



Boreland Hill, Upper Woodford, Salisbury.

Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation Report





Wessex Archaeology

Boreland Hill Upper Woodford, Salisbury.

Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation Report

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Ref: 75760.01

December 2010

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	WA 75760	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.		NGR		411775, 137620	

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
1	E	DDR	REG		21/12/10	

I= Internal Draft E= External Draft F= Final

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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Wiltshire Council for commissioning the project. Particular thanks are due to Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger and Clare King. Special thanks are due to Steve Henstridge and Dave Iles for making the metal detector find and reporting the findspot to Wiltshire Council, which resulted in the test pit evaluation being undertaken. Their assistance in excavating the test pit is also gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also extended to the landowner of Boreland Hill who gave permission for the work to go ahead.

Damian De Rosa managed the project for Wessex Archaeology and wrote this report. Simon Flaherty undertook the fieldwork. The illustrations were prepared by Liz James and the finds were looked at by Lorraine Mephram

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wiltshire Council, to carry out an archaeological test pit evaluation on land at Boreland Hill, Upper Woodford (hereafter 'the Site') centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 411775, 137620 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The work was carried out following the recovery of a number of artefacts including an iron spearhead, bones, metal objects and Roman coins during metal detecting at the Site. The findspot and finds were reported to Wiltshire Council, who requested that a test pit evaluation of the findspot should be undertaken in order to clarify the nature of the finds. Initial interpretation of the finds had indicated that they may belong to a human burial with placed deposits due to the presence of possible human bone and the spearhead.

1.1.3 However, a quick assessment of the bone by Wessex Archaeology prior to the commencement of the evaluation established that they were animal bones.

1.1.4 Extensive fieldwalking and metal detecting of the Site along with cropmarks (**Figure 1**) showing up on aerial photographs indicate that an extensive settlement in the form of a number of enclosure ditches dating to the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods are present at the Site.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site is situated on Boreland Hill within an arable field approximately 400m to the west of Upper Woodford (**Figure 1**). At the time of the evaluation a crop had recently been planted within the field.

1.2.2 The Site was located within the field at a height of 132.60m above Ordnance Datum (aOD)

1.2.3 The underlying natural geology is shown on the British Geographical Survey Sheet 298 to comprise of clay with flint overlying Upper Chalk and this was confirmed during the evaluation.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 The aim of the archaeological test pit evaluation was to:

- Clarify the nature of the finds recovered during metal detecting and to establish the nature of the archaeological feature and deposit from which the finds came
- To recover where possible artefacts from sealed archaeological deposits to provide dating evidence for the metal detector artefacts and for features and deposits excavated during the course of the evaluation.
- To recover sealed dating evidence in order to provide and help establish a firmer understanding of the nature and date of the settlement activity known to be present at the Site as a result of previous fieldwalking, metal detecting and cropmarks.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section sets out the general methodology that was applied to the excavation and recording of the archaeological remains encountered in the field, and post-fieldwork including archive preparation.

3.1.2 The test pit was excavated in accordance with the location shown on **Figure 1**.

3.2 Standards

3.2.1 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 The evaluation comprised the hand excavation of one 2m x 2m test pit approximately centred on the metal detector find spot.

3.3.2 Excavation was undertaken in spits with the removal of the top/ploughsoil to the top of the natural chalk and or archaeological features and deposits. Excavation continued until the identified archaeological feature, Ditch **104** (**Figure 1**) had been fully excavated within the confines of the test pit to the natural chalk.

3.4 Recording

3.4.1 Archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. Deposits and features were planned at an appropriate scale of 1:20 on drawing film. Single context planning was carried out where necessary, e.g. where complex archaeological features and deposits needed to be fully recorded. Sections

were drawn at 1:10 on drawing film and included existing ground surface and overburden where appropriate in order to provide a full record and deposit column information.

- 3.4.2 A photographic record was kept using a digital camera. The record included detailed images of archaeological deposits and features and other images to illustrate their location and context, and the location and context of the separate working areas. The record included images of the Site overall.
- 3.4.3 The test pit was located in relation to the Ordnance Survey national grid, and all archaeological features were related to Ordnance Survey Datum. T
- 3.4.4 The spoil from the trenches was scanned for artefacts by hand and with a metal detector.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Context descriptions, giving brief soil and feature descriptions are given in **Appendix 1**. More detailed descriptions are available in the Site archive. The location of the test pit is shown on **Figure 1**.

4.2 Test pit

- 4.2.1 The test pit measured 2m² and was aligned approximately north east to south west being centred approximately on the metal detector findspot (**Figure 1**).
- 4.2.2 A top/ploughsoil overburden (**101**) was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.35m. The deposit consisted of a dark brown grey silty clay with large flint nodules and chalk inclusions. The deposit (**101**) on excavation was found to directly overlie the natural clay with flint and chalk (**103**) in the south east corner of the test pit and revealed the edge of a north east to south west aligned ditch (**104**) (**Figure 1**) filled with a mid grey, black silty clay with frequent large flint nodule inclusions (**102**). Pottery recovered from **101** included seven sherds dating to both the Early Iron Age and 35 sherds of 2nd and 3rd century Romano-British date along with ceramic building material of Romano-British date. The range of material recovered indicates the more disturbed nature of deposit **101** most probably as a result of ploughing.
- 4.2.3 Directly underlying and sealed by deposit **101** was a mid grey, black silty clay with frequent large flint nodule inclusions (**102**) up to 0.35m deep, which was seen to be the fill of a north east to south west aligned ditch **104**. Pottery recovered from the fill (**102**) was exclusively Romano-British and included sherds of samian, Oxon and New Forest colour coats, greyware, BB1 and grog-tempered wares with a date range of 2nd to 4th century AD. Further dating for this context was provided by a bronze coin of the House of Constantine dating to the mid 4th century AD. From the description given by the metal detectorists in regard of the depth from which the spearhead was recovered it would appear that the object would have come from context **102**.

- 4.2.4 The ditch **104 (Figure 1)** was seen to lie on a north east to south west alignment, with a gradual sloping side breaking on to a concave base. The base was seen to rise back up to the north west, which would help to give an indication of the width of the ditch as c.0.80m. The ditch aligns almost exactly to cropmarks (**Figure 1**), which can be clearly seen on aerial photographs. The ditch would appear to be possibly part of a southern annex enclosure to a larger main enclosure to the north. However, without further investigation this can not be confirmed and it may be that the two enclosures are not directly related.

5 FINDS

- 5.1.1 **Table 1** summarises the finds recovered from the Site. Where datable, these are primarily Roman (pottery, ceramic building material, coins, spear, knife, shale armlet), and are indicative of settlement, incorporating building(s) of some substance, in the vicinity of the Site. The range of pottery types (samian, British finewares, coarsewares including Black Burnished ware) indicates a date range spanning most of the Roman period, from at least the 2nd century AD (possibly earlier) through to the 4th century.
- 5.1.2 There are also some items of prehistoric date (worked flint, pottery), suggesting more sporadic activity around the Site. The datable pottery is of Early Iron Age date, but the worked flint cannot be dated more closely.

Table 1: Finds by context

Context	Obj No	Material	No.	Wt. (g)	Description
101		ANIMAL BONE	11	40	
101		FLINT	2	177	1 flake; 1 natural spheroid, possibly utilised
101		BURNT FLINT	3	36	
101		CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL	6	278	Roman (type unknown)
101		IRON	2	23	nail; staple
101		POTTERY	42	180	7 EIA (fineware, red-finished); 35 Roman (NF colour coat, greyware, BB1; date range ?C2/C3 AD)
102	1	COPPER ALLOY	1	2	Roman coin - Mid 4 th Century AD House of Constantine
102	2	IRON	1	10	nail
102	3	IRON	1	6	nail
102	4	IRON	1	16	probably nail, bent over (corroded)
102		FIRED CLAY	3	46	undiagnostic, probably structural
102		BURNT FLINT	2	232	
102		FLINT	1	1	unworked
102		IRON	3	15	2 nails & 1 shank
102		ANIMAL BONE	17	102	
102		POTTERY	71	512	Roman (samian, Oxon & NF colour coats, greyware, BB1, grog-tempered; date range C2-C4 AD)
topsoil	5	COPPER ALLOY	1	3	Roman coin - Carausius 286-293 AD
topsoil	6	COPPER ALLOY	1	8	Roman coin - Sesterius of Crispina (very worn) 182-187 AD
unstrat	7	IRON	1	12	small Roman knife, narrow blade (edge parallel to back), blade broken; suspension loop at end of handle (broken)
unstrat	8	SHALE	2	7	2 fragments of armlet, plain, lathe-turned
unstrat	9	IRON	1	33	bar, unknown function
unstrat	10	IRON	1	80	Roman spearhead; leaf-shaped blade & flanged socket
unstrat		POTTERY	1	6	Roman greyware
unstrat		POTTERY	1	4	?Iron Age sandy ware
unstrat		POTTERY	1	8	Roman greyware
unstrat		IRON	4	12	1 nail; 3 hobnails
unstrat		ANIMAL BONE	8	14	

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 Although it was previously known from cropmarks and extensive metal detecting and fieldwalking that a probable Romano-British settlement was present on Boreland Hill, no excavation to firmly date any archaeological features from secure sealed deposits had been undertaken. The discovery of the spearhead and associated finds leading to the undertaking of the test pit evaluation has been able to identify an enclosure ditch, which would appear to have gone out of use by the middle of the 4th century AD. The ditch would appear to be part of an extensive set of enclosure ditches, which are clear as cropmarks on aerial photographs and are thought to belong to a Romano-British settlement in use from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD.
- 6.1.2 The ditch overlies and aligns almost exactly to cropmarks which can be clearly seen on aerial photographs. The ditch would appear to be part of a southern annex enclosure to a larger main enclosure to the north. However, without further investigation this can not be confirmed and it may be that the two enclosures are not directly related.
- 6.1.3 The presence of Romano-British pottery and coins dating to the 2nd to 4th century indicates that the extensive settlement at Boreland Hill was in use for a considerable length of time. The recovery of Early Iron Age Material may also indicate that early settlement is also present in the vicinity

7 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

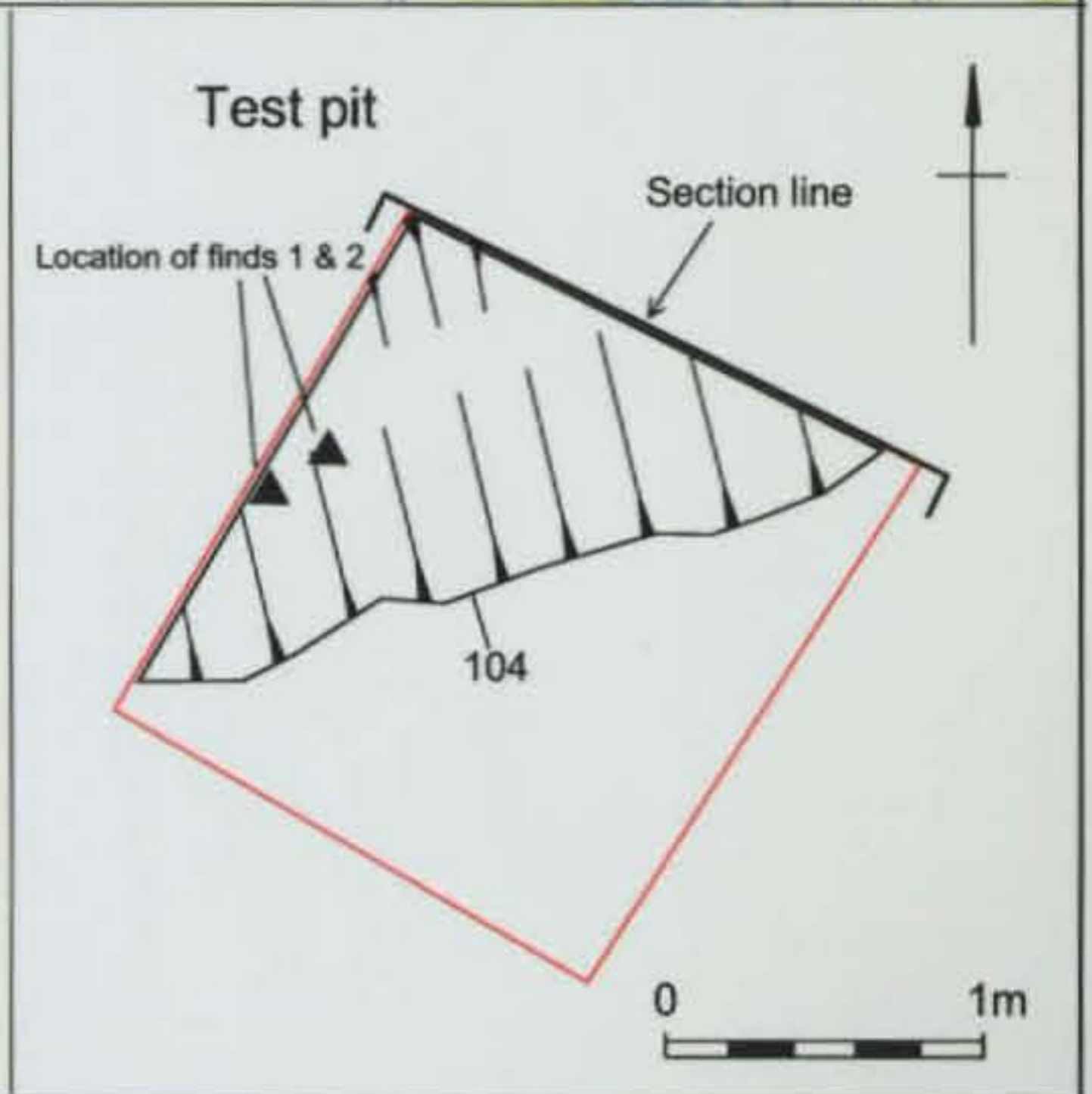
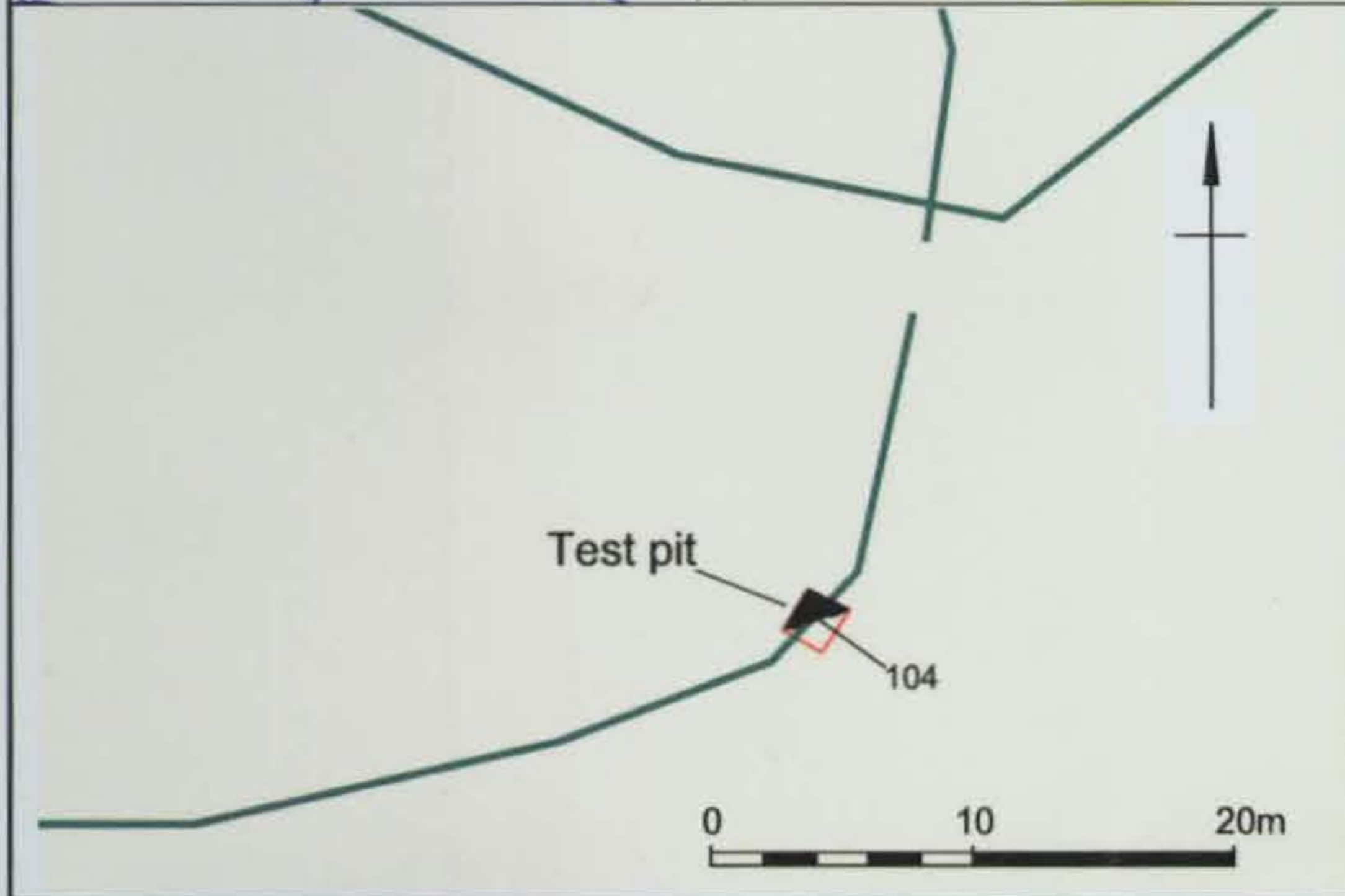
- 7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive consisting of all paper documents, digital record and artefacts is deposited with the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum.
- 7.1.2 The project archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology at Old Sarum, Salisbury, Wiltshire under the Code **75760**
- 7.1.3 The project archive will be prepared to comply with guidelines set out in *Environmental Standards for the permanent storage of excavated material from archaeological sites* (UKIC 1984, Conservation Guidelines 3), *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (Walker 1990) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE), English Heritage (2006), as required by the Winchester Museums Service.
- 7.1.4 A hard copy and digital copy of the archive report will be submitted to the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record

7.2 Copyright



- 7.2.1 Wessex Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. Excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of the report by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements may be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority.

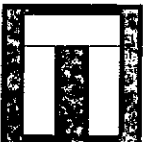
APPENDIX 1 : TEST PIT SUMMARY TABLE

Test pit No.	1	NGR	E	411775	W	137620
Length (m)	Width (m)	Height Above Ordnance Datum (m) (At Ground Level)			Max. Depth (m) (Below Ground Level)	
2.00	2.00	132.60			0.62	
Context No.	Soil Description					Depth (m) (B.G.L)
101	Topsoil/ploughsoil. Dark brown grey silty clay with flint and chalk inclusions. Flint, 250mm, sub-rounded – angular, poorly sorted. Density 25%. Chalk, 60mm sub rounded, poorly sorted. Density 15%. Contained RB pot.					0-0.35
102	Fill of ditch 104. Mid grey, black silty clay with frequent large flint nodule inclusions.					0.35-0.65
103	Natural, mid yellow brown clay mixed in with the chalk and flint natural.					0.65+
104	SW to NE aligned edge of what appears to be a ditch with a gradually sloping regular side, breaking gradually on to a concave base which rises back up toward the NW, presumably to form the opposing side of the ditch.					0.35-0.65



South-west facing section of test pit

 Cropmarks 	Digital Map Data © (2004) XYZ Digital Map Company Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2010 Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright (year) All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100020449. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
	Date:	20/12/10	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	1:20000, 1:500 and 1:50	Illustrator:	SEJ
	Path:	Y:\PROJECTS\75760\Drawing Office\Report figs\TPeval\10_12_20\75760_TPeval.dwg		



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