

**Burnt House Farm
Petherton Road, North Newton
Bridgwater, Somerset**

Archaeological Evaluation



for:
Gadd Properties Ltd

CA Project: AN0494
CA Report: AN0494_1

Somerset Historic Environment
Record (HER) ref: PRN 45723

July 2022



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Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	29 July 2022	Craig Jones	Derek Evans	Internal review	–	Derek Evans

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Cirencester Building 11 Kemble Enterprise Park Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6BQ t. 01285 771 022	Milton Keynes Unit 8, The IO Centre Fingle Drive, Stonebridge Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK13 0AT t. 01908 564 660	Andover Stanley House Walworth Road Andover Hampshire SP10 5LH t. 01264 347 630	Suffolk Unit 5, Plot 11 Maitland Road Lion Barn Industrial Estate Needham Market Suffolk IP6 8NZ t. 01449 900 120
e. enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk			

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Burnt House Farm, Petherton Road
Location:	North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset
NGR:	329802 131270
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	3–4 May 2022
Planning reference:	Sedgemoor District Council ref: 37/19/00102 DD
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Somerset Museums Service and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Accession Number:	TTNCM 3/2022
Site Code:	BHFM22

In May 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Burnt House Farm, North Newton, Somerset. A total of four trenches were excavated within the site.

The evaluation recorded a post-medieval ditch, a post-medieval sheep burial and a modern pit. The ditch presumably relates to a former field boundary, although no corresponding boundary is visible on historic cartographic sources.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In May 2022, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Burnt House Farm, Petherton Road, North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset (centred at NGR: 329802 131270; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for Gadd Properties Ltd.
- 1.2. Sedgemoor District Council has granted outline planning permission for the demolition of existing agricultural buildings and the subsequent residential development of the site (planning ref: 37/19/00102 DD). Condition 13 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work.
- 1.3. The scope of this evaluation was defined by Steve Membery (South West Heritage Trust), the archaeological advisor to Sedgemoor District Council. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2019) and approved by Steve Membery.
- 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 application site is approximately 0.19ha in extent. It lies on the western side of Petherton Road, North Newton. The site is currently occupied by a series of farm buildings and yards.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Helsby Sandstone Formation, which formed in the Triassic Period. No superficial deposits are recorded at the site (BGS 2022).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1. A Roman coin findspot and a ditch containing Roman pottery were recorded during previous archaeological works in the immediate vicinity of the application site, although the exact location of these works is unclear (Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) ref: 10605).

-
- 2.2. Archaeological excavations at Parker's Field (c. 80m north of the application site) recorded evidence for Roman settlement, although – again– the exact location of these works is unclear/disputed (HER ref: 30224).
- 2.3. North Petherton was recorded in the Domesday Survey (1086). The early medieval settlement is thought to have developed around the site of the present St Peter's Church (c. 300 south-east of the application site), which has a tower of possible early medieval origin. The application site lies within the North Newton Area of High Archaeological Potential, which reflects the potential for remains associated with the early medieval and medieval settlement to survive below-ground.

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 Sedgemoor District 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 proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2021). A further objective of the project was to compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive.
- 3.2. The specific objective of the evaluation was to determine if any remains associated with known Roman, early medieval and medieval activity in the area enter into the application site boundary.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork comprised the excavation of 4no 10m x 1.8m trenches (Fig. 2): The trenches were located to provide a representative sample of the site outside of the standing building footprints.
- 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 the Somerset Museums Service for the deposition of the project archive. The Somerset Museums Service has issued accession number TTNCM 3/2022. 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. Details of the artefactual material recovered from the site are given in Section 6.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

- 5.2. Natural substrate 102 was uncovered at a depth of 0.81m below present ground level (bpgl). In the southernmost 3m of the trench, the natural substrate was overlain by modern made ground layer 103, which measured 0.4m in thickness. Natural 102 and made ground 103 were overlain by 0.54m of subsoil 101, which was sealed in turn by 0.27m of modern topsoil.

-
- 5.3. Irregular pit 104 was 1.14m long and 0.37m deep. The fill of this pit (106) contained an articulated sheep burial (105). A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from fill 105.

Trench 2

- 5.4. Natural substrate 201 was uncovered at a depth of 0.24m bpgl. It was overlain directly by modern made ground layer 200, which comprised modern slate, CBM and rubble in a silty matrix.
- 5.5. Tr2 exposed part of a pit which was filled with modern rubble (no context number assigned).

Trench 3 (Fig. 4)

- 5.6. Natural substrate 302 was uncovered at a depth of 0.47m bpgl. It was overlain by 0.26m of subsoil 301, which was covered in turn covered by a 0.21m of modern tarmac and rubble layer 300.
- 5.7. East/west aligned ditch 303 was 1.14m wide and 0.38m deep. It contained a single fill (304) from which a single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered.

Trench 4

- 5.8. Natural substrate 402 was uncovered at a depth of 0.78m bpgl. It was overlain by 0.48m of subsoil 401, which was sealed in turn covered by 0.3m of topsoil 400.
- 5.9. East/west aligned ditch 403 was the continuation of ditch 303 (Tr3). It was not excavated in Tr4.

6. THE FINDS

Context	Material	Description	No.	Wt (g)	Spot-date
105	Pottery	South Somerset, brown glazed	1	7	C17-C18
304	Pottery	South Somerset, white slipped and copper-dusted glazed	1	104	C17-C18

Table 1: Finds concordance

- 6.1. The evaluation yielded two sherds of pottery, weighing 111g in total. Both sherds are fine red earthenwares from South Somerset and date to the 17th–18th centuries. That from fill deposit 105 (pit 104, Tr1) has a plain brown glaze on its interior. That from fill 304 (ditch 303, Tr3) is part of a base which has a white slip

with copper glaze on the interior surface. This sherd has a thick layer of soot/burning on the exterior.

- 6.2. As these artefacts are of minimal archaeological significance, they will not be retained and will not form part of the project archive.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. The evaluation recorded a post-medieval ditch (Tr3 and Tr4), a post-medieval sheep burial (Tr1) and a modern pit (Tr2). The ditch in Tr3 and Tr4 presumably relates to a former field boundary, although no corresponding boundary is visible on historic cartographic sources.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 8.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Craig Jones, assisted by Rebecca Avery. This report was written by Craig Jones. The finds report was written by Alejandra Gutiérrez and Jacky Sommerville. The report illustrations were prepared by Krissy Moore. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Richard Paxford. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

9. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2022 *Geology of Britain Viewer*

<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/> Accessed 21 January 2022

Cotswold Archaeology 2022 *Burnt House Farm, Petherton Road, North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

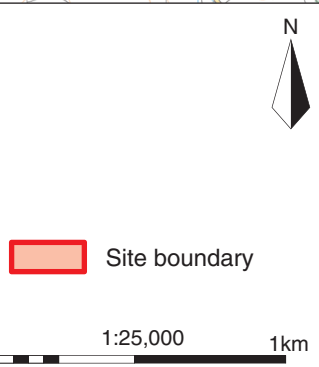
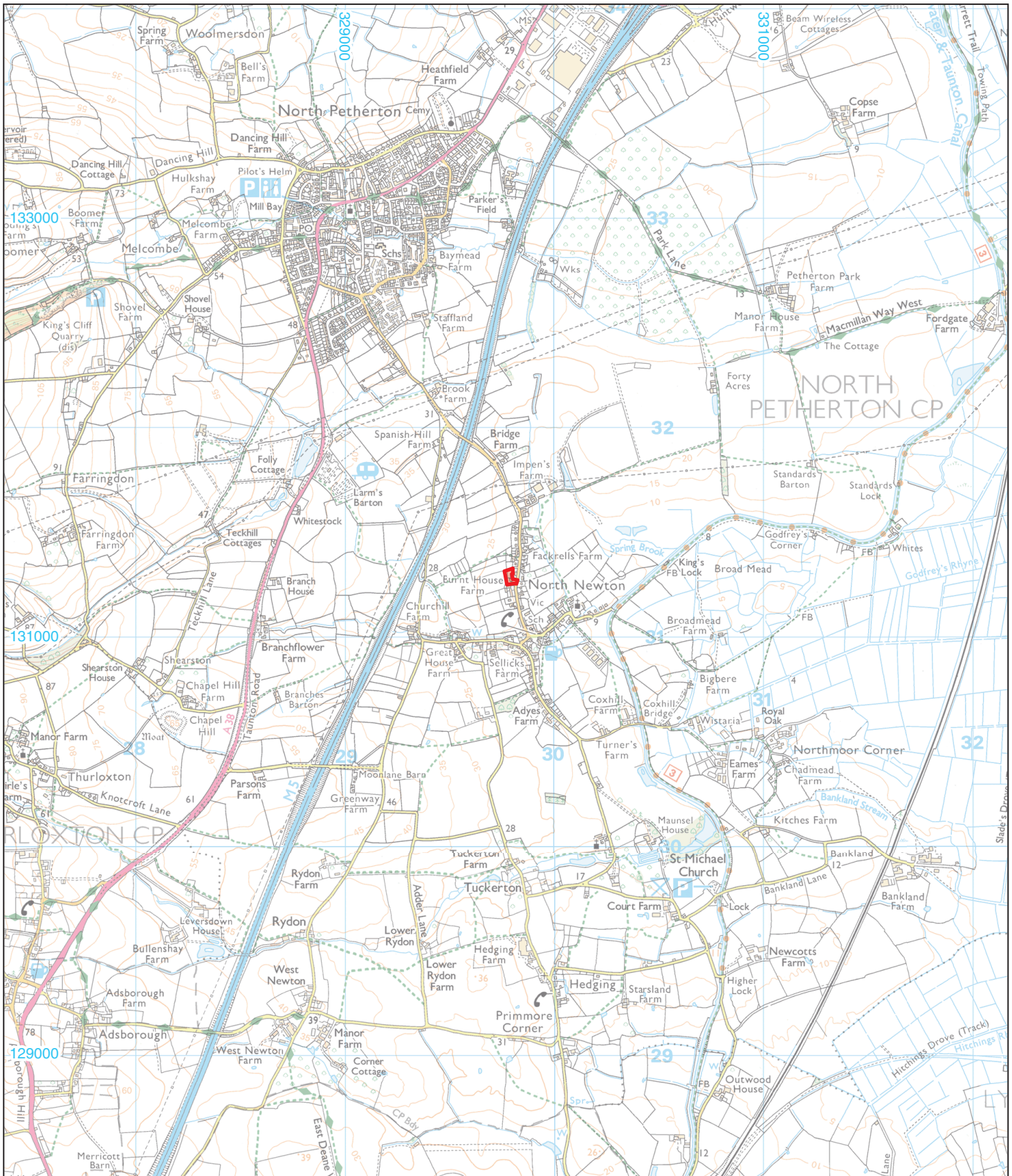
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2021 *National Planning Policy Framework*

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	Mid grey brown sandy silt			0.27	
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Dark red-brown clayey silt			0.54	
1	102	Layer		Natural	Mid-brown-red clayey sand				
1	103	Layer		Made ground	Dark brown-grey sandy silt, with modern rubble inclusions			0.4	
1	104	Cut		Pit	Irregular/sub-circular pit	1.14	0.52	0.37	
1	105	Fill	104	Sheep skeleton	Articulated sheep skeleton				C17-C18
1	106	Fill	104	Backfill of pit	Mid-red-brown silty sand	1.14	0.52	0.37	
2	200	Layer		Made ground	Modern rubble in a grey-brown sandy silt matrix			0.24	
2	201	Layer		Natural	Mid-brown-red clayey sand				
3	300	Layer		Made ground	Modern rubble in a grey-brown sandy silt matrix			0.21	
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Dark red-brown clayey silt			0.26	
3	302	Layer		Natural	Mid-brown-red clayey sand				
3	303	Cut		Ditch	East/west aligned		1.14	0.38	
3	304	Fill		Ditch fill	Mid-reddish brown sandy silt		1.14	0.38	C17-C18
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Mid-reddish brown sandy clay			0.3	
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Dark red-brown clayey silt			0.48	
4	402	Layer		Natural	Mid-brown-red clayey sand				
4	403	Cut		Ditch	East/west aligned; not excavated		1.38		
4	404	Fill		Ditch fill	Mid-reddish brown sandy silt		1.38		

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Burnt House Farm, Petherton Road, North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset	
Short description	<p>In May 2022, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Burnt House Farm, North Newton, Somerset. A total of four trenches were excavated within the site.</p> <p>The evaluation recorded a post-medieval ditch, a post-medieval sheep burial and a modern pit. The ditch presumably relates to a former field boundary, although no corresponding boundary is visible on historic cartographic sources.</p>	
Project dates	3–4 May 2022	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Petherton Road, North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset	
Study area (m ² /ha)	0.19ha	
Site co-ordinates	329802 131270	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Craig Jones	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Somerset Museums Service; accession number TTNCM 3/2022	Site recording forms
Digital	Archaeology Data Service (ADS)	Database, digital photos, digital recording data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2022 <i>Burnt House Farm, Petherton Road, North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report AN0494_1		



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

PROJECT TITLE
 Burnt House Farm, North Newton,
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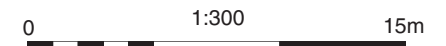
FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	KM	PROJECT NO.	AN0494	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	09/05/2022	1
APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Archaeological feature
(excavated/unexcavated)
- Modern
- A ↑ A ↓ Section location



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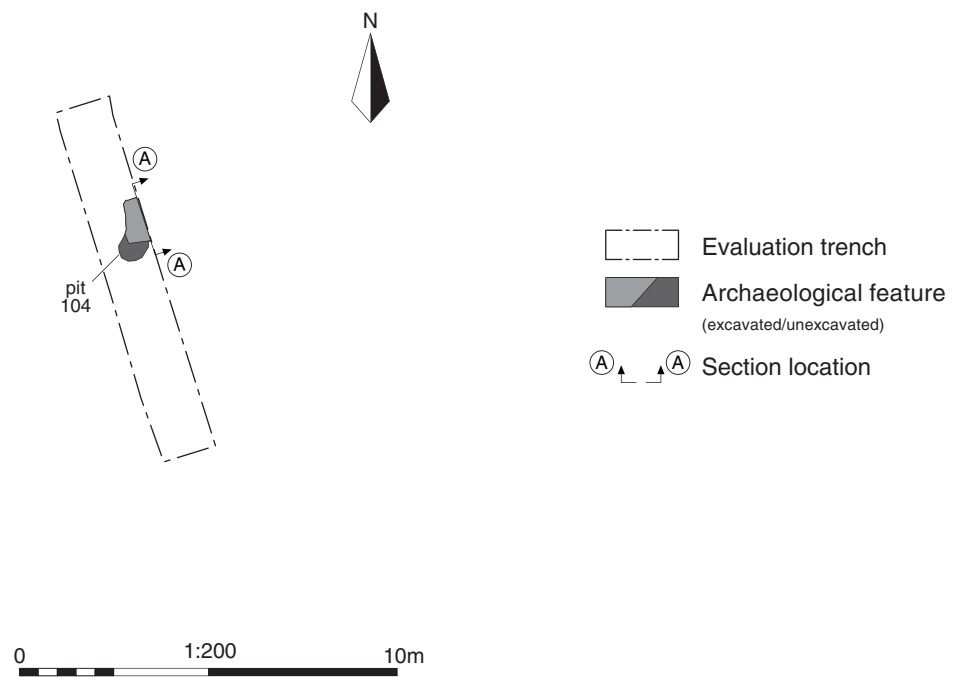
Cotswold Archaeology
 Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 Suffolk 01449 900120
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enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

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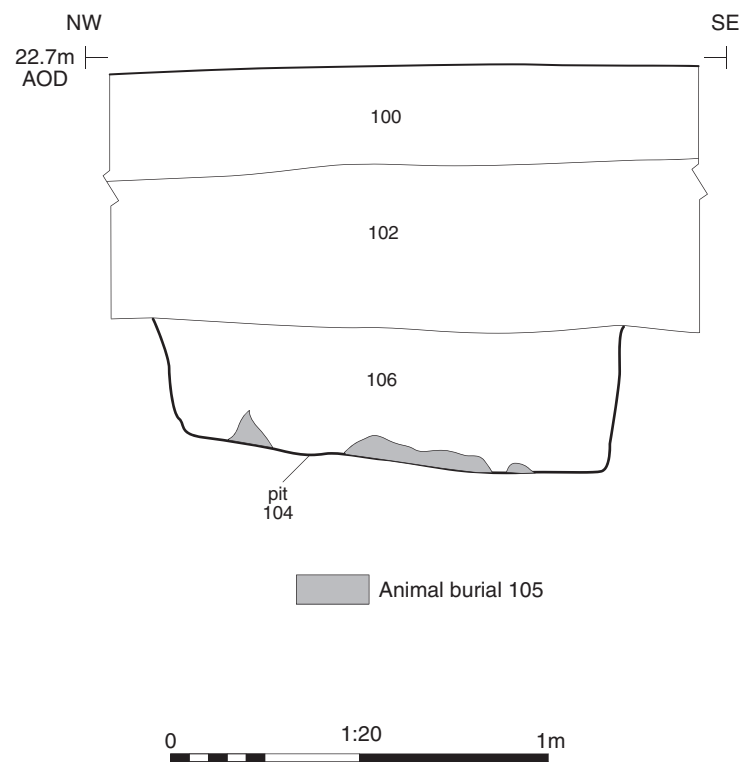
FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan showing
 archaeological features

DRAWN BY KM CHECKED BY DJB APPROVED BY DE	PROJECT NO. AN0494 DATE 26/07/2022 SCALE@A3 1:300	FIGURE NO. 2
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Trench 1, plan



Section AA

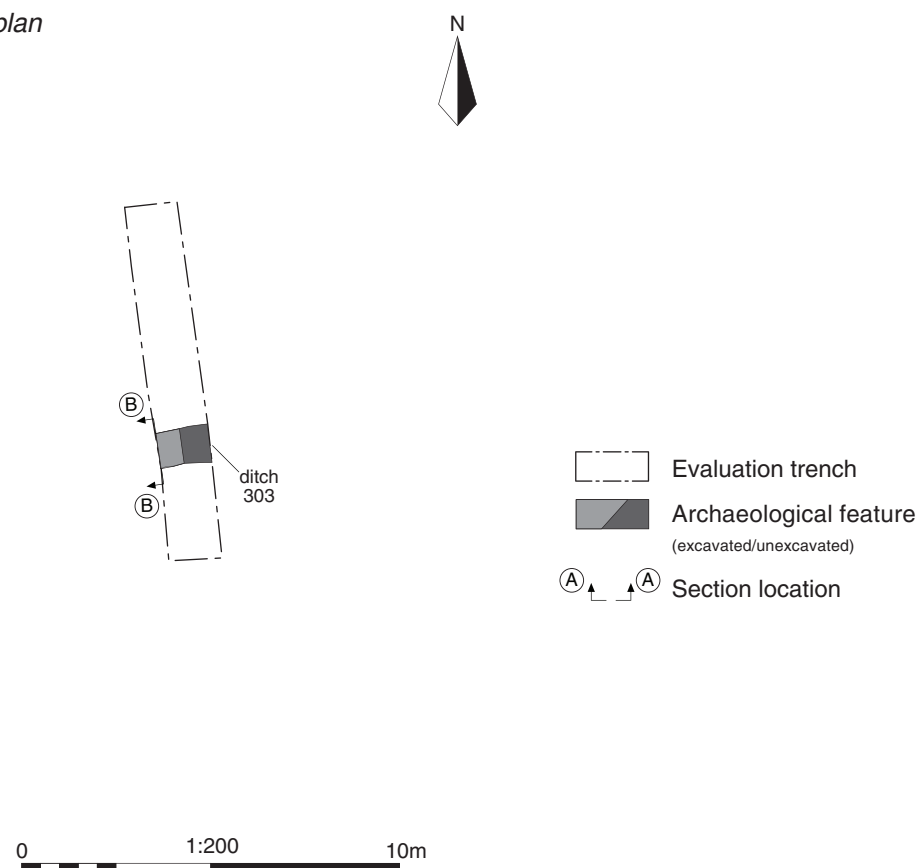


Pit 104 with animal burial 105, looking north-east (scale 1m)



Animal burial 105, plan view (scale 0.5m)

Trench 3, plan

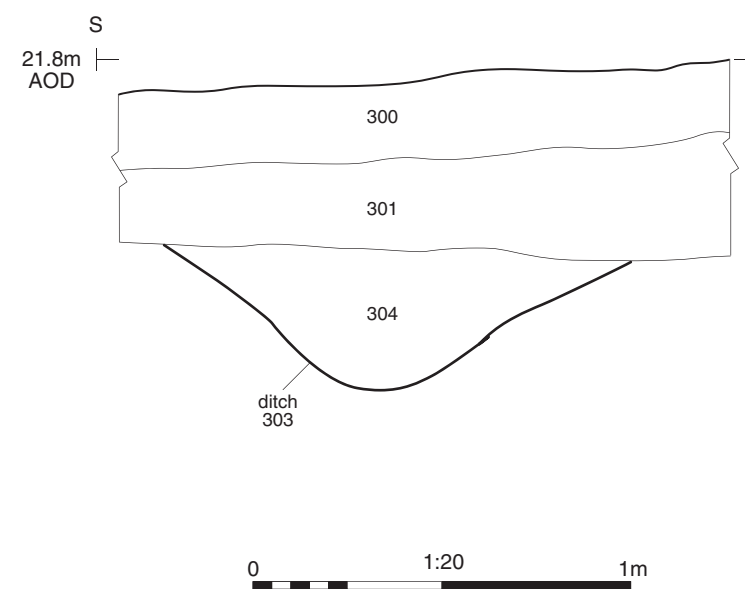


Trench 3, looking north (scales 1m)



Ditch 303, looking west (scale 1m)

Section BB




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

PROJECT TITLE
**Burnt House Farm, North Newton,
 Bridgwater, Somerset**

FIGURE TITLE
**Trench 3: plan, photographs and
 section**

DRAWN BY	KM	PROJECT NO.	AN0494	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	09/05/2022	4
APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE@A3	1:20 & 1:200	

Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11
Cotswold Business Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

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

