

**Land at Bell House Farm
Maisemore
Gloucestershire**

Archaeological Evaluation

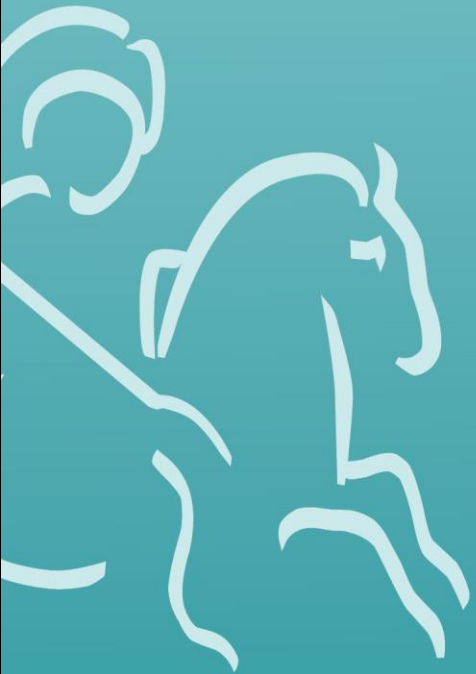


for:
RPS Consulting Services Ltd

on behalf of:
GreenVolt Developments

CA Project: CR0625
CA Report: CR0625_1

March 2021



Land at Bell House Farm Maisemore Gloucestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	03 March 2021	Christian Day	Alex Thomson	Internal review	–	Richard Young

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Land at Bell House Farm
Location:	Maisemore, Gloucestershire
NGR:	380980 221488
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	15–16 February 2021
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Museum of Gloucester and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Site Code:	CAMAI21

In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire. Five trenches were excavated.

The evaluation confirmed the presence of features identified through a preceding geophysical survey, including a former field boundary ditch of post-medieval/modern date running across the site and plough furrows to the west. These features, along with an undated, although likely related, ditch, a dog burial and tree-throw pits are indicative of post-medieval and modern agricultural activity within the site.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire (centred at NGR: 380980 221488; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for RPS Consulting Services Ltd. on behalf of GreenVolt Developments.
- 1.2. The evaluation results will inform a planning application for residential development of the site, which will be made to Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC).
- 1.3. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) prepared by RPS Consulting Services Ltd (2021) and approved by Rachel Foster, Archaeologist, Gloucestershire County Council, the archaeological advisor to TBC.
- 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 site is located on the western edge of Maisemore, occupying the south-eastern end of a large arable field. The site is bounded to the south-west by the A417, to the north-east by an unnamed stream and to the south-east by a residential development. The site slopes gently from west to east, from approximately 30m AOD to 26m AOD.
- 1.6. The underlying basal geology of the site consists of mudstone and limestone of the Rugby Limestone Member, formed during the Jurassic Period, overlain by sand and gravel of the Kidderminster Station Member, of the Quaternary Period (BGS 2021). The natural substrate recorded during the evaluation consisted of sands and gravels.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The wider site has previously been the subject of a heritage assessment (CgMS 2017) and geophysical survey (MS 2018). The following is a summary of these reports.
- 2.2. Within the current site, the heritage assessment identified no heritage assets (CgMS 2017). Ridge and furrow cropmarks across the site and the surrounding fields supported the interpretation that the site lay in the agricultural hinterland of the village of Maisemore in the medieval period. Map regression identified that the site was subdivided into three orchard fields on the 1837 Maisemore Tithe Map, this configuration remaining relatively consistent across the 19th and 20th centuries, with progressive removal of the orchards until the site reached its present layout in 1973.
- 2.3. The geophysical survey addressed a wider boundary, including land to the north-west of the current site (MS 2018). This identified weak agricultural trends interpreted as possibly relating to a historic ploughing regime as they followed the same alignment as former field boundaries and ridge and furrow cropmarks in the western part of the site. An agricultural spread was identified on the same alignment and corresponded to the location of a former field boundary depicted on historic mapping (*ibid.*).

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 TBC 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).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches measuring 40m in length and 1.8 m in width (Fig. 2). The trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies identified by the geophysical survey and provide a representative sample of the area.

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- 4.2. 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.
 - 4.3. 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 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.
 - 4.5. Artefacts were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
 - 4.6. CA will make arrangements with Museum of Gloucester for the deposition of the project archive and, subject to agreement with the legal landowner(s), the artefact collection. The 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 D, 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. Details of the biological evidence (animal bone) recovered are given in Section 7 and Appendix C.
- 5.2. The stratigraphic sequence recorded during the course of the evaluation was broadly uniform. The natural substrate was encountered in all trenches, comprising of mixed sand and gravels. This was typically overlain by between 0.27m and 0.48m of clay-sand subsoil, which was in turn sealed by 0.24m and 0.32m of sandy-clay topsoil.

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- 5.3. Archaeological features were identified in Trenches 2, 3 and 4. No archaeological features were encountered in the remaining trenches except three undated tree-throw pits in Trench 2 and plough furrows in Trench 1. These furrows were aligned south-west/north-east and correlated with the agricultural trends identified by the geophysical survey (Fig. 2).
- 5.4. Pit 204 was identified cutting the subsoil towards the centre of Trench 2 and measured 1.17m in length, at least 0.50m in width, 0.45m in depth and contained undated fill 203. In the base of the feature the articulated remains of a dog skeleton were identified (Fig. 3; see Section 7).
- 5.5. Correlating closely to a linear geophysical anomaly, north-east/south-west aligned ditches 206, 305 (Fig. 3, Section AA) and 404 were recorded cutting the subsoil at the north-western or western ends of Trenches 2, 3 and 4, respectively, and likely represent the continuation of the same former field boundary ditch. They measured up to 2.5m in width, 0.6m in depth and contained fills 205, 304, 305 and 403. Two sherds of refined whiteware pottery, dateable to the late 18th to late 19th century, were recovered from fill 403 of ditch 404.
- 5.6. Ditch 307 (Fig. 3, Section BB) was identified towards the western end of Trench 3. It was aligned south-west/north-east, measured 0.70m in width, 0.28m in depth and contained undated fill 306.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1. Artefactual material dating to the modern period was recovered from one ditch fill. Quantities of the artefact types are given in Appendix B and the pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. The fabric code (in parenthesis in the text) is equated to the online Gloucester pottery type series (<http://glospot.potsherd.net/table/med>). As the finds are modern in date, retention is not recommended.

Pottery

- 6.2. Two sherds of refined whiteware (TF71), of late 18th to late 19th century date, were recorded from fill 403 of ditch 404. One sherd (a rimsherd, probably from a saucer) features 'flow blue' decoration, which can be more closely dated to the mid to late 19th century (C. Jarrett, *pers. comm*).

7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Animal bone

- 7.1. Animal bone amounting to 51 fragments (236g) was recovered from fill 203 of pit 204 (See Table 2, Appendix C). The material was very well preserved making it possible to identify the assemblage as the articulated remains of a partial dog skeleton (*Canis familiaris*), specifically both hind legs from the tibia to the phalanges and the metacarpals and phalanges of the front paws.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1. The archaeological evaluation has successfully demonstrated that there was good correlation between the identified geophysical anomalies and the features identified during the subsequent trenching, including a former field boundary ditch and plough furrows. It has also corroborated documentary evidence for the use of the site as an orchard in the post-medieval period.
- 8.2. A post-medieval/modern field boundary ditch was identified in Trenches 2, 3 and 4, and was dated to the late 18th to late 19th century. This feature correlates with a linear geophysical anomaly and corresponds to the location of a former field boundary depicted on historic mapping (see *Archaeological Background* above). Within Trench 3 a further undated ditch was identified on the same alignment and in close proximity to the former field boundary and may represent an earlier phase of this boundary.
- 8.3. Medieval/post-medieval plough furrows were identified in Trench 1, correlating with the geophysical survey results for the western part of the site. Furthermore, three undated tree-throw pits were identified in Trench 2, along with a dog burial, and it is likely that these are evidence of the use of the eastern part of the site as an orchard, as depicted on historic cartographic sources, and of the wider agricultural use of the site in the post-medieval/modern periods.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 9.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Christian Day, assisted by Nathan Chinchen and Richard Scurr. This report was written by Christian Day. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Jacky Sommerville and Andrew Clarke, respectively. The report illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The project archive has been compiled by Christian Day and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Alex Thomson.

10. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2021 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/> Accessed 03
March 2021
- CgMs Heritage 2017 *Land at Bellhouse Farm, Maisemore, Tewkesbury,
Gloucestershire: Heritage Assessment*
- MS (Magnitude Surveys) 2018 *Geophysical Survey Report of Land at Bell Farm,
Maisemore*, unpublished client report ref. **MSSO281**
- RPS Consulting Services Ltd 2021, *Land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore,
Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire: 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 brown-grey sandy clay, loose, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.32m	
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-sand, friable, frequent gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.38m	
1	102	Layer		Natural substrate	Light orange-brown sand / gravel, compact	>40m	>1.8m	-	
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown-grey sandy clay, loose, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.24m	
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-sand, friable, frequent gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.29m	
2	202	Layer		Natural substrate	Light orange-brown sand / gravel, compact	>40m	>1.8m	-	
2	203	Fill	204	Fill of pit	Dark grey-brown sandy silt, friable, occasional gravel stones	1.17m	>0.5m	0.45m	
2	204	Cut		Pit	Sub-oval partially exposed feature with steep sides and flat base	1.17m	>0.5m	0.45m	
2	205	Fill	206	Fill of ditch	Dark brown-grey clay-silt, friable, occasional gravel stones	>1.8m	>0.60m	>0.30m	
2	206	Cut		Ditch	SW/NE aligned linear, partially exposed in plan, not excavated	>1.8m	>0.60m	>0.30m	
2	207	Fill	208	Fill of tree throw	Mid brown-grey sandy silt, friable, frequent gravel stones	4.30m	>1.8m	0.55m	
2	208	Cut		Tree throw	Irregular partially exposed feature with gently sloping sides and concave base	4.30m	>1.8m	0.55m	
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown-grey sandy clay, loose, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.26m	
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-sand, friable, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.48m	
3	302	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red-brown clay-sand with gravel patches, compact	>40m	>1.8m	-	
3	303	Fill	305	2 nd fill of ditch	Dark brown-grey clay-silt, friable	>1.8m	2.20m	0.50m	
3	304	Fill	305	1 st fill of ditch	Light brown sandy silt, friable, frequent gravel stones	>1.8m	1.90m	0.20m	
3	305	Cut		Ditch	SW/NE aligned linear with irregular sides and concave base	>1.8m	2.20m	0.60m	
3	306	Fill	307	Fill of ditch	Mid red-brown sandy silt, friable	>1.8m	0.70m	0.28m	
3	307	Cut		Ditch	SW/NE aligned linear with moderate sides and concave base	>1.8m	0.70m	0.28m	
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown-grey sandy clay, loose, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.25m	
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-sand, friable, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.27m	
4	402	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid red-brown clay-sand with gravel patches, compact	>40m	>1.8m	-	

4	403	Fill	404	Fill of ditch	Dark grey clay-silt, friable	>1.8m	2.50m	0.45m	MC19-LC19
4	404	Cut	403	Ditch	SW/NE aligned linear, partially exposed in plan, not excavated	>1.8m	2.50m	0.45m	
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown-grey sandy clay, loose, occasional gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.26m	
5	501	Layer		Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-sand, friable, frequent gravel stones	>40m	>1.8m	0.30m	
5	502	Layer		Natural substrate	Light orange-brown sand / gravel	>40m	>1.8m	-	

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Table 1: Finds concordance

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
403	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Refined whiteware	TF71	1	12	MC19-LC19
	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Refined whiteware ("flow blue" decoration)	TF71	1	2	

References

<http://glospot.potsherd.net/table/med> Viewed 22 February 2021

APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

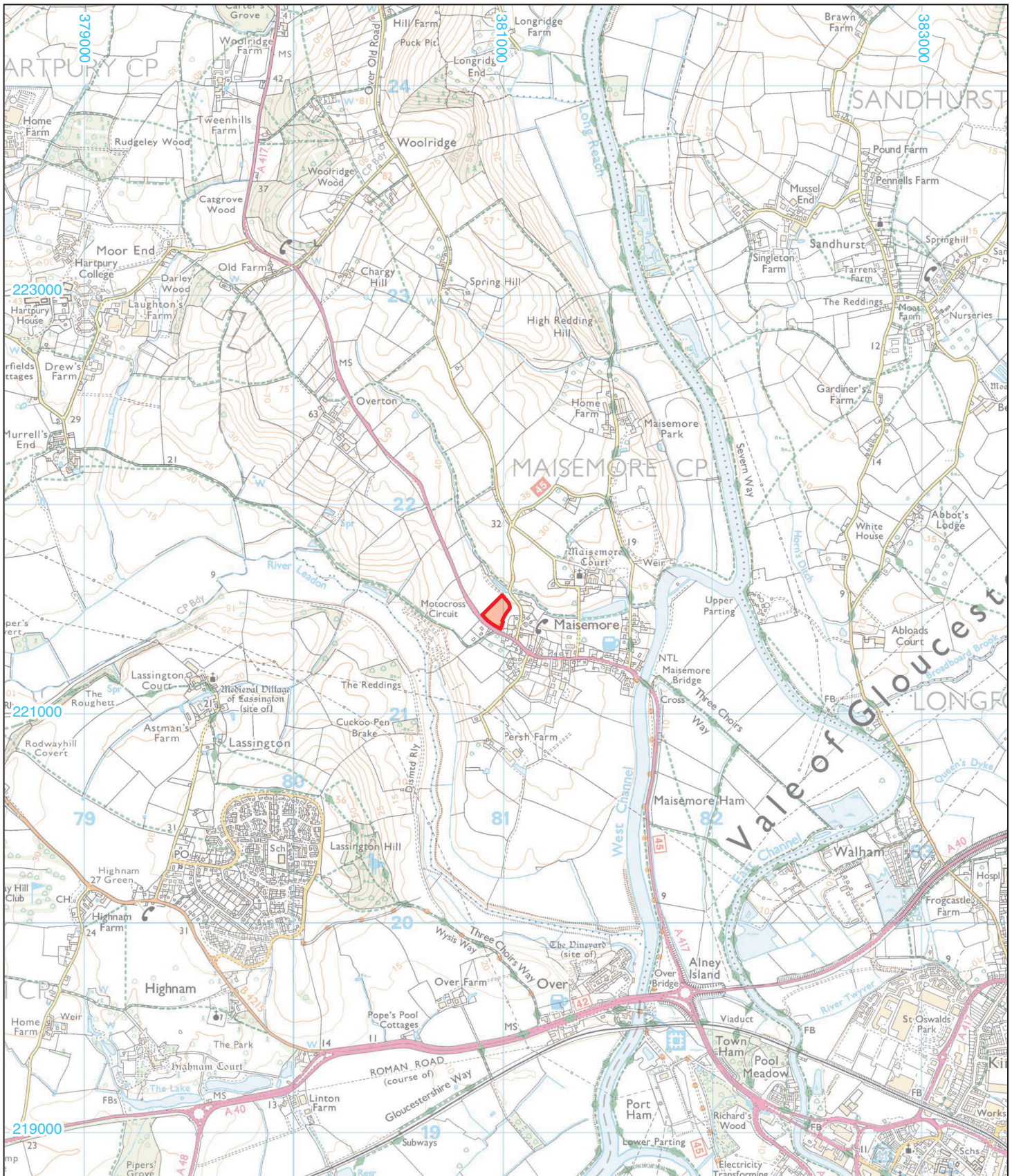
Table 2: Identified animal species by fragment count (NISP) and weight and context.

Cut	Fill	Canis	Total	Weight (g)
204	203	51	51	236
Total		51	51	
Weight		236	236	

Canis = dog

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire	
Short description	<p>In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire. Five trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The evaluation confirmed the presence of features identified through a preceding geophysical survey, including a former field boundary ditch of post-medieval/modern date running across the site and plough furrows to the west. These features, along with an undated, although likely related, ditch, a dog burial and tree-throw pits are indicative of post-medieval and modern agricultural activity within the site.</p>	
Project dates	15 February – 16 February 2021	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	Heritage Assessment (CgMs 2017) Geophysical survey (Magnitude Surveys 2018)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire	
Study area (m ² /ha)	1.45 ha	
Site co-ordinates	380980 221488	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	RPS Consulting Services Ltd	
Project Manager	Alex Thomson	
Project Supervisor	Christian Day	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	Museum of Gloucester	Ceramics, animal bone
Paper	Museum of Gloucester	Context sheets, trench recording forms, permatrace drawings, photographic registers
Digital	Museum of Gloucester	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2021 <i>Land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA Report No. CR0625_1		



 Site boundary

0  1km

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PROJECT TITLE
Land at Bell House Farm, Maise more,
Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	23/02/2021	
APPROVED BY	AT	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	1



- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature
(excavated / unexcavated)
- Furrow
- Treethrow
- Land drain
- Section location
- Buffer 10m

- Magnitude Surveys 2018
- Natural (spread)
 - Agricultural (spread)
 - Agricultural (trend)
 - Undetermined (trend)
 - Ferrous (dipolar)
 - Ferrous (spread) / Magnetic Disturbance
 - Service



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PROJECT TITLE
**Land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore,
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FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan

DRAWN BY CHECKED BY APPROVED BY	EE DJB AT	PROJECT NO. DATE SCALE@A3	CR0625 23/02/2021 1:750	FIGURE NO. 2
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Ditch 305, looking north (scale 1m)

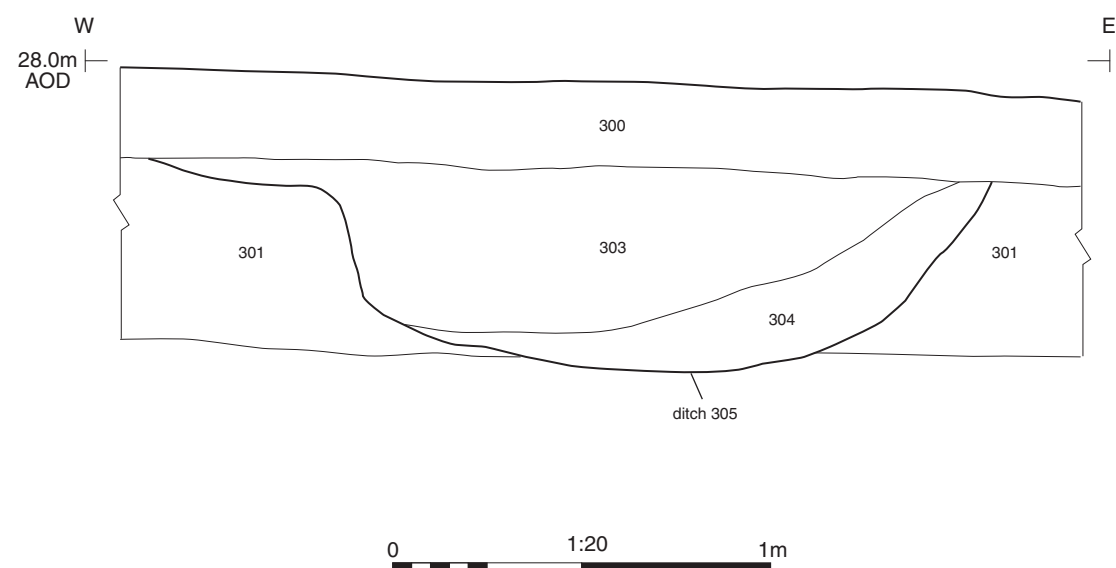


Ditch 307, looking north-east (scale 0.5m)

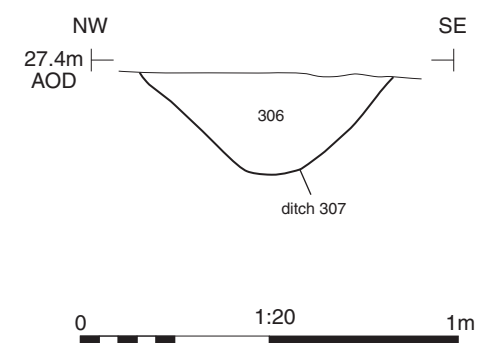


Pit 204, looking south-west (scale 1m)

Section AA



Section BB





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PROJECT TITLE

 Land at Bell House Farm, Maisemore, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE

 Photographs and sections

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