
LAND TO THE EAST OF CHURCH VIEW,
SUTTON BENDER,
WILTSHIRE.

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT
OSA REPORT No: OSA20DT02.

February 2020.

OSA

ON SITE ARCHÆOLOGY LTD

25A Milton Street • York • North Yorkshire • YO10 3EP

telephone • 01904 411673 • fax • 01904 414522

e-mail • mail@onsitearchaeology.co.uk

© *On-Site Archaeology 2020.*

Report Summary.

REPORT NO: OSA20DT02

SITE NAME: Land East of Church View, Sutton Benger

COUNTY: Wiltshire

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: ST 9515 7855

ON BEHALF OF: Land Allocation Ltd
21 Marina Court
Castle Street
Hull
HU1 1TJ

RESEARCH AND TEXT: Graham Bruce
Amy Pearson
Jacob Webb

GRAPHICS: Graham Bruce

TIMING: Research and Report preparation
February 2020

APPROVED AND AUTHORISED BY: Nick Pearson, MCIfA (693)
On Site Archaeology
25A Milton Street
York
YO10 3EP

tel (01904) 411673
fax (01904) 414522
mobile (07767) 385766
e-mail mail@onsitearchaeology.co.uk

Table of Contents.

1.0 Abstract	4
2.0 Introduction	6
3.0 Methodology	6
4.0 Site Location, Landuse, Topography and Geology	6
5.0 Gazetteer of Sites and Artefacts	7
6.0 Archaeological and Historical Background	18
7.0 Cartographic Evidence	20
8.0 Discussion and Archaeological Implications	24
9.0 Bibliography	25
10.0 The Plates	26

List of Figures.

Figure 1. Site location (NGR ST 9515 7855).....	5
Figure 2. Locations of Listed Buildings (in yellow) and Sutton Benger Conservation Area (in blue).	16
Figure 3. Detailed map of locations of Listed Buildings within Sutton Benger village.....	16
Figure 4. Locations of Monuments (in green) and Events (in blue).	17
Figure 5. Extract from the map produced by Christopher Saxton.....	20
Figure 6. Extract from Emanuel Bowen's map of 1755.	21
Figure 7. Extract from the Andrews and Drury map of 1773 (site shaded).	22
Figure 8. Extract from the Ordnance Survey map from 1886.....	22
Figure 9. Extract from the 1925 Ordnance Survey map.	22
Figure 10. Extract from the 1983 Ordnance survey map.	23

List of Plates.

Plate 1. View across the main arable field element of the site looking southeast.	26
Plate 2. View across the main arable field element of the site looking southwest.	26
Plate 3. View across the main arable field element of the site looking north.	27
Plate 4. Northern boundary of site looking east.....	27
Plate 5. Northern boundary of site looking west.....	28
Plate 6. Small paddocks forming the western part of site.	28
Plate 7. View from the southern part of site towards Christian Malford.	29
Plate 8. View from site towards Sutton Benger village, showing All Saints church.....	29
Plate 9. 20 th century track represented as a modern cropmark.....	30

1.0 Abstract.

This Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared at the request of Land Allocation Ltd to provide archaeological background information on a site on land east of Church View, Sutton Benger, Wiltshire.

Research for the preparation of this assessment has not identified any known heritage assets within the limits of the site. The site clearly lies well outside the core of the medieval settlement, within its agricultural hinterland.

Archaeological remains, identified by cropmarks as representing Iron Age settlement, are present in the surrounding area and these may extend onto the site, although there is evidence to suggest that at least parts of the site have been disturbed by 20th century gravel extraction. If archaeological remains do extend into the site they are unlikely to be of sufficient significance to prevent development. Any decisions regarding the need for, and scale of, archaeological investigation of this site will be made by the Local Planning Authority and their archaeological advisors, the Wiltshire and Swindon Archaeology Service. Any such investigation could be secured through the addition of suitable conditions to the grant of planning consent. Geophysical survey would be appropriate as the initial stage of investigation.

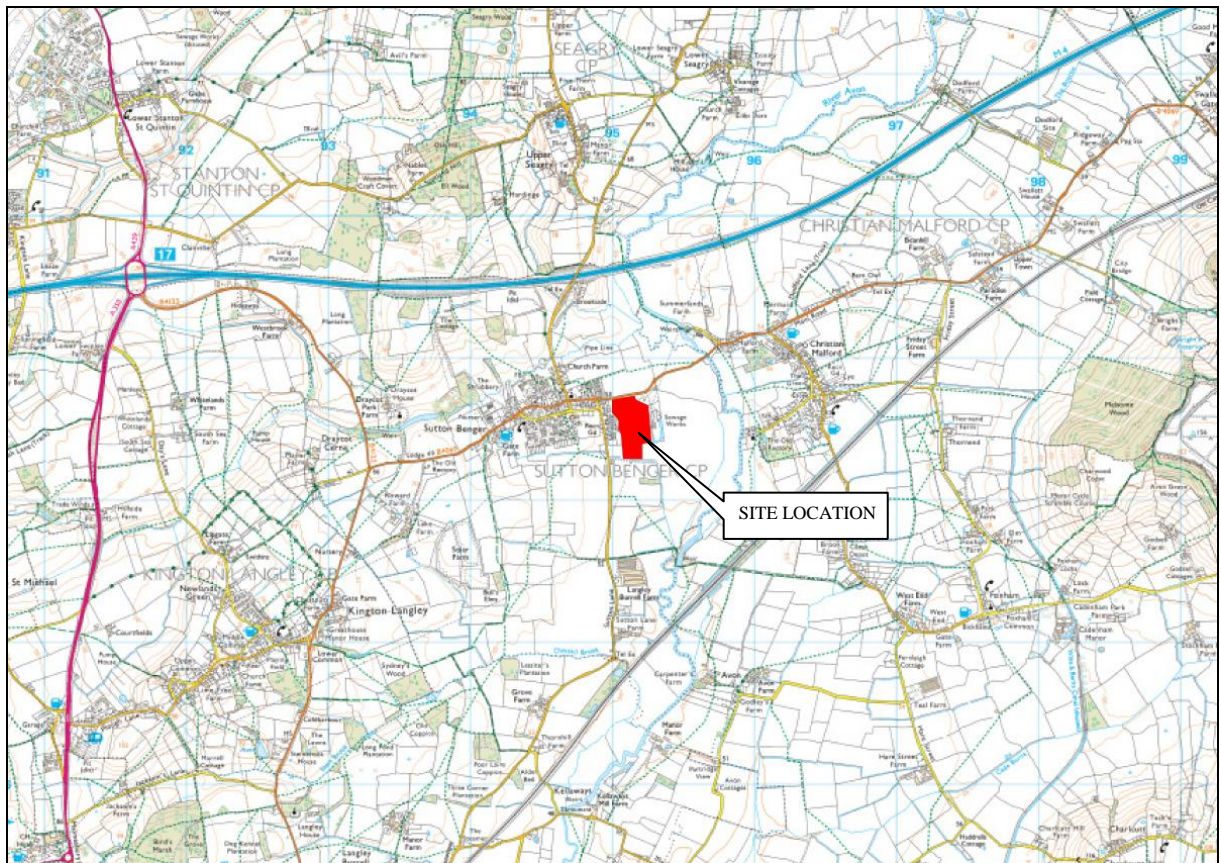


Figure 1. Site location (NGR ST 9515 7855).

Reproduced from the 2000 Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 maps with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
 © Crown copyright. OSA Licence No: AL 52132A0001

2.0 Introduction.

In February 2020 an archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken by *On Site Archaeology* on land east of Church View, Sutton Benger, Wiltshire. The study area is centred at approximately NGR ST 9515 7855 (Figure 1).

The study was undertaken to support a planning application for development of the site.

The historical and archaeological significance of the study area was assessed using a variety of sources including cartographic evidence, the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER), sources held by Historic England and published archaeological and historical reports.

3.0 Methodology.

The historical and archaeological significance of the study area was assessed using a variety of sources. These include cartographic evidence, records held at the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER) office, the online archaeological catalogues held by The Archaeological Data Service and the Historic England Archive (Pastscape), and published archaeological and historical reports. The assistance of the staff at these records offices is greatly appreciated.

Archaeological and historical data has been collected over an area extending for a distance of approximately 1000m from the study area. Some significant sites, which may have an influence on the archaeological potential of the site, lie outside the 1000m search area. The locations of the collected data points are indicated on Figures 2, 3 and 4.

A site visit was undertaken to enhance the understanding of the modern landuse of the site, especially with regards to its effect upon the archaeological record. A photographic record was made of the site and the surrounding area during this site visit, a selection of these photographs are used to illustrate this report (see Plates 1-9).

Site research notes are currently stored with On Site Archaeology.

4.0 Site Location, Landuse, Topography and Geology.

The study area considered by this report is located to the east edge of the village of Sutton Benger, Wiltshire, which is situated 5km to the northeast of the town of Chippenham. It is approximately centred at NGR ST 9515 7855.

The majority of the site comprises a single agricultural field (Plates 1 and 2) currently used for arable crop. The southeastern part of the site is crossed by overhead power lines (Plate 3). In addition to the arable field the site includes a series of smaller enclosures along the western edge used as paddocks (Plate 6) and the College Green Mobile Home Park.

The site is bordered by the A4069, High Street, to the north (Plates 4 and 5), a water treatment works and agricultural land to the east, by agricultural fields to the south and by residential properties along Church View and Sutton Lane to the west, with a combination of wooden fences and hedges forming the perimeter.

The bedrock geology comprises sandstone of the Kellaways Sand Member, overlain by sand and gravel River Terrace Deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk>).

5.0 Gazetteer of Sites and Artefacts.

The following sections list the sites and artefacts of archaeological or historical potential that are recorded in the various sources consulted. Where possible the relevant Sites and Monuments Record (Wiltshire Historic Environment Record) number is given, together with other bibliographic references where used. The locations of the recorded sites are plotted on Figures 2 and 3. The first sections deal with designated heritage assets (Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields and Listed Buildings), whilst the final section includes non-designated assets (Monuments and Events) included within the North Yorkshire County Council Historic Environment Record.

5.1 *Scheduled Monuments*

There are no Scheduled Monuments located within the 1000m search area. The closest is a Medieval moated site 500m northwest of Nabals Farm (List Entry Number 1013076) on the north side of the M4 motorway in Stanton St. Quinton, which is approximately 1.5km to the northwest of the site.

5.2 *Registered Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens*

There are no Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens within the vicinity of the site.

5.3 *Listed Buildings*

A number of Listed Buildings are located within the vicinity of the site. The locations of these Listed Buildings are shown (in yellow) relative to the site, on Figures 2 and 3. The majority of these are located within Sutton Benger village, which is designated as a Conservation Area and are shown on Figure 3. The extent of the conservation area is shown shaded in blue on Figures 2 and 3.

1 Avon Weir. (List Entry Number: 1199629) (DWI4105).

Grade II. Former mill-house, early C19, red brick and ashlar dressings with two-stage slate and stone tiled roof, coped gables and end stacks. Two storeys and attic, 3 window range. Flush quoins and window surrounds, three first floor 12-pane sashes, ground floor tripartite sashes, each side of door in plain stone surround. Tripartite sashes have casements replacing centre sash. Timber gabled porch. Roof has continuous rendered attic with casement pair each side, stone slates below, slates above. Single storey additions each end, red brick to left, rendered to right. Rubble stone rear wall with first floor casement pair each side of loading door, now glazed. Marked as Christian Malford Mill on Andrews and Drury 1773 map. A 6-storey cloth mill was built c1800 and worked to c1850, demolished before 1885. (K. Rogers, Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills 1976 75).

2 *United Reform Church, Christian Malford. (List Entry Number: 1022462) (DWI4104)*

Grade II. Chapel, dated 1836, rubble stone with squared rubble front, ashlar dressings and concrete tiled roof. Ashlar raised angle piers, plinth and band under plain coped pedimental gable with oval plaque 'Shecaniah Erected AD 1836'. Two stone Y-traceried windows with plate glass and centre 4-centred arched doorway with double doors and overlight. One south side Y-tracery window with original leaded lights. Windowless north wall with red brick 1909 addition.

3 *Church of All Saints. Christian Malford. (List Entry Number: 1199647). (DWI4107).*

Grade I. Anglican parish church, C12 origins, c1300, C15 with C18 west tower. Restored 1881. Rubble stone and ashlar with stone slate roofs and coped gables. Nave, north porch, chancel, south aisle, south porch and south west tower. In addition to the church itself the graveyard includes several funerary monuments that are individually listed. These are not included as separate entries here. The church tower is just visible from the southern part of the site (Plate 7).

4 *Gate Farmhouse. (List Entry Number: 1200576).(DWI3974)*

Grade II. Farmhouse, C17 and C18 altered in C19, rubble stone with imitation stone slate roofs. Two storeys and attic.

5 *Appletrees (List Entry Number: 1022401) (DWI3956).*

Grade II. Estate cottage, c1865 for Draycot Park estate, squared rubble stone with ashlar dressings, deep-eaved Bridgwater tile roof ornate barge boards and eaves boards.

6 *Tythe Barn House (List Entry Number: 1022407) (DWI3975)*

Grade II. Barn converted to house, C18, rubble stone with stone slate half-hipped roof and half-hipped projecting east cart-entry with timber-lintel, the opening now glazed.

7 *Ross Cottage. (List Entry Number: 1200508) (DWI3957).*

Grade II. House, dated ER 1782, rubble stone with stone slate roof and off-centre ridge stack.

8 *The Wellesley Arms Inn (List Entry Number: 1363822) (DWI3958).*

Grade II. Inn, mid C18, rubble stone with stone slate roof, coped gables and two ashlar ridge stacks.

9 *Bell Cottage. (List Entry Number: 1300706).(DWI3959)*

Grade II. House, C17 or early C18, painted rubble stone with thatched roof and south end stack.

10 *Arms Farmhouse. (List Entry Number: 1300665).(DWI3976)*

Grade II. Farmhouse, later C18, rubble stone with stone slate mansard roof and brick end stacks.

11 *Barn at Arms Farm to South. (List Entry Number: 1363787).(DWI3977)*

Grade II. Barn, late C18, rubble stone with stone slate half-hipped roof, south side hipped projecting cart-entry and plain north side entry with timber lintel.

12 *Manor Farmhouse. (List Entry Number: 1022402).(DWI3960)*

Grade II. Farmhouse, medieval origins, C17, altered C19, rubble stone, formerly roughcast, with concrete plain tile roofs, coped gables and ashlar end stacks.

13 *Little Manor and The Old Police House. (List Entry Number: 1022408).(DWI3978)*

Grade II. Two houses, C18, rubble stone with ashlar dressings and stone slates to The Old Police House, Bridgwater tiles to Little Manor.

14 *22 and 24 High Street (Bell Hatch formerly listed as The Old Post Office). (List Entry Number: 1200521).(DWI3961)*

Grade II. Pair of houses, C18 on earlier core, rubble stone with Bridgwater tile hipped roof.

15 *48 High Street (Sutton House). (List Entry Number: 1363823).(DWI3962)*

Grade II. House, mid C18, painted rubble stone with stone slate roof, coped gables and end stacks.

16 *Nos 1 and 2 Park Lane. (List Entry Number: 1363788).(DWI3980)*

Grade II. House, C17, rubble stone with concrete plain tile roof and end stacks.

17 *50 High Street. (List Entry Number: 1300718).(DWI3963)*

Grade II. House, later C18, painted rubble stone with ashlar dressings, concrete tile roof and end stacks.

18 *Vine Cottage. (List Entry Number: 1022409).(DWI3982)*

Grade II. House, late C17 or early C18, painted rubble stone with thatched roof, half-hipped to east.

19 *Church Farmhouse. (List Entry Number: 1300678).(DWI3981)*

Grade II. Farmhouse, late C18, roughcast with stone slate roof and end stacks.

20 *The Bell House Hotel. (List Entry Number: 1200602).(DWI3979)*

Grade II. House now hotel, C16 altered in early C19, painted rubble stone with stone slate roofs and brick stacks.

21 *Church of All Saints, Sutton Benger. (List Entry Number: 1022403).(DWI3964)*

Grade II*. Anglican parish church, C12 origins, C14 and C15, heavily restored 1851 by J.H. Hakewill. Rubble stone with stone slate roofs and coped gables. West tower, nave, south aisle, south porch and chancel. In addition to the church itself the graveyard includes several funerary monuments that are individually listed. These are not included as separate entries here. The tower of the church is just visible from parts of the site where it is not obscured by vegetation and intervening buildings (Plate 8).

22 *The Old Rectory. (List Entry Number: 1200544).(DWI3968)*

Grade II. Rectory, 1841, possibly on earlier core, ashlar with slate roofs and paired ashlar stacks on north and south ridges.

23 *62 and 64 High Street. (List Entry Number: 1022405).(DWI3969)*

Grade II. House, now two cottages, C17, rubble stone with thatched roof, half-hipped to west and east end stack.

24 *66 High Street. (List Entry Number: 1300685).(DWI3970)*

Grade II. House, C17, painted rubble stone with thatched half-hipped roof and rebuilt west stack.

25 *68 and 70 High Street. (List Entry Number: 1363825).(DWI3971)*

Grade II. Pair of houses, C18, roughcast rubble stone with pantiled roof, coped south gable with end stack, ridge stack and north end stack, on front roof slope.

26 *74 and 76 High Street. (List Entry Number: 1200570).(DWI3972)*

Grade II. Pair of cottages, now one house, rubble stone with thatched roof, hipped to west, half-hipped to east, and ridge stack.

5.4 Non-Designated Assets in WCC HER

The following section includes data on monuments and events obtained through a 1000m search of the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record. The data presented here has been allocated Gazetteer number starting at 27 to avoid confusion with the Designated Heritage Assets data presented above. The locations of the monuments included below are shown in green on Figure 4. Events have been allocated numbers starting from 58 and are shown in blue on Figure 4. Where monument data has been derived through events these are only included once to avoid unnecessary repetition.

27 *Draycot Park. (ST97NW527 - MWI5132).*

The HER records the presence of post-medieval parkland.

28 *Gate Farm. (MWI66302).*

Gate Farm, Sutton Benger. Partially extant 17th century farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. Located within or in association to a village. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings.

29 *Arms Farm. (MWI66303).*

Arms Farm, Sutton Benger. Partially extant 18th century farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. Located within or in association to a village. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings. Two historic working buildings have been identified within the farmstead of 18th century origin.

30 *Manor Farm. (MWI66301).*

Manor Farm, Sutton Benger. Medieval farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. The farmhouse is attached to the agricultural range. Located within or in association to a village. The farmhouse is the only surviving historic structure.

31 *Poplar Farm. (MWI66299).*

Poplar Farm, Sutton Benger. Partially extant 19th century farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. The farmhouse is detached with side on to the yard. Located within or in association to a village. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings.

32 *Site of Farmstead in Sutton Benger. (MWI66300).*

Site of Farmstead, Sutton Benger. Demolished 19th century farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. The farmhouse was detached with gable on to the yard. Located within or in association to a village. The farmstead and all historic buildings have been lost.

33 *Sutton Benger village. (MWI5093).*

The HER records that the village of Sutton Benger has Saxon origins.

34 *Medieval finger ring. (MWI5126).*

The HER records the discovery of a medieval finger ring with a design of a crown over a T at 38 High Street.

35 *Church Farm. (MWI66298).*

Church Farm, Sutton Benger. Partially extant 18th century farmstead of regular courtyard plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. Located within or in association to a village. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings.

36 *Memorial to Judith Pearce. (MWI75275).*

In 1821, the residents of Sutton Benger erected a memorial made from Forest of Dean stone to a local widow, Judith Pearce, who was murdered in November 1820. This was destroyed in 2004 when the branch of an overhanging tree crashed to the ground, and a new memorial of York stone was erected in its place in 2006.

37 *Site of outfarm, NNE of Church Farm. (MWI71344).*

Site of outfarm, NNE of Church Farm, Sutton Benger. Demolished 19th century outfarm constructed as a singular structure. Isolated location. The farmstead and all historic buildings have been lost.

38 *Pill box. (MWI31772).*

A Type 24 pillbox at Brookside, north-east of Sutton Benger.

39 *Findspot. (MWI4988).*

Neolithic flakes, ditch west of Avon Mill.

40 *Findspot. (MWI5005).*

A single sherd of Roman samian pottery was recovered from the surface of a field west of Avon Mill.

41 *Cropmarks. (MWI5054).*

Linear and curving ditches showing as cropmarks. The HER entry suggests that these may be the result of 20th century allotment activity on the site. However, historic maps indicate that the allotments were more likely to be laid out on a north-south and east-west grid pattern and the cropmarks differ from these alignments. The cropmarks potentially represent late prehistoric and/or Romano-British enclosures and field systems.

42 *Findspot. (MWI4997).*

Neolithic flint scraper found amongst gravel at the side of a newly cleaned ditch.

43 *Findspot. (MWI4993).*

A Palaeolithic Acheulian pointed handaxe, broken with the tip missing was found in 1943 (now in the Natural History Museum) in a pit 600 yards west of the river, together with animal bone remains of Equus, Wolf and Elephas in gravel 9 ft deep.

44 *Cropmark. (MWI5041).*

An undated cropmark complex of a settlement which is probably Iron Age. The complex includes a series of apparent enclosures and trackways and at least two circular features that may be round houses.

45 *Cropmark. (MWI5037).*

An undated ring ditch is recorded as a cropmark to the east of Church Farm.

46 *Findspot. (MWI5001, MWI5006, MWI5021, MWI5030).*

Fieldwalking of fields to the east of Church Farm (in the vicinity of a probable settlement recorded as cropmarks) has recovered artefacts including pottery dated to the Iron Age, pottery and building stone of the Romano-British period, Medieval pottery and Post-Medieval finds including pottery, clay pipes and glass. The Medieval and Post-Medieval finds are likely to have been deposited on fields during agricultural manuring activities, whilst the Iron Age and Romano-British artefacts are likely to be derived from the settlement indicated by the cropmark complex.

47 *Pill box. (MWI31524).*

A Type 22 pillbox with porch is located east of Sutton Benger.

48 *Cropmark. (MWI5050).*

An undated cropmark complex predominantly comprising linear features is recorded.

49 *Findspot. (MWI4994, MWI4996).*

Mesolithic and Neolithic flint tools are recorded from a gravel pit at Summerlands Farm.

50 *Outfarm, Southwest of Avon Villa. (MWI71350).*

Outfarm southwest of Avon Villa, Christian Malford. Extant 19th century outfarm of loose courtyard plan. One side of the loose courtyard is formed by working agricultural buildings. Located within or in association to a hamlet. The farmstead has retained all components of its historic form, with minimal apparent alteration.

51 *Site of outfarm, Southwest of Avon Villa. (MWI71351).*

Site of Outfarm southwest of Avon Villa, Christian Malford. Demolished 19th century outfarm of loose courtyard plan. One side of the loose courtyard is formed by working

agricultural buildings. Located within or in association to a hamlet. The farmstead and all historic buildings have been lost.

52 *Summerlands Farm. (MWI66392).*

Summerlands Farm, Christian Malford. Partially extant 19th century farmstead of L-plan (with attached house). There are additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is attached to the agricultural range. Isolated location. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings.

53 *Malford Farm. (MWI66393).*

Malford Farm, Christian Malford. Partially extant 19th century farmstead of dispersed plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. Located within or in association to a village. There has been a partial loss (less than 50%) of traditional buildings.

54 *Pill box. (MWI31771).*

A Type 24 pillbox south of B4069 road near River Avon, Sutton Benger.

55 *Pill box. (MWI31521).*

A Type 24 pillbox is located east of the River Avon,

56 *Christian Malford village. (MWI5007).*

The HER records that the village of Christian Malford has Saxon origins.

57 *Rectory Farm. (MWI66390).*

The Old Rectory (Rectory Farm), Christian Malford. Partially extant 17th century farmstead of dispersed plan. The farm buildings are dispersed across multiple yards. Located within or in association to a village. There has been significant loss (greater than 50%) of traditional buildings.

58 *Geophysical survey at Arms Farm. (EWI9108).*

A geophysical survey was carried out in December 2017. The survey has identified a former field boundary and a modern service. Several trends are evident in the data. The majority of these likely relate to modern agricultural activity, but it is possible some relate to the extant ridge and furrow seen across the site.

59 *Archaeological watching brief at All Saints church. (EWI6898).*

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in 2010 during groundworks associated with the installation of new drainage and other services within the Tower base and across the churchyard to the west of All Saints Church, Sutton Benger,

Wiltshire. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

60 Archaeological evaluation at the New Rectory. (EWI6141).

An evaluation was carried out in 2005. This concluded that the overall site evidence is consistent with the dumping of waste material in the 19th-20th centuries, following usage of the area for gravel extraction in the 19th century.

61 Archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 58 High Street. (EWI5700).

Evaluation trenches, excavated in 1998, revealed evidence of gravel quarrying, in one area backfilled by a 19th-20th century bottle dump. The quarrying truncates much of the area, but a few possibly medieval features survive such as the base of a linear ditch and some small pits or postholes. Some residual medieval pottery was recovered from one of the backfilled areas of quarrying. While no archaeological material survived in the area adjoining the High Street, the proposed house plots were adjusted to avoid some of the surviving features.

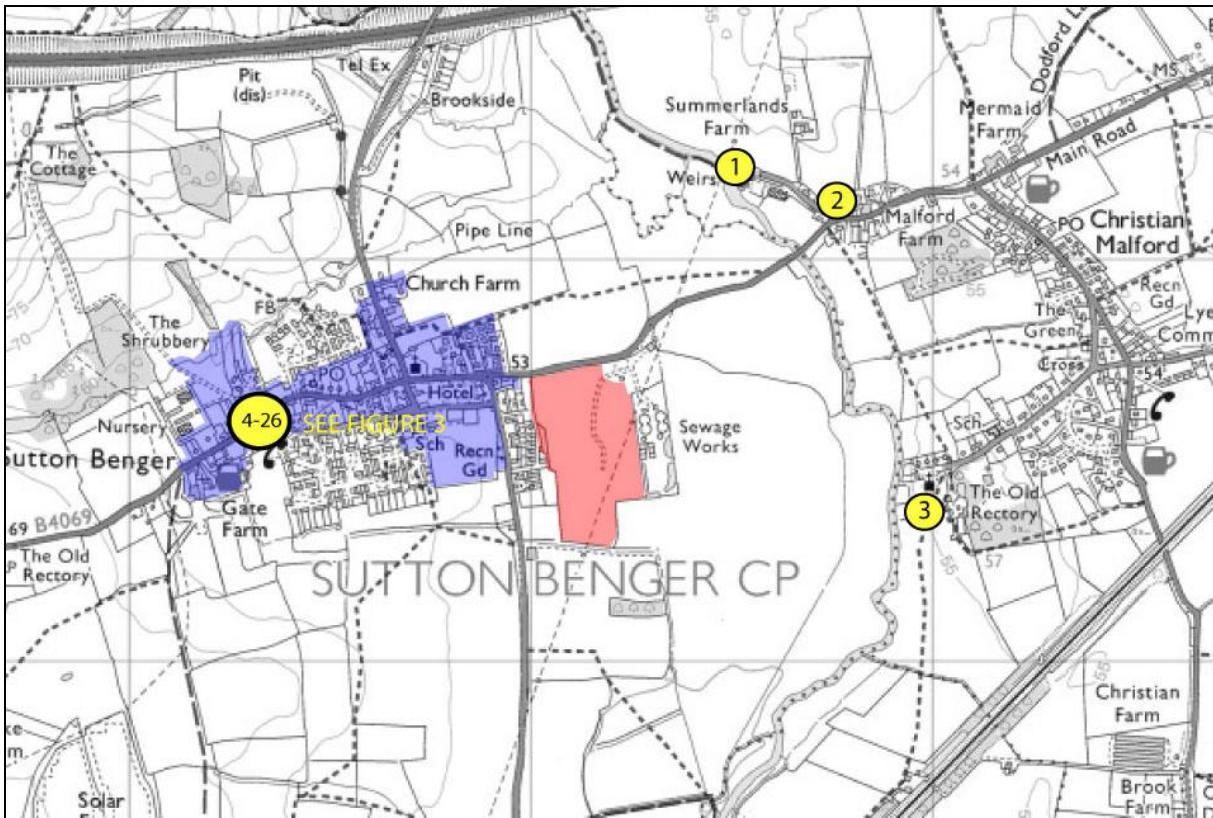


Figure 2. Locations of Listed Buildings (in yellow) and Sutton Benger Conservation Area (in blue).

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 maps with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
© Crown copyright. OSA Licence No: AL 52132A0001

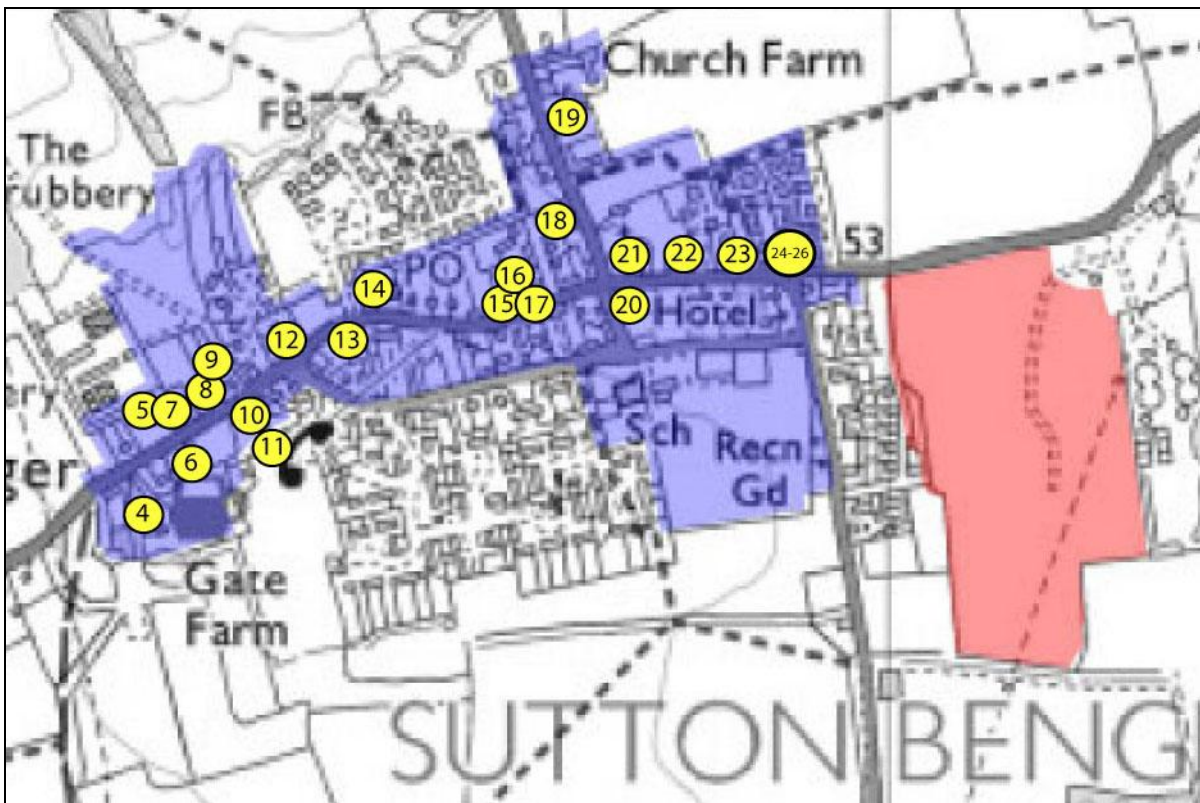


Figure 3. Detailed map of locations of Listed Buildings within Sutton Benger village.

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 maps with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
© Crown copyright. OSA Licence No: AL 52132A0001

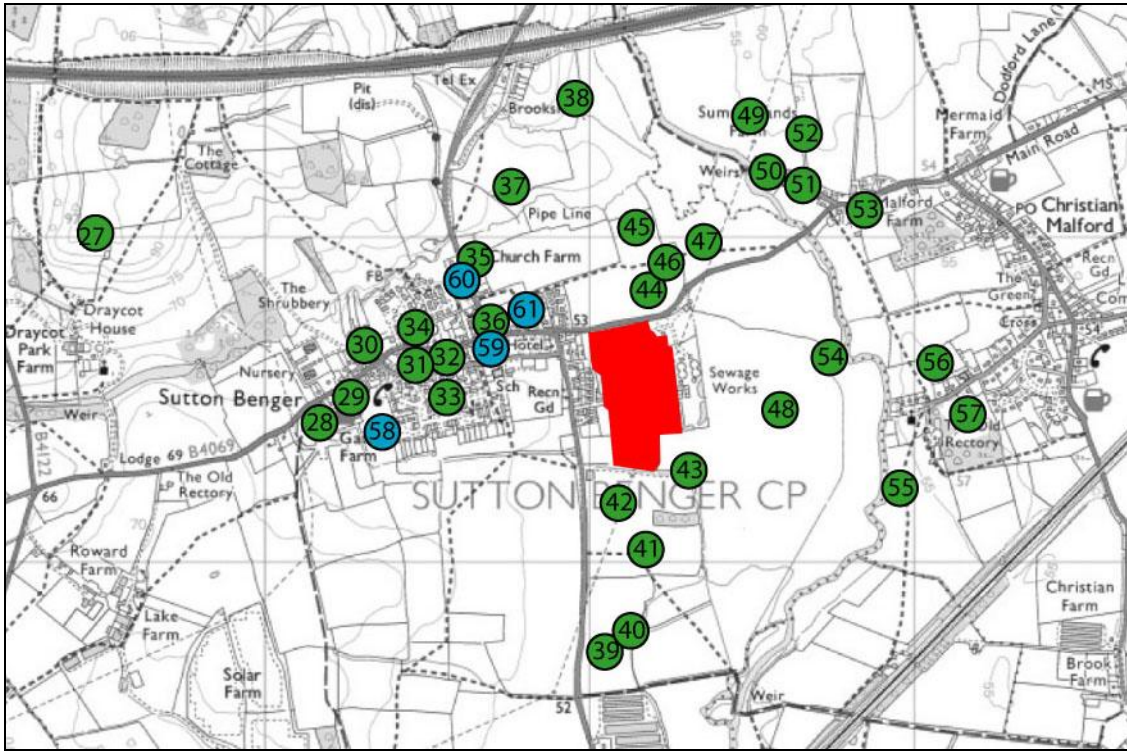


Figure 4. Locations of Monuments (in green) and Events (in blue).

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 maps with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
© Crown copyright. OSA Licence No: AL 52132A0001

6.0 Archaeological and Historical Background.

6.1 *The Prehistoric Period (to the 1st Century AD)*

Prehistoric periods are represented in the gazetteer by a number of entries. The Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic entries all relate to the discovery of occasional flint artefacts (gazetteer entries 43, 49, 39 and 42), which, in the case of the earliest material was also discovered in association with faunal remains.

The other main source of evidence relating to the prehistoric period is in the form of cropmarks. These include potentially extensive settlement (44), field systems (41, 48) and a ring ditch (45). However, as none of the cropmarks have been tested through intrusive archaeological evidence their dating to the prehistoric period is provisional. Of the cropmarks identified the settlement (44) is the most convincing as there has also been associated Iron Age pottery recovered through fieldwalking (46).

6.2 *The Roman Period (1st to the 5th centuries AD)*

The search area contained limited evidence dated to this period. A sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the surface of a field to the south of the village (40) whilst Roman pottery and building stone was recovered during fieldwalking to the east (46).

The potentially Iron Age sites identified by cropmarks may also be of Roman date, or span the two periods. The settlement cropmarks to the north of the B4069 are likely to extend into this period as they are associated with fieldwalking artefacts.

6.3 *Early Medieval periods (5th to 11th centuries AD)*

The only entries for this period record that the villages of both Sutton Benger (33) and Christian Malford (56) have Saxon origins. Sutton is mentioned in Malmesbury abbey's copy of a charter from King Ethulwulf in AD 854, indicating the presence of a manor long before the Conquest (VCH, 1991). However, to date no pre-Conquest artefacts or features have been identified within the village for inclusion in the HER. It is assumed that the Saxon village was located entirely within the limits of the later medieval and modern settlement. The HER does include a reference to a Saxon dagger accessioned by Devizes Museum (monument number MWI5096), the grid reference for which is located close to the line of the M4 to the north of the village. No further information regarding the context of discovery of this object is available.

6.4 *The Medieval Period (11th to the mid 16th centuries AD)*

The village of Sutton Benger developed along the Swindon-Chippenham road and a number of entries in the gazetteer relate to this period. The Listed churches of All Saints in both the villages of Sutton Benger (21) and Christain Malford (3) date to the medieval period, origins. The listed Manor Farmhouse in the west part of Sutton Benger (12) also has medieval origins.

Medieval artefacts have been recovered locally, including a finger ring (34) and pottery from fieldwalking (46). The medieval period is the earliest revealed by controlled archaeological investigation within the village. This includes evidence for probably medieval ridge and furrow field systems to the southwest of the village recorded through geophysics (58), together with excavated pits, posthole and a ditch, to the north of the High Street (61).

The site considered by this report lies outside the core of the medieval settlement, immediately adjacent to the main road linking Sutton Benger and Christain Malford villages. Although no ridge and furrow has been recorded on the site it may have been utilised for agriculture in the medieval period, with common meadow lands extending to the east towards the River Avon.

6.5 *The Post-Medieval to Modern Periods (mid 16th to 21st centuries)*

A substantial proportion of the dated entries for the search area are from this period. The majority of the listed buildings are from this period as is often the case within settlements predominantly designated as Conservation Areas.

In addition a second substantial group of entries relate to post-medieval farms, either situated within the villages of Sutton Benger and Christian Malford, or outside the settlements in more isolated locations. Some of these farms are represented by extant buildings, whilst others have suffered complete demolition. The predominance of farms within the post-medieval HER data characterises the agricultural nature of the area during this period.

The only other significant group within the search area comprise WWII pillboxes located along the course of the River Avon to the east of Sutton Benger.

The cartographic sources (see below) predominantly confirm this agricultural character of the site, and the wider area throughout the post-medieval to modern period. An exception to this landuse is however, recorded during the mid to late 20th century, which has an influence upon the archaeological potential of the site. The Victoria County History (VCH, 1991) records that in 1822 three gravel pits lay to the north of the church. The two programmes of evaluation trenching carried out in the village (60 and 61) both encountered evidence for such quarrying, represented by 19th to early 20th century backfilling and the 1886 Ordnance Survey map (see below) also indicates the presence of a gravel pit in the village. In c. 1948 Sheppard & Brown Ltd. extracted gravel from land between the church and the Avon, and 1956–64 the Pyramid Sand & Gravel Co. worked pits in Sutton Benger. Precisely locating the full extent of such gravel extraction can be problematic due to the tendency for exhausted pits to be rapidly utilised for the disposal of refuse, as had been shown with the examples that have been subject to evaluation. The Palaeolithic hand axe recorded in the HER (43) was recovered at a depth of 9 feet from a gravel pit 600 yards to the west of the River Avon in 1943. This is located close to the southeast corner of the site, so it can be reasonably assumed that this area was subject to gravel extraction during the mid 20th century, but is not recorded on cartographic sources, suggesting fairly rapid backfilling. Ordnance Survey maps from the late 1970s and early 1980s (see Figure 10 below) show an approximately triangular pond in the southern part of the site, which is no longer present. This is likely to represent a flooded

gravel pit. The same maps also show a track heading towards this pond from the road to the north, sharing an access with the track to the sewage works. The track is still represented within the field as a modern cropmark (Plate 9). These maps indicate that at least part of the site has almost certainly been subject to gravel extraction, but the full extent of this is difficult to establish. No obvious evidence for gravel extraction is present on the site, although it should be noted that at the time of the site visit a maturing crop was present, which may mask subtle earthwork features.

7.0 Cartographic Evidence.

The earliest map illustrated in this assessment dates from the late 16th century. The 1583 map produced by Christopher Saxton for his Atlas of England and Wales (Figure 5). This map provide no detail for the character of the site but does show the two village of Sutton (without the Benger suffix) and Christian Malford on either side of the River Avon to the north of Chippenham. This reflects the well populated agricultural landscape of the later 16th century.



Figure 5. Extract from the map produced by Christopher Saxton.

The Emmanuel Bowen map of 1755 (Figure 6 shows a similar lack of detail for the site but notes that the village name had now been extended by the addition of "Bengar", and shows the course of the tributary to the river, flowing to the north of the village.

The earliest map to show the area in details is that prepared by John Andrews and Andrew Drury in 1773 (Figure 7). This was the first map to be based upon original survey rather than reproduced using details provided by Saxton and John Speed in the early 17th century (Crittall, 1952). The Andrews and Drury map shows the layout of the village of Sutton Benger much as it is recognisable today. The site can be easily located outside the core of the village to the east within part of the larger Queen Field.

By the 19th century the quality of mapping is increased by the introduction of the Ordnance Survey. The 1886 edition (Figure 8) shows the site forming part of the larger Queen Field, with no features inside the site boundary. The layout of the village had changed very little since the Andrews and Drury map of more than a century earlier. This picture remained unaltered well into the 20th century, as illustrated by the 1925 edition of the Ordnance Survey (Figure 9). By the later 20th century (Figure 10) some expansion of the village had occurred and the southern end of the site had been subject to gravel extraction, together with a track leading to this. The sewage works had been constructed to the east of the site by this date.



Figure 6. Extract from Emanuel Bowen's map of 1755.

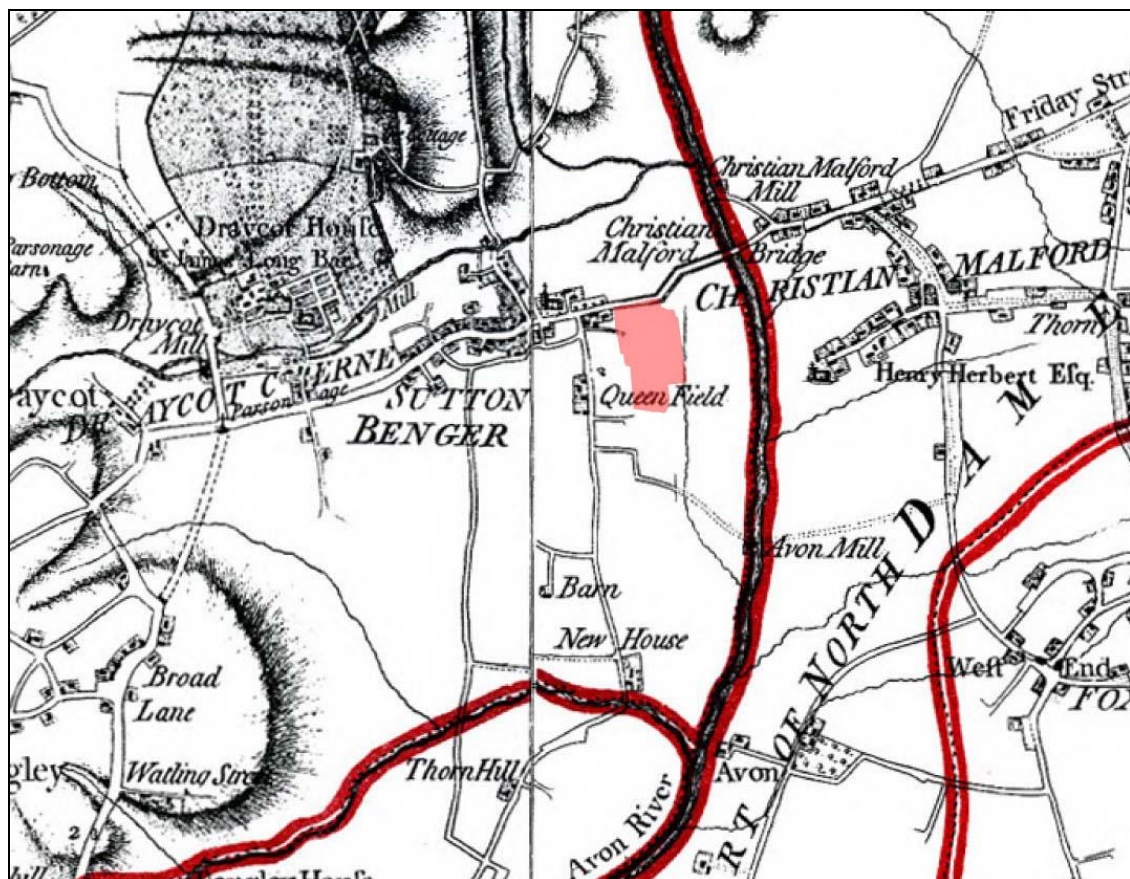


Figure 7. Extract from the Andrews and Drury map of 1773 (site shaded).

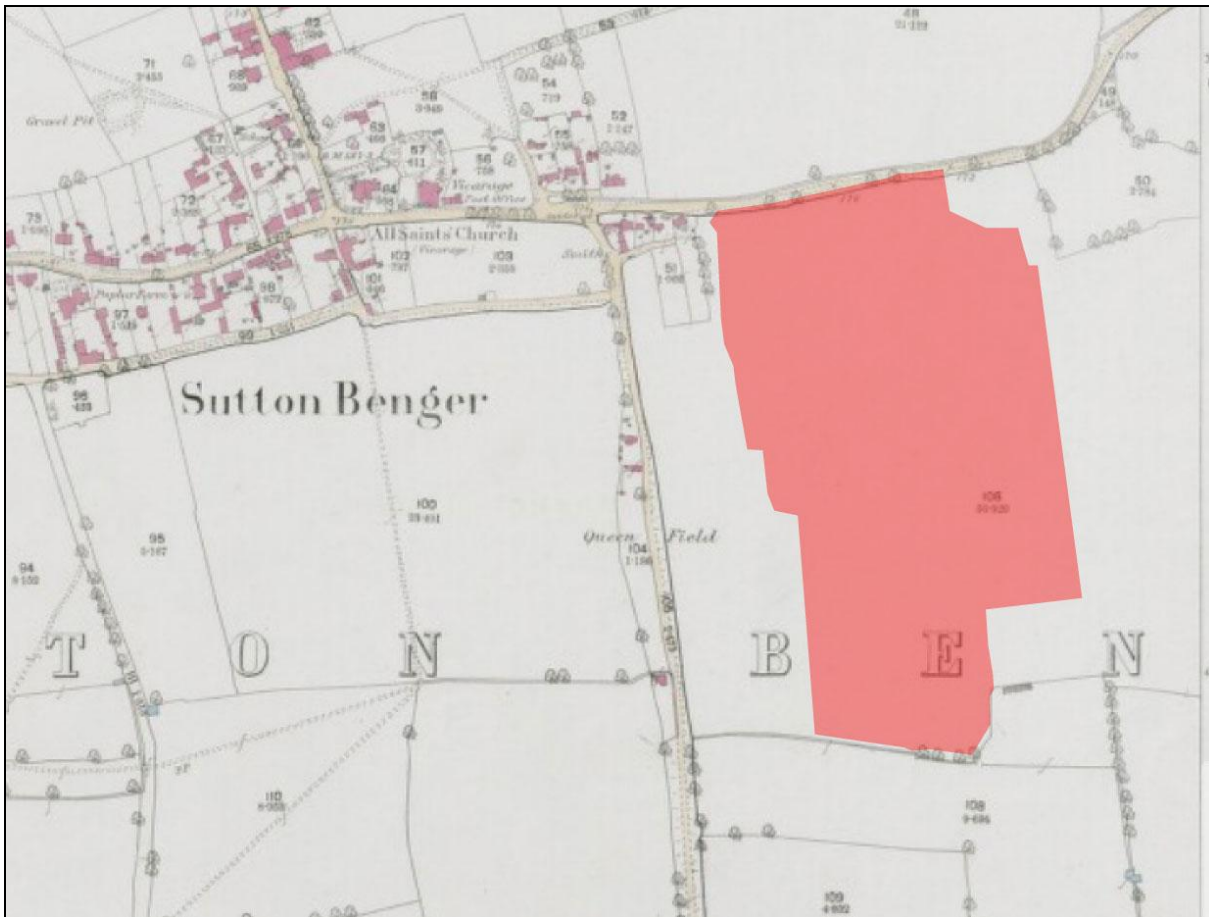


Figure 8. Extract from the Ordnance Survey map from 1886.

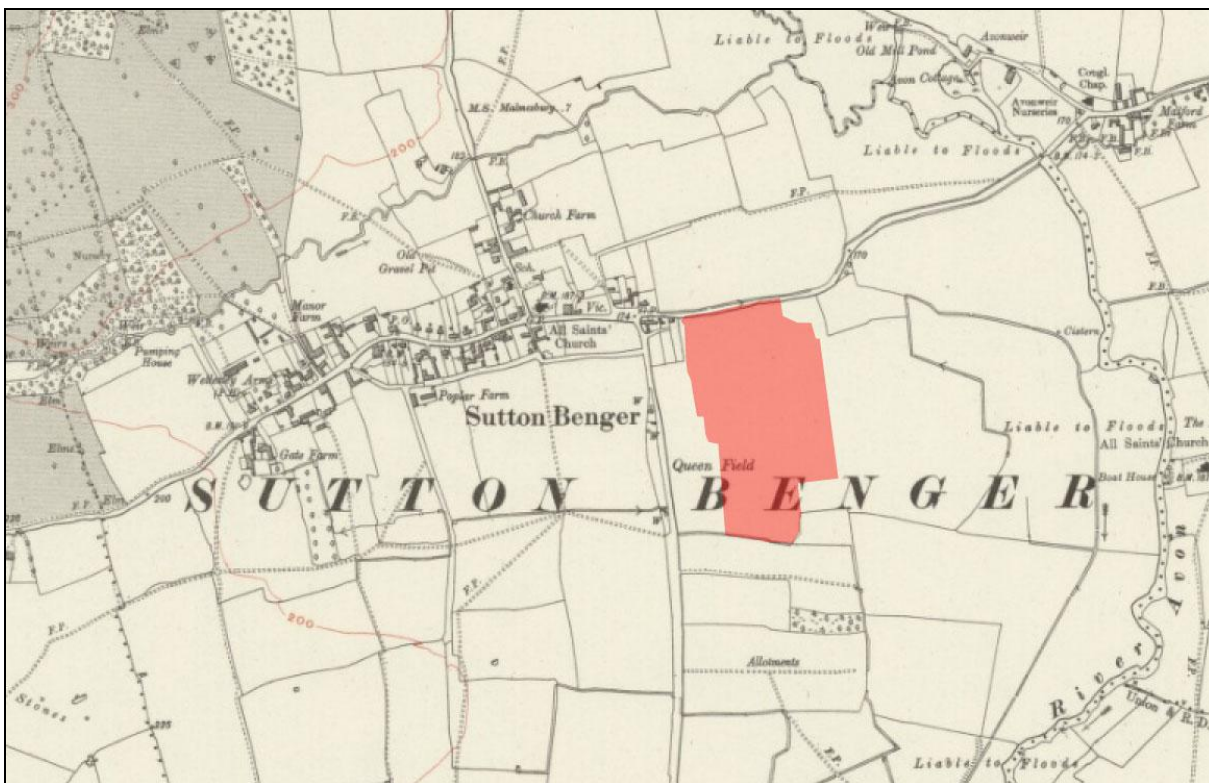


Figure 9. Extract from the 1925 Ordnance Survey map.

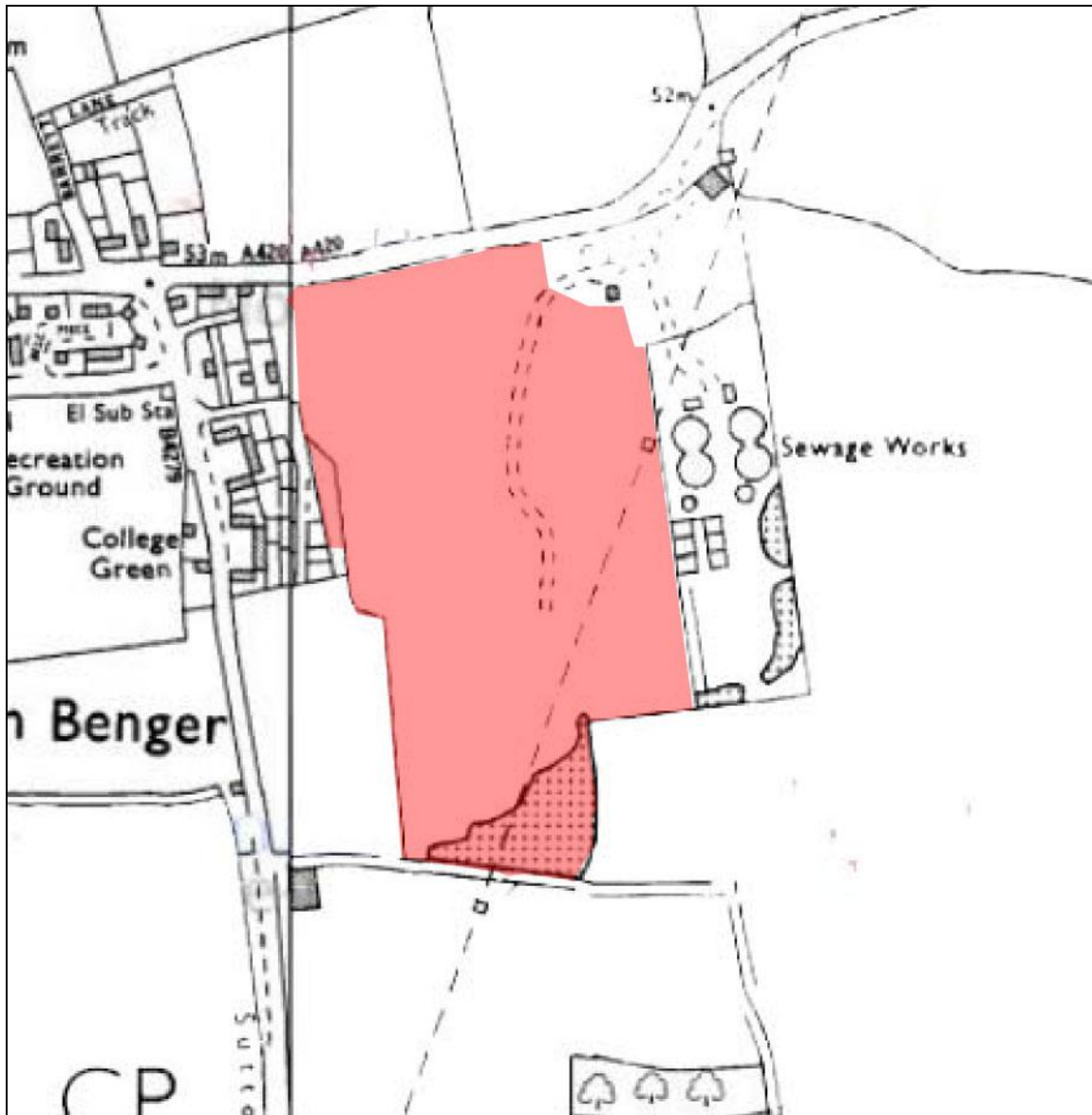


Figure 10. Extract from the 1983 Ordnance survey map.

8.0 Discussion and Archaeological Implications.

Any review of the archaeological potential of this area is hampered to some extent by the limited numbers of archaeological investigations that have taken place. Only two evaluations have been carried out in the search area, and these have both been located within the core of the historic village where the main aim was to attempt to identify remains dating from the medieval period. The site considered by this assessment clearly lies well outside the core of the medieval settlement, within its agricultural hinterland.

The main sources of evidence to the assessment to archaeological potential of the site for periods pre-dating the medieval period are findspots and cropmarks. Occasional prehistoric and Roman artefacts are known from the area, including Palaeolithic material from within the river terrace gravels upon which the site lies. Such evidence is only likely to be revealed during deep excavations, such as gravel extraction. Later prehistoric and Roman finds appear to be associated with cropmarks, especially to the north of the B4069. These cropmarks are interpreted as the remains of settlement, although none have yet to be tested through excavation within the vicinity of the site.

The absence of the cropmarks to the south of the B4069 and onto the site itself may be due to a number of reasons. It may be that the settlement and enclosures simply did not extend this far south. Alternatively farming practices within different fields may have resulted in differing conditions for the formation and identification of cropmarks. It is also possible that the site has been impacted upon by 20th century gravel extraction to the extent that archaeological features have already been disturbed. This is clearly the case within the southern part of the site, where a pond was located as recently as the 1980s.

Research for the preparation of this assessment has not identified any known heritage assets within the limits of the site. Archaeological remains, identified by cropmarks, are present in the surrounding area and these may extend onto the site, although there is evidence to suggest that at least parts of the site have been disturbed by 20th century gravel extraction. If archaeological remains do extend into the site they are unlikely to be of sufficient significance to prevent development.

The North Wiltshire Local Plan (2011) indicated that the site lies within an area defined as a Locally Important Archaeological Site. In 2015 the Local Plan was replaced by the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Core Policy 58 - Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment. Core Policy 58 identifies archaeological sites of local interest as Heritage assets and states that "Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged. The advice of statutory and local consultees will be sought in consideration of such applications".

Any decisions regarding the need for, and scale of, archaeological investigation of this site will be made by the Local Planning Authority and their archaeological advisors, the Wiltshire and Swindon Archaeology Service, in line with Core Policy 58. Geophysical survey would be appropriate as the initial stage of investigation.

9.0 Bibliography.

Crittall, E. (ed). 1952. Andrews' and Drury's Map of Wiltshire, 1773: A Reduced Facsimilie.

North Wiltshire District Council. 2011. North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Victoria County History. 1991. A History of the County of Wiltshire: Volume 14, Malmesbury Hundred.

Wiltshire Council. 2015. Wiltshire Core Strategy. Adopted January 2015.

10.0 The Plates.



Plate 1. View across the main arable field element of the site looking southeast.



Plate 2. View across the main arable field element of the site looking southwest.



Plate 3. View across the main arable field element of the site looking north.



Plate 4. Northern boundary of site looking east.



Plate 5. Northern boundary of site looking west.



Plate 6. Small paddocks forming the western part of site.



Plate 7. View from the southern part of site towards Christian Malford.



Plate 8. View from site towards Sutton Benger village, showing All Saints church.



Plate 9. 20th century track represented as a modern cropmark.