

**LAND AT THE REAR OF  
BRAE HILL ROAD  
BRILL  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

*For*

**BANNER HOMES GROUP**

CA PROJECT: 2597  
CA REPORT: 08094

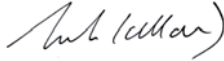
MAY 2008



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CA PROJECT: 2597  
CA REPORT: 08094

prepared by	Tim Havard, Project Officer
date	14 May 2008
checked by	Cliff Bateman, Project Manager
date	16 May 2008
approved by	Mark Collard, Head of Contracts
signed	
date	20 May 2008
issue	01

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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Land at the rear of Brae Hill Road
<b>Location:</b>	Brill, Buckinghamshire
<b>NGR:</b>	SP 6528 1405
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	28 April – 6 May 2008
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	08/00438/AP
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum Service
<b>Site Code:</b>	BRI 08

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in April and May 2008 at the request of Banner Homes Group on land at the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire. Seven trenches were excavated.

Two probable shallow clay extraction pits were recorded with one having been deliberately backfilled. A robbed foundation trench corresponding with a former boundary was identified towards the south-eastern corner of the site. An area of stakeholes identified in trenches 1 and 7 is also likely to represent an undated boundary. Possible land boundaries identified from aerial photographs were shown to be land drains. No evidence was revealed for the survival of cottages depicted within the site on the 1853 Brill Tithe Map.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In April and May 2008 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Banner Homes Group on land at the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire (centred on NGR: SP 6528 1405; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken in advance of the determination of a planning application for residential development of the site.

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation (BCAS 2008) prepared by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Field Service, the archaeological advisors to the Aylesbury Vale District Council, and with a subsequent detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2008) and approved by David Radford. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001), and the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991). It was monitored by David Radford, including site visits on 30 April and 2 May 2008.

### ***The site***

1.3 The proposed development area is approximately c.0.4ha and is situated at the western edge of the village, to the rear of Brae Hill Road. It currently comprises uncultivated land (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 185m AOD with the ground level dropping away from east to west. At the time of fieldwork, several possible quarry pits were clearly visible in relief across the site.

1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Purbeck Formation and Whitchurch Sand Formation of the Upper Jurassic and Lower Cretaceous periods respectively (BGS 1994).

### ***Archaeological background***

1.5 The proposed development area was the subject of a Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) by CA in 2006. The assessment concluded that although evidence of pottery and ceramic building material production dating from the medieval period to the 19th century has been uncovered in the immediate vicinity, no such evidence was

currently recorded within the site itself. However, there remained a potential for industrial features, such as kilns, or associated features, such as waster dumps or quarries for raw materials, to be present. Two ponds depicted on historic maps and an area at the north-east of the site which is lower than the land of adjacent properties may represent areas of former mineral extraction.

- 1.6 The DBA also noted that a terrace of four cottages was depicted within the site on the earliest available detailed map of the area, the Brill Tithe map of 1853. These buildings have since been demolished and although no remains are currently visible within the field, they may still be present below current ground level.
- 1.7 In March 2008 a geophysical survey, comprising magnetometry and resistivity surveys, were undertaken within the proposed development area. Neither survey technique recorded anomalies representative of clearly defined archaeological remains. For the most part, the identified geophysical anomalies were representative of current and recent occupation, including deposits of construction debris, iron objects, and traces of recently removed garden plots (Pre-construct Geophysics 2008).

### ***Archaeological objectives***

- 1.8 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist Aylesbury Vale District Council in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

### ***Methodology***

- 1.9 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of seven trenches of lengths varying between 10m and 40m in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). All trenches measured 1.6m in width. Due to the wet and boggy conditions within the site, the location of several trenches was revised in the field with the approval of David Radford.
- 1.10 All 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* (2007).

- 1.11 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* (2003) and no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995).
- 1.12 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum Service along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## **2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-3)**

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively.
- 2.2 Land drains comprising pitched stone were observed in all trenches.

### ***Trench 1 (Fig 2)***

- 2.3 Trench 1 was positioned to examine a possible boundary identified on aerial photographs.
- 2.4 Approximately twenty four stakeholes were identified towards the northern end of trench 1. Several of these were excavated and were shown to be of anthropogenic origin, ovoid in plan and cut into the natural substrate to a depth of approximately 0.1m. No finds were recovered from those excavated.

- 2.5 Parallel, shallow ditch and gully, 104 and 106 respectively, were also identified at the northern end of the trench. No finds were recovered from either feature and no relationship with the nearby stakeholes could be established. All features were sealed by subsoil 101 and topsoil 100. A small quantity of post-medieval and modern pottery was recovered from subsoil 101 towards the northern end of the trench.

### ***Trench 2***

- 2.6 No features were identified from trench 2. A small quantity of post-medieval and modern pottery was recovered from subsoil 202 and a worked flint flake retrieved from topsoil 201.

### ***Trench 3 (Figs 2 & 3)***

- 2.7 Trench 3 was extended to examine the northern edge of a pond shown on the 1880 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (CA 2006, Fig.4). Shallow pit 305 at the eastern end of the trench was recorded in section cutting through the subsoil. It measured at least 5.6m in length, approximately 0.4m in depth and had been deliberately backfilled with compacted brick and tile rubble 306. A small quantity of post-medieval and modern pottery was recovered from this deposit and a small representative sample of brick and tile, including an almost complete roof tile, was retained.

### ***Trench 4 (Figs 2 & 3)***

- 2.8 The location of trench 4 was revised in the field in order to examine a possible clay extraction pit. Pit 404 lay towards the southern end of trench 4, measured approximately 1.7m in width, 0.4m in depth and cut through subsoil 401 into natural clay substrate 402. It contained single silty clay fill 403 from which three sherds of residual medieval Brill/Boarstal pottery were recovered together with a single sherd of post-medieval pottery. Additionally, a small quantity of smashed or chopped horse and cattle bone was recovered from this fill.



### **Trench 5**

- 2.9 Trench 5 was positioned to examine the location of the four cottages identified by the DBA (CA 2006), however, no features were identified within the trench. Frequent brick rubble inclusions were noted within subsoil 501 and three sherds of post-medieval and modern pottery were recovered.

### **Trench 6 (Figs 2 & 3)**

- 2.10 Robbed foundation trench 604, with steep sides and a flat base, was located towards the south-western extent of trench 6. It cut through subsoil 601 and contained mortar rubble with occasional brick inclusions, 605, from which a single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered.

### **Trench 7 (Fig 2)**

- 2.11 Approximately 43 stakeholes were recorded towards the north-western extent of trench 7. Several of these were excavated and were shown to be very similar to those in adjacent trench 1. No finds were recovered from any of the excavated stakeholes or the subsoil and topsoil.

### **Finds**

- 2.12 Quantities of pottery, ceramic building material, worked flint, glass and animal bone were recovered from eight deposits. One piece of worked flint, an unutilised primary flake, was recovered from topsoil deposit 201.
- 2.13 The majority of recovered pottery (21 sherds, 384g) dates to the post-medieval or later periods and consists of hand painted or transfer printed china, Nottingham stonewares, creamwares and Brill/Boarstal type glazed earthenwares. A small amount of Brill/Boarstall glazed pottery of medieval type (4 sherds, 49g) was recovered from subsoil 101 and pit fill 403. This material was present alongside later pottery types and can be considered residual.
- 2.14 Eleven fragments (2987g) of post-medieval ceramic building material were recovered and comprised mainly hand made bricks and roof tile fragments. Of note is an almost complete roof tile from pit fill 306, with two peg holes present.

- 2.15 Two pieces (155g) of post-medieval glass were recovered from pit fill 306 and topsoil 600. Both consist of bottle bases consistent with 18th century dating (Hume 1969, 64)
- 2.16 A small quantity of animal bone was recovered from the fill of pit 404. The assemblage comprised a horse radius and cattle tibia and metacarpal. The bones were from adult animals and had been chopped or smashed before deposition, although modern breakage was also observed.
- 2.17 The majority of the artefactual material comes from topsoil and subsoil layers and will be discarded. Material from within the pit fills (306 and 403) and foundation cut (603) has been retained.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 The only evidence encountered which can be directly related to the production of pottery and ceramic building material was two probable clay extraction pits examined in trenches 3 and 4. Pit 305 was deliberately backfilled with brick and tile rubble probably in the 19th or 20th-century whilst pit 404 had initially naturally silted prior to a small amount of refuse being disposed within it.
- 3.2 No remains of the terrace of four cottages depicted on the 1853 Brill Tithe Map were encountered in trench 5. The brick rubble observed in the subsoil and the wet, boggy ground in the vicinity of the trench suggests that they were razed to the ground. The robbed foundation trench encountered in trench 5 broadly correlates with a boundary depicted to the south of the cottages.
- 3.3 The stakeholes identified in trenches 1 and 7 do not appear to form any distinct features or patterns however both the southern and eastern extents of their distribution has been established. Both ditch 104 and gully 106 were aligned parallel with the northern boundary of the site and are thus interpreted as a former boundary.
- 3.4 Possible linear boundaries identified from aerial photography (CA 2006, 12) were shown to be land drains.

#### 4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Havard, assisted by Charlie Jones. The report was written by Tim Havard. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Tim Havard, and prepared for deposition by Kathryn Price. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

#### 5. REFERENCES

BCAS (Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service) 2008 *Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation (Trail Trenching): Land off Windmill Street, Brill*

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1994 England and Wales Sheet 237, Thame, Solid and Drift Geology

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 *Land to the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2006 *Land at the Rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire. Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. CAT Typescript 06073*

Hume, I.N. 1969 *A guide to Artifacts of Colonial America* Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press

Pre-construct Geophysics 2008 *Geophysical Survey: Land to the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire:*

**APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

Trench 1 30m length (existing ground level: 184.29m to 184.77m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil			0.38	
101	Layer	Subsoil			0.18	C19-C20
102	Layer	Natural sandy clay			n/a	
103	Fill	Single silty clay fill of 104			0.07	
104	Cut	Shallow truncated ditch	>1.6	0.62	0.07	
105	Fill	Single silty clay fill of 106			0.06	
106	Cut	Cut for shallow truncated gully	>1.6	0.25	0.06	
107	Group	Group number assigned to multiple stakeholes				

Trench 2 15m length (existing ground level: 182.88m to 183.91m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
201	Layer	Topsoil			0.3	
202	Layer	Subsoil			0.2	PMED
203	Layer	Natural clay sand	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Trench 3 30m length (existing ground level: 182.47m to 185.74m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
301	Layer	Topsoil			0.2	
302	Layer	Subsoil			0.15	
303	Layer	Colluvium			0.15	
304	Layer	Natural: brown yellow sand in eastern half of trench changing to mid yellow clay in western half	n/a	n/a	n/a	
305	Cut	Cut for probable clay pit	>6	>1.6	>0.4	
306	Fill	Brick and tile rubble backfill of 306			>0.4	C19-C20

Trench 4 15m length (existing ground level: 183.46m to 183.93m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
400	Layer	Topsoil			0.22	
401	Layer	Subsoil			0.26	
402	Layer	Natural: yellow brown clay	n/a	n/a	n/a	
403	Fill	Single silty clay fill of 404			0.4	C16-C18
404	Cut	Cut for probable clay pit	>1.6	>1.26	0.4	

Trench 5 10m length (existing ground level: 183.46m to 184.95m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
500	Layer	Topsoil			0.22	
501	Layer	Subsoil with frequent brick rubble			0.29	C19-C20
502	Layer	Natural: light yellow clay	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Trench 6 40m length (existing ground level: 186.12m to 186.67m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
600	Layer	Topsoil			0.45	C19-C20
601	Layer	Subsoil			0.2 to 0.4	
602	Layer	Natural: yellow clay in southern half of trench changing to mid brown sand in northern half	n/a	n/a	n/a	
603	Fill	Loose mortar rubble fill of 604			0.55	C19-C20
604	Cut	Cut for probable robbed out foundation	>1.35	0.7	0.55	

Trench 7 15m length (existing ground level: 184.47m to 185.20m AOD)

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
700	Layer	Topsoil			0.2	
701	Layer	Subsoil			0.1	
702	Layer	Natural: Yellow brown clay	n/a	n/a	n/a	
703	Group	Group number assigned to multiple stakeholes				

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Artefact type	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
101*	Post-medieval pottery: hand painted china, glazed earthenware	5	32	C19-C20
	Medieval pottery: Brill/Boarstal glazed	1	9	
	Post-medieval ceramic building material: roof tile	3	274	
201*	Worked flint flake	1	22	-
202*	Post-medieval pottery: degraded earthenware	1	10	PMED
	Post-medieval ceramic building material: tile	2	120	
306	Post-medieval pottery: white china, glazed earthenware	2	84	C19-C20
	Post-medieval ceramic building material: tile, handmade brick	3	2309	
	Post-medieval glass: bottle	1	92	
403	Post-medieval pottery: Brill/Boarstal type	1	27	C16-C18
	Medieval pottery: Brill/Boarstal type	3	40	
	Post-medieval ceramic building material: handmade brick	2	174	
	Animal bone: horse, cattle	5	516	
501*	Post-medieval pottery: creamware, hand painted china, glazed earthenwares	3	62	C19-C20
600*	Post-medieval pottery: transfer print china, Nottingham stoneware, glazed earthenwares	8	149	C19-C20
	Modern glass: bottle	1	63	
603	Post-medieval pottery: hand painted china	1	20	C19-C20
	Post-medieval ceramic building material: brick	1	110	

\* Material discarded

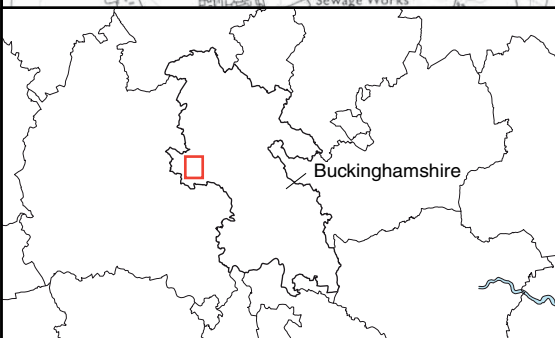
## APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM


<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Land at the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in April and May 2008 at the request of Banner Homes Group on land at the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire. Seven trenches were excavated.</p> <p>Two probable shallow clay extraction pits were recorded with one having been deliberately backfilled. A robbed foundation trench corresponding with a former boundary was identified towards the south-eastern corner of the site. An area of stakeholes identified in trenches 1 and 7 is also likely to represent an undated boundary. Possible land boundaries identified from aerial photographs were shown to be land drains. No evidence was revealed for the survival of cottages depicted within the site on the 1853 Brill Tithe Map.</p>	
Project dates	28 April – 6 May 2008	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Archaeological Evaluation.	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	<p>Desk-based assessment undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology 2006</p> <p>Geophysical Survey 2008</p>	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Land at the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	1.8ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 6528 1405	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	Tim Havard	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Buckinghamshire County Museum Service	Field records (1 box)
Paper	Buckinghamshire County Museum Service	Trench Record Sheets, Context sheets, Drawing Register, Levels Register, field drawings
Digital	Buckinghamshire	Digital photos

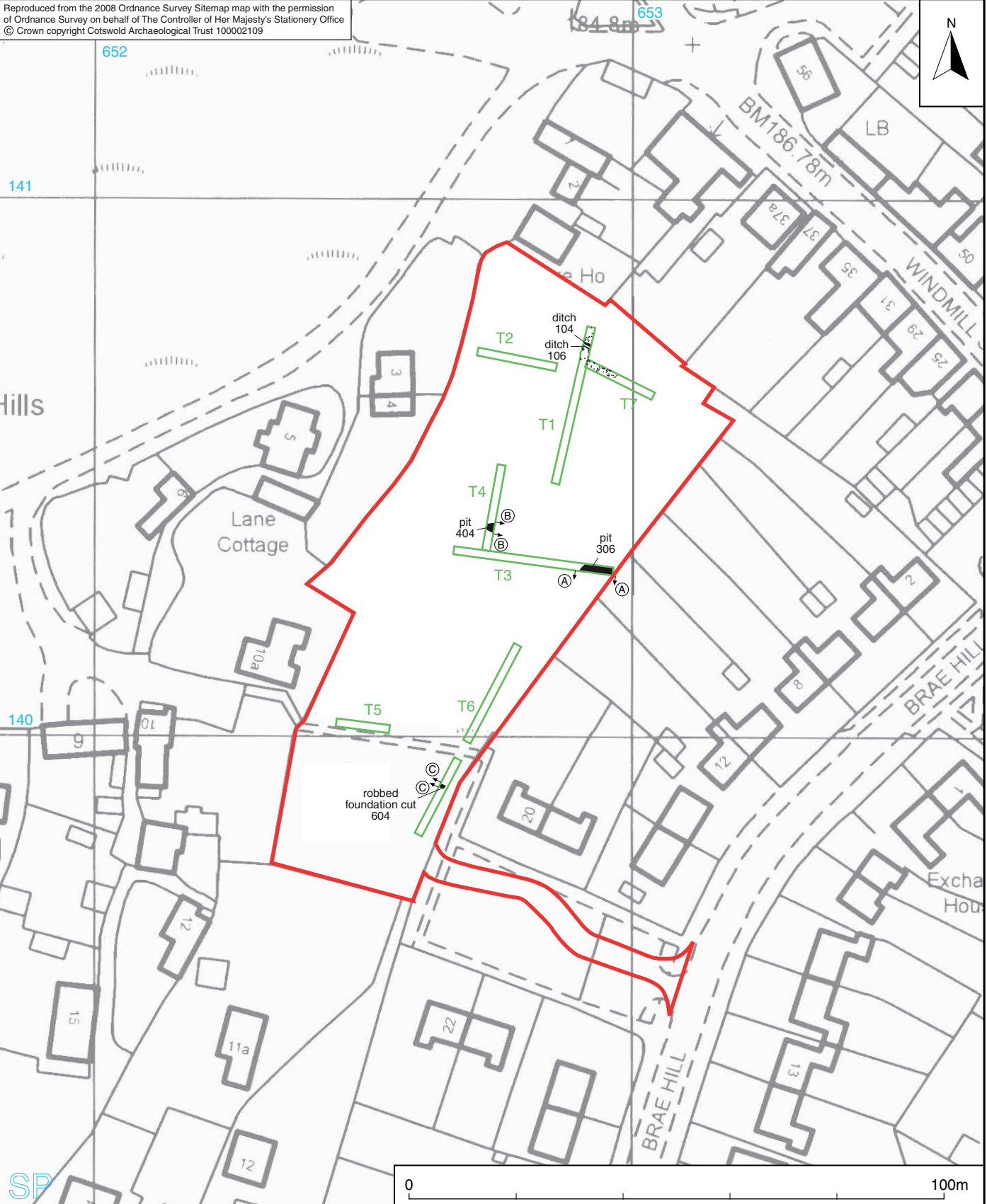
	County Museum Service	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Cotswold Archaeology (CA) 2008 <i>Land to the rear of Brae Hill Road, Brill, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA Typescript report 08094		



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 <b>COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY</b>			
PROJECT TITLE <b>Brae Hill Road, Brill          Buckinghamshire</b>			
FIGURE TITLE <b>Site location plan</b>			
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- site
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- stakeholes

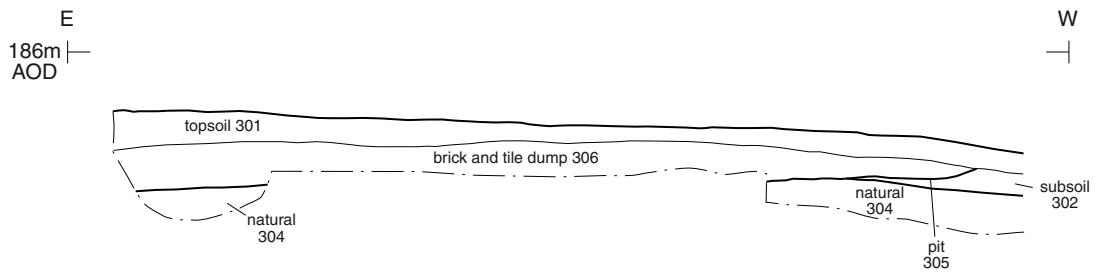
 **COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY**

**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Brae Hill Road, Brill  
 Buckinghamshire

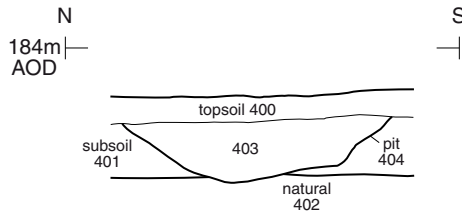
**FIGURE TITLE**  
**Trench location plan, showing archaeological features**

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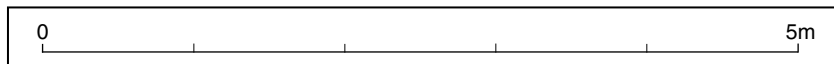
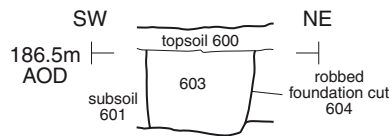
Trench 3; section AA



Trench 4; section BB



Trench 6; section CC



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Brae Hill Road, Brill  
Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

**Sections AA to CC**

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LG

SCALE

1:50@A4

PROJECT NO.

2597

FIGURE NO.

**3**