

**RESTROP ROAD, PURTON, WILTSHIRE.**

**NGR: 408351,187193**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT**

Prepared for: Hollins Strategic Land

SLR REF: 401.05627.00006

VERSION No: 3

AUGUST 2020





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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of report

SLR Consulting Limited was instructed by Hollins Strategic Land (hereinafter referred to as the Client) to provide an Archaeological Field Evaluation in support of a planning application for residential housing. The evaluation was undertaken across two fields ('the Site') located off Restrop Road, Purton Wiltshire SN5 4BB, centred on National Grid Reference 408351 187193 (**Figure 1**). This report presents the results of that investigation and will be supported as part of the planning process.

## 1.2 Planning Background

Outline planning permission for up to 61 dwellings with associated landscaping, pedestrian access towards High Street and through Reids Piece, with vehicular access off Restrop Road, has been submitted by Hollins Strategic Land LLP (Land at Restrop Road, Purton Swindon Wiltshire SN5 4BP 19/03731/OUT) to the local planning authority, Wiltshire Council.

Wiltshire Council, as advised by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, highlighted the site's archaeological potential and indicated the need for an archaeological evaluation (site investigation) to make an informed decision on the application.

This judgment was based on previous archaeological excavation adjacent the site during the 1980s (see section 3 below<sup>1</sup>) and an assessment at the site, commissioned by the client which included for a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (SLR 2018<sup>2</sup>) and a geophysical survey undertaken by Sumo services in 2020<sup>3</sup>.

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation ('WSI'), approved by the County Archaeologist<sup>4</sup>.

This report sets out the methodology followed, which was designed to establish the presence/absence and nature of any archaeological remains in the investigated areas, and assist with identifying the scope of any required mitigation of the effects of the development on buried archaeological remains.

## 1.3 Staffing and Programme

Staffing was as follows.

- Site director: Guy Kendall, Associate Archaeologist, SLR Consulting, MCIfA
- Project Manager and Quality Assurance: Tim Malim, Technical Director, SLR Consulting, MCIfA
- Site Archaeologists: Harry Towers (SLR Consulting)

The fieldwork took place between 22<sup>nd</sup> June to the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The conditions were very dry, hot and sunny.

The Full Archive Report and the Archive will be deposited with the destination museum by the end of August 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> Digby, H. no date. Summary of the 1989 excavations at Northview Hospital, Purton. Unpublished.

<sup>2</sup> Morley, C. Restrop Road, Purton, Wiltshire: Historic Desk Based Assessment, 2018, SLR Consulting Ltd, Report Ref: 401.05627.00006

<sup>3</sup> Geophysical Survey Report, Restrop Road, Purton, Wiltshire, Sumo Services, 2020, Report Ref: 16843

<sup>4</sup> Restrop Road, Purton, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation, 2020, SLR Consulting Ltd, Report Ref: 401.05627.00006

## 1.4 Abbreviations and Terms Used in This Report

### Abbreviations and Terms

AOD	above Ordnance Datum (elevation values)
OS	Ordnance Survey
Planning Archaeologist	Wiltshire County Council's Archaeologist
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

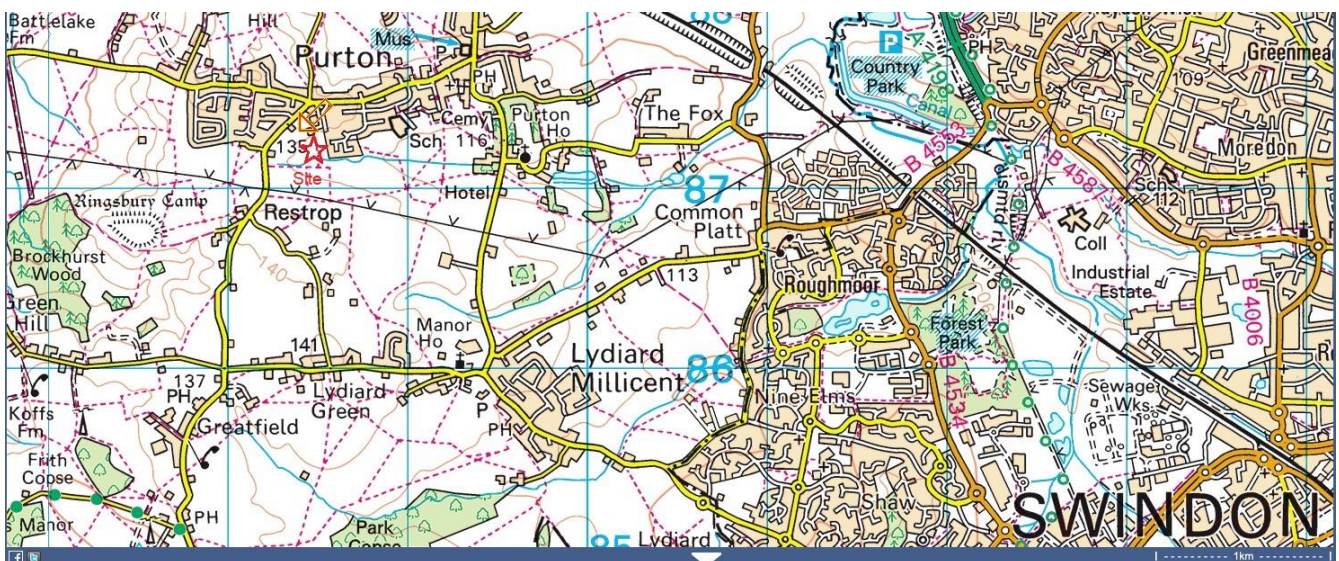
### Terms for Archaeological Eras and Periods

- prehistoric (pre-AD43)
- Roman (AD 43-410)
- early medieval (AD 410-c.850)
- late Saxon (c.AD 850-1066)
- high medieval (AD 1066- 1540)
- post-medieval (AD 1540-1900)
- modern (20th and 21st centuries)
- undated.

### Terms for subdivisions of the Prehistoric Era

- Palaeolithic (450,000-12,000 BC)
- Mesolithic (12,000-4,000 BC)
- Neolithic (4,000-2,200 BC)
- Bronze Age (2,200-750 BC)
- Iron Age (750 BC-AD 43).

Figure 1  
Site location





## 2.0 Site location and description

The Site is located on the southern edge of the village of Purton, south of the intersection of Restrop Road, High Street, Hoggs Lane and Pavenhill, c.7km north-east of Swindon (**Figure 1**). It is located entirely within Purton Civil Parish and comprises two adjoining sub-rectangular fields. The larger of these is W-E oriented, with the Restrop Road to the west, and a small un-named brook to the south. The second field is N-S oriented, extending from the eastern boundary of the first field northwards towards the built form south of High Street (**Figure 2**).

The western parcel is defined by dense boundary vegetation, including rows of tall, mature trees; the only real break in this vegetation comprises the gated entrance to the south-west, and this lends this particular field an inward-facing aspect and a distinct sense of enclosure. The smaller eastern parcel is similarly defined to the south and west, while its northern and eastern boundaries, and north-western corner, are defined by walling, c.2-4m in height, with the tops of the adjacent modern housing visible beyond. Both fields are presently in agricultural use, primarily as pasture. The latter includes a public footpath, which runs along the western boundary.

**Figure 2: 3D Satellite imagery, showing the Site to the south of Purton. Google Earth 2018.**



## 3.0 Archaeological and historical context

### 3.1 Prehistoric & Romano-British context

There is little archaeological evidence for prehistoric occupation at Purton, with only dispersed find-spots of Iron Age pot and other materials recorded. Circumstantially, it seems probable that an ancient thoroughfare or 'ridgeway' ran from South Pavenhill eastwards along the ridge-top, and that another may have run north-south from Pavenhill North, with the two intersecting at Dogridge. This nexus may be one factor that influenced the continued focus on this location into the subsequent Romano-British period, as discussed below.

The Roman settlement patterns within the wider region are relatively pronounced, with rural settlements focussed within the immediate hinterlands surrounding the major settlements at Swindon and Cirencester, as well as along the courses of the major Roman Roads and rivers. While modest in number, primary industrial sites appear to cluster within the centre of the large triangular area defined by the major roads linking Cirencester, Swindon and Bath, and this includes such a site at Purton; this patterning probably reflects a rich and diverse resource base within this industrial 'core', perhaps similar to those of the Arden and the Weald, with plentiful timber for fuel, clay for use as raw material, and water, as well as convenient trade-routes.

An industrial site at Purton is located to the north-west of the Site, within the area of modern housing between the Pavenhill and Battlewell roads. Two such industrial (pottery production) sites have been excavated within this area and a further one (possibly two) kilns identified at the second, the latter also included evidence for associated timber structures, both circular and rectangular in plan.

Besides industry, both settlement and mortuary activity have also been recorded at Purton. In terms of settlement, a posited villa was located just north of Pavenhill again in a location that would have respected the posited ridge-top thoroughfare. While no in situ structural remains were identified, the presence of a villa has been inferred on the basis of the nature and concentration of finds made within this area in antiquity. These finds included a considerable quantity of tile and other building debris. Thusly, there is little reason to doubt the presence of at least one building, and probably a number of others, along the ridge-top, given the other evidence for proximate Romano-British occupation discussed within this section.

The final key Romano-British site to have been identified at Purton relates to burial. Specifically, it comprised a walled cemetery, discovered during excavations at Northview Hospital in 1987. This excavation revealed a central mausoleum, a number of coffin burials and a number of additional inhumations and cremations. Again, the location and orientation of the cemetery are of relevance. It was purposively sited on the edge of a valley-side plateau, above the 130m aOD contour, overlooking the brook. The walled structure itself appears to have been oriented NNE-SSW with respect to the ridge-top to the north, along which the posited thoroughfare / ridgeway is likely to have run; it is further possible that both the cemetery and the industrial foci to the north-west of the Site would have been accessed via minor roads running south from, and perpendicular to, the ridgeway.

#### Romano-British potential

Clearly, the Romano-British evidence that has been recovered to date within Purton has revealed a comparatively well-defined settlement landscape. This level of definition is rare in the absence of a fully excavated settlement, and as such it is highly informative in terms of Romano-British archaeological potential more widely within this area.

The greatest potential for Romano-British remains within the Site would appear to be for burials (inhumations and/or cremations) and other mortuary features associated with the known cemetery to the north-east at Northview Hospital. Within the context of both the archaeological and topographic evidence, this potential would seem likely to be limited to the northern part of the eastern parcel. Based upon this settlement model



and the environmental conditions described previously, the potential for Romano-British mortuary, industrial or settlement remains to survive within the remainder of the Site, however, was considered low.

This is supported by the results of a previous programme of pre-determination geophysical survey and evaluation trenching, which the LPA's Archaeological Advisor recommended be undertaken in relation to a previous application (13/04676/FUL) for residential development of the field immediately north of the Site. The justification for this was provided to the Planning Officer in the Archaeological Advisor's official advice letter (dated: 14th October 2013), as follows:

This location has the potential to be archaeologically sensitive. Although there are no known archaeological sites or features within the proposed red line area itself, there is an extensive Roman settlement and a cemetery located within a few hundred metres [to the north].

### 3.2 Medieval

What evidence there is for this period would indicate that the site was in agricultural use, forming part of the field system associated with on or other of the afore-mentioned manors. Examination of aerial photography and satellite imagery clearly reveals the former field system elements within the site, including headlands / boundaries, and a small area of possible ridge and furrow. The buried remains of such agricultural features may well survive within the Site. There is otherwise no record of and no evidence for settlement of this period within or within material proximity to the Site.

### 3.3 Post Medieval

During the post-medieval period, Purton's open fields were enclosed via a series of private acts, resulting in the pattern of largely rectilinear field boundaries that survive today; these being divided and linked by straight driftways and lanes. The principal enclosure appears to have been that undertaken in 1597, with a further 850 acres of common / waste enclosed by agreement shortly thereafter.

As with the preceding medieval period, what evidence there is for this period would indicate that the site was in agricultural use, as pasture and meadow; in particular, the location of and environmental conditions within the western parcel, adjacent to the brook, suggest that it is likely to have principally comprised part of a long and sinuous belt of meadow following the brook eastwards towards Church End. The buried remains of post-medieval / modern agricultural features may well survive within the Site. There is otherwise, however, no record of and no evidence for substantive activity of these periods within or within material proximity to the Site.

## 4.0 Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of the trial trench evaluation were to:

- supplement (and test) the geophysical survey results of the Sumo Report of 2020;
- explore the potential for further burials to extend into the site associated with Northview Hospital excavations;
- identify any general buried archaeological remains that might survive within the Site;
- establish the nature, extent, state of preservation and, most importantly, the significance of any such remains, as per paragraph 189 of the NPPF (January 2019);
- provide a proportionate level of information about the Site's archaeological potential, and the significance of any known and/or potential remains within the Site, sufficient to inform the County Archaeologist who will advise whether any further archaeological site work is necessary;
- to excavate and record significant areas of remains in lieu of their destruction by the development; and
- to analyse and report on the results to a level appropriate to their importance.

### 4.1 Appropriate Research Framework Objectives

South West Archaeological Research Framework Research Strategy 2012 – 2017<sup>5</sup>

- Theme A: Settlement Sites and Landscapes – Urban, Rural, Maritime, and Prehistoric
- Research Aim 29: Improve understanding of non-villa Roman rural settlement.
- Theme D: Social Identity and Change – transition, identity, territories, conflict, religion, and death
- Research Aim 58 (55): Widen our understanding of Roman burial traditions.
- Research Aim 33: Widen understanding of the origins of villages.
- Theme B: Artefacts and the Built Environment – technologies, resources, links to trade.

Depending upon their nature, extent and level of preservation, any outlying Romano-British burials that might survive within the Site would enhance current knowledge and understanding of the Northview cemetery. Their heritage significance would derive from their evidential value, as their examination under archaeological conditions would have the potential to contribute to our understanding of local burial rite(s) and custom(s) during this period, as well as providing further evidence for contemporary population demographics, and the extent and arrangement of the cemetery itself.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/downloads/swarf/swarf\\_strat.pdf](https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/downloads/swarf/swarf_strat.pdf)

## 5.0 Methodology

### 5.1 Quality Assurance

SLR Consulting is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists C(IfA). SLR's work is undertaken to audited professional standards and with reference to the CIfA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014).

### 5.2 Fieldwork

#### 5.2.1 Monitoring

The County Archaeologist was informed of the start date of site works prior to commencement. Most of the trenches were inspected after excavation by the County Archaeologist, but with her agreement, given the extensive negative results that had been obtained, no further archaeological work was required and the backfilling of all trenches was agreed. Trenches were opened in two main stages: 17 to 12 (east – west aligned field) and 11 to 1 (north-south aligned field).

#### 5.2.2 Layout

17 Trenches 14 x 25m and 3 x 50m (17, 16 and 13) were located across the two fields. Trenches 1 – 12 and 14 - 15 were located to sample geophysical anomalies, identified within the Sumo geophysical survey report of 2020 with Trenches 17, 16 and 13 located to investigate hitherto un-investigated areas of the site, which would be disturbed during development. The trenches covered a 2.5% sample of the 3.5ha site area in line with the agreed WSI of May 2020.

#### 5.2.3 Excavation

Trenches were excavated to between 1.8m and 2.1m width at trench floor level using a mechanical excavator.

The excavation was carried down through three predominant contexts. The top context represented a turbated homogenous topsoil with frequent rootlet and medium to large inclusions extending to an approximate depth, in all trenches, of between 0.10m to 0.35m. The second context represented a light- to medium-brown chalky / sandy subsoil with frequent chalk inclusions with an approximate depth in all trenches of 0.15m to 0.35m. The third context was represented by a natural geology of chalk limestone.

A localised deeper test-pit was cut by machine in the first few trenches to confirm the correct identification of natural deposits and optimise the identification of archaeological features, but the correct horizon – the chalk limestone natural - was easy to identify and this procedure was omitted in the later trenches.

An archaeologist controlled the machine excavation of the trial trenches and recorded all archaeological features or deposits within them. The buried soil was carefully inspected during its excavation and afterward in section.

Potential features were hand cleaned and part-excavated where necessary to establish their archaeological significance. The one archaeological feature identified (Trench 9) was fully excavated within the trench footprint.

On completion, all excavations were backfilled with the arisings.

#### 5.2.4 Recording

Trenches were set out and their basic excavated dimensions recorded using survey grade GPS (Drawing 01). Plans and sections of archaeological features were recorded in hand measurements using baselines set out with the GPS. Spot-heights were recorded on the trench floor, which was generally slightly below the top of

the chalk limestone. A length section representative of the full general deposit-sequence above natural within each trench was also recorded.

Written records of features and deposits were made in a *pro-forma* single context recording system. Plans and sections of features were hand-drawn, to 1:10 scale.

A photographic record was compiled comprising high-resolution digital images (7 megapixel minimum resolution) with a supporting index, archived in accordance with ClfA guidelines for long term storage of digital media. Photos recorded each trench after excavation, the representative section, and the features during and after excavation. Suitable bar scales were incorporated in the views. The photographs were recorded in a written catalogue detailing date, location, subject and filenames.

### 5.2.5 Environmental sampling

No suitable context was identified for sampling due to the turbated nature of much of the site.

### 5.2.6 Artefacts

All finds recovered during the works were washed, marked, bagged and labelled according to the individual deposit from which they were recovered.

### 5.2.7 Treasure

No artefacts were found which would be defined as 'treasure' under The Treasure Act 1996 (and as amended by the Treasure Designation Order 2002 No 2666).

### 5.2.8 Human Remains

No human remains were identified during the fieldwork.

### 5.2.9 Field Records

The trial trenches and archaeological deposits and features within them were recorded by text on proformas, and in suitably-scaled plan and section drawings (at 1:10 scale).

The minimum record was sufficient for most trenches due to the absence of archaeological features:

- a photograph of each trench or area after stripping;
- a written description of each deposit and the general sedimentary sequence, including deposit thicknesses; and
- a sketch-plan showing the location and values of surface and trench floor levels in relation to Ordnance Survey Datum.

## 6.0 Results

### 6.1 Overview

The general deposit sequence in each trench is summarised in Table 1. Further discussion of results is provided in section 6.2.

In all 17 trenches were opened across the two fields to a depth of approximately 0.25m – 0.45m (see Drawing 1). Only one trench (9) revealed a single archaeological feature **[003]** represented by a ditch running north south across the trench. The ditch contained a single fill **(004)** represented by a light-grey/brown silty firm clay with frequent limestone inclusions. The fill contained 8 pottery sherds. Trench 8 was moved slightly to the east to attempt to intercept the feature, but it was not seen.

A single discrete deposit of pottery sherds was noted in Trench 10 and appeared to represent one pot. The deposit was given a small finds number due to the amount and concentration of the sherds **(Tr 9 - AAA)**.

The pottery from the fill of **[003]** represented a range of types of Romano – British date including pieces of degraded colour-coated ware / sandy ware and a Savernake type Roman Grey ware of likely 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century date, **(Figure 6)**.

The pottery from Trench 10 represented a probable Dorset Black Burnished Ware 1 (DOR - BBW1) shallow bowl dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries and probably representative of that produced at Poole, Dorset **(Figure 10)**.

Unstratified finds of Ceramic Building Material (CBM) and daub were located across Trenches 8 from the base of the trench and within the excavated material. The CBM represented 160 grams of material including a fragment of a Roman roof tile **(Figure 5)**.

**Table 1**  
**General deposit sequence in each trench (see Drawing 2)**

Trench Number	Plan dimensions (m)	Deposit sequence in representative section	Archaeological features present?
1	25x1.8, extended East to West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.10m Topsoil</li> <li>0.10 – 0.25m Subsoil</li> <li>0.35m + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
2	25x1.8, extended East to West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 - 0.40m Subsoil</li> <li>0.40m + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
3	25x1.8, extended North to South.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.10m Topsoil</li> <li>0.10 – 0.25m Subsoil</li> <li>0.35m + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
4	25x1.8, extended East to West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 – 0.40m Subsoil</li> <li>0.40 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
5	25x1.8, extended North to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 – 0.40m Subsoil</li> <li>0.40 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No



Trench Number	Plan dimensions (m)	Deposit sequence in representative section	Archaeological features present?
	South.		
6	25x1.8, extended East to West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.12m Topsoil</li> <li>0.12 – 0.30m Subsoil</li> <li>0.30 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
7	25x1.8, extended North to South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 – 0.30m Subsoil</li> <li>0.30 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
8	25x1.8, extended North to South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.25m Topsoil</li> <li>0.25 – 0.50m Subsoil</li> <li>0.50 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	Unstratified Romano – British CBM and daub. Fig.4
9	25x1.8, extended East to West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 – 0.40m Subsoil</li> <li>0.40 – 0.65m [90003] – (90004)</li> <li>0.40 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	Romano – British Pottery sherds. Fig.5.
10	25x1.8, extended North to South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.25m Topsoil</li> <li>0.25 – 0.40m Subsoil</li> <li>0.40 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	Small Find Tr 10 AAA. Romano – British pottery. Fig.9.
11	25x1.8, extended East to West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 – 0.50m Subsoil</li> <li>0.50 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
12	25x1.8, extended North to South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.20m Topsoil</li> <li>0.20 – 0.45m Subsoil</li> <li>0.45 – 0.85 + Alluvium</li> </ul>	No natural depression / solution feature?
13	50x1.8, extended East to West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.30m Topsoil</li> <li>0.30 – 0.50m Subsoil</li> <li>0.50 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
14	25x1.8, extended North to South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.30m Topsoil</li> <li>0.30 – 0.50m Subsoil</li> <li>0.50 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
15	25x1.8, extended East to West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.30m Topsoil</li> <li>0.30 – 0.50m Subsoil</li> <li>0.50 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No
16	50x1.8, extended East to West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.0 – 0.25m Topsoil</li> <li>0.30 – 0.25m Subsoil</li> <li>0.50 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li> </ul>	No

Trench Number	Plan dimensions (m)	Deposit sequence in representative section	Archaeological features present?
17	50x1.8, extended North to South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 0.0 – 0.30m Topsoil</li><li>• 0.30 – 0.40m Subsoil</li><li>• 0.40 + Natural Chalk Limestone</li></ul>	No

## 6.2 Trenches 8, 9, 10.

### Trench 8

No archaeological features were present (**Figure 3**).

There was a general spread of unstratified CBM and daub across the trench. The trench is unremarkable in itself but collectively with trenches 9 and 10 produced the only finds from across the site, all dating to the Romano-British period. The topsoil (**001**) and subsoil (**002**) were mixed, most likely due to historic ploughing (**Figure 4**).

**Figure 3**  
**Trench 8 South Facing**





**Figure 4**  
**Trench 8: east facing section.**



**Figure 5**  
**Trench 8: Unstratified CBM and Daub.**



## Trench 9

Trench 9 contained the only feature noted across all 17 trenches at the site. The feature consisted of a single ditch 1m in width and with a depth of 0.25m. The ditch cut [003] had a single fill (004) represented by a light grey/brown silty firm clay with frequent limestone inclusions. The ditch base was concave and undulating with the feature edges being quite ephemeral (Figures 7 - 9). The fill (004) of the feature contained a number of Romano-British pottery sherds ranging from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. The fabrics represent degraded shards of colour coated /sandy wares and a single sherd of Savernake – type Roman grey ware with some CBM.

**Figure 6**  
Trench 9: Pottery Fragments.





**Figure 7**  
Trench 9: North facing section of feature [003].



**Figure 8**  
Trench 9: feature in plan taken facing west.





Figure 9  
Trench 9: facing west



## Trench 10

No significant archaeological features were present.

Trench 10 was excavated north-south across the site to 25m length. The trench was unremarkable and contained no features of an archaeological nature. However, one discrete spread of pot was located at the edge of the east facing section. The pottery represented a significant part of a shallow black burnished ware (1) bowl with geometric decoration typical of that from Poole Dorset (DOR-BBW1, **Figures 10 - 12**)

**Figure 10**  
Trench 10: Pottery small find (Tr10 AAA)



Geometric decoration.



**Figure 11**  
**Trench 10: East facing section.**



**Figure 12**  
**Trench 10: North facing.**





## 6.3 Finds Discussion

Only one cut feature in Trench 9 produced a secure context for finds. **(004)** the single fill of **[003]** provided both pot (51g, see **Figure 6**) and disarticulated animal bone (210g).

### Ditch Cut and Fill 003/004 in Trench 9:

- Cattle metacarpal, several joining fragments along fresh breaks.
- Large mammal-sized vertebra fragment.
- Savernake type - Roman Grey Ware
- Eroded colour coated / sandy ware.
- Some CBM (unspecified)

Across the remainder of the excavated trenches finds were of an unstratified nature, including a discreet concentration of Black Burnished Ware found in Trench 10 (**small find AAA, Figure 10**). Trench 8 produced a good spread of CBM including a partial Roman-British roof tile and daub (**Figure 5**). All other trenches did not produce any finds or features and were archaeologically sterile.

## 6.4 Archive

The primary archive consists of all original records, artefacts, ecofacts / samples and all documentation that relates to the archaeological works.

The destination museum for physical archives is intended to be Wiltshire Museum, 41 Long Street, Devizes, SN10 1NS.

Upon completion and submission of this Full Archive Report, the landowner will be contacted to arrange legal transfer of title to the archaeological objects retained during the investigation from themselves to the receiving museum. The transfer of title would be affected by a standard letter supplied to the landowner for signature.

The project archive currently consists of all original records, artefacts, ecofacts, samples and all documentation that relates to the archaeological works. SLR Consulting in conjunction with the Planning Archaeologist will jointly endeavour to persuade the legal owner of the artefacts to transfer ownership to a relevant repository.

The archive is compliant with:

- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (Archaeology Section) (1990): *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage*.
- Archaeological Archives Forum 2007 (revised 2011): *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*;
- The Society of Museum Archaeologists 1995: *Towards An Accessible Archive*; and
- Museums Sheffield (March 2016) *Procedures for the Deposition of Archaeological Archives from Derbyshire at Museums Sheffield*.

The two bone ecofacts have been retained.

## 6.5 Reports

Due to the minimal finds this document forms the Full Archive report with no intermediate Assessment Report, as proposed in the WSI.

On approval from the County Archaeologist, bound paper copies of the Full Archive Report and digital copies in PDF format, including all illustrations, will be provided to the Client, the Planning Archaeologist and the HER.

Upon completion of the work, SLR Consulting will make the work accessible to the wider research community by submitting copies of reports online to OASIS (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>).

If required publication will be through a note in a suitable level of detail offered to the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society Magazine (WANHM).

## 6.6 Copyright

SLR will retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988 with all rights reserved; the contractor will provide an exclusive licence to the Client for the use of such documents by the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in this Method Statement.



## 7.0 Summary and conclusions

### 7.1 Context

Topographical, historical and archaeological evidence indicates that during the Romano-British period, the Site was situated amongst scattered and dispersed settlements, industrial sites and agricultural activity. Romano-British occupation in the immediate vicinity of the site is represented by remains of a building with a mosaic floor, possibly a villa, which was identified in 1896 approximately 250m to the north of the Site, and adjacent to Restrop Road in the north, is an area known as Blacklands. This name is generally associated with Romano-British occupation, particularly pottery manufacture. In addition to the settlement evidence, a likely focus of Romano-British industrial activity has been recorded some 350m to the west of the site. Here four pottery kilns were investigated, and it is thought that pottery manufacture was undertaken in the mid-2nd century AD. In this general area assemblages of pottery and ceramic building material, including tiles and tesserae, were found in the vicinity of a building and industrial sites. Stray finds, comprising a 1st century brooch and a coin of Crispus (died AD326) were collected to the south-east and east of the Site, respectively.

Romano-British funerary activity is represented by a walled cemetery comprising unusually rich burials c. 50m to the north-east of the Site. Excavations undertaken in 1987-1988 recorded seven burials, including three in stone sarcophagi and a cremation burial within a glass bottle placed in a highly decorated lead coffin.

Of the 17 trenches excavated across the Site only one cut feature [**Trench 9 003**] was recorded, which produced Romano-British pottery (**Figure 6**). This suggests that funeral activity did not extend to within the area of the Site. However, from a concentration of unstratified pottery and CBM from Trenches 8, 9 and 10 it is probable that settlement lay close by, potentially associated with the walled cemetery. This would fit with the general spread of Romano-British settlement within the local area.

Trenches 8, 9 and 10 were all grouped within the central portion of the northern portion of the site (**Figures 1 and 2, Drawing 01**). For the finds to be concentrated solely within these trenches suggests some form of activity in the immediate area. However, the trench sections (Drawing 2) show the topsoil and subsoil were very turbated suggesting historic ploughing probably truncated any features present, and distributed the finds across this central part of the site. The pot from Trench 10, however, was concentrated in one location.

### 7.2 Geophysical versus Trial Trenching results

The Sumo geophysics report of January 2020 revealed a number of anomalies across the site. However, none of the trial trenches encountered any of the geophysical anomalies with the exception of the plough scars within Area 1. It is suggested that the majority of anomalies identified by the geophysical survey were geological in nature rather than archaeological features. The open trenches revealed a varied pattern of chalk limestone including concentrated patches and spreads of chalk clasts with equal distribution of gravels and silts.

This geological variation would suggest that within the area of the site and the geology present geophysical survey is not the most effective method of assessing archaeological risk and that the use of trial trenching, in this instance, was the most effective tool for evaluating the site.

### 7.3 Conclusions

The results of trial trenching suggest that archaeological features are absent from the great majority of the site. Despite the evidence for Romano-British burial practice from the walled cemetery located c.50m to the immediate north-east of the site, no further burials were recorded across the evaluation area. In addition, the limited nature of finds and cut features across the site indicate the area was probably on the margin of settlement and that historically ploughing has truncated and disturbed what few features were once present.

## References

English Heritage (2011). *Environmental Archaeology, a Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed).

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images/books/publications/environmental-archaeology-2nd/environmental-archaeology-2nd.pdf/>

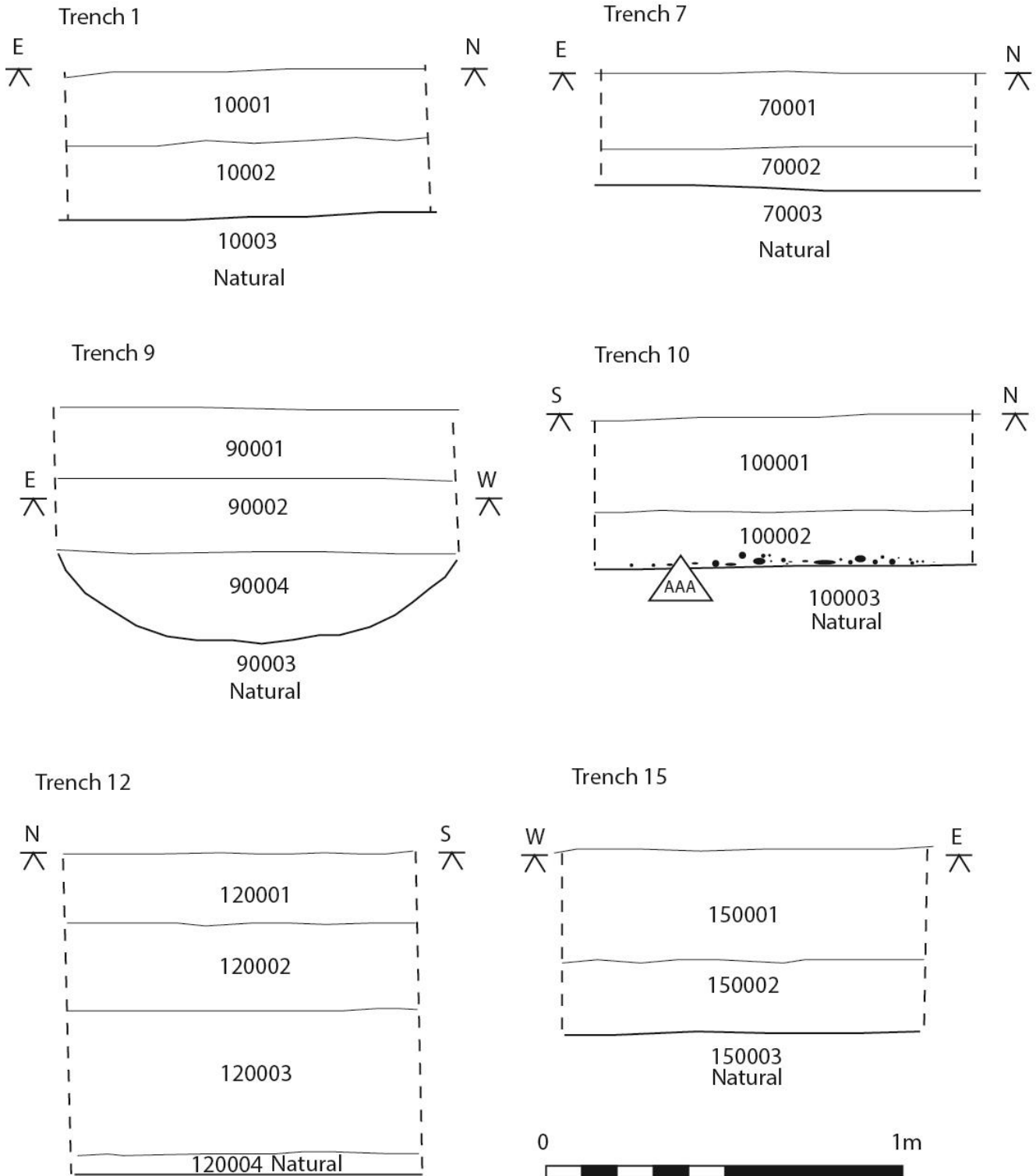
Museums Sheffield (March 2016) *Procedures for the Deposition of Archaeological Archives from Derbyshire at Museums Sheffield*

Shackley, M. 1981, *Environmental Archaeology*, George, Allen & Unwin Ltd.

# DRAWINGS

Drawing 2: Representative sections of deposit sequence recorded from trench sides.

Apart from Trenches 9, 10, 12 and 15 (illustrated below), all other deposit sequences were similar to those shown in Trenches 1 and 7



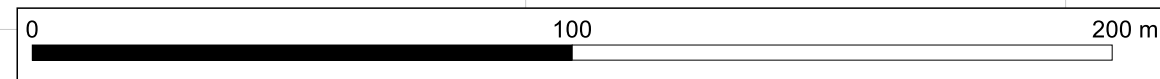


LEGEND	
	APPLICATION BOUNDARY
	TRIAL TRENCH
	EXCAVATED FEATURE
	POTTERY SCATTER 'AAA'
	FOUL SEWER
	OVERHEAD LINE
	FOOTPATH
	GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AREA
GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY ANOMALIES	
	FORMER FIELD BOUNDARY
	UTILITY
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