

**LAND AT SHAWSWELL FARM
RENDCOMB
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

For

**DAVID PALMER BUILDING
CONTRACTORS LTD**


CA PROJECT: 3153
CA REPORT: 10160

OCTOBER 2010

LAND AT SHAWSWELL FARM
RENDCOMB
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CA PROJECT: 3153
CA REPORT: 10160

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date	24 September 2010
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date	12 October 2010
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signed	
date	
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land at Shawswell Farm
Location:	Rendcomb, Gloucestershire
NGR:	SP 0237 1134
Type:	Watching Brief
Date:	16 August and 1-3 September 2010
Planning Reference:	09/04444/FUL
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Corinium Museum
Site Code:	SWF 10

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a stable block and associated agricultural track at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb, Gloucestershire.

Two ditches containing Roman pottery were revealed within the footprint of the stable block. One small, discrete pit containing pottery dating to the medieval period was excavated and recorded within the area of the agricultural track.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 During August and September 2010 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for David Palmer Building Contractors Ltd at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb, Gloucestershire (centred on NGR: SP 0237 1134; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition (no. 3) attached to a planning consent for a stable block and associated agricultural track (Cotswold District Council planning ref: 09/04444/FUL). Approximately 180m of the agricultural track had been excavated prior to the archaeological watching brief (and the earlier Desk-Based Assessment). The remaining length of track and the stable block area were excavated under archaeological watching brief.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2010) and approved by Cotswold District Council acting on the advice of Charles Parry, Senior Archaeological Officer, Gloucestershire County Council. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Gloucestershire* (GCC 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The proposed development encloses an area of approximately 0.2ha. It is located on ground that slopes upwards from c. 204m AOD in the south-east to c. 210m AOD in the north-west. The majority of the length of agricultural track observed during the watching brief lies in a fairly level pasture field associated with Shawswell Farm to the north. The western extent of the track and the proposed stable block lie within a steeply sloping wooded area enclosed to the south and east by drystone walls. Immediately to the south-west is Springfield House.
- 1.4 The solid geology of the site is predominantly Taynton limestone formation of the Mesozoic era, with the Fuller's Earth formation of the Mesozoic era at the eastern edge of the site (BGS 2010).

Archaeological background

- 1.5 Research indicates that the site is located in an area of high archaeological potential. A Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) was conducted by Cotswold Archaeology in December 2009 which identified a number of areas of archaeological interest, summarised below.
- 1.6 There is only one recorded possible prehistoric feature within the study area, the probable long barrow approximately 400m north-east of the site. The 41m-long mound sits upon the top of a ridge, orientated north-south, and is constructed from limestone. Geophysical survey of the site and its surrounds recorded two mounds, an oval one to the north and a circular one to the south, both composed of dense rubble with no internal structures visible (Marshall 1996). No other prehistoric features are recorded within the study area. However, a second possible barrow is suggested by a stony patch within a field, just outside the study area, 700m east of the site. In the wider area, a dense flint scatter, covering approximately 12ha of arable hillside has been identified through fieldwalking north of Rendcomb long barrow, outside the study area, 800m north of the site. A rectilinear enclosure was identified from aerial photography 1km north-west of the site and may relate to such activity. The tribal oppidum of Bagendon, the Dobunnic capital and a sizeable (81ha) territorial enclosure, is located 3.8km to the south (Clifford 1961). Ditches hillfort is located approximately 4km to the southwest.
- 1.7 A Roman road, the White Way, passes south-west to north-east along the route of an existing road approximately 1km to the east of the study area. This minor Roman road (Margary 1973, fig. 5 no. 55), leading to Cirencester, the civitas capital and major local Roman settlement, served a number of Roman villas in the district around Cirencester.
- 1.8 Rendcomb is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, and developed as an estate village associated with the Manor of Rendcomb (Victoria County Histories 1981 221). Agricultural land-use historically dominated the region, and rabbit farming is suggested in the area by the presence of pillow mounds to the north of Rendcomb (RCHME 1976, xxxiii). Deserted medieval settlement is recorded in the area, and the Ordnance Survey maps a series of earthworks immediately east of Springfield House, within the area of the proposed trackway.

- 1.9 The earthworks of Shawswell deserted medieval village are situated within the vicinity of the site. These are positioned upon the western slopes of the small valley. The earthworks cover a large area, apparently focused beyond the site to the north. Approximately 250m to the north of the site lies a linear hollow running east-west, associated with short linear ditches, and the turf-covered foundation remains of 4-5 houses and adjoining field enclosures. The earthworks are all less than 0.3m high and generally much reduced by ploughing, leading these particular remains to be classified as ‘indeterminate earthworks’ (Aston and Viner 1984, 283). The proposed stable block site is situated to the west of the identified earthworks.

Methodology

- 1.10 The fieldwork was guided by the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2010). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising the machine excavation of the western end of the agricultural trackway and the footprint of the stable block (Fig. 2).
- 1.11 The groundworks were carried out in two phases. The initial phase (Trench 1) was the excavation of the agricultural trackway. Phase two (Trench 2) comprised the ground level reduction for the stable block.
- 1.12 Where archaeological deposits were encountered, written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.13 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 Corinium Museum, 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 3-5)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the watching brief results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B. The natural geological substrate consisting of limestone brash was revealed in both trenches at an average depth of 0.7m below present ground level (bpgl). Trench 1

revealed a possible buried Roman soil and a small pit dating to the medieval period. Trench 2 revealed two Roman ditches sealed by colluvium. All features cut the natural substrate.

Trench 1 (Figs 3, 4)

- 2.2 The natural substrate of limestone brash and sandy silt was overlain by buried soil 102, which contained pottery dating to the 2nd century AD. This layer was present within the western half of Trench 1 and was overlain by limestone fragments 101. Layer 101 thinned gradually from a depth of more than 0.5m in the west until no longer present in the eastern end of the trench.
- 2.3 Near the eastern end of the trench was a shallow, steep sided pit 104 with a diameter of 0.74m. It was filled by 105, which contained pottery dating to the 11th to 13th centuries as well as animal bone (Fig 4, section AA). This fill was sealed by topsoil layer 100.

Trench 2 (Figs 3-5)

- 2.4 Ditch A (Fig. 4), aligned north-east/south-west, was identified in the northern part of the trench. Ditch B (Fig. 5), aligned north/south, was identified in the southern part of the trench.
- 2.5 Ditch A was shallow with an open U-shaped profile, measuring 0.8m wide and 0.22m deep (Fig. 4, section BB). A length of 12m was exposed within the trench. It was filled by 205, a yellowish brown sandy clay silt which pottery dating to the middle to late 1st century AD.
- 2.6 Ditch B was steep sided with a V-shaped profile and an exposed length of c. 9m and a width of 2.5m. Two sections; 206 and 211 were excavated through this ditch. Ditch 206 (Fig. 5, section CC) was 2.7m in width and at least 0.5m in depth. The earliest fills of ditch, 209 (which contained pottery dating to the middle 1st century AD) and 210, comprised silty clays with limestone fragments and were overlain by 208 which was of a similar character and contained pottery dating to the middle to late 1st century AD. The final fill, 207, comprised yellow brown clay silt, the upper half of which was heat affected to a reddish colour. There was a moderate quantity of charcoal at the top of this layer. Deposit 207 was observed to extend for approximately 2m from the terminus end of ditch B and contained pottery dating to the middle to late 1st century AD.

- 2.7 Ditch 211 was 2.3m in width and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.3m at which point it was hand augered to a further depth of c. 1.42m (Fig. 5, DD). Primary deposit 215 was overlain by 214, a deposit of large limestone blocks, possibly derived from a ditch-side bank. Overlying 214 was gradual silting deposit 213 derived from upslope side of the ditch. Deposit 212 appeared to be a deliberate backfill to level the ditch once it had gone out of use. Pottery and a fragment of a copper alloy brooch dating to the middle to late 1st century AD were recovered from fill 212.
- 2.8 The fills of the archaeological features identified in Trench 2 were overlain by colluvium 202 and topsoil 201. Pottery dating to the late 1st to middle 2nd centuries AD was recovered from the former deposit.

The Finds

- 2.9 Quantities of archaeological finds were recovered from 11 deposits, comprising Roman and medieval pottery, a copper-alloy brooch fragment and animal bone. Further quantities of modern artefacts, including pottery and an iron nail, were recovered as unstratified finds (Appendix B).

Pottery

- 2.10 Pottery of Roman date was retrieved from seven separate deposits (205, 207, 208, 209 and 212). Most is characteristic of the middle to late 1st century AD, and compares with material of this date from Ditches Hillfort (Moore 2009, 96–131) and Bagendon (Fell 1961, 213–67).
- 2.11 The fabric types identifiable from these earlier deposits were: shell-tempered fabric, limestone-tempered (some of which could be from a Malvernian source: deposit 209), grog-tempered, a miscellaneous greyware, Savernake grog-tempered ware and Severn Valley ware.
- 2.12 Sherds in ‘Belgic’ style grog-tempered fabrics and a wheelthrown limestone-tempered fabric were recovered from fills 207, 209 (of ditch 206) and 212 (of ditch 211), each characteristic of the middle 1st century AD. One rim sherd from fill 209 (of ditch 206) is identifiable as from a cordoned jar or bowl in grog-tempered fabric; another vessel in the wheelthrown limestone-tempered fabric, from fill 212 (of ditch 211), with joining sherds is from a shouldered jar in ‘Belgic’ style. Fill 212 also

produced sherds of Severn Valley ware, including a carinated bowl of early Roman type (Webster 'form H': Webster 1976, 33–4).

- 2.13 The largest group was recovered from colluvium layer 202, totalling 23 sherds, comprising Savernake grog-tempered ware, sherds in limestone-tempered fabric and sherds in oxidized red-slipped fabric suggesting a date of the late 1st to early 2nd centuries.
- 2.14 A date of the 2nd century has been assigned to buried soil 102 due to the presence of two rim sherds from a flat rim dish in Black-Burnished ware exhibiting acute-angle lattice.
- 2.15 Pottery of medieval date was recovered from topsoil 100, fill 105 (of pit 104) and topsoil 200. The fabric is identifiable in all the fragments as Cotswold oolitic limestone-tempered and the forms are cooking pot and jars broadly dateable to the 11th to 13th centuries AD. From topsoil 200 one sherd was retrieved that could be in Minety limestone-tempered ware dateable to the 12th to 13th centuries AD.

Metal artefact

- 2.16 A fragment of a Roman brooch in copper alloy was retrieved from fill 212 (of ditch 211). Due to the bad preservation of the artefact it is difficult to determinate if it is a Colchester type or a Dolphin type brooch. Both these brooch types are dateable to the 1st century.

Animal Bone

- 2.17 Animal bone was recovered from ten deposits and totalled 135 fragments weighing 1.3kg. The species identified were cattle, sheep/goat, pig and hare. More fragmented bones were classified by size, and cow-sized, sheep-sized and cat-sized categories were present. The Roman and medieval deposits produced a similar range of species. The bone was well preserved with frequent evidence of butchery and occasional evidence of gnawing by dogs.

3. DISCUSSION

Roman

- 3.1 Buried soil 102 was evident in the western end of Trench 1, this contained pottery dating to the 2nd century AD and may have represented a buried soil horizon. Trench 2 contained two ditches dated to the middle to late 1st century AD. The relatively large quantities of pottery and animal bone recovered from the ditches may indicate nearby settlement activity. The sequence of infilling in ditch B suggests that a ditch-side bank might have been present along the eastern side of the ditch. Stony layer 101 recorded within the western end of Trench 1 was possibly waste material derived from a nearby quarry to the north-west (Phillip St Pier, pers. comm.). Colluvial layer 202 present within Trench 2, which sealed the archaeological features, contained a significant quantity of pottery dated to the Late 1st to Mid 2nd century AD.

Medieval

- 3.2 A single archaeological feature dated to the medieval period, pit 104, was excavated and recorded in Trench 1. It contained a charcoal rich fill with animal bone and a small quantity of pottery sherds dated to the 11th to 13th centuries AD. Pit 104 may be associated with the medieval settlement to the east and further to the north-east of the site.
- 3.3 Although significant tree root disturbance was observed within the majority of the site, preservation of archaeological features and deposits within the steeply sloping area was likely to be good due to the presence of the overlying colluvium deposit.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by David Parry. The report was written by David Parry. The illustrations were prepared by John Bennett. The finds report was compiled by Angela Aggujaro and Sylvia Warman. The archive has been compiled by David Parry, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Laurent Coleman.

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1 – 205m AOD

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil. Heavily rooted dark grey brown sandy silt			0.12	
101	Layer	Possible made ground – quarrying detritus			0.54	
102	Layer	Buried soil			0.2	C2
103	Layer	Natural substrate. Light yellow limestone brash and sandy silt				
104	Cut	Pit or posthole	0.74	0.74	0.23	
105	Fill	Fill of 104. Medieval pottery	0.74	0.74	0.23	C11-C13

Trench 2 – 209m AOD

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
200	Layer	Topsoil. Heavily rooted dark greenish brown sandy silt			0.26	
201	Layer	Subsoil. Yellow brown sandy silt			0.10	
202	Layer	Colluvium. Red brown sandy clay silt with very common limestone cobbles			0.42	LC1-MC2
203	Layer	Natural. Limestone brash				
204	Cut	Ditch A. Filled by 205	>12	0.8	0.22	
205	Fill	Ditch A. Fill of ditch 204. Yellow brown sandy clay silt	>1.0	0.8	0.22	MLC1
206	Cut	Ditch B. Ditch terminus. Filled by 207, 208, 209, 210	1.3	1.3 (half)	>0.7	
207	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 206. Partly heat-affected clay silt	c. 2.0	1.15 (half)	0.19	MLC1
208	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 206. Gritty grey brown clay silt with common limestone	>1.1	1.1 (half)	>0.42	MLC1
209	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 206. Yellow brown clay silt with common limestone fragments				MC1
210	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 206. Limestone cobbles and boulders in mid brown clay silt matrix	>1.3	>0.9	>0.58	
211	Cut	Ditch B. Filled with 212, 213, 214, 215	1.2	2.45	>1.3	
212	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 211. Pottery, copper alloy brooch fragment	>1.2	1.2	0.84	MLC1
213	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 211.	>1.2	1.6	1.2	
214	Fill	Ditch B. Fill of ditch 211.	>1.2	1.0	>1.15	
215	Fill	Ditch B. Primary fill of ditch 211. Yellow brown gritty clay silt	>1.2	>0.55	>0.15	
216	Group	Ditch B. Group number for ditch cuts 206 and 211	>9	2.5	>1.3	

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS


Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
100	Medieval pottery: oolitic limestone-tempered fabric	1	16	C11-C13
102	Animal Bone: pig, cow-sized, sheep-sized Roman pottery: Black-Burnished ware Industrial residue: iron slag	6 2 1	44 10 16	C2
105	Animal Bone: cattle, sheep/goat, pig, cow-sized, sheep-sized Medieval pottery: oolitic limestone-tempered fabric	12 27	48 232	C11-C13
200	Animal Bone: sheep/goat, pig Medieval pottery: limestone-tempered fabric	3 1	66 10	C12-C13
202	Animal Bone: cattle, sheep/goat, cow-sized Roman pottery: Savernake grog-tempered, limestone-tempered fabric, oxidized slipped fabric	7 23	122 218	LC1-MC2
205	Animal Bone: cattle, sheep/goat, cow-sized Roman pottery: Severn valley ware, greyware, shell-tempered fabric, black sandy ware (Cirencester type 5)	11 14	112 106	MLC1+
207	Roman pottery: handmade limestone and shell-tempered fabric, 'Belgic' style wheel-thrown grog-tempered fabric, fine greyware. Animal Bone: sheep/goat, pig, cow-sized	15 4	78 8	MLC1
208	Animal Bone: cattle, sheep/goat, cow-sized, sheep-sized Roman pottery: handmade shell-tempered fabric, greyware, wheel-thrown grog-tempered fabric	28 8	406 40	MLC1
209	Animal Bone: pig, hare, cow-sized, sheep-sized, cat-sized Roman pottery: handmade limestone-tempered fabric, greyware, grog-tempered fabric, wheel-thrown 'Belgic' style limestone-tempered fabric	11 7	48 80	MC1
212	Animal Bone: cattle, sheep/goat, cow-sized, sheep-sized Roman pottery: 'Belgic' style grog-tempered, Severn Valley ware, greyware, limestone-tempered fabric (cc. 209) Copper-alloy brooch	50 37 1	478 176 2	MLC1
213	Animal Bone: cow-sized	3	14	—
u.s.	Post-medieval pottery: stoneware, refined white ware Iron nail Ceramic building material	5 1 1	124 8 4	—

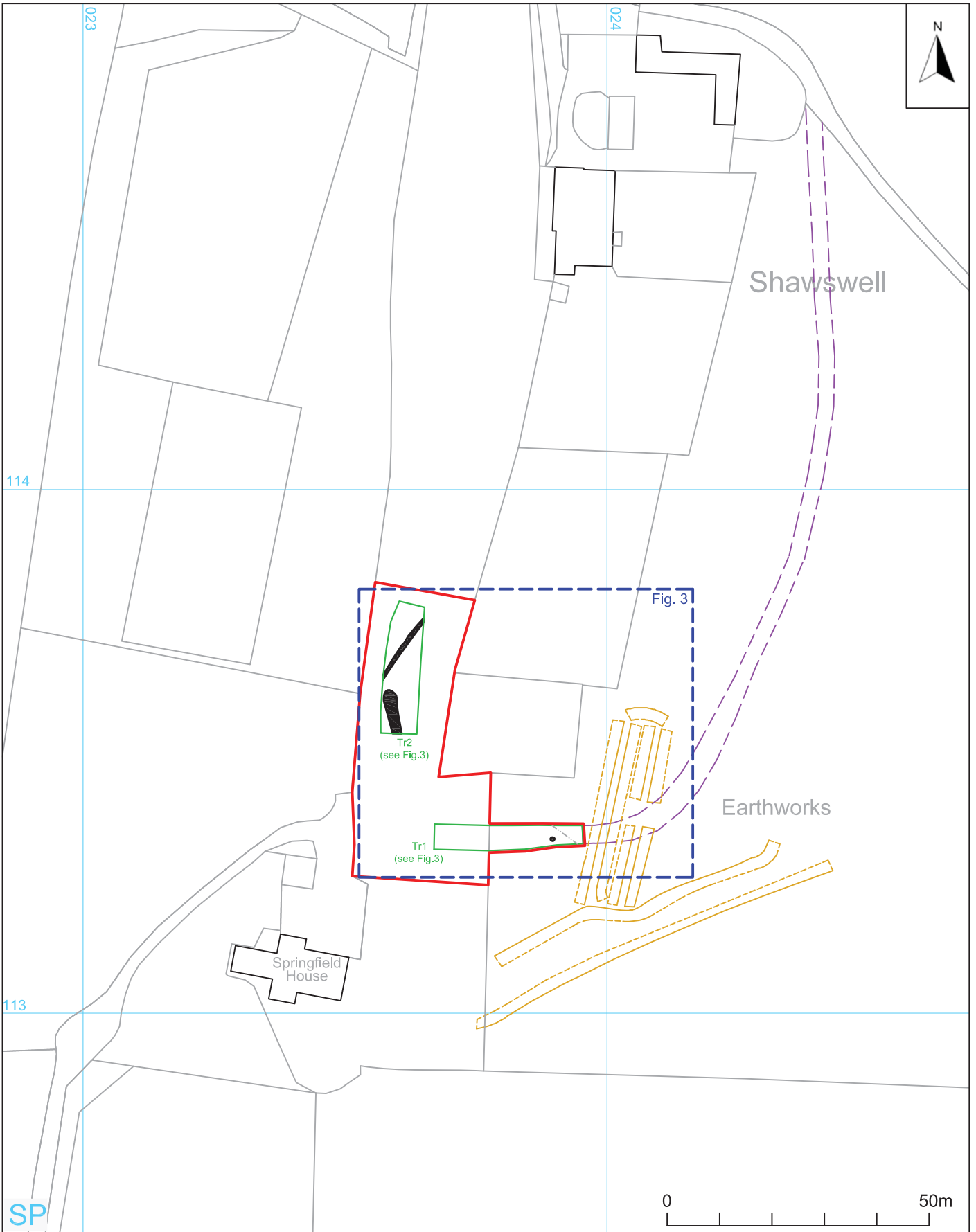
APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land at Shawswell Farm	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a stable block and associated agricultural track at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb, Gloucestershire. Two ditches containing Roman pottery were revealed within the footprint of the stable block. One small, discrete pit containing pottery dating to the medieval period was excavated and recorded within the area of the agricultural track.	
Project dates	16 August and 1-3 September 2010	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	DBA CA (2009)	
Future work	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb, Glos	
Study area	0.2ha	
Site co-ordinates	SP 0237 1134	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Gloucestershire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Laurent Coleman	
Project Supervisor	David Parry	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Corinium Museum	Ceramics, animal bone, iron slag, copper-alloy brooch fragment
Paper	Corinium Museum	Context sheets, photo registers, permatrace drawings
Digital	Corinium Museum	Digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2010 <i>Land at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA typescript report 10160		

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 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
PROJECT TITLE Land at Shawswell Farm Rendcomb, Gloucestershire			
FIGURE TITLE Site location plan			
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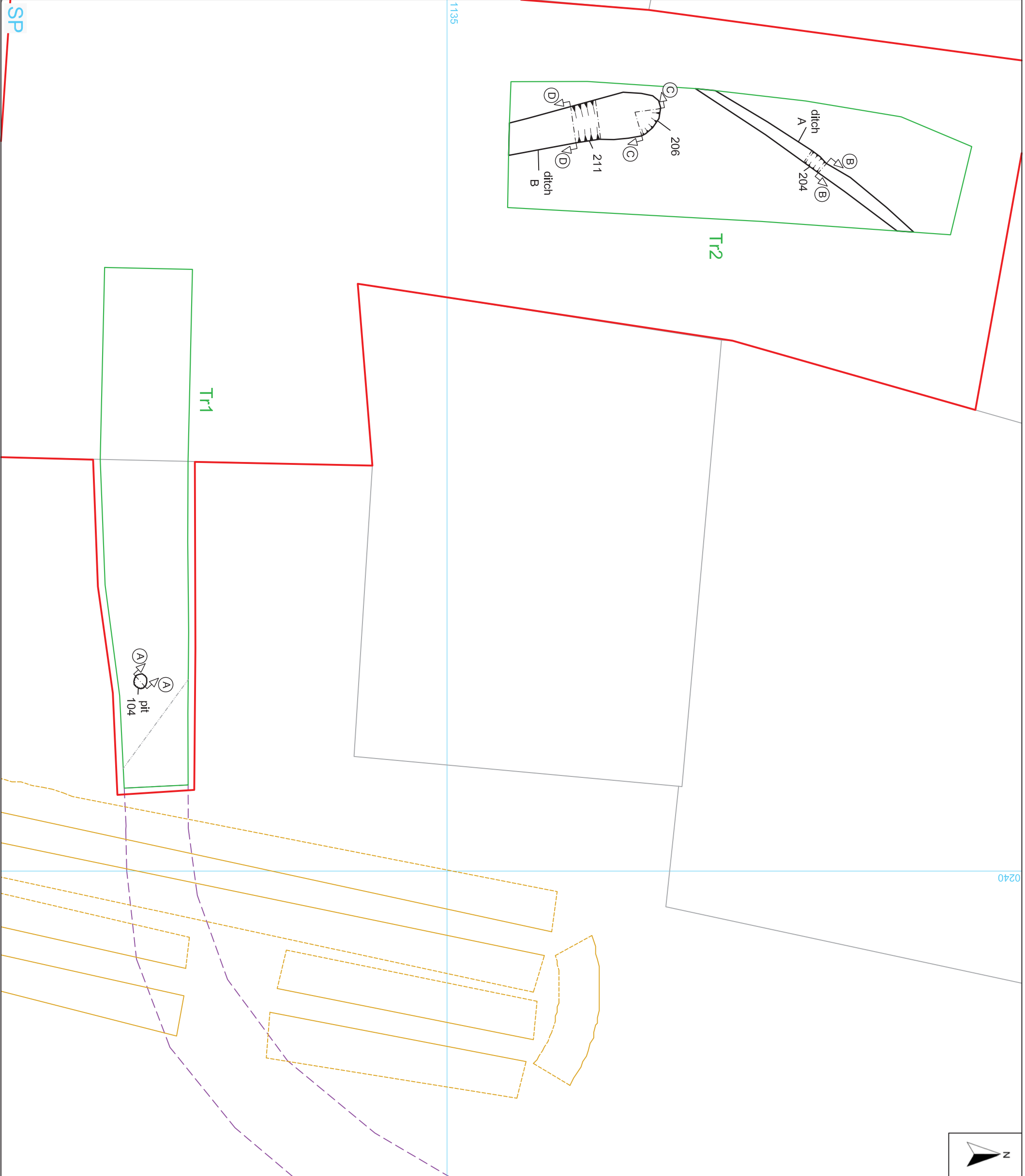


P:\3153 shawswell farm, rendcomb w\Illustration\Drafts\3153_Land at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb Fig 2-3.dwg

SP

- site
- area of observed groundworks, showing archaeological feature
- previously constructed trackway (CA 2009)
- earthworks depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping

<small>PROJECT TITLE</small> Land at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb, Gloucestershire			
<small>FIGURE TITLE</small> The site, showing location of groundworks			
<small>DRAWN BY</small>	<small>SCALE</small>	<small>PROJECT NO.</small>	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
JB	1:1000@A4	3153	2



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- Site
- area of observed groundworks
- archaeological feature
- modern feature
- previously constructed trackway (CA 2009)
- earthworks depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

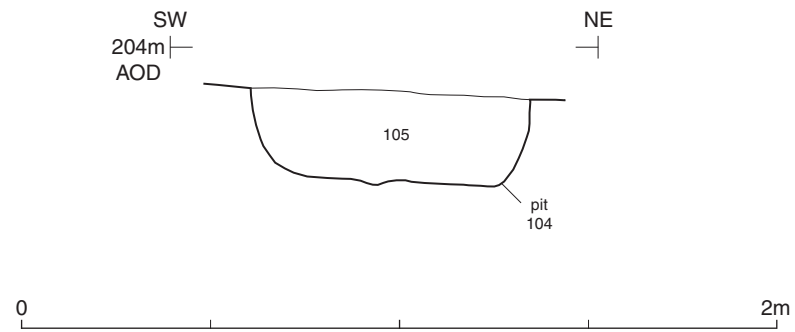
PROJECT TITLE
 Land at Shawswell Farm,
 Rendcomb, Gloucestershire

FIGURE TITLE
**Location of groundworks,
 showing archaeological features**

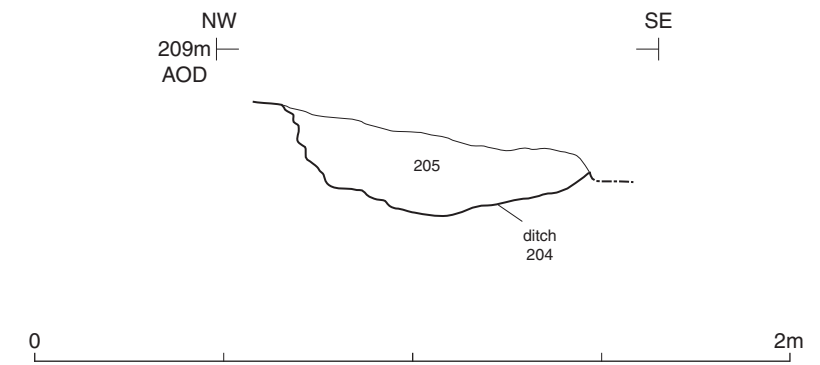
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SP

Section AA




Section BB



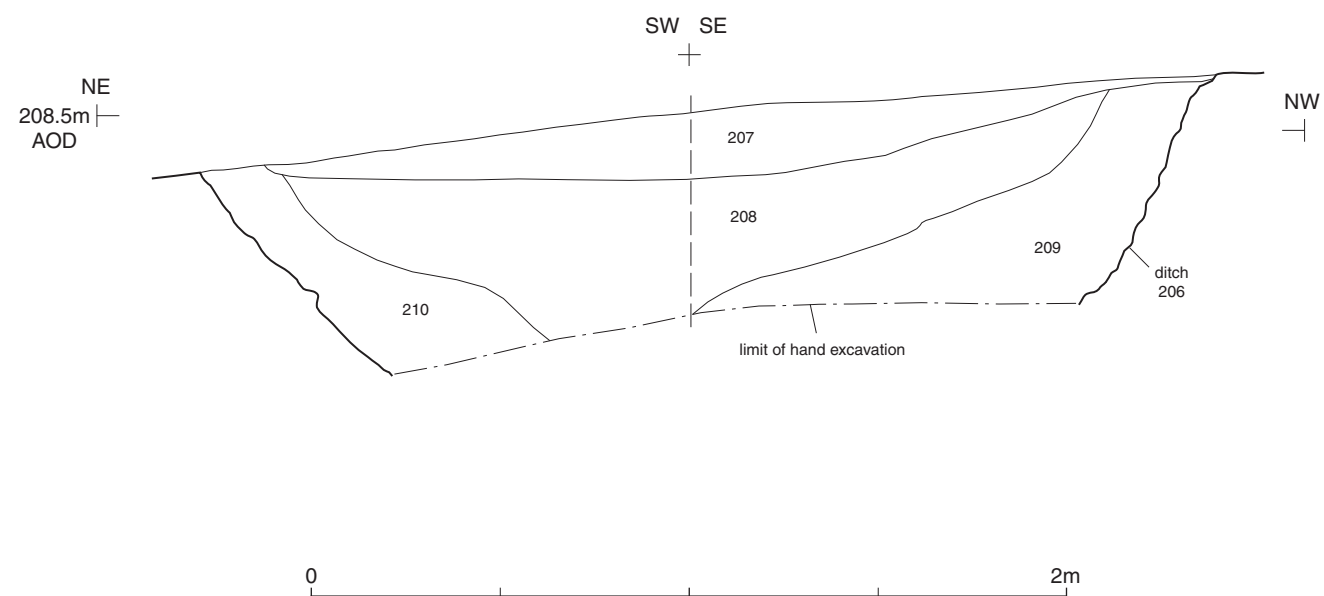
Pit 104, looking north-west (0.4m scale)



Section 204 of ditch A, looking north-east (0.4m Scale)

 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
<small>PROJECT TITLE</small> Land at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb Gloucestershire			
<small>FIGURE TITLE</small> Pit 104 and section 204 of ditch A; sections and photographs			
<small>DRAWN BY</small>	<small>SCALE</small>	<small>PROJECT NO.</small>	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
JB	1:20@A3	3153	4

Section CC




Section DD



Terminus 206 of ditch B , looking west (1 and 2m scales)



Section 211 of ditch B, looking south-east (2m scale)

 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
<small>PROJECT TITLE</small> Land at Shawswell Farm, Rendcomb Gloucestershire			
<small>FIGURE TITLE</small> Ditch B; sections and photographs			
<small>DRAWN BY</small>	<small>SCALE</small>	<small>PROJECT NO.</small>	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
JB	1:20@A3	3153	5