

# FURNACE FARM ST WEONARDS

*An Archaeological Watching Brief  
for  
Mr Bas Godden*

Carried out by

ARCHAEOLOGY ASSOCIATES

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FURNACE FARM  
ST WEONARDS

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## ***Summary***

Archaeology Associates carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief for Mr Bas Godden. This occurred during the ground works for the connection of a new water supply in relation to a development to convert an existing building into two residential dwellings at Furnace Farm, St. Weonards NGR (SO 4921 2341).

The lower part of the site consisted mainly of a blast furnace iron slag dump with a large stone spoil heap on top on part of the area. On the upper part in the vicinity of the existing buildings only the natural was encountered. The only archaeological features recorded were tip lines in part of the slag dump and except for slag the only find recovered was a clay pipe stem dating to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

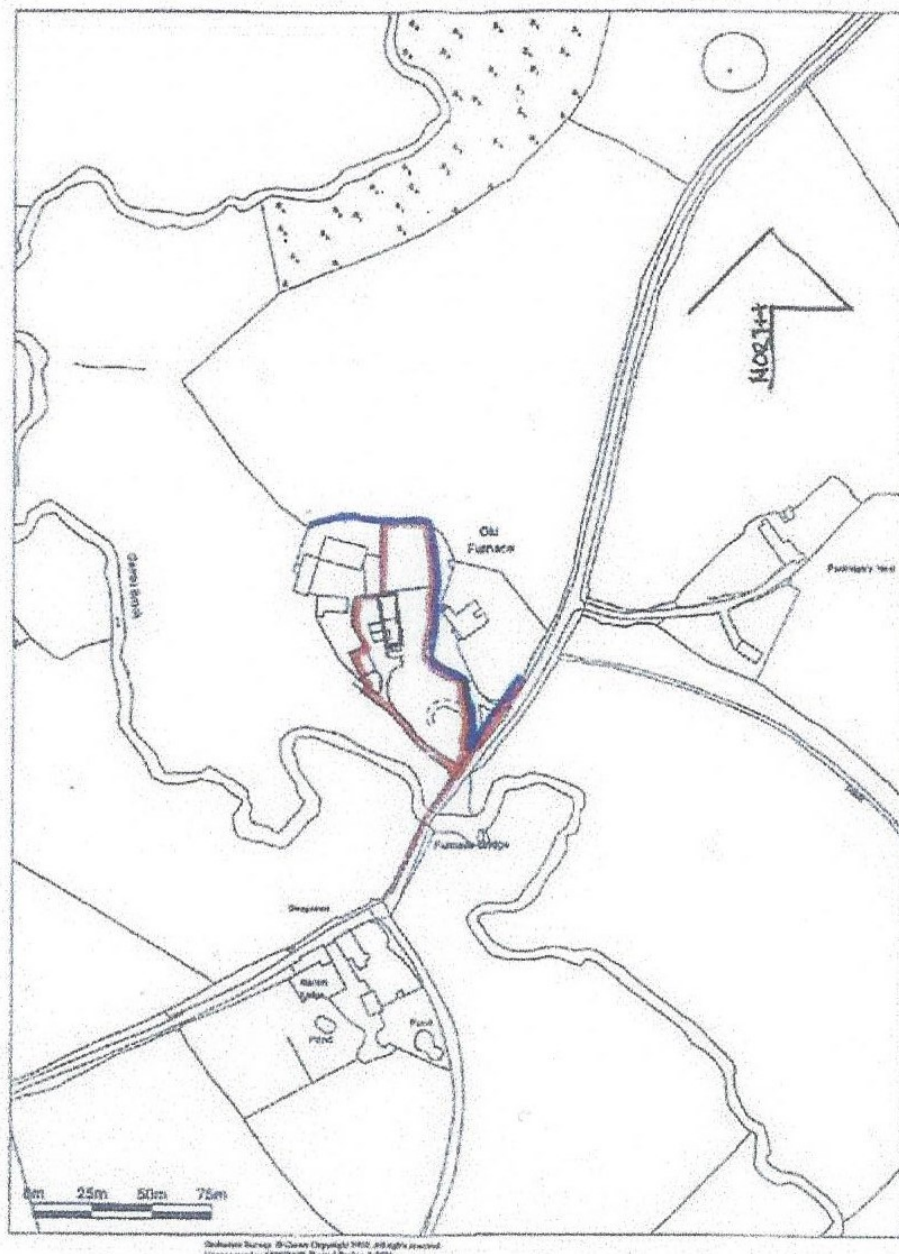


Fig. 1

Furnace Farm, St. Weonards: Site Location

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## ***Introduction***

Archaeology Associates carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief for Mr Bas Godden. This occurred during the ground works for the connection of a new water supply in relation to a development to convert an existing building into two residential dwellings at Furnace Farm, St. Weonards NGR (SO 4921 2341).

The Archaeological Watching Brief was required in order to comply with a condition imposed by Herefordshire Council (Planning Application S102491/F) on the planning consent for the development. The watching brief was required under PPG16 (*Planning Policy Guidance 16*) imposed by the planning authority to safeguard any archaeological resource on the development site.

Archaeology Associates wishes to acknowledge the help given by Mr Bas Godden and the workmen on site. The unit is also grateful for the help received from Julian Cotton, the Archaeological Advisor in Herefordshire Council and Stephen Clarke and Jane Bray of Monmouth Archaeology.

The Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out in March 2017.

## ***Objectives***

The objectives of the Archaeological Watching Brief were to safeguard any archaeological remains and to understand the nature, date and extent of any archaeological features and deposits which existed on the proposed development site. All remains of potential interest were recorded and finds retained for later analysis.

## ***Methodology***

The ground works consisted of the excavation of one main pipe trench diverting into smaller sections as it neared the buildings at the top of the site. The average width was 0.80m and the average depth was also 0.80m from the lowest ground level. At times the trench cut across the edge of an embankment resulting in the depth on that side of up to 2.80 metres.

Stuart Wilson of Archaeology Associates was present on the site to record the archaeology but only after a couple of weeks since the excavation had been carried out. The excavation had been carried out in breach of condition and prior to the units' involvement in the project. Julian Cotton the Archaeological Advisor for Herefordshire Council was aware of the breach and our specification for the archaeological watching brief was accepted with this in mind.

Due to the unstable nature of the slag and stone deposits several trench sides had already caved in prior to arriving on site. The unstable nature of the remaining trench sides limited to some degree the recording of sections while complying with safety protocols. That said drawn and/or photographic records were made of all significant archaeological features visible, finds looked for and samples taken.

At the top of the site some of the trenches had already been filled in to allow for vehicular access that prevented further recording, though only natural was encountered in the trench leading up to those areas.

The watching brief was carried out to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' '*Standards for Archaeological Watching Briefs*' but limited in some respects as outlined in the issues above.

A photographic record was made of the excavations, while plans and sections were drawn and context records were kept in accordance with normal archaeological practice.

The finds were related to the contexts in which they originated and were examined by a recognised specialist.



Fig. 3

Furnace Farm, St. Weonards: Site Plan

Red Line shows trench with location of sections

### ***The Archaeology – Drawings & Photographs***

The ground works for the pipe trench excavated down to an average depth of 0.80 metres below the lowest ground level but at times when cutting across sections of the embankment reached depths of 2.80 metres on the north eastern/eastern side of the trench. Natural (005) was immediately reached at the top of the site in the vicinity of the existing buildings. Below this the excavation only cut down into several different slag deposits or the base of the trench was obscured by scree from collapses of the very unstable sides. At the bottom of the site near the road natural was once again reached but this time mixed up with slag (003).

The only features of note were tip lines within the upper portion of the slag dump. The slag is recorded as being located on this site is the area which it was found in the article “17<sup>th</sup> Century Ironmaking in South West Herefordshire” by John van Laun, 1979.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 marks an area as an “Old Quarry” along the line the trench was dug. The hatching shown is more or less the exact location of the stone spoil heap (004). The stone is clearly visible above ground on the side of the trench, so it is possible the spoil heap was mistaken for evidence of a quarry. Some of the stone looked like it had been worked so was most likely building rubble. Alternatively a quarry may have existed many centuries ago and was subsequently backfilled with vast amounts of slag. The excavation depth and recent collapses prevented further analysis of this possibility.

The slag encountered was all blast furnace slag. Mostly green glassy in nature (006), some had an opaque white finish with green glass elements (008) while a small amount had a vivid blue glassy appearance (010).

The only find was a stem of a clay pipe thought to date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Officially unstratified; it was found in the scree from the white/green slag (008). This ties in well with the known history of when the blast furnace was in operation.

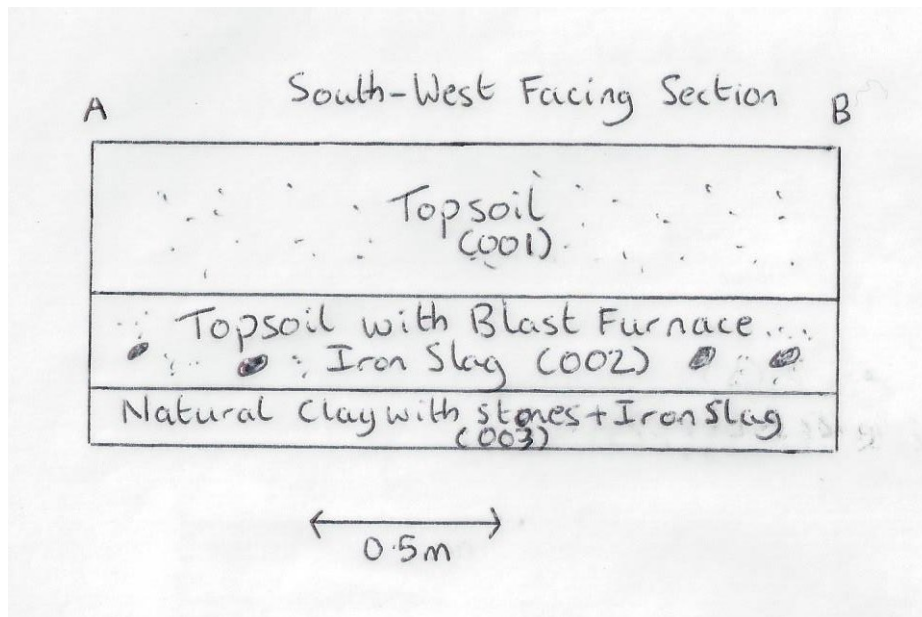


Fig: 4

Section A-B

Furnace Farm, St. Weonards



Photograph of Section A-B

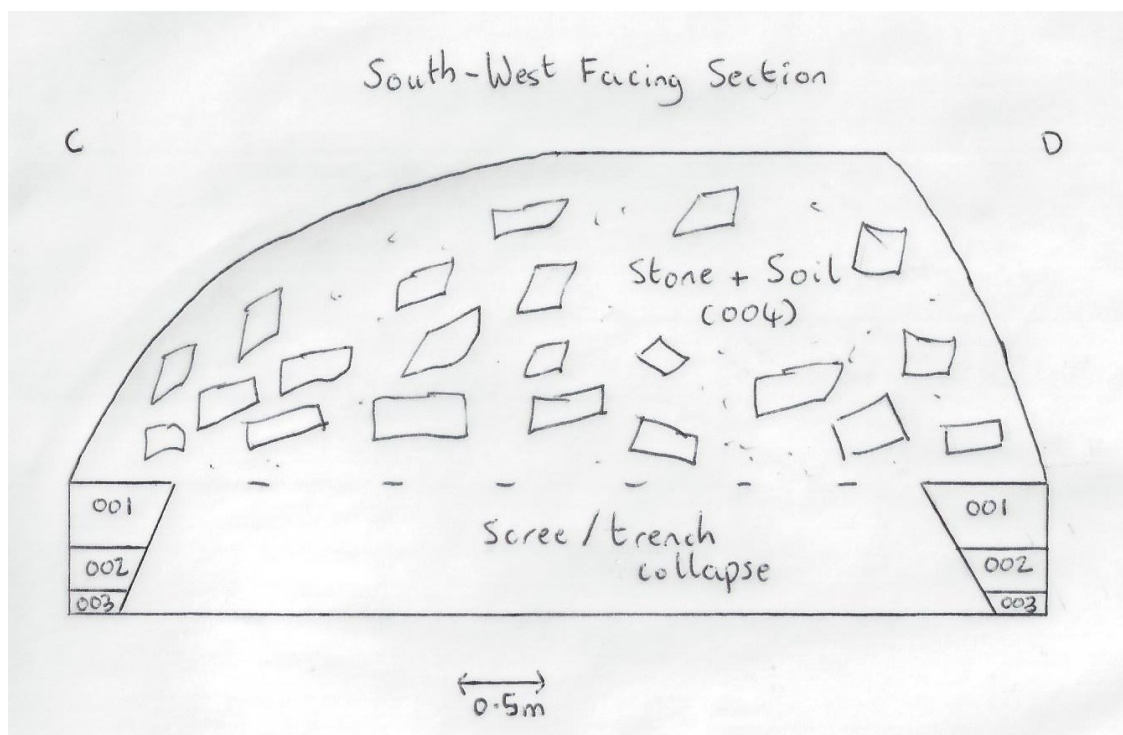


Fig: 5

# Section C-D

Furnace Farm, St. Weonards



Photograph of Section C-D

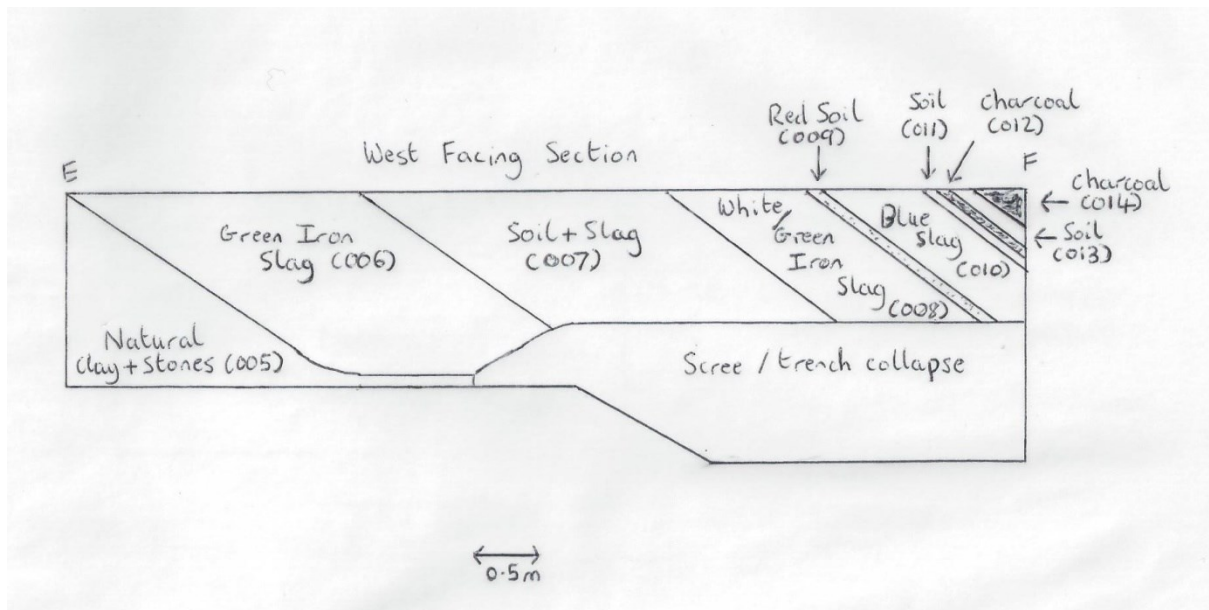


Fig: 6

Section E-F

Furnace Farm, St. Weonards



Photograph 1 of Section E-F

Showing Contexts (005 & 006)



Photograph 2 of Section E-F  
Showing Contexts (005 & 006)



Photograph 3 of Section E-F  
Showing Contexts (008, 009 & 010)



Photograph 3 of Section E-F

Showing Contexts (008 to 014 inclusive)

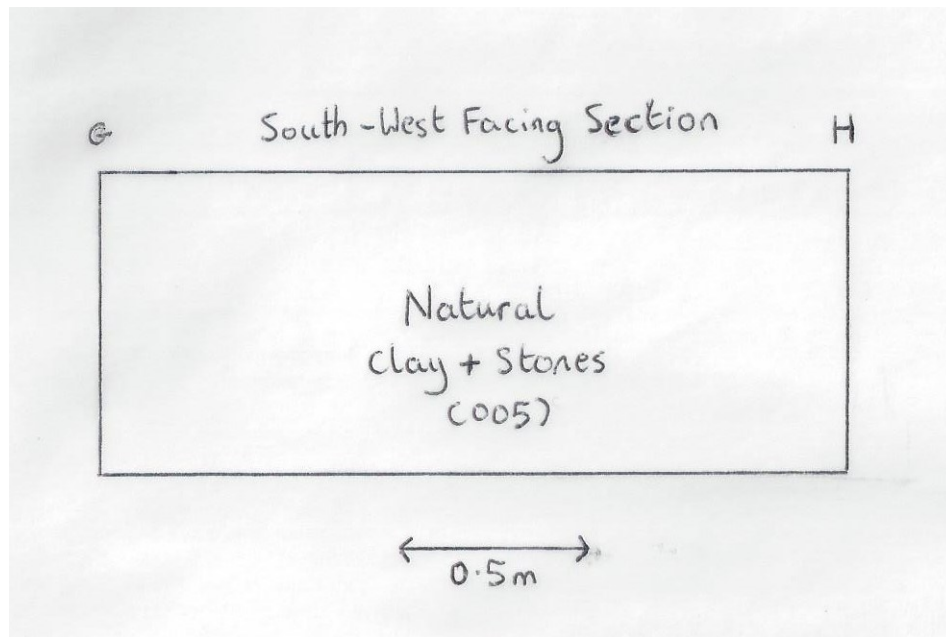


Fig: 7

Section G-H

Furnace Farm, St. Weonards



Photograph of Section G-H

### ***Historical Background***

Old Furnace House is a two storeyed, L-shaped plan building of rubble with a slate roof, which was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to the PastScape website an iron furnace is known to have been in existence here by 1661 and was apparently disused by 1835 as the area is described as “Old Furnace” on Bryant’s map of 1835.

The three storeyed building that makes up part of the planning application to be converted from a barn to residential use has a plaque on it stating “Furnace rebuilt by William Rea 1720”. According to English Heritage Monuments Protection Programme, Industrial Monuments Assessment, Step 3 Reports the plaque appears not to relate to the barns but for the furnace sited there.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 marks an area as an “Old Quarry” below these buildings and within this area slag is recorded to exist according to John van Laun in his article “17<sup>th</sup> Century Ironmaking in South West Herefordshire”, 1979.

### *General Site Photographs*



Photograph near bottom of site and Section A-B looking towards the road



Photograph looking up at spoil heap (004) in the foreground



Photograph looking at Section E-F, Contexts (005,006 & 007) are visible



Photograph looking at Section E-F, Contexts (007 to 014 inclusive) are visible



Photograph looking towards top of site, taken near Section G-H



Photograph looking at a side trench at the top of the site



Photograph showing an in-filled trench at the top of the site (looking down)



Photograph showing another in-filled trench at the top of the site (looking up)

### ***Contexts***

- 001 Topsoil
- 002 Topsoil with Blast Furnace Iron Slag – below (001)
- 003 Natural Clay with Stones and Iron Slag – below (002)
- 004 Stone and Soil Spoil Heap – above (001)
- 005 Natural Clay and Stones – below (006)
- 006 Green Iron Slag Deposit – above (005) and earlier than (007)
- 007 Soil and Slag Deposit – later than (006) and earlier than (008)
- 008 White/Green Slag Deposit – later than (007) and earlier than (009)
- 009 Red Soil Deposit – later than (008) and earlier than (010)
- 010 Blue Slag Deposit – later than (009) and earlier than (011)
- 011 Soil Deposit – later than (010) and earlier than (012)
- 012 Charcoal Deposit – later than (011) and earlier than (013)
- 013 Soil Deposit – later than (012) and earlier than (014)
- 014 Charcoal Deposit – later than (013)

### ***The Finds Summary***

Except for green and some blue glassy blast furnace iron slag the only find found was a stem of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe.

## ***Catalogue of Finds***

The finds are catalogued in the contexts from which they were recovered.

### **Pottery**

#### *Context 008*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Fabric and Form</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Sherds</i>
008	Clay Pipe Stem	-	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> C	1

### **Other Finds**

#### *Context 002*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No.</i>
002	Green Slag	Post-Medieval	Large Quantity

#### *Context 003*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No.</i>
003	Green Slag	Post-Medieval	Large Quantity

#### *Context 006*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No.</i>
006	Green Slag	Post-Medieval	Large Quantity

#### *Context 007*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No.</i>
007	Green Slag	Post-Medieval	Large Quantity

#### *Context 008*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No.</i>
008	White/Green Slag	Post-Medieval	Large Quantity

#### *Context 010*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No.</i>
010	Blue Slag	Post-Medieval	Large Quantity

### **Bones**

(Not identifiable: Nid) - There were no bones

## ***Conclusion***

The only archaeological remains were related in date and type to the known history of the site as an iron blast furnace in post medieval times. Outside of the existing buildings at the top of the site no other archaeological activity was recorded.

## ***The Archive***

The archive will be held in the depository of Archaeology Associates at King's Lodge, Chepstow, until it can be accessioned by an appropriate local museum. The archive consists of a computer file with digital photographs, report and drawings, photographic record sheet, context records and other paperwork. The report will be sent in digital PDF format to the Archaeological Advisor for the Local Planning Authority, the HER and the applicant.

## ***References***

Bryant's Map, 1835

English Heritage Monuments Protection Programme, Industrial Monuments Assessment, Step 3 Reports

Laun, John van article 17<sup>th</sup> Century Ironmaking in South West Herefordshire, 1979.

Ordnance Survey Map, 1888

PastScape website, 1-3-2017

*This report was compiled by*

*Stuart Wilson, B.A*

*of Archaeology Associates*

*March 2017*

FURNACE FARM, OLD FURNACE ROAD,  
ST WEONARDS, HEREFORDSHIRE

THE SPECIFICATION  
FOR THE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

**ARCHAEOLOGY ASSOCIATES**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**SPECIFICATION**

**1. Objectives**

- 1.1 To carry out an archaeological watching brief to the standards laid down in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Guideline for Watching Briefs. The watching brief is required under PPG16 (*Planning Policy Guidance 16*) imposed by the planning authority to safeguard any archaeological resource on the development site.
- 1.2 To ensure that any significant archaeological features that are found on the site, together with their associated deposits, are retained for future generations. This will preferably be achieved by the preservation of the features in-situ or, if this is not possible, by their preservation by record. The preservation of the features are to be carried out to the standards laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- 1.3 It is the aim of the archaeological contractor to ensure that any archaeological deposits which are found during the development are fully recorded, if possible retrieved, and reported to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

**2. Scope of the work**

- 2.1 The archaeology of the development site as a whole will be considered when any archaeology exposed during the building ground works or service excavations is examined. All remains of potential interest will be recorded and finds retained, regardless of date.

**3. Methodology and Contingency Arrangements**

- 3.1 If archaeological features are discovered, work will cease in the immediate area until the archaeologist has been able to fully inspect the feature and determine its importance.
- 3.2 If, in the opinion of the archaeologist, the archaeological feature can be rapidly recorded to the required standard in accordance with the watching brief guidelines this will be done.

- 3.3 If the archaeologist determines that the archaeological feature requires more investigation and recording than he can undertake as part of the watching brief, the LPA and their archaeological advisors will be informed and an on-site meeting arranged as soon as possible. Until the meeting has taken place no work will be undertaken in the vicinity of the archaeological feature.
- 3.4 The meeting will determine what works are required to be undertaken to ensure that the archaeological feature is fully "preserved by record". In most cases a detailed project design for this work will be prepared and submitted to the LPA prior to the commencement of the agreed work.

#### **4. Recording**

- 4.1 Recording of archaeological contexts will be undertaken using a continuous numbered context system on pro-forma recording sheets.
- 4.2 Written and drawn records will be kept; plans (other than site location) will be drawn to a scale of 1:20. The photographic record will consist of pictures captured with a digital camera taken throughout the project.
- 4.3 Drawn records will be related to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.
- 4.4 All artefacts recovered during the project will be retained and be closely related to the contexts from which they originated. All typologically distinct and closely datable finds will be recorded three dimensionally where possible.
- 4.5 Although it is not expected that human remains will be found on the site, any occurrence will be dealt with by initially leaving them in-situ and, if their removal is found to be necessary, this will be carried out to comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice regulations.
- 4.6 Any features containing deposits of environmental or technological significance will be sampled.
- 4.7 Although the requirements for the conservation of artefacts are unpredictable we will undertake to ensure that the minimum standards are achieved as in the UK Institute of Conservation's "Guidelines for the treatment of Finds from Archaeological Sites".

## **5. Post-Excavation**

- 5.1 A catalogue by context of all artefacts recovered will be included with quantification by weight or sherd count where appropriate.
- 5.2 Finds will be treated in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' "*Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*" (2014). Pottery will be analysed to the standards outlined in "Guidelines for the preparation of Pottery Archives" as prepared by the Study Group for Roman Pottery in consultation with the CIfA. All other material will be analysed following the advice given in the "*Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Guidelines for Finds Work*".
- 5.3 A project archive will be prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' "*Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*" (2014).

## **6 The Report**

- 6.1 The report will be fully representative of information gathered from implementation of sections 4, 5 and 6, even if the evidence is negative.
- 6.2 The report will contain at least one location plan showing the site in relation to local topography as well as the trench(es).
- 6.3 The report will include all drawn sections and plans, with reference to those of archaeological significance.
- 6.4 A summary report on the assemblage of artefacts and an assessment of potential for further study will be prepared by suitably qualified individuals and included in the report.
- 6.5 Once completed a copy of the report will be submitted to the LPA for their approval. A further copy will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER). Notes of any confidentiality imposed by the client will be included.
- 6.6 A summary of the work will be submitted to 'Council of British Archaeology' no later than one year after completion of the work.
- 6.7 The contractors will arrange with the appropriate Museum Service an agreement for the deposition of the completed archive. This will be confirmed in the final report.
- 6.8 Although there may be a period of client confidentiality, the site archive and report will be deposited with the Museum Service within 6 months.

## **7 The Contractors**

- 7.1 The work will be undertaken by the contractors Archaeology Associates under the direction of Stuart Wilson who is a qualified archaeologists having obtained a degree from York University and an affiliate to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. The contractors have decades of experience in archaeological excavation and carrying out research archaeology.
- 7.2 Archaeology Associates, as archaeological contractors, will adhere to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's Code of Conduct and the Code of Approved Practice for the regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology.
- 7.3 The personnel involved in the watching brief will have had previous experience of this work and will be supervised by Stuart Wilson.
- 7.4 We hold Public Liability and Employers Liability insurance with Towergate Insurance, certificate no. 00183.
- 7.5 The copyright for this report shall remain with the Archaeology Associates.