

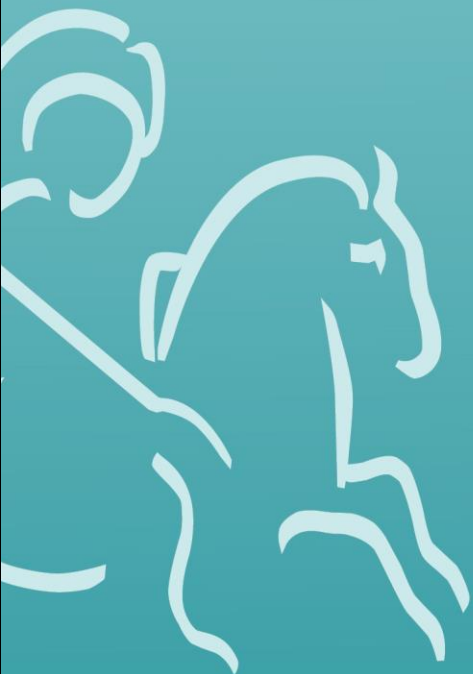
**Land at The Croft  
Milston,  
Wiltshire**  
*Archaeological Evaluation*



*for:*  
Wiltshire Council

CA Project: AN0281  
CA Report: AN0281\_1

February 2021



# Land at The Croft Milston, Wiltshire

*Archaeological Evaluation*

CA Project: AN0281  
CA Report: AN0281\_1

Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	17/02/2021	SJB	Ray Kennedy	Internal review	General Edit	Ray Kennedy

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Fig. 2 Trench location plan (1:400)

Fig. 3 Photographs of the site and Trench 1

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## SUMMARY

<b>Project name:</b>	The Croft
<b>Location:</b>	Milston, Wiltshire
<b>NGR:</b>	416103, 145742
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	Salisbury Museum (SBYWM: 2021.4)
<b>Site Code:</b>	CRBR21

In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of the land at The Croft, Milston, Wiltshire. A single 20m trench was excavated.

Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of the land at the Croft, Milston, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 416103, 145742; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for Wiltshire Council.
- 1.2. The evaluation will help inform the planning application for the construction of a domestic dwelling, which will be made to Wiltshire Council.
- 1.3. The archaeological works was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2021) and approved by Neil Adam, Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council.
- 1.4. The evaluation was also in line with Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020), 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 site is approximately 0.13ha in extent, being situated at the south-western edge of a modern housing development called The Croft, located within the small settlement of Brigmerston. The nearby village of Milston lies approximately 380m to the south of the site with the larger settlement at Durrington located c.740m to the south-east.
- 1.6. The site currently comprises of a sub-rectangular, bounded by residential dwellings to the north, east and south, with mature woodlands to the north, west and south-west. The site is currently vacant comprising of grass and a tarmac/concrete hard standing associated with the formed garage block. There is some encroachment from neighbouring properties, and is occupied by fencing and garden structures.
- 1.7. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Seaford Chalk Formation; a sedimentary bedrock formed 84 to 90 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period from warm chalk seas (BGS 2021).

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## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The Archaeological background given below is a succinct summary of the Desk Based Assessment of the site by Cotswold Archaeology (2021).

### *Prehistoric*

2.2. No remains of prehistoric date are recorded within the Site. However, The Avon Valley where the site is situated, acted as a key travel route across Salisbury Plain, and became a focus of prehistoric activity. The wider area around is encompassed by Salisbury Plain which represents a rich prehistoric landscape containing settlements, field systems and funerary monuments.

2.3. Within the wider landscape limited quantities of Mesolithic flint work have been recorded, suggesting a background level of activity during this period (McOmish et al. 2002).

### *Neolithic*

2.4. In the Neolithic period (4000 BC - 2400 BC) the construction of ceremonial monuments, the earliest of which include long barrows and cursus monuments, were being constructed in the Salisbury Plains. Examination of aerial photographs as part of the Salisbury Plain NMP (English Heritage 2000) and the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Mapping Project (English Heritage 2004) identified a cropmark of a suspected long barrow at Brigmerston Field, c. 600m to the south-east of the Site. This feature measured approximately 35m in length with slightly curved ditches spaced c.30m's apart.

### *Bronze Age*

2.5. The Early Bronze Age (2400 - 1500 BC) saw an increase in construction of funerary monument known as round barrows. These circular monuments usually composed of a mound and encircling ditch, are recorded extensively across Salisbury Plain, occurring both individually and as groupings.

2.6. A number of probable ploughed-out barrows located by cropmarks and photographs have been recorded in the study area (English Heritage 2000 and 2004). The two main concentrations of these monuments are located c. 600m to the south-east of the Site at Brigmerston Field and c. 250m to the north-east of the Site at Brigmerston Corner, in which 13 are recorded at Brigmerston Field and 14 at Brigmerston Corner. Both of these barrow groups contain a triple barrow, consisting

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of three barrows enclosed by a oval ditch. Evidence for earlier Neolithic in the form of a Neolithic Long Barrow is located at Brigmerston Field.

- 2.7. By the later Bronze Age an intensification of landscape for settlement and agriculture occurred, supported by the presence of substantial boundary ditches and extensive field systems. Towards the northern, eastern and western limits of the study area, aerial photographs have identified several field systems (English Heritage 2000 and 2004), although not attributed to any specific period, it is possible that some of these field systems could belong to the Bronze Age. Excavated examples of these elsewhere on Salisbury Plain have dated between the late Bronze Age and Romano-British periods (McOmish et al. 2002).
- 2.8. A single stray find of a polished flint knife, potentially disturbed by ploughing, was located c.780m to the south of the site
- 2.9. The available evidence suggests that the landscape surrounding the Site was a focus for ceremonial/funerary activity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, and although the site is located at some distance from any apparent focal points of such activity, it is possible some of the activity may be present on site.

#### *Iron Age and Romano-British*

- 2.10. During the Iron Age (750 BC – AD 43) and Romano-British (AD 43 – AD 410) periods, a well established pattern of farms and settlements across the Salisbury Plain landscape, appears to have continued from the Late Bronze Age (McOmish et al. 2002; Wessex Archaeology 2010). No remains of definitive Iron Age date are recorded within the study area; several features are identified by the HER as being of broad prehistoric to Romano-British date and may be associated with this period.
- 2.11. Two rectangular enclosures, located c. 600m to the east of the Site, and c. 850m to the north-west are suspected to belong to the Iron Age or Romano-British period; The latter of these appears to be incomplete. Both enclosures are situated close to field systems, which it is believed they are associated with. These complexes of rectangular enclosures potentially could originate in the Bronze Age.
- 2.12. To the north of the site, c. 820m, further field systems have been dated, along with a single linear ditch, recorded as being of probable late prehistoric or Romano-British date, is recorded c. 730m to the north-east.



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- 2.13. Located at Milston Farm c. 520m to the south-east of the Site, the scheduled monument which comprises of earthworks relating to an undated U-shaped enclosure, has been suggested to represent a settlement site of late prehistoric or Romano-British date. However, due to the historic core at Milston this monument may have a medieval origin.
- 2.14. In the study area limited material evidence for Romano-British activity is recorded. A cremation burial found in association with a bone pin, a knife blade, pottery sherds and a clay object was located c. 700m to the south-east of the Site; additionally during a watching brief located at Durrington Manor in 2004, c. 940m south-west of the Site, early Romano-British pottery sherds were uncovered..

#### *Early medieval and medieval*

- 2.15. Archaeological evidence for early medieval activity within the study area is limited to stray finds of pottery and a comb, located c. 670m to the south-east of the Site, a brooch, recovered c. 620m to the south-west, and a bookend, c. 660m to the south-west.
- 2.16. Brigmerston was first recorded in the AD 1086 Domesday Survey, in which it is recorded Brismarstone, a small settlement of 11 households (Open Domesday 2020). The village is thought to have developed in the early medieval period at the same time as Milston, with Brigmerston located on the southern bank of the River Avon and Milston the northern bank. The two separate settlements were associated with two separate manors, by the 14th century were under a single ownership both retaining separate areas of open fields (ibid).
- 2.17. A manor house belonging to the Lord of Milston and Brigmerston is recorded to exist in the 14th and 16th centuries; however the exact location of the building is unknown. Approximately 90m to the south of the site, a dovecote associated with the grade II Dovecote Cottage, is believed to date to the 16th century retaining a medieval buttress at its north-east corner.
- 2.18. Ridge and furrow earthworks, which likely formed part of the open field system associated with Milston Manor has been identified c.430m south-east of the site. No remains relating to Brigmerston have been identified, surviving in the form a scheduled moated enclosure.

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2.19. Additional evidence for medieval activity in the study areas comprises of a medieval settlement located at Knighton Farm, c. 620m to the south-west of the site. To the north of the site (450m), earthworks identified through aerial photographs have been suggested to belong to the deserted medieval settlement of Sexhamcote, recorded in AD 1227. Situated c. 900m south-west of the site, East End Farm has medieval origins, taking its name from one of the two former manors, which the medieval settlement at Durrington was centred on.

2.20. The site lies c. 60m to the north of the inferred extent of the medieval village of Brimmerston as mapped by the HER, and may have been located on the hinterland of the medieval settlement. The remaining evidence of medieval activity comprised of a single find spot of a lead ampulla found c. 550m to the south-west of the site. A undated ditch and bank earthwork located c. 820m to the south-east of the site may have a medieval origin.

#### *Post-medieval and Modern*

2.21. During the post-medieval period, the site and surrounding the landscape retains a largely rural disposition.

2.22. The only evidence of archaeology relating to this period are associated with the water meadows occupying much of the Avon floodplain. A potential mill has been suggested to be located c. 750m to the south of site, after the recovery of a post-medieval millstone.

2.23. The settlement of Brimmerston experienced a shift towards the south-west away from the medieval core towards the new Brimmerston Farm, after a fire in the 18th century (Baggs et al. 1995). Post shift, the limited development which occurred within the village during the 19th and 20th centuries, was located along Church Road, forming a dispersed linear pattern of settlement. The Croft where the site is located was constructed during the 20th century.

2.24. The Military Lands Act in 1982, enabled the secretary of state to purchase land for military purposes, with the acquisition of land for the army within Salisbury Plain began in 1897. The area north of Durrington has been used for artillery practice since 1899 (Baggs et al. 1995).

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- 2.25. A number of military features are recorded within the study area, including a Nissen hut, c. 340m to the north of the Site, a series of possible gun posts c. 920m to the west, and two gun pits and a target butt c. 970m to the west.
- 2.26. The earliest cartographic source reviewed for the Desk Based Assessment (CA 2021), is the 1841 Milston Tithe Map depicting the site lying within the southern part of a larger plot situated to the immediate north-east. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880 continues to depict the site within this plot of land.
- 2.27. By 1901 the area had been sub divided into three separate long plots (1901 Ordnance Survey edition), with site straddling the two west most enclosures. Further reorganisation of the land was present in the 1924 Ordnance Survey edition. The north-south aligned enclosures depicted on the previous edition had been removed, with a long northeast-southwest plot laid out on the western edge of Church Road, following the alignment of the current Croft estate. Later Ordnance Survey Maps (1937-39) shows very little change to the site.
- 2.28. By the time of the time of the 1972 Ordnance Survey edition, the Croft had been residentially developed, with the hard standing located within the site boundary existing on the 1994 Ordnance Survey edition.

#### *Unknown*

- 2.29. A number of undated features are located within the study area as recorded in the HER. A substantial boundary ditch was located during a watching brief c. 930m to the south-west of the site and a linear feature visible on aerial photographs c. 790m to the north-east.

### **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 Wiltshire Council 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).

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## 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 1 trench (Fig. 2):
  - 1 no 20m x 1.8m trench;
- 4.2. The trench was located to test the archaeological potential of the site in relation to the proposed house footings. The trench was moved in the field to avoid overhead services, disputed land, possible modern disturbance and a in use car park, with the approval of Neil Adam.
- 4.3. The trench were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica GPS. Overburden was stripped from the trench by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate.
- 4.4. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.5. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.6. CA will make arrangements with Salisbury Museum (under accession number: SBYWM: 2021.4) for the deposition of the project archive. 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 B, 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.

### Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

- 5.2. Located to the south-west of the site running on a southeast-northwest alignment, Trench 1 measured 18.4m in length, with a maximum recorded depth of 0.67m. The area was overlaid by dark grey brown topsoil (100) which contained evidence of

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modern disturbance and bonfires, recorded to a depth of 0.2m. The topsoil overlaid a mid brown grey subsoil (101) which in return covered the natural substrata deposits 102 and 103 at a depth greater than 0.28m. Towards the south east of the trench, natural substrata 102 comprised of chalk bedrock which was covered by gravel hill wash deposits (103) towards the centre of the trench. These deposits becoming deeper towards the north-west of the trench the closer it came to the River Avon. To the north-west of the trench a modern cut with a yellow sand fill was present (sealed by the topsoil) and was not excavated further due to the presence of a possible service. No Archaeological features were present.

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1. Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.
- 6.2. Although the potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeology was high, due to the suggested location of a nearby manor house, no evidence was recorded. This is suggestive of the site being part of the hinterland of nearby settlement activity, with no occupation occurring within the site until the construction of the garages in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Steven Bush, assisted by Steffan Klemenic. This report was written by Steven Bush. The report illustrations were prepared by Krissy Moore. The project archive has been compiled by Richard Paxford and prepared for deposition by Zoe Emery. The project was managed for CA by Ray Kennedy.

## 8. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2020 *Geology of Britain Viewer*  
<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/> Accessed 17  
February 2021

Cotswold Archaeology, 2021, Land at The Croft, Milston, Wiltshire: Heritage  
Assessment

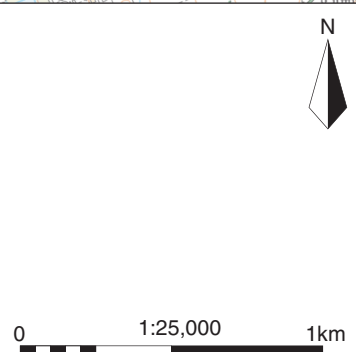
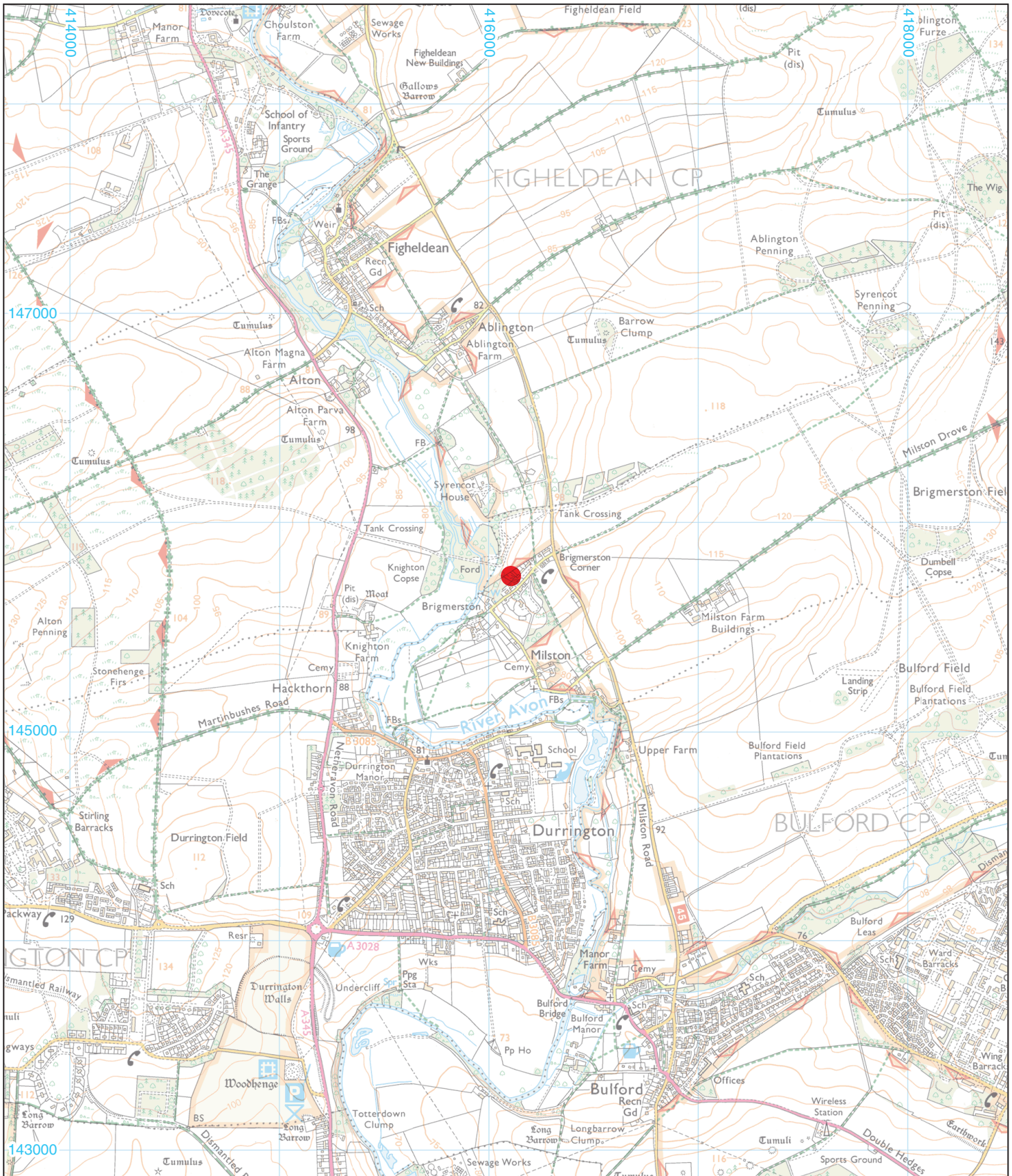
Cotswold Archaeology, 2021, Land at The Croft, Milston, Wiltshire: Written Scheme  
of Investigation

## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy silt	>18.4	1.8	0-0.2 (0.2)	-
1	101	Layer		subsoil	Mid brown grey clayey silt	>18.4	1.8	0.2-0.28 (0.08)	-
1	102	Layer		Natural Substrata	Orange grey/brown white gravelly chalk	>8.45	1.8	>0.28m	-
1	103	Layer		Hill wash	Light white grey sandy gravel with chalk inclusions.	>9.9	1.8	0.28-0.67 (0.39)	-

## APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	Land at the Croft, Milston, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation	
Short description	In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of the land at The Croft, Milston, Wiltshire. A single 20m trench was excavated. Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered	
Project dates	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	
Project type	Field Evaluation	
Previous work	Heritage Assessment (Cotswold Archaeology 2021)	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site location	The Croft, Milston, Wiltshire	
Study area (m <sup>2</sup> /ha)	0.13ha	
Site co-ordinates	SU 16103, 45742	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Wiltshire Council	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy	
Project Supervisor	Steven Bush	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>		
	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>		
	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	NA	NA
Paper	Salisbury Museum (SBYWM: 2021.4)	Context sheets
Digital	Salisbury Museum (SBYWM: 2021.4)	Database, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Cotswold Archaeology 2021 <i>Land at The Croft, Milston, Wiltshire: Archaeological CA</i> typescript report <b>AN0281_1</b>		



Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
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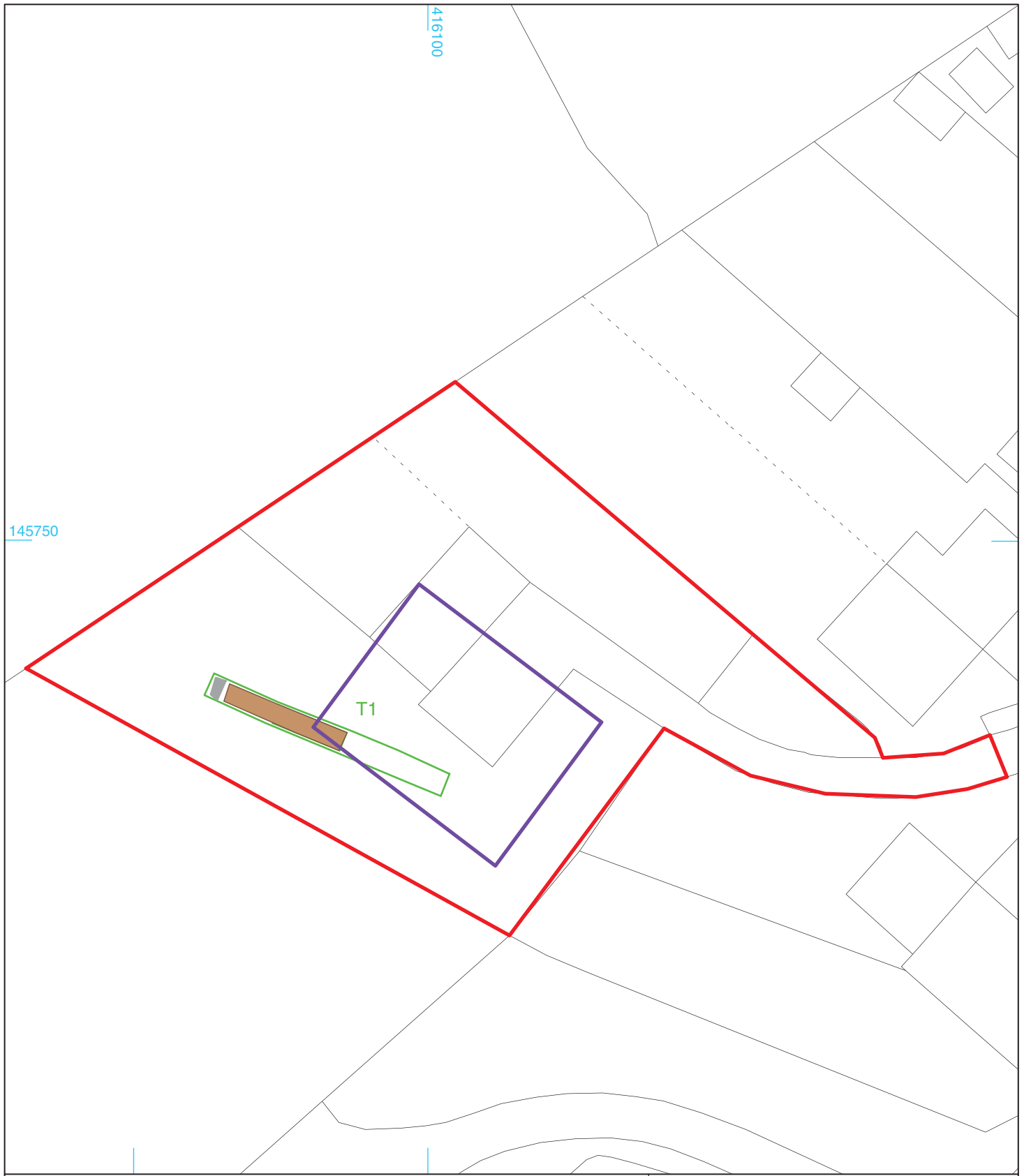
**PROJECT TITLE**  
 The Croft, Brigrmerston, Milston, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	KM	PROJECT NO.	AN0281	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	15/02/2021	1
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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- Site boundary
- Proposed building
- Modern
- Natural
- Evaluation trench



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**PROJECT TITLE**

The Croft, Briggermerston, Milston, Wiltshire

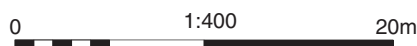
**FIGURE TITLE**

Site plan

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 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 15/02/2021  
 APPROVED BY RK SCALE@A4 1:400

**FIGURE NO.**

**2**





3A

Photograph of site, looking north-west



3B

Trench 1 post excavation, looking north-west (scales 1m)



3C

Trench 1, south-west facing section (scale 1m)

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