# Milton Barns, East Knoyle, Wiltshire

## Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation

## Centred on NGR 4387761, 131200

By
AC archaeology

On behalf of:
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AC archaeology

# MILTON BARNS, EAST KNOYLE, WILTSHIRE:

## Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation

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## Accession Number: Awaited

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**1.1** This project design sets out the methodology for undertaking a programme of archaeological investigation by trial pits in relation to a planning consent (Ref: PL2022/04148) for the development of land occupied by former agricultural buildings at Milton Barns, Milton, near East Knoyle, Wiltshire, SP3 6BJ.

**1.2** The document has been prepared by AC archaeology Ltd on behalf of the applicant in response to condition 7 of the planning consent that requires the submission of a programme of archaeological investigations. It has been agreed with the Assistant County Archaeologist that an initial phase of assessment should comprise a site investigation by trial pits. The site and trial pit locations are shown on Fig. 1.

**1.3** The application area covers some 0.125 hectares and comprises a trapezoidal plot grouping four extant barns at the junction of New Road and Touchstone Lane in the hamlet of Milton, Wiltshire.

**1.4** The underlying geology comprises Shaftesbury Sandstone Member, a sedimentary bedrock formed between 113 and 100 million years ago during the Cretaceous period; West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation lies to the east (BGS Online).

### 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

**2.1** The hamlet of Milton lies 700m northeast of East Knoyle, with West Knoyle lying 1.5km to the northwest. All of these settlements appear to be amalgamated, being recorded in the Domesday Book as *'Chenvel'* where the land was held by King William (Powell-Smith and Palmer 2023). Here, 57 inhabitants are recorded along side large tracts of meadow, pasture and a reasonable amount of woodland.

**2.2** The settlement of Milton is recorded in the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (WHER) as a settlement with medieval origins (WHER Ref: ST83SE456).

**2.3** A Heritage Statement was completed by AB Heritage (2022), which showed that this plot had an association with the nearby Clouds Estate. The Statement noted that Victoria County History records 17th century farmhouses located nearby, with 18-19th century remodelling (AB Heritage 2022, 17; WHER: MWI64967, MWI64968, MWI64969, MWI64965).

**2.4** The tithe map (AB Heritage 2022, Plate 1) shows a different layout to the buildings currently present on the site. Elements of the present layout of buildings is visible on the 1880s OS map, suggesting that there has been extensive 19th century remodelling of the site.

## 3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### Aims

**3.1** The principal aims of the investigations are:

- to test for the presence, and assess the significance, of any archaeological deposits exposed in the trial pits
- to enable an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on any archaeological deposits;
- to record the overburden deposits on the site which may provide protection from any potential future development;
- to develop a mitigation strategy should deposits of archaeological significance be found;
- To contribute to archaeological research framework questions. The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework Research Strategy 2012 – 2017 (Research Frameworks 2023), for example, includes the following themes that may be relevant to the site area:

Theme A: Settlement Sites and Landscapes – urban, rural, prehistoric:

Research Aim 30: Develop and test methodologies to identify Early Medieval settlement;

Research Aim 31: To address the long-running debates about Early Medieval landscapes and territories.

### Trial Pits

**3.2** It is proposed to excavate five trial pits across the potential development area. TPs 1-3 are located within the footprint of the new building; TP3 would be excavated by hand, but there is a solid stone floor surface at that end of the existing structure and where there is no access for a mini-digger. It has therefore been re-positioned and will be excavated by mini-digger. TP4 is in the approximate location of a soakaway. TP5 is in a building where a new floor will be required for the refurbished barn.

**3.3** The pits will each be a minimum of 1x1m in size. Trial pits 1, 3 and 4 will be a minimum of 2m long.

**3.4** Overburden within those trial pits that will be hand excavated that can be shown to be of modern date will be removed in level spits of no more than 200mm using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. Excavation will cease either at the top of archaeological deposits, or at the surface of the natural geology if no archaeological deposits are encountered.

**3.5** All trial pits and spoil heaps will be scanned with a metal detector by a suitably experienced operative and in accordance with the requirements of Wiltshire Council's Archaeological Service. No backfilling will be carried out until approved by the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist (WCACA).

### Assessment and approaches to recording

**3.6** Following completion of topsoil removal, or as soon as safe working allows, each trial pit will be cleaned by hand, where necessary, and any sub-surface deposits identified. Spoil heaps will be scanned for unstratified artefacts that will be recovered. A decision will then be made as follows:

a) if there are no archaeological deposits present, the trial pit will be recorded as per methodology for Negative pits in section 3.7, or;

b) if there are deposits of potential archaeological origin (Positive trenches), these deposits will be excavated and recorded in accordance with the methodology in section 3.8.

**Excavation and recording methodology**

*Negative Trial Pits*

**3.7** In the case of a trial pit assessed to contain no archaeological features or deposits, and deemed to be Negative, the archaeological recording will comprise:

- Recording of the trial pit position in plan;
- Completion of a *pro forma* summary form that includes project and field cross-references, trench dimensions, a description of the nature and depth of topsoil, the nature of the exposed natural subsoil and a measured representative sketch of at least one section;
- Recording of a datum level at each corner of the trial pit, and;
- A digital photograph showing a view of the entire pit and one showing the base and part of at least two sides of the excavated trial pit, including the recorded section.

No scaled plans or sections of the pit will be provided.

**3.8** In the case of a trial pit assessed to contain archaeological features or deposits, and deemed to be Positive, the archaeological recording will consist of two stages. The first stage will comprise:

- Completion of a record as set out in 3.7.

The second stage will comprise manual archaeological excavation and recording as follows:

- A trial pit plan will be drawn at a scale 1:20, with detailed sections at 1:10. Sections and plans of features will relate to site or Ordnance Datum;
- A sample of archaeological features and deposits will be excavated by hand and to the following sample levels: 50% of discrete features (pits, postholes etc., but a sample only of features occurring in high numbers *e.g.* stakeholes); 25% of linear features with non-uniform fills; and 10% of linear features with uniform fills;
- Where human remains are encountered, WCACA will be consulted in the first instance and they will be left *in situ* wherever possible; where this is not possible, they will be removed in full following grant of licence by the Ministry of Justice;
- If expansive deposits, such as alluvial or colluvial deposits or quarry pits, are present in any trench, then machine-cut sondages will be excavated at intervals throughout the relevant trench, until the layer sequence is confirmed;
- Should *in situ* structural remains be encountered, then sufficient excavation will be undertaken to confirm the function, sequence and chronology and method of construction;

- In the case of industrial features these will normally be investigated to a 50% sample level but, following consultation with WCACA, full excavation and recording may be undertaken where appropriate;
- All artefacts or deposits revealed will be recorded using the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* single sequence recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2* (2012);
- A photographic record of all archaeological deposits will be made in both plan and section. This will comprise digital photographs only, illustrating in both detail and generally the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate the progress of the work.

**Finds**

**3.9** Modern finds (i.e. post-1850) will only be kept to confirm the date of selected deposits, prior to discard. All post-medieval and earlier artefacts, other than bulk ceramic building material which may be sub-sampled, will be retained.

**3.10** The handling and processing of finds will conform to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Guidelines for Finds Work*. All artefacts recovered are to be washed (where the condition of the material allows) and marked. Finds will be bagged, boxed, labelled and stored in accordance with current CIfA (2014) guidelines and procedures outlined by Watkinson and Neal (1997). Appropriate separation will be maintained of bulk finds from those small or delicate objects requiring special treatment or packaging.

**3.11** Conservation work to stabilise fragile items will be undertaken by Wiltshire & Swindon Conservation Service, Chippenham.

**Sampling for Palaeo-environmental and scientific dating analysis**

**3.12** All deposits with palaeo-environmental potential - principally deposits dateable to the medieval or earlier periods and containing carbonised and/or waterlogged remains - will be bulk sampled in accordance with Historic England guidelines (English Heritage 2011 '*Environmental Archaeology – A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*').

**3.13** Suitable carbonised (or other) material will be identified and sampled for radiocarbon dating, where appropriate. Other deposits will be identified and sampled that may provide suitable material for thermo-remnant archaeomagnetic dating or for analysis of industrial residues.

## 4. ASSESSMENT OF THE SITE ARCHIVE

**4.1** An archive prepared to the specification set out in Appendix 3 of MAP2 (English Heritage 1991) will be produced.

**4.2** The archive will be prepared to the standards outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991), and in accordance with the guidelines published in *Guidelines for the preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage* (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation 1990) and *Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission 1992). Deposition shall take place as soon as practicable after the site works and any subsequent mitigation activities and in any case within 12 months of the completion of the project.

**4.3** Subject to the formal agreement of the landowner, it is intended that the finds together with the site archive will be deposited with the Salisbury Museum (Accession code: Awaited). All materials will be marked, packaged and presented in accordance with their standard requirement. As part of the overall commitment to archive costs, AC archaeology will cover the costs of all museum storage boxes. Digital photographs taken as part of the project will be stored in archive as uncompressed tiff images. Security copies of paper records in digital format will be maintained and stored at the AC archaeology offices prior to deposition.

**4.4** If the results are wholly or largely devoid of archaeological interest then no formal archive will be deposited, but additional photographs will be included with the report.

## 5. REPORTING

**5.1** A written evaluation report will be prepared following completion on site. The contents of the report will vary depending on the findings, but as a minimum will contain:

- an introduction to the archaeological and historical background of the site;
- a statement of the methods used in the excavation;
- a descriptive account of the results, to include relevant illustrations/ photographic plates;
- an account of the nature, extent, date, condition and significance of any finds, with specialist opinions as appropriate;
- an interpretation and a conclusion considering the validity of the results and any limiting factors.

**5.2** Following the initial assessment by AC archaeology's Finds Officer the following specialists (as required) may undertake various components of the report:

- A report on any prehistoric pottery will be carried out by Lorraine Mepham BA MCIfA freelance specialist;
- a report on any Iron Age or Romano-British pottery will be carried out by Mark Corney BA, Freelance specialist;
- a report on any Saxon and later pottery will be carried out by Dan Carter BSc ACIfA, Project Officer, AC archaeology;
- a report on the animal bone will be undertaken by Royston Clark BA, MSc, PhD. MCIfA, AC archaeology;
- identification of worked flint will be carried out by Royston Clark BA, MSc, PhD. MCIfA, AC archaeology;
- a report on metal objects and coins will be undertaken by Mark Corney BA, freelance specialist;
- assessment of palaeo-environmental samples will be undertaken by Mike Allen PhD, MCIfA, FLS, FSA;
- Scientific dating ($^{14}C$) will be undertaken by Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre.

**5.3** As a minimum, a short note on the circumstances and nature of the project will be provided for publication in the county journal within one year following completion of the site work unless further site work is required.

**5.4** Copies of the full report will be supplied to the client, the planning officer and the WHER. A digital copy of the site data will also be provided in an approved format.

**5.5** An OASIS record will be completed.

## 6. MONITORING

**6.1** The WCACA will be invited to inspect and advise on the work during the archaeological investigation and prior to backfilling the evaluation trenches.

## 7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

**7.1** Archaeological staff will operate under AC archaeology's Health and Safety Policy and in accordance with current Health and Safety legislation, to include (but not exclusively rely on upon) the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act* 1974, the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations* 1992 and the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.*

**7.2** Archaeological staff will not work within the reach of the excavator arm on mechanical plant and would be at a safe distance should the bucket hitch fail. The machine operator will ensure that all necessary parts of the plant are fully functional and properly maintained.

**7.3** In accordance with the provisions of the AC archaeology Health and Safety Policy, the senior archaeologist will be responsible for ensuring that operations under his control are carried out in accordance with the approved procedures.

**7.4** Archaeological staff will not work in unsafe conditions, even where not to do so will result in the possible under-recording of the archaeological resource. Each trench will be assessed as to the need for shoring or battering of trench edges. Spoil will be kept at a safe distance from the excavation edge.

## 8. INSURANCE

**8.1** AC *archaeology* carries Public Liability Insurance cover to £5,000,000, Employers Liability to £10,000,000 and Professional Indemnity cover to £5,000,000.

## 9. COPYRIGHT

**9.1** AC archaeology Ltd will provide the employer with unrestricted permission to use any report resulting from the archaeological investigations but will retain, along with its specialist contributors, the copyright of the report and all associated archive material.

## 10. PERSONNEL

**10.1** The work will be managed by Peter Cox on behalf of AC archaeology Ltd. Other staff will be permanent or contract staff members of AC archaeology Ltd, all with suitable experience in this type of investigation and adhering to the CIfA Code of Conduct. All site staff hold construction industry CSCS accreditation.

## 11. REFERENCES

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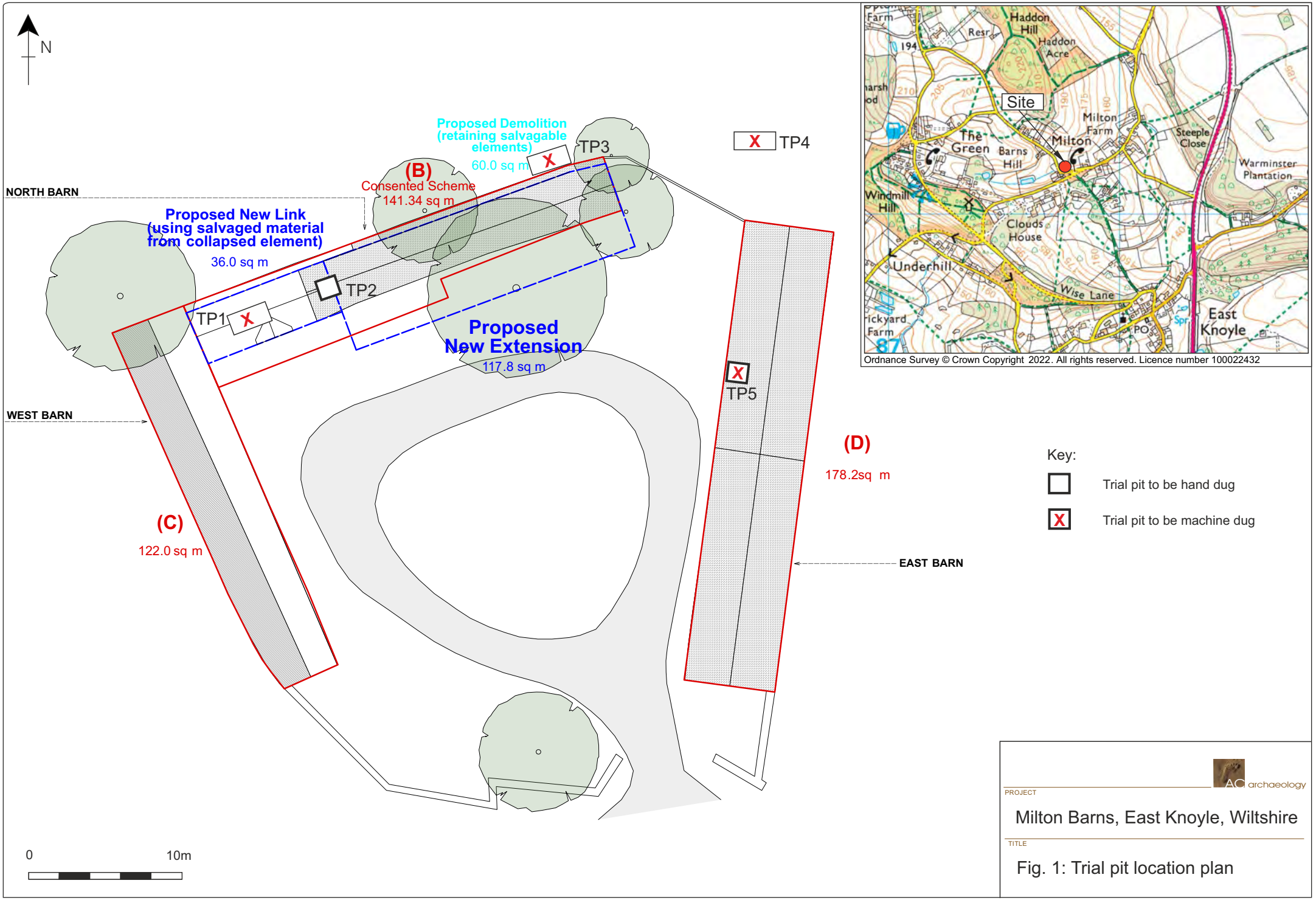
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United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990. *Guidelines for the preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage.* Professional guidance


N
Proposed Demolition
(retaining salvagable
elements)
60.0 sq m
TP3
X
TP4
(B)
Consented Scheme
141.34 sq m
NORTH BARN
Proposed New Link
(using salvaged material
from collapsed element)
36.0 sq m
TP2
TP1
X
Proposed
New Extension
117.8 sq m
X
TP5
(D)
178.2sq m
WEST BARN
(C)
122.0 sq m
EAST BARN
0
10m
Site
Haddon Hill
Haddon Acre
Resr
Farm
194
Milton Farm
Milton
The Green
Barns Hill
Steeple Close
Warminster Plantation
Windmill Hill
Clouds House
Underhill
Wise Lane
East Knoyle
PO
Spr
87
Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2022. All rights reserved. Licence number 100022432
Key:
Trial pit to be hand dug
Trial pit to be machine dug
AC archaeology
PROJECT
Milton Barns, East Knoyle, Wiltshire
TITLE
Fig. 1: Trial pit location plan

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