 1.3. A programme of predetermination archaeological evaluation was advised by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council (WC), the archaeological advisor to SBC. The evaluation was subsequently carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)* prepared by CA (2020) and approved by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger.
- 1.4. The evaluation was also in line with the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2014)*, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.5. The proposed development area is approximately 4ha in extent, and comprises the southern half of an open agricultural field. The site is bounded to the north by the previously evaluated northern half of the field (now an active development site), to the west by Sams Lane, to the south by the B4019 and to the east by further agricultural fields. The site lies at approximately 133m AOD and slopes gradually downwards to the south-west, with a shallow combe present in the south-central part of the site.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as predominantly consisting of limestone of the Stanford Formation, formed during the Jurassic Period (BGS 2020). A small area of mudstone of the Ampthill Clay Formation is mapped in the south-east of the site, also of the Jurassic Period (*ibid.*). The natural geological substrate identified during the course of the evaluation consisted of mixed clays in the north and east of the site and limestone gravel and brash in the south and west.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. An Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (DBA; CA 2016), a geophysical survey (AS 2018), an archaeological evaluation (CA 2018) and archaeological excavation (CA 2019 and forthcoming) have been carried out within, or immediately adjacent to, the site. Below is a summary of the findings of these investigations, and reference should be made to these documents for further details.
- 2.2. The DBA outlines that pipelines trenches excavated along the eastern and southern edges of the site did not reveal any archaeological features (CA 2016). Investigations in the wider vicinity of the site, however, have located a number of archaeological sites and the Scheduled Monument of Castle Hill Hillfort and Lynchets (HE list entry number: 1016324) is situated c. 500m to the north of the site, which dates to the late Bronze Age to early Iron Age.
- 2.3. The site is likely to have been used for agricultural purposes from at least the medieval period, and early mapping shows that a central north-east to south-west orientated field boundary crossed the northern half of the field (the Phase 1 evaluation area) until the late 1960s. In 1970 the field boundary was removed but the field is mapped as containing several mature trees, a line of which still exist in the western part of the site. A 1946 aerial photograph appears to show circular features within the field. However, these did not relate to any observed features (CA 2016).
- 2.4. A geophysical survey of the wider site (AS 2018; see Fig. 2) identified evidence for potential quarrying in the north-western part of the overall field, anomalies that possibly represented an enclosure and/or ridge and furrow and a small group of positive responses in the north-eastern part of the wider site. Linear and curvilinear anomalies of uncertain origin were recorded in the southern part of the site covered by the current evaluation.
- 2.5. An archaeological evaluation undertaken directly to the north of the current site identified evidence for prehistoric and Roman funerary activity on the site (CA 2018). Eighteen probable Roman cremation burials were identified, sixteen of which cut an earlier deposit which could represent the remains of an earlier round barrow. A possible grave, pit and posthole recorded in the vicinity of the cremations are also likely to relate to prehistoric or Roman funerary activity. Evidence for probable

medieval clay extraction was also identified. Following the medieval period the site appears to have been used solely for agricultural purposes. A post-medieval field boundary and evidence for medieval/post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was identified across the site (*ibid.*).

- 2.6. A subsequent programme of archaeological excavation confirmed these features as a Roman cremation cemetery, alongside possible post-Roman occupation (CA 2019; see Fig. 1). A total of 33 cremation burials were identified, consisting of both urned and un-urned internments (10 and 23 respectively), dating to the 1st to 3rd centuries AD. These were largely within shallow pits with no other associated grave goods. Later features included an Early Anglo-Saxon pit and a probable sunken featured building (SFB) structure, which both seemingly respected the Roman cemetery features.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date and state of preservation. This information will enable SBC to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage asset conservation and the development proposals, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).
- 3.2. The specific objective of the evaluation was to investigate the anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey (AS 2018) and to investigate whether the activity identified to the north continues into this parcel of land.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 14 50m-long trenches (Fig. 2).
- 4.2. Trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies and to provide a representative sample of the remainder of the site. Trenches 4, 5, 8, 12 and 14 were relocated during the course of the fieldwork due to the presence of mature trees and ongoing construction works, with the agreement of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger.
- 4.3. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica GPS. Overburden was stripped from the trenches 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.
- 4.4. Archaeological features/deposits were investigated, planned and recorded in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.5. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.6. Artefacts were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.7. CA will make arrangements with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery 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).
- 4.8. A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts 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 similar stratigraphic sequence was recorded throughout the evaluated area. The natural geological substrate was identified within all excavated trenches at an average depth of 0.5m below present ground level (bpgl) and consisted of mixed clays and limestone gravel/brash.
- 5.3. Within Trenches 1, 7, 9 and 12 the natural substrate was overlain by a colluvial clay deposit (1003, 7002, 9002 and 12003), averaging 0.3m in thickness (see Fig. 2 for location and extent). The deposit of colluvium correlated broadly to a series of irregular anomalies identified by the preceding geophysical survey and sat within a shallow topographic depression within the site. A single sherd of pottery, dateable to the 11th to 13th centuries, was recovered from colluvial deposit 9002 in Trench 9. The natural substrate and colluvium were sealed by c. 0.2m of silty-clay subsoil, which was in turn covered by c. 0.24m of silty-clay plough soil/topsoil. A single flint flake was recovered from the topsoil horizon in Trench 1.
- 5.4. Overall, there was limited correlation between the recorded features and geophysical anomalies, with many anomalies seemingly relating to variation in the natural substrate or to modern field drains (such as in Trench 5). No archaeological features or deposits (except the aforementioned colluvium) were identified in Trenches 1, 3-9, 11, 12 and 14. Two north-east/south-west aligned furrows were recorded in Trenches 2 and 13 (2005 and 13003 respectively). One sherd of pottery, dating to the Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon period (5th to 8th centuries), was recovered from fill 2006 of furrow 2005.

Trench 10 (Fig. 2 & 3)

- 5.5. North-east/south-west aligned ditch 10003 was identified toward the south-eastern end of Trench 10 (Fig. 3, Section AA). It measured 1.5m in width, 0.2m in depth and contained undated silty-clay fill 10004. Ditch 10003 correlated closely with an anomaly identified by the preceding geophysical survey (see Fig. 2).

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1. Small quantities of artefactual material, comprising pottery and worked flint, were recovered by hand from three deposits. This material is listed by context in Appendix B and discussed in brief below. Fabric codes used to record pottery types are defined in Appendix B.

Pottery

- 6.2. Two sherds (42g) were recorded from two deposits. An abraded and unfeathered bodysherd (7g), in a handmade quartz-tempered fabric, is tentatively dated as early medieval, probably in the later 5th to 8th centuries range. It appears to be re-deposited in a furrow feature (fill 2006 of furrow 2005), which is probably of medieval or later date. The second sherd, from colluvium deposit 7002, is also unfeathered and abraded. Dating in the 11th to 13th centuries range is based on the oolitic limestone-tempered fabric, which is equivalent to Cirencester type 202 (Ireland 1998, 103-4).

Lithics

- 6.3. Worked flint was limited to a single chip (small flake) recovered from topsoil deposit 1000. It exhibits moderate edge damage most likely resulting from prolonged exposure within the plough soil. Raw material consists of good quality dark grey flint, with light, mottled 'recortication'. It exhibits no secondary working or indications of utilisation and probably represents a waste flake from (secondary) core reduction or tool manufacture/reworking. As such, and as an isolated piece, it is not closely dateable.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. The archaeological evaluation demonstrated that there was some correlation between the identified geophysical anomalies and the features that were subsequently revealed during the current trenching; many anomalies were shown to relate to geological variation, modern drainage or to colluvial deposits. Despite the archaeological potential of the development area (see Archaeological Background above) only a small artefactual assemblage and one feature were recorded.

-
- 7.2. The recovery of worked flint from topsoil horizon of Trench 1 correlates to known prehistoric activity from the wider area. The small, abraded sherd of 5th to 8th-century Anglo-Saxon pottery recovered from the furrow in Trench 2 probably derives from the contemporary activity identified 100m to the north-west by the previous excavation.
- 7.3. The recovery of an abraded sherd of medieval pottery from Trench 9 suggests some use of the site at this time. The evidence for furrows recorded in Trenches 2 and 13 are likely to be of medieval or post-medieval date, representing a continuation of furrows identified during previous evaluation works to the north (CA 2018), supporting the assumption that much of the area was being used for arable cultivation from the medieval period onwards.
- 7.4. Ditch 10003, identified in Trench 10, correlated to a linear geophysical anomaly and possibly relates to a drainage and/or enclosure function but remains undated.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 8.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Liam Wilson, assisted by Amy Evans, Daniel White, Michael Lavery and Jack Harrison. This report was written by Liam Wilson. The finds report was written by Ed McSloy. The report illustrations were prepared by Rosanna Price and Ryan Wilson. The project archive has been compiled by Liam Wilson, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Alex Thomson.

9. REFERENCES

AS (Archaeological Surveys Ltd) 2018 *Land East of Sams Lane, Broad Blunsdon, Swindon: Magnetometer Survey Report*, ref. no. **J755**

British Geological Survey 2020 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>
Accessed 19 May 2020

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Land East of Sams Lane, Broad Blunsdon, Wiltshire: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, CA report no. **16418**

CA 2018 *Land East of Sams Lane, Broad Blunsdon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA report no. **18493**

CA 2019 *Land East of Sams Lane, Broad Blunsdon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Excavation Fieldwork Summary*

CA 2020 *Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Ireland, C.A., 1998 *The Pottery in Wilkinson and McWhirr*, 103–140

Wilkinson, D. and McWhirr, A., 1998 *Cirencester Excavations IV: Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church and Medieval Abbey*, Cotswold Archaeological Trust

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	1000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.25
1	1001	Layer		subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
1	1002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
1	1003	Layer		colluvium	Mid rey brown silty clay	>1.8	0.8	0.2
2	2000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.25
2	2001	Layer		subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
2	2002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
2	2003	cut		Furrow	NW/SE, moderate sides and flat base	>4	1.5	0.08
2	2004	fill		Furrow fill	Mid dark brown silty clay	>4	1.5	0.08
2	2005	cut		Furrow	NW/SE, moderate sides and flat base	>4	1.5	0.08
2	2006	fill		Furrow fill	Mid dark brown silty clay	>4	1.5	0.45
3	3000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.25
3	3001	Layer		subsoil	light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
3	3002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
4	4000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.35
4	4001	Layer		subsoil	light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
4	4002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
5	5000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.3
5	5001	Layer		subsoil	light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
5	5002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
6	6000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.38
6	6001	Layer		subsoil	light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.09
6	6002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
7	7000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.15
7	7001	Layer		subsoil	light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
7	7002	Layer		colluvium	Mid rey brown silty clay	>35	0.8	0.2
7	7003	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
8	8000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.45
8	8001	Layer		subsoil	light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.25
8	8002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
9	9000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.28
9	9001	Layer		subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
9	9002	Layer		colluvium	Mid rey brown silty clay	>30	0.8	0.4
9	9003	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
10	10000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.21
10	10001	Layer		subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
10	10003	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
10	10004	Cut		Ditch	E-W cut of ditch, moderate sides and flat base	>1.8	1.84	0.2
10	10005	fill		Fill of ditch	Mid grey brown silty clay	>1.8	1.84	0.2

11	11000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.25
11	11001	Layer		subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
11	11002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
12	12000	Layer		Plough soil	Dark grey brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.25
12	12001	Layer		subsoil	Light yellow brown silty clay	>50	>1.8	0.2
12	12002	Layer		natural	Light grey brown limestone brash	>50	>1.8	>0.01
12	12003	Layer		colluvium	Mid rey brown silty clay	>25	0.8	0.2

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context No.	Material	Description*	Ct.	Wt. (g)	Spot-date
1000	Worked flint	Chip/small flake	1	<1	-
2006	Early medieval pottery	QZ (bodysherd) abraded	1	7g	C5-C7/C8
7002	medieval pottery	COTS (bodysherd) abraded	1	35	C11-C13

*pottery fabrics are defined below

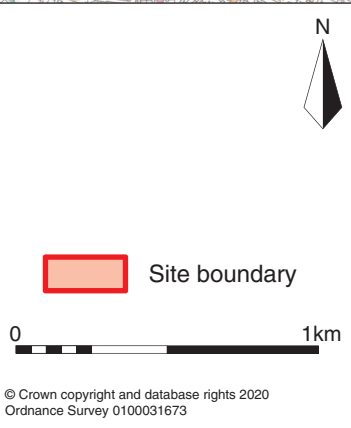
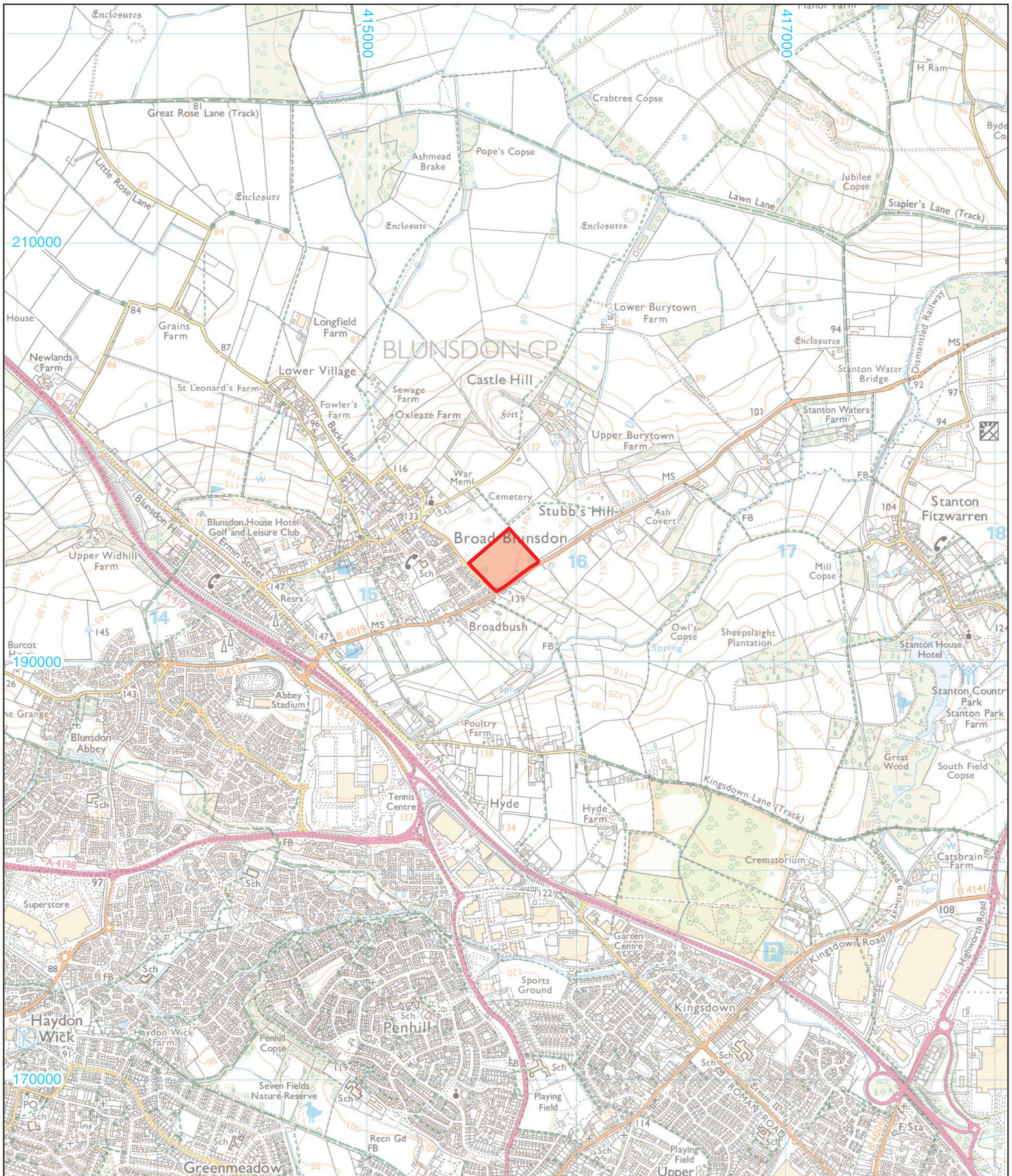
Pottery fabrics short descriptions

QZ Handmade. Dark grey throughout, sandy feel. Common sub-angular quartz (up to 0.3mm)

COTS Handmade. Dark grey brown throughout. Abundant oolitic limestone (0.3-0.5mm). Cirencester fabric 202 (Ireland 1998, 103-4)

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Wiltshire	
Short description	<p>In June 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on the southern parcel (Phase 2) of land to the east of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire. A total of 14 trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The evaluation identified an undated ditch and agricultural furrows of probable medieval or post-medieval date. Residual finds of prehistoric flint and Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery were recovered from later deposits.</p>	
Project dates	15-19 June 2020	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	DBA (CA 2016) Geophysical survey (AS 2018) Archaeological evaluation (CA 2018) Archaeological Excavation (CA 2019)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Land to the east of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire	
Study area	4ha	
Site co-ordinates	415448 190638	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Alex Thomson	
Project Supervisor	Liam Wilson	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery	Pottery, flint
Paper	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery	Context sheets, drawings, registers
Digital	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2020 <i>Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams Lane, Blunsdon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> , CA typescript report CR0391_1		



Cotswold Archaeology

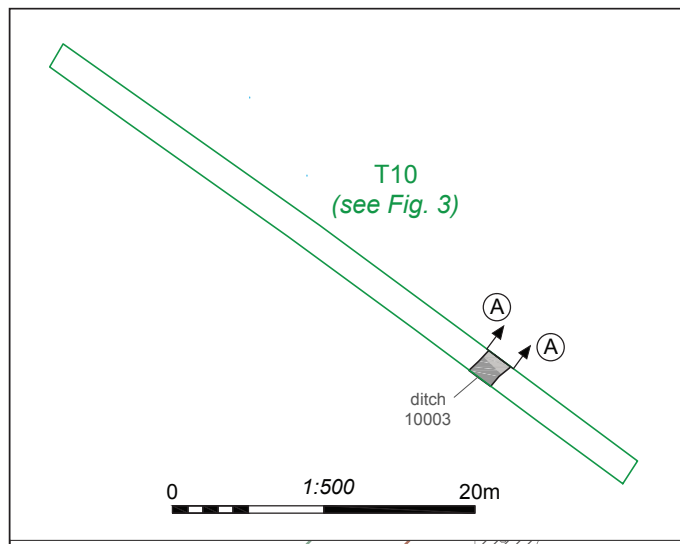
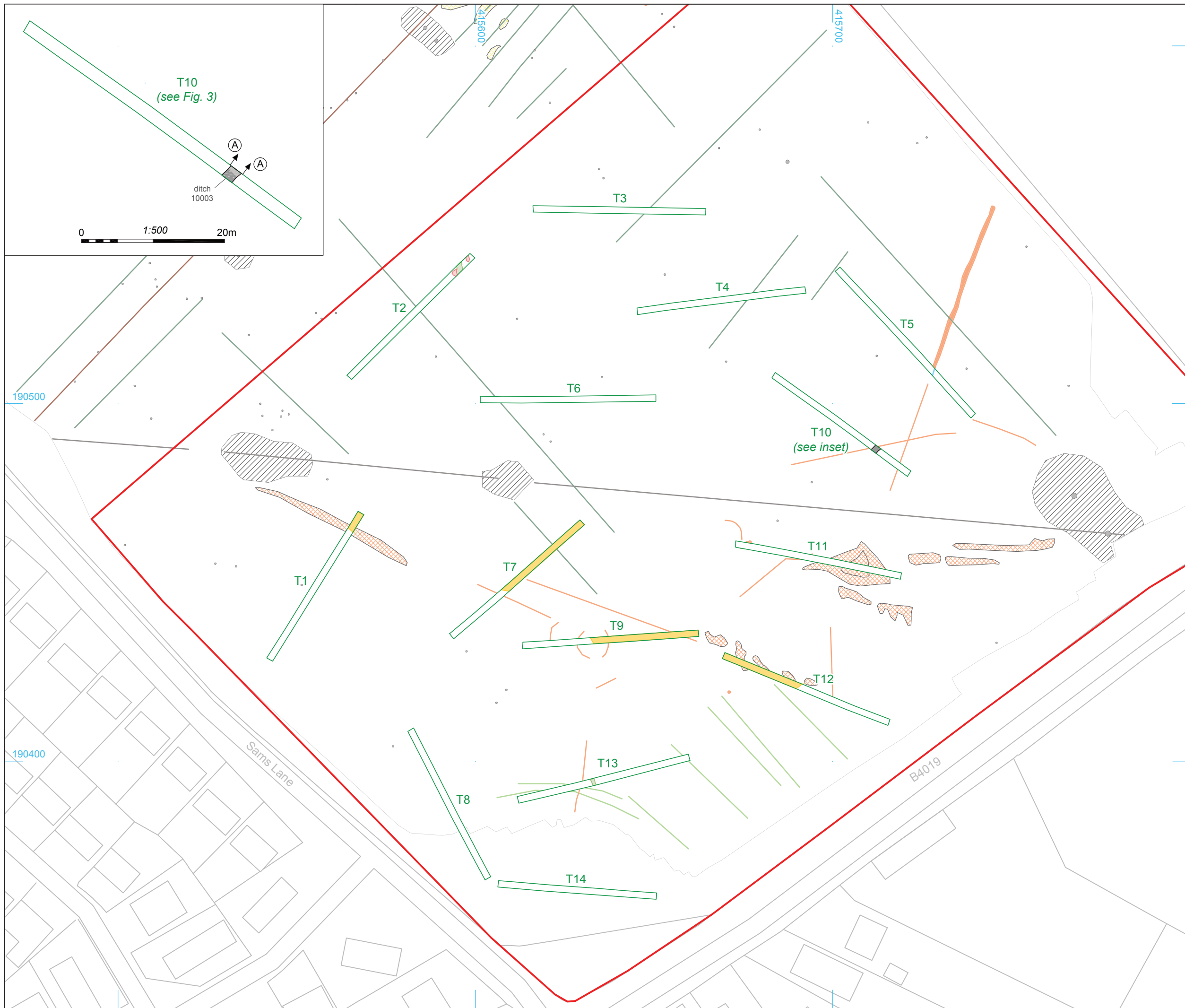
Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 573970
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PROJECT TITLE
 Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams Lane, Broad Blunsdon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

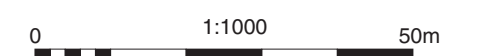
DRAWN BY RP **PROJECT NO.** CR0391 **FIGURE NO.**
CHECKED BY DJB **DATE** 26.06.20 **1**
APPROVED BY ADT **SCALE**@A4 1:25,000

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 Ordnance Survey 0100031673



- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature (excavated / unexcavated)
- Colluvium
- Furrow
- Treethrow
- Section location

- Geophysical Survey Results**
by Archaeological Surveys Ltd, 2018
- Positive linear anomaly - possible ditch-like feature
 - Linear anomaly - ridge and furrow
 - Positive linear anomaly - former field boundary
 - Linear anomaly - of agricultural origin
 - Discrete positive response - possible pit-like feature
 - Positive anomaly - magnetically enhanced material
 - Magnetic response - associated with infilled quarrying
 - Magnetic response - ground disturbance associated with ridge and furrow / possible quarrying
 - Magnetic debris - spread of magnetically the iron-rich / ferrous material
 - Magnetic disturbance from ferrous material
 - Strong multiple dipolar linear anomaly - pipeline
 - Strong dipolar anomaly - ferrous object



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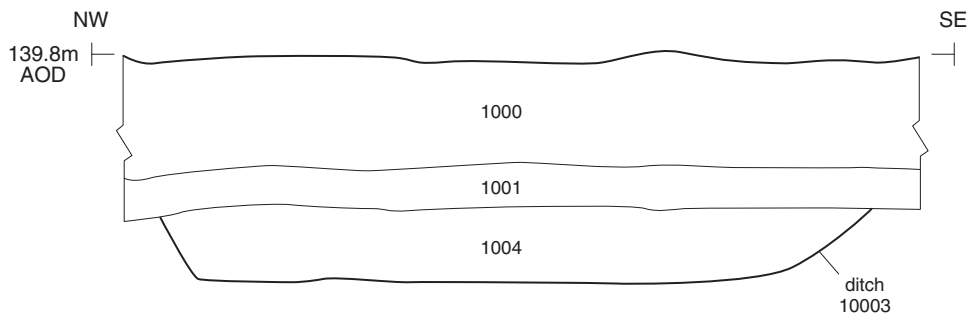
PROJECT TITLE
Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams

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

<small>DRAWN BY</small> RP	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> CR0391	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
<small>CHECKED BY</small> DJB	<small>DATE</small> 26.06.20	2
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Section AA



Ditch 10003, looking north-east (1m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Southern Parcel (Phase 2), Land East of Sams Lane, Broad Blunsdon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 10: section and photograph

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FIGURE NO.

3

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