

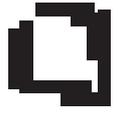
**Land East of Tarporley Road,
Whitchurch, Shropshire.
September 2016
V 3.0 - FINAL**



aeon archaeology



Archaeological Excavation
Project Code: A0068.2
Report no. 0102



aeon archaeology

**Land East of Tarporley Road,
Whitchurch, Shropshire.
September 2016
V 3.0 - FINAL**

Report no. 0102 v1.0

Archaeological Excavation

Aeon Archaeology
25, Mold Road
Broughton
Chester
CH4 0PQ

Project Code: A0068.2
Date: 22/09/2016
Client: Edgeway Homes
Written by: Josh Dean BA ACIfA
info@aeonarchaeology.co.uk



Figures

Figure 01: Location of site at Bollandsfield, near Tarporley Road, Whitchurch - scale 1:10,000 at A4

Figure 02: Location of proposed development site Bollandsfield, Whitchurch - scale 1:1,000 at A4

Figure 03: Site Plan of Excavation on land adjacent to Bollandsfield, Nr. Tarporley Rd. Whitchurch

Figure 04: Southeast facing section showing (1003), (1005) & (1013)

Figure 05: Southeast facing section [1030]

Figure 06: Northwest facing section [1030]

Figure 07: Southeast facing section of [1030]

Figure 08: South facing section of [1014]

Plates

Plate 01: Site shot (pre-excavation) from North - 2m & 1m scale

Plate 02: Pre-excavation shot Palaeochannel from northwest - 2m & 1m scale

Plate 03: Site shot (pre-excavation) from southwest - 2m & 1m scale

Plate 04: Southeast facing section showing (1003), (1005) & (1015) - 2m & 0.5m scale

Plate 05: South facing section of [1030] - 0.5m scale

Plate 06: [1030] in plan from North - 2m & 1m scale

Plate 07: South facing section showing (1003), (1004), (1031), (1046) & [1030] - 2m scale

Plate 08: Northwest facing section of [1014] - 1m & 0.5m scale

Plate 09: East facing shot of pit [1032] - (2x) 1m scale

Contents

1.0	NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	2
2.0	INTRODUCTION	3
3.0	PROJECT AIMS	4
4.0	METHODOLOGY.....	6
4.2	Data Collection from Site Records	6
4.3	Artefact Methodology	6
4.4	Environmental Samples Methodology.....	6
4.5	Report and dissemination.....	6
5.0	SITE LOCATION.....	7
6.0	HISTORY OF THE SITE	8
7.0	QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS	10
7.1	The Documentary Archive.....	10
7.2	Environmental Samples	10
7.3	Artefacts.....	10
8.0	SPECIALIST ANALYSIS.....	11
8.1	Ceramics	11
9.0	RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION.....	13
10.0	CONCLUSION.....	15
11.0	SOURCES.....	17

1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Aeon Archaeology in partnership with Nexus Heritage were commissioned by Edgeway Homes (hereafter the Client) to carry out an archaeological excavation at a proposed residential development located on land adjacent to Bollandsfield, Tarpoley Road, Whitchurch, Shropshire as a condition of full planning permission.

The archaeological excavation identified several features at the site which produced Roman ceramic dating to the mid-2nd century A.D. to the early 4th century A.D all of these were natural features and were most likely re-deposited through water action.

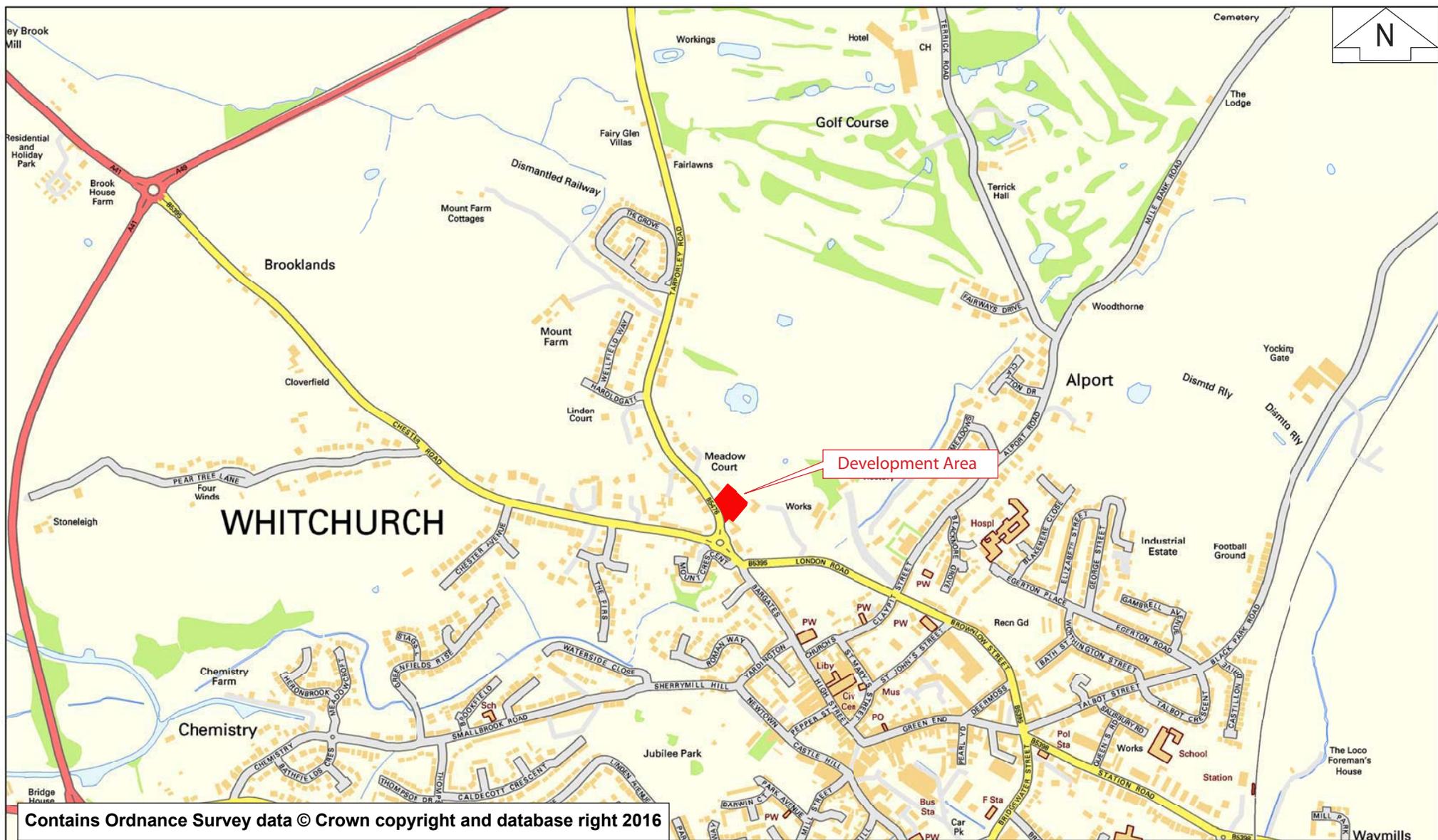
The archaeological excavation has established that a period of Roman activity probably persisted somewhere nearby to the site anywhere between the 1st and 4th Centuries A.D. However within the excavation area itself the identified features were all natural in origin. It is therefore most likely that the finds from Tarpoley Road, Whitchurch are residual and therefore represent an assemblage that has been carried into the area via natural processes.

A draft version of this document was provided to Dr A. Wigley, Natural & Historic Environment Manager of Shropshire Council for review and Dr. Wigley confirmed approval of the contents in writing on 20 Oct. 2016.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was contracted to Nexus Heritage acting as the Archaeological consultant for the client; Edgeway Homes. The excavation was a condition of full planning permission (**15/00942/FUL**) to erect a residential development within an area of land adjacent to Bollandsfield, Tarpoley Road, Whitchurch Shropshire, (**NGR SJ 53952 41971**). The Local Planning Authority (Shropshire County Council) liaised with Anthony Martin (Nexus Heritage) who coordinated with Aeon Archaeology to ensure the archaeological expectations of the Council were met.

A written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Nexus Heritage in April 2016 (document no. 3298.R01a) which outlined the principle aims of the excavation and the methods by which they would be met.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016

Figure 01: Location of proposed development site, Bollandfield, Whitchurch.
Scale 1:10,000 at A4.



Aeon Archaeology
Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA
25 Mold Road, Broughton, Chester CH4 0PQ
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585
www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016



Figure 02: Location of Trench at Bollandfield, Whitchurch scale 1:1,000 at A4

Aeon Archaeology
Richard Cooke BA MA MCifA
25 Mold Road, Broughton, Chester CH4 0PQ
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585
www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk

3.0 PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the works was to characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains uncovered during the excavation. The broad aims of the archaeological excavation were:

- To determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains on the site, the integrity of which may be threatened by development at the site.
- To establish the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion to sub-surface deposits and, where the data allows, assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits of archaeological significance.
- To enable the client to establish a schedule for archaeological risks.
- To report on the work and determine the need, if any, for further archaeological mitigation. This may consist of attempts to preserve significant remains in situ or, if this is not possible, more extensive excavation work and reporting. Less sensitive remains may require a watching brief. Any such further work may be secured by amendment to the condition.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological excavation were:

- Insofar as possible within methodological constraints, to explain any temporal, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and any relationships between these and the archaeological and historic elements of the wider landscape.
- Where the data allows, identify the research implications of the site with reference to the regional research agenda and recent work in Shropshire.

The broad characteristics of both the size and orientation of the excavation was considered to be appropriate and were agreed with the Planning Archaeologist at Shropshire Council. The trench was proposed as part of the WSI prepared by Nexus Heritage and was designed to investigate an area around several gully features identified in the archaeological excavation phase (report 0068) which produced Roman ceramic.

The management of this project has followed the procedures laid out in the standard professional guidance *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2014), and in the *CIFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (Chartered Institute For Archaeologists, 2014).

Five stages are specified:

Phase 1: project planning

Phase 2: fieldwork

Phase 3: assessment of potential for analysis and revised project design

Phase 4: analysis and report preparation

Phase 5: dissemination

In this instance it was not necessary to prepare a revised project design as alluded to in Phase 3; as there was a paucity of evidence recovered in Phase 2 in terms of archaeological features and the residual ceramic finds only offered minimal potential for analysis and therefore did not warrant any alteration to the initial project design.

All the information is to be presented in a report that will be held by the Shropshire Historic Environment Record and the OASIS database so that it can be accessible to the public and future researchers. This phase of work also includes archiving the material and documentary records from the project.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Before the excavation commenced an agreed programme of excavation timing, siting, duration, surface re-instatement and health and safety protection measures were agreed with the Client, and the Shropshire County Archaeologist.

4.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that they can be archived with the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

4.3 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. Finds numbers would be attributed and they would be bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the excavation. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Client and Shropshire County Council. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

4.4 Environmental Samples Methodology

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples were related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

4.5 Report and dissemination

A full archive including plans, photographs and written material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced.

Upon approval from the Client copies of the report will be sent to the Shropshire Historic Environment Record and the Shropshire Development Control Archaeologist (Andy Wigley).

5.0 SITE LOCATION

(Reproduced from Nexus Report No: 3250.R01a)

The Site is situated on the north-western side of the town of Whitchurch, in the civil parish of Whitchurch Urban, Shropshire (centre point **NGR: SJ 53950 41982**), (Figure. 1). The Site consists of a single field, laid to rough, unmanaged pasture and part of the garden attached to a residential property identified as Bollandsfield. The Site slopes down to the south-east from a high-point of *c.* 103m OD in the garden of Bollandsfield to a low point of *c.* 99.60m OD at the entrance off Tarporley Road.

The proposed development area is situated on the south-eastern side of Bollandsfield and comprises part of the garden associated with Bollandsfield and a small field of rough pasture. The Site is bounded to the north-east by fences and hedges beyond which is rough pasture. To the south-east the Site is bounded by a tall hedgerow which separates it from the car park of a Sainsbury's Supermarket and the adjacent property of Bargates Cottage. The north-western boundary of the Site does not correspond to any physical boundary and is an arbitrary line defining the limits of the application Site. The south-western boundary onto Tarporley Road is formed by multiple physical features includes a wooden gate, a privet hedge and a brick wall behind which is a bank supporting a number of trees and shrubs.

The Superficial geology of Site is Glaciofluvial Deposits of Devensian Sand and Gravel formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. The bedrock is Lias Group Mudstone.

(<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

6.0 HISTORY OF THE SITE

(Reproduced from Nexus Report No: 3250.R01a)

The following section is a summary of the archaeological and historical evidence as identified in the Nexus Heritage document *Land adjacent to Bollandsfield, Whitchurch, Shropshire - Heritage Statement*, (Nexus Report No: 3046.R01). The evidence was colligated from the Shropshire Historic Environment Record, the Shropshire Record Office, Whitchurch Library and other documentary and cartographic sources. The details of the Heritage Statement need not be rehearsed here. However, the following summary provides a concise outline of the broad archaeological and historic context.

In summary there are 48 archaeological monuments within a radius of 300m from the Site centre, none of which is located wholly or partly within the Site. However, the south-western boundary of the site is coincident with the Roman Road from Wroxeter to Rutinium, Whitchurch and Chester.

There are no known prehistoric archaeological sites or find-spots within the Site or in the vicinity, but during the Romano-British period Whitchurch was established as a Roman town, identified as *Mediolanum*). A cemetery to the north-western of the settlement is suspected and if present is likely to have been tightly focussed along Bargates and possibly along the roadside. The suspicion derives from a report, dated to 1950, that seven skeletons were found in the grounds of the residential premises The Gables and Plympton, c. 30m to the south-east of the Site's southern boundary. There appears to be no further information on the skeletons other than an annotation on a map made by an Ordnance Survey correspondent in 1950 and an Ordnance Survey Record Card dating to 1976. The existence of further inhumations in the vicinity remains conjectural but there is a chance that the seven inhumations may be accompanied by more, as yet undiscovered human remains, and that if present such remains may extend into the Site.

There are no confirmed archaeological remains from the Saxon/early medieval period recorded in the Site or the immediate vicinity. Whitchurch was situated in the Saxon kingdom of Mercia and lay in the Odonet Hundred and later North Bradford Hundred. There is however, no archaeological evidence of the medieval settlement at Whitchurch prior to the 11th century.

Evidence is more plentiful for the archaeology and history of Whitchurch during the medieval period. In the late 11th century the Domesday Survey identified the site of the present town within the manor of *Westune*. The first recorded use of the place-name Whitchurch is in 1271-2 and during this period the Site lay outside the urban core and the Site may have been agricultural land associated with the manor.

By the 14th century the town was prospering and had expanded outside the limit of its defences. Little is known of the early origins of the Rectory and the moated site to the south-east of the Site. It has been suggested that it was a manor house belonging to the le Strange family, although by the late 13th century the Le Strange family were resident elsewhere (North *et al* 2007). The moated site is thought to have earlier origins associated with a monastic hospital, although this attribution is not secure.

It is probably acceptable to assume that the Site was in proximity to the moat and manor house at the site of the Rectory during this period. However, there is no compelling justification to suggest that there were any buildings or other features on the Site during this period, (other than traces of agricultural activity) that would have left a trace in the archaeological record.

The landscape of the Assessment Area witnessed multiple, significant changes to the topography during the post-medieval period, as a result of influences such as population growth and

communication development. The Site, however, was not within the demesne lands associated with the Rectory. But by 1791 the incumbent had purchased additional land beyond the glebe which included the Site. By and large, the boundaries of the Site have remained stable since the late 18th century, but the south-western boundary has been altered through incremental changes to the landscape.

By the late 19th century the Site had been divided into two contrasting halves. The north-western half appears to be part of large field, given over to agricultural use. The south-eastern half appears to be laid out as formal gardens probably associated with the Rectory. The gardens are divided into two rectilinear enclosures with what appear to be paths circulating along the boundaries. The northern enclosure appears to be provided with trees and shrubs and a *Summer House*. By the first decade of the 20th century the formal gardens are no longer present and by 1926 a new, residence called Bollandsfield has been constructed within the Site.

7.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS

7.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological excavation:

Digital photographs	71
Context Sheets	16
Drawings	8 on 4 sheets

7.2 Environmental Samples

Environmental samples were initially taken during the investigation of suspected archaeological features, however once these were ascertained to be natural in origin the samples were discarded.

7.3 Artefacts

Thirty one individual artefact numbers were issued during the excavation phase, although some of these applied to several sherds of ceramic found within the same stratigraphic horizon. All finds were cleaned and identification made in-house at Aeon Archaeology.

8.0 SPECIALIST ANALYSIS

8.1 Ceramics

By Josh Dean

Introduction

The excavation at Tarporley Road, Whitchurch produced ceramic assemblages comprising 35 sherds of Roman pottery and 28 sherds of Post Medieval pottery. The artefacts, according to their unique identifying number, context and type are quantified in the table below.

Bulk Finds Quantification				
Artefact No.	Context	Artefact type	Quantity	Weight
1	1001	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	3g
2	1001	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	5g
3	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware - Plate Rim - C.1850	1	6g
4	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	11g
5	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	10g
6	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	4g
7	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	3g
8	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	4g
9	1002	Post Med Pot – Redware	1	47g
10	1002	Post Med Pot - Stoneware - Metallic Black Lead Glaze	1	14g
11	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	10g
12	1041	Roman Pottery? - CBM/Orange ware	7	91g
13	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	2g
14	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	2g
15	1002	Post Med Pot - Stoneware - Tortoiseshell Glaze	1	8g
16	1002	Post Med Pot - Transferware c.1850-	1	249g
17	1033	Stone? Stoneware?	6	138g
18	1033	Post Med Pot - Redware - Metallic Black Lead Glaze (L18th c.)	1	3g
19	1005	Roman Pottery - BB2 Rimsherd Cup	1	16g
20	1033	Roman Pottery - BB2 - 2nd-4th cen BC	9	50g
21	1004	Post Med Pot - Transferware C.1850-	1	1g
22	1031	Roman Pottery - Orange ware	3	21g
23	1031	Roman? - CBM/Orange ware	1	54g
24	1031	Roman Pottery - Orange ware	1	21g
25	1015	Roman Pottery - BB2 - Rim Sherd	1	18g
27	1003	Roman Pottery - BB2 - 2nd-4th cen BC	1	8g
28	1033	Roman/Medieval? – Overfired	10	105g
29	1033	Roman Pottery - Orange ware - Base	2	40g
30	1033	Roman Pottery - CBM/Orange ware	4	55g

31	1033	Roman Pottery - BB2 - 2nd-4th cen BC	1	21g
----	------	--------------------------------------	---	-----

The Roman Pottery

Fabric codes in brackets relate to those in the *National Roman Fabric Reference Collection* held by the Museum of London (see Tomber & Dore 1998)

The trench produced 2 sherds from separate contexts (1005 & 1015) from the rim of a Black Burnished ware jar (COL BB 2). Contexts (1035 & 1037) produced 19 sherds from a minimum of 2 Black Burnished ware jars (COL BB 2) in an oxidised fabric that is perhaps a Colchester ware rather than a Cheshire Plain ware fabric judging by its finer, less granular appearance. This type of fabric was produced around the Thames estuary and began to be distributed in Northern Britain during the 2nd – 3rd centuries. Context (1031) produced 5 pottery sherds of orange ware from either from the Severn valley or the legionary kilns at Holt, Cheshire. These sherds were undiagnostic and had been heavily abraded through water action.

The Post Medieval Pottery

The post-medieval pottery comprised a rather limited range of wares, largely products of the 19th century, comprising: blackware, transferware, and brown stoneware. The forms were primarily those for the table along with utilitarian jars. The general range for dates can be restricted to circa 1850 – 1920. The blackware (1002) with metallic lead glaze possibly pushes the dating back as far as 1750 however it was located in the topsoil and therefore is almost certainly residual.

Discussion

The artefacts from the evaluation demonstrate activity near the site during the Roman period, however the contexts in which these ceramics were found must be described as non-archaeological in their composition they appeared to be heavily affected by phenomenon associated with river environments; coarse stream silts, rounded pebbles and heavy concentrations of manganese (signifying sustained water movement). However human agency is certainly related to the presence of these finds; Presumably there was a location ‘upstream’ to the North/Northwest where these artefacts were introduced into the stream system by means of purposeful deposition or via domestic loss. They most likely washed into the natural hollows and palaeochannels on this site by means of episodic flooding events or deposition in stream silts via fluvial activity.

Some of the Roman pottery was in good condition with some large sherds present. The condition of the Roman pottery has allowed a degree of certainty that these sherds represent an assemblage discarded during the 3rd century or later. The possible Holt ware, which may have presented an earlier date was far too abraded to be certain of and therefore doubtful. The post medieval finds are indicative of generic table wares during the Victorian era, these wares were also comparatively less abraded than the Roman.

9.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

The excavation was designed to assess and characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains. The location of the excavation can be found on figure 2. Where relevant context numbers have been assigned and are shown enclosed within brackets. Details of all contexts used can be found in appendix I.

The Excavation

The Trench measured approx. 17.5m length northeast to southwest by approx. 13.0m in width northwest to southeast and was located at the south-eastern area of the site. The purpose for the location of the trench in this area was to a target sub-circular feature revealed in during the archaeological evaluation undertaken by Aeon Archaeology in 2015 (report 0068).

The excavation area consisted of a 0.35m deep fairly compacted grey-brown silt-clay topsoil deposit with occasional small rounded pebbles (1001) and a 0.3m deep firm mid-orange/brown with yellow mottling silt-sand subsoil deposit with frequent small rounded pebbles and cobbles (1002). This lay above a well compacted orange/yellow brown mottled sand natural glacial substrata with frequent concreted manganese outcrops and infrequent small rounded gravel and cobble inclusions (1003).

The targeted sub-circular feature was encountered at the northwestern end of the trench. The previously observed southern portion of the feature did not appear and is presumed to have been so ephemeral as to have been removed during machining. The sub-circular feature now became reinterpreted as a curvilinear [1030] (context [2013] in evaluation report 0068) and measured >7.5m in length by 0.85m in width by 0.32m in depth, orientated northwest to southeast and cut into the natural glacial substrata (1003). The feature continued into the north-eastern trench limit of excavation.

Two slots were placed across the feature (Plate 5-6) leaving a 1.0m portion of the fill left in situ; the slots excavated through 0.12m of fairly compacted grey/black silty-sand (1031) which contained all of the Roman pottery (finds numbers 22-24) for this feature. This lay above 0.11m of an extremely firm orange yellow sand-clay (1044) which in turn was above a 0.03m deep pure grey clay which did not respect the cut [1030]. Furthermore the sides of the feature were steeply concaved with a highly irregular undulating base.

Fill (1031) produced 5 pottery sherds of heavily abraded Roman orange ware which is possibly from the legionary kilns at Holt but is more likely Severn Valley rare providing a reliable date of 2nd-4rd century AD. Feature [1030] closely resembles a palaeochannel; archaeologically sterile/natural deposits probably associated with inundation events heavily undulating bases and concreted manganese all indicate the presence of water.

Along the eastern and south-eastern extent of the trench limit there was a large linear feature [1004] orientated northeast to southwest it measured 0.94m in length along this alignment before continuing into both the eastern and southern trench limits. Furthermore it was 2.12m in width at its maximum visible extent. The uppermost fill of the feature (1005) yielded a single piece of black burnish ware 2 rimsherd. This fill was an extremely firm grey/black silt-sand and represented the single fill of [1004] extending to a depth of 0.42m. The sides of the cut were gradually concave and the base was irregular and undulating. This fill was very friable once excavated and produced no more finds. Immediately to the northwest of [1004] was a compacted orange sand-clay (1013) peppered with concreted manganese; this area appears to have been deposited as alluvium (see figure. 04) the feature [1004] also appears to be natural in origin and is interpreted as a palaeochannel for the same reasons as feature [1030].

Immediately to the northwest of [1004] was a north-south linear feature [1014] which produced another excellent black burnished ware 2 rimsherd. This feature was half sectioned halfway along its length and excavated through a smooth single dark grey sandy-silt fill (1015) full of concreted manganese inclusions and some evidence of iron panning. Once more the ceramic appeared to be a residual find. Once more this feature appears to have been sculpted by the a historic water channel; this was even more evident with regards to [1014] due to the sheer quantities of concreted manganese both within the feature and contingent within the natural surrounding it.

Only one more feature proved to be of archaeological interest. Directly to the east of [1030] was sub-circular natural hollow which produced 27 pottery sherds both of Roman and Post-Medieval origin. The extent of [1032] was extremely difficult to define as it also subject to regular flooding events and the deposition of silts around the area of the natural hollow [1032] this area was also subject to heavy bioturbation processes. What appeared to be the extent of the feature was fully excavated in an attempt to recover ceramic. The single fill of [1032] was a granular dark orange/brown silt sand full of rounded, sub-rounded/angular pebbles (1033), manganese concretions and pockets of bright white natural sand (1003). The deposit was 1.50m in length along its northwest-southeast axis, 1.32m in width and was cut 0.32m into the natural glacial substrata. The archaeological finds (17; 20; 27-31) were restricted to the first 0.10m of the deposit. This feature is interpreted as a natural hollow within the landscape which was subsequently filled with (1033) as a single event in time via a historic deluge of water.

The excavation area was recorded using digital photographs and context sheets. Measurements were taken by hand and a scale plan of the trench produced as shown in figure 3.



Plate 01: Site shot (pre-excavation) from North - 2m & 1m scale



Plate 02: Pre-excavation shot Palaeochannel from northwest - 2m & 1m scale



Plate 03: Site shot (pre-excavation) from southwest - 2m & 1m scale



Plate 04: Southeast facing section showing (1003), (1005) & (1015) - 2m & 0.5m scale



Plate 05: South facing section of [1030] - 0.5m scale



Plate 06: [1030] in plan from North - 2m & 1m scale



Plate 07: South facing section showing (1003), (1004), (1031), (1046) & [1030] - 2m scale



Plate 08: Northwest facing section of [1014] - 1m & 0.5m scale



Plate 09: East facing shot of pit [1032] - (2x) 1m scale

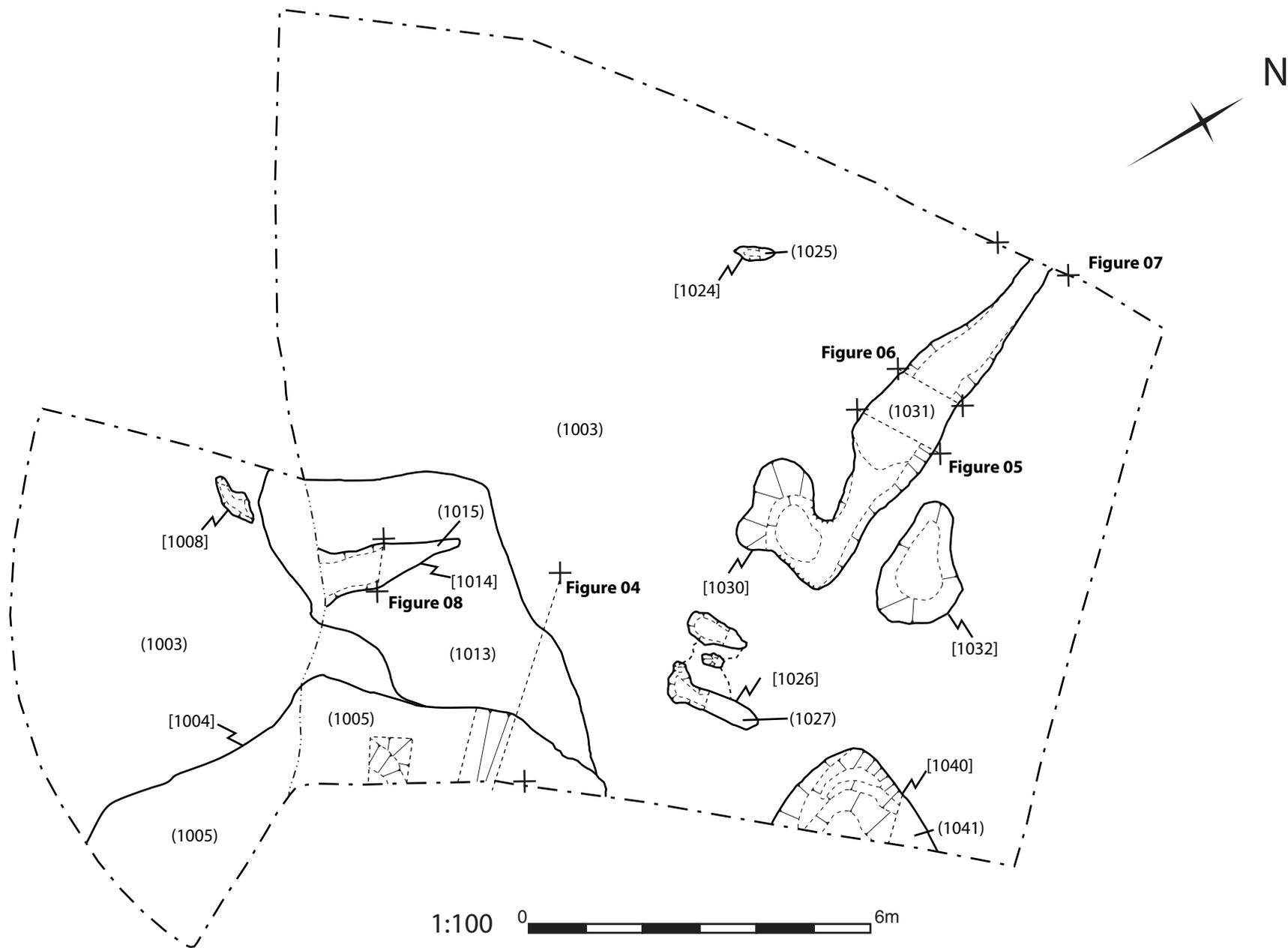


Figure 03: Site Plan of Excavation on land adjacent to Bollandsfield, Nr. Tarporley Rd.
Whitchurch



Aeon Archaeology
Richard Cooke BA MA MCIFA
25 Mold Road, Broughton, Chester CH4 0PQ
Tel: 07866925393 / 01244 531585
www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk

Figure 04. Southeast facing section showing (1003), (1005) & (1013)

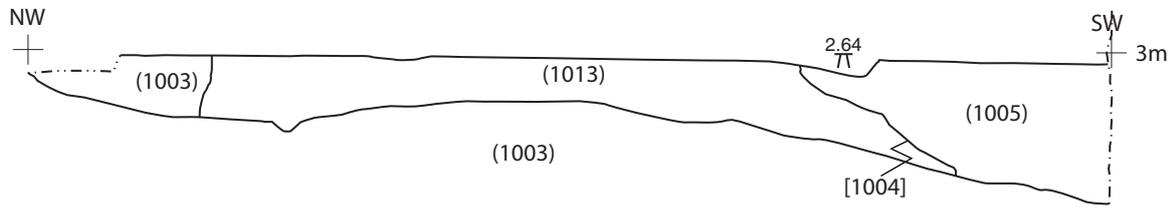


Figure 05. Southeast facing section [1030]

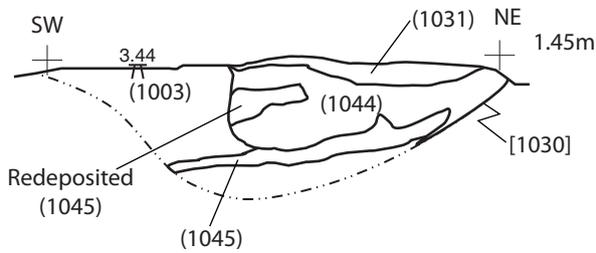


Figure 06. Northwest facing section [1030]

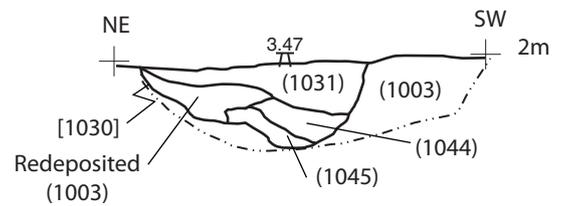


Figure 07. Southeast facing section of [1030]

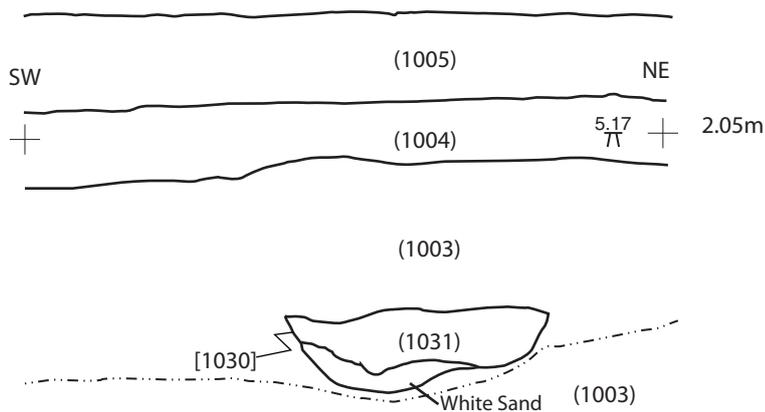
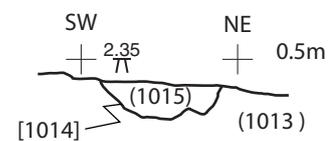


Figure 08. South facing section of [1014]



Figures 04 -08: Feature sections.

Aeon Archaeology
 Richard Cooke BA MA MCIfA
 25 Mold Road, Broughton, Chester CH4 0PQ
 Tel: 01244 531585/ 07866925393
www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk

10.0 CONCLUSION

Following the archaeological excavation at Tarporley Road, Whitchurch the anticipated archaeological potential of the sub-surface deposits and artefactual remains was not realised and the results of the excavation mean that much of the aims and objectives could not be addressed in full. However some very useful data on the spatial and cultural characteristics of Whitchurch's urban-rural edgelands during the Roman period have been added to the body of knowledge on the history and development of this important north-Midlands town. The location of the site to the north of the contemporary center of Whitchurch made it an excellent candidate for archaeological remains especially with in reference to the Roman and Early Medieval periods, with its proximity to the historical route of Watling street augmenting this potential (Buteux 1996), (Jones and Webster 1969). Unfortunately it appears that all the features highlighted during excavation at Tarporley Road were natural in origin, either cut into the landscape over time by water action or deposited by water inundation events.

Both of the features [1030] and [1004] appeared to have been formed by fluvial action and are apparent palaeochannels. This interpretation is in contrast to the archaeological evaluation (report 0068) which concluded that the evidence constituted of a series of drainage gullies and refuse pits which has now proven to be incorrect. The rationale for natural features as oppose to anthropogenic interpretations is supported by the homogenous fills which contained rounded and sub-rounded pebbles. Furthermore distinct areas of sedimentary clays such as (1013) or (1045) more closely resemble stream deposits associated with inundation events, the heavily undulating bases of features are reminiscent of stream beds and the prevalence of manganese deposits all allude to an environment affected by periods of storm flow and water ingress, presumably from the higher ground to the north. The initial interpretation was reasonable due to the presence of the Roman ceramics in the deposits but ultimately this proved to be incorrect following full excavation for the reasons already mentioned.

The frequency of Roman material culture in the form of residual ceramic finds represents a characteristic addition to the current record of Roman Whitchurch (Mediolanum) the material culture found at the site adjacent to the Tarpoley road is synchronous with elsewhere in the county of Shropshire and correlates well with the putative concepts associated with the peripheral of Roman settlements.

The methods adopted during this excavation can be considered as successful in as much as they enabled the accurate diagnosis of potential sub-surface deposits as non-anthropological and in actual fact relating to natural site formation processes. The evidence recovered was of a consistent standard although limited; it was able to meet some of the expectations of the project aims in terms of returning dating information for example but was not successful in highlighting any surviving archaeological remains on the site. Overall the evidence although marginal, does inform the conditions set out within the project aims with regards to determining the need for further archaeological mitigation – the paucity of evidence suggests that there is no justification for further analysis.

The evidence has little potential in developing new research aims within the remit of this investigation as there is not enough archaeology to adequately inform or contribute to another phase of this project. Potentially there is a contribution to be made to any future project design focused in the local area, in order to locate the possible source of the Roman ceramic. However the methodology was satisfactory to interrogate the site and determine its archaeological value.

The production of both a paper based and digital archaeological archive will be maintained by Aeon Archaeology under the number A0068.2 and provision of this archive will be made available to Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Furthermore a note concerning the findings of the excavation will be made available to *Archaeology West Midlands* in order to inform their annual

fieldwork round up and also to *Britannia* the Journal for the study of the Roman province of Britannia.

The excavation was successfully undertaken by Aeon Archaeology. An appropriate line of communication was maintained between the Client, Nexus Heritage and Shropshire County Council, ensuring that the works advanced in compliance with the WSI. The assessment, analysis and the reporting of results is proportional to the significance of the evidence. It is concluded that this investigation has been completed within expectations and in accordance with CIfA standards and guidance and the relevant condition on the planning permission should be discharged.

SOURCES

Nexus Heritage, 2016. *Land East of Tarporley Road, Whitchurch, Shropshire (15/00942/FUL) Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation*, Document No: 3298.R01a

Nexus Heritage, 2016. *Land East of Tarporley Road, Whitchurch, Shropshire (15/00942/FUL) Desk Based Assessment*, Document No: 3046.R01

OS Maps

OS 1:10 000 Series sheet SH 57 NE, SH 57 SE, SH 57 SW and SH 57 NW.

Published sources

Brown D. H., 2007. *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum

British Geological Survey website. www.bgs.ac.uk

English Heritage, 2001. *Archaeometallurgy*. English Heritage: Centre for Archaeological Guidelines.

English Heritage, 1991. *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*

English Heritage, 2006. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE)*

Peacock, D.P.S & Williams, D.F. 1986. *Amphorae and the Roman Economy*. London: Longman

Richards, J. & Robinson, D., 2000. *Digital Archives from Excavation and Fieldwork: Guide to Good Practice (Second Edition)*. The Archaeology Data Service Guide to Good Practice: Oxbow Books

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014. *Code of Conduct*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014. *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014. *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*

Tomber, R. & Dore, J. 1998. *The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection, A Handbook*. MoLAS Monograph 2

Tyres, P. 1996. *Roman Pottery in Britain*. London: Batsford

