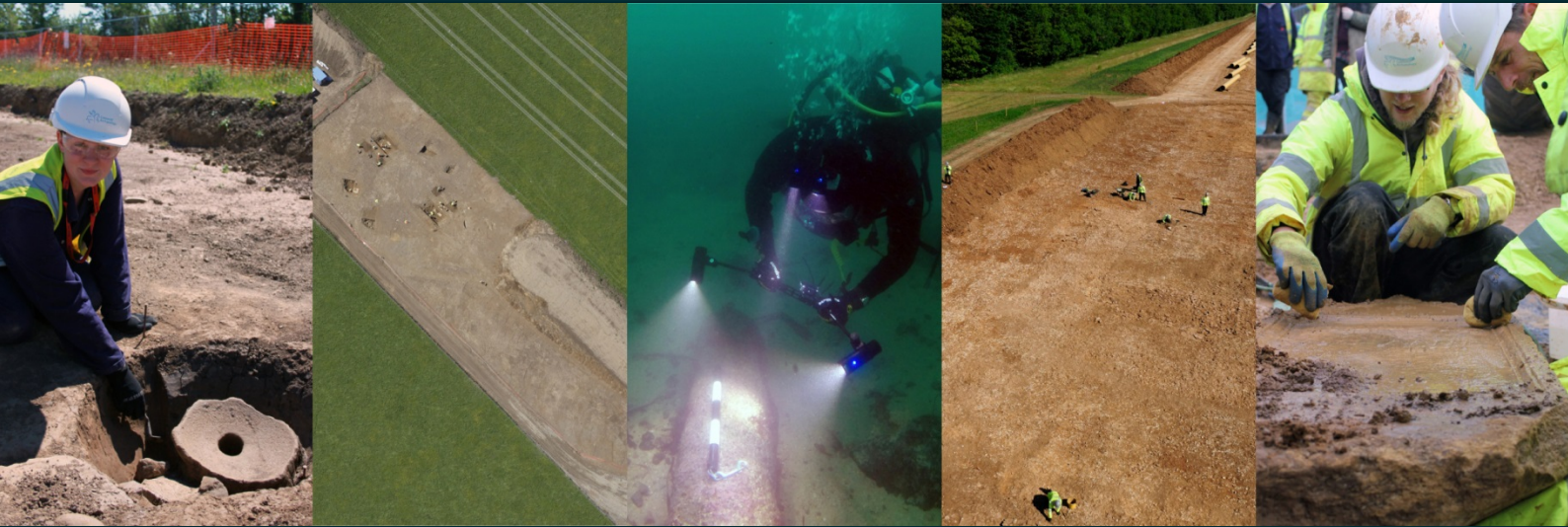


Land at 12 Turnpike Road
Blunsdon
Swindon
Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Bellway Homes Ltd

CA Project: CR0304
CA Report: CR0304_1
SMAG Accession No.: SWIMG:2020.3

February 2020



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Blunsdon
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A	30 January 2020	Monica Fombellida	Alex Thomson	Final		Richard Young

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land at 12 Turnpike Road
Location:	Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire
NGR:	415184 189726
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	22 – 24 January 2020
Planning Reference:	Swindon Borough Council ref: S/OUT/19/1742
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Swindon Museum & Art Gallery
Accession Number:	SWIMG:2020.3
Site Code:	TURN 20

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between 22 and 24 January 2020 on land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire. Five trenches were excavated.

Modern made-ground deposits of unknown origin were identified across the evaluated area.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2020 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Bellway Homes Ltd on land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 415184 189726; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application for residential development, submitted to Swindon Borough Council (SBC; ref: S/OUT/19/1742).
- 1.2 The archaeological evaluation was recommended by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council (WC), the archaeological advisor to SBC, and was conducted 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).

The site

- 1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 2.05ha and comprises 12 Turnpike Road, and associated gardens and agricultural land. The site is bounded to the south-west by the residential properties facing on to Turnpike Road, to the north-west and north-east by agricultural fields, and to the south-east by residential properties. The site lies at approximately 140m AOD and slopes gently to the south-east.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as limestone of the Stanford Formation, formed during the Jurassic Period (BGS 2020). The natural substrate identified during the course of the evaluation consisted of light yellow-brown silt-clay, and was encountered in Trenches 1 and 2.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The proposed development area has previously been the subject of a Heritage Assessment (CSA 2019) and Geophysical Survey (PCG 2019). The following is a summary of these reports and information available from archaeological works within the wider area.

- 2.2 Prehistoric activity within the area is limited to isolated Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age find spots at Groundwell Ridge, Abbey Meads and The Grange, all located to the west of the site (FA 2013). A Neolithic cooking pit has been recorded c. 650m to the east (CSA 2019). Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age settlement was reported at Hyde Farm, c.1km east of the site, whilst the Iron Age hillfort of Castle Hill lays c. 1.3km to the north-east (*ibid.*). Iron Age activity has also been identified at Groundwell West and during the construction of the A419 Blunsdon Bypass, c.100m to the west of the proposed development area (CA 2004; Brett & McSloy 2011). Geophysical survey immediately to the north-east of the site has identified anomalies that may represent linear and rectilinear features of possible prehistoric/Roman date, although the results were described as inconclusive in the survey report (CSA 2019).
- 2.3 The nearest identified evidence of Roman activity is Ermin Street, a major road linking the civitates of *Calleva* (Silchester) and *Corinium* (Cirencester), which runs directly to the west of the site, along the course of the present-day Turnpike Road. An evaluation undertaken off Ermin Street, c. 600m to the north-west of the site, identified a pit containing early Roman pottery (CA 2013). Archaeological works associated with the A419, immediately south of Turnpike Road, recorded a small Roman period farmstead c. 90m south-west of the site (Brett & McSloy 2011). A rural sanctuary (Scheduled Monument 1018496) was uncovered during building works at Groundwell Ridge, c. 1km to the south-west of the current site. Subsequent extensive geophysical analysis and excavation (e.g. CA 2003) of the site has revealed a complex of buildings and earthworks, including hillside terracing, four courtyards, a bathhouse and a stone-lined cistern, possibly a nymphaeum (EH 2006). Two hoards, one of 3rd-century coins and the other of mid 4th-century silver plate were excavated at the site.
- 2.4 There is evidence for Saxon activity in the form of human burials at Abbey Meads, c. 700m to the west of the site, suggesting the presence of a settlement in the near vicinity (CA 2008).
- 2.5 The site likely lay within the agricultural hinterland of Broad Blunsdon and Blunsdon St. Andrew during the medieval and post-medieval periods, and is depicted as one enclosed field from the late 19th century on historic cartographic sources. An evaluation undertaken directly to the north-west of site identified post-medieval and modern quarrying activity, correlating to the same mapping evidence (CA 2019).

- 2.6 The geophysical survey (PCG 2019) identified no anomalies of archaeological interest within the limits of the proposed development area. Widespread and strong magnetic variation was registered across almost the entire site and could be associated with modern activity.

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 the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). This information will enable SBC 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 revised *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Four trenches measured 30m in length and one trench measured 20m in length. All trenches measured 1.8m in width. 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 The 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*, but no deposits were identified that required

sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.

- 4.4 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. The site archive will be deposited within Swindon Museum & Art Gallery under accession number SWIMG:2020.3. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-3)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The general stratigraphic sequence identified during the course of the evaluation was broadly uniform. The natural geological substrate was identified within Trenches 1 and 2, at a depth of c. 1m below present ground level (bpgl) in Trench 1, and c. 2m bpgl in Trench 2. This was sealed by 0.1m of buried topsoil, which was then overlain by modern dumped deposits, which were recorded in all trenches. Trenches 3-5 were excavated to a maximum depth of 2.2m, and this modern dumped deposit continued beyond the limit of excavation in each instance (see Fig. 3). This made-ground material correlates to the extensive magnetic disturbance recorded by the preceding geophysical survey.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the course of the evaluation. It is probable that any features relating to the prehistoric, Roman or early medieval activity known to exist in the vicinity of the site either do not extend into the proposed development area or were sealed by the significant modern made-ground horizon recorded in all trenches.
- 6.2 The origin of the modern made-ground identified across the evaluated area is unclear. However, it may be that this material derives from the construction of the A419 dual carriageway to the south-west of site.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Marino Cardelli, assisted by Trevor Jose. The report was written by Monica Fombellida. The illustrations were prepared by Gemma Bowen. The archive has been compiled by and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Alex Thomson.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2020 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, accessed 31 January 2020

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CA 2004 *A419, Blunsdon Bypass, Swindon, Wiltshire*, CA Report No. **04004**

CA 2008 *Two Anglo-Saxon Burials at Abbeymeads, Blunsdon St. Andrew, Wiltshire*, CA Report No. **08027**

CA 2013 *Land off Ermin Street, Blunsdon, Swindon: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA Report No. **13402**

CA 2019 *Land off Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA Report No. **CR0232_1**

CA 2020 *Land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

CSA 2019 *Land off Turnpike Road, Swindon, Heritage Assessment*, CSA Report No. **CSA/4222/01D**

EH (English Heritage) 2006 *Groundwell Ridge Roman Villa, Swindon, Wiltshire: Excavations 2003–2005*. Research Department Report Series **77**.

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PCG (Pre-construct Geophysics) 2019 *Land off Turnpike Road, Swindon, Geophysical (Gradiometer) Survey*

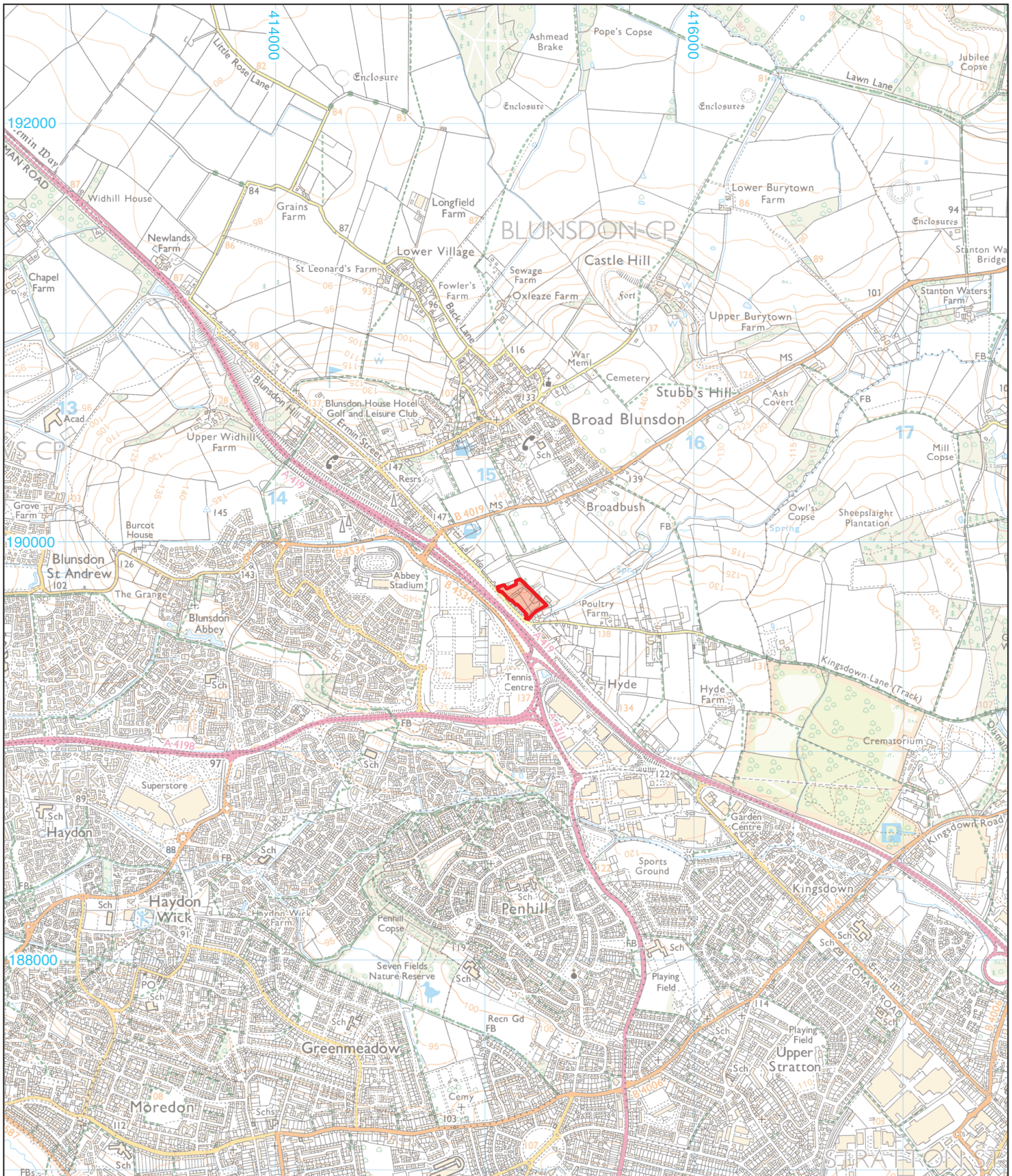


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Tr. No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	Layer	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.15
1	101	Layer	Made ground	Mid green-brown clay-silt with CBM inclusions	20	1.8	0.28
1	102	Layer	Made ground	Light orange-brown clay with stones inclusions	20	1.8	0.3
1	103	Layer	Made ground	Mid grey-brown silt-clay with limestone inclusion	20	1.8	0.32
1	104	Layer	Natural	Light yellow-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	n/a
2	200	Layer	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.15
2	201	Layer	Made ground	Mid yellow-brown clay-silt with CBM inclusions	20	1.8	1.5
2	202	Layer	Buried soil	Dark brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.1
2	203	Layer	Buried subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-silt	20	1.8	0.15
2	204	Layer	Natural	Light yellow-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	n/a
3	300	Layer	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.15
3	301	Layer	Made ground	Mid yellow-brown clay-silt with CBM inclusions	20	1.8	>2
4	400	Layer	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.15
4	401	Layer	Made ground	Mid grey-brown silt-clay with modern inclusions	20	1.8	>1.75
4	402	Layer	Made ground	Mid yellow-brown clay-silt with CBM inclusions	20	1.8	0.3
5	500	Layer	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.15
5	501	Layer	Subsoil	Light orange-brown, clay-silt	20	1.8	0.2
5	502	Layer	Made ground	Dark brown silt-clay	20	1.8	0.1
5	503	Layer	Made ground	Light yellow-brown clay with CBM inclusions	20	1.8	>1.6

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology between 22 and 24 January 2020 on land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire. Five trenches were excavated. Modern made-ground deposits of unknown origin were identified across the evaluated area.	
Project dates	22 - 24 January 2020	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Heritage Assesment (CSA 2019) Geophysical survey (PCG 2019)	
Future work	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire	
Study area	2.05ha	
Site co-ordinates	415184 189726	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Alex Thomson	
Project Supervisor	Marino Cardelli	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Paper	Swindon Museum & Art Gallery - SWIMG:2020.3	Field recording sheets
Digital	Swindon Museum & Art Gallery - SWIMG:2020.3	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2020 <i>Land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon, Swindon, Wiltshire. Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report CR0304_1		



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

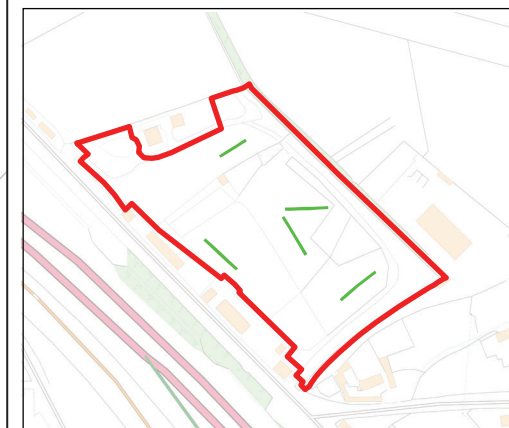
PROJECT TITLE
 Land at 12 Tumpike Road, Blunsdon,
 Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan



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DRAWN BY	GB	PROJECT NO.	CR0304	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	27/01/2020	
APPROVED BY	MC	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	1



- Site Boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Overhead line buffer



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

PROJECT TITLE
 Land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon,
 Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan

DRAWN BY CHECKED BY APPROVED BY	GB DJB MC	PROJECT NO. DATE SCALE@A3	CR0304 27/01/2020 1:500	FIGURE NO. 2
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Trench 1, looking north-west (1m scale)



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



Sondage at north-eastern end of Trench 3, looking north-east (1m scale)



Sondage at north-eastern end of Trench 5, looking east (1m scale)


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

PROJECT TITLE
 Land at 12 Turnpike Road, Blunsdon,
 Swindon, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
Photographs

DRAWN BY	GB	PROJECT NO.	CR0304	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	27/01/2020	
APPROVED BY	MC	SCALE@A3	NA	3

Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 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

e: enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

