



Land adjacent to Steart Village, Steart Point, Somerset, TA5 2PX

Interim Report no. 1

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Figure 1: Site and proposed excavation Area 500

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (the **Contractor**) has been commissioned by May Gurney Ltd (the **Client**) to carry out an archaeological evaluation of land proposed for a habitat creation scheme at Steart Point peninsula, near Bridgwater, Somerset (the **Site** - centred on OS NGR 327000 145000; **Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological works are being carried out as part of a package of measures in order to mitigate anticipated off-site impacts associated with construction work at Bristol Port, and specifically loss of floodplain/ wildlife habitat. At Steart Point, the works will comprise construction of an artificial floodplain creek system, extending over a footprint measuring approximately 24.5ha, and associated balancing ponds totalling an additional 25.5ha.

2 SCOPE OF WORKS

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This Interim Report has been prepared by the Contractor, and sets out the proposed archaeological works. The scope of works under consideration currently comprises further examination of archaeological remains observed in evaluation Trenches 103 and 104 (WA Plot 32), located within the footprint of the south-eastern balancing pond (**Figure 1**).
- 2.1.2 The proposed investigation area (hereafter **Area 500**) extends over approximately 0.32ha.

2.2 Evaluation Results

Trench 103

- 2.2.1 Within Trench 103 was a 0.13m thick deposit (10303), encountered at 0.61m below modern ground surface, and extending 12.60m over the central portion of the trench. The spread was a mid-blue/grey clay with abundant dark orange/brown iron clay mottling, inclusions including very rare sandstone cobbles (<60mm) and small sub-rounded (flattened) possibly calcareous lumps (<8mm) and flecks. Archaeological material recovered includes pottery, fired clay, animal bone and charcoal.



Trench 104

2.2.2 Within Trench 104 was the northern terminal of a north-north-east – south-south-west aligned ditch (**10403**), encountered at 0.75m below modern ground surface. The ditch was at least 1.50m long (though extending to the south beyond the limit of Trench 104), 1.23m wide and 0.44m deep, with moderate convex sides and a flat base. The single fill (10404) was characterised by a mid-greyish-brown clay with occasional manganese and iron staining. It contained a few pieces of bone, but no other diagnostic material.



Artefacts

2.2.3 Deposit 10303 produced a modest range of artefact types. Rapid assessment has determined that the pottery recovered, whilst possibly very late prehistoric, is probably more likely to be Romano-British in date, and was accompanied by a piece of deer metatarsal (probably red deer).

2.2.4 The fill of ditch **10403** (context 10404) contained the fragmented remains of the distal end of a cattle tibia.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1.1 The aim of the project is to examine the archaeological resource within the area of investigation, within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource, to analyse and interpret the results, and disseminate them. All works will be undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation*, the IfA *Code of Conduct*, and other current and relevant best practice and standards and guidance.

3.1.2 To achieve the project aim as outlined, the following generic objectives are defined:

- *To determine the general nature of the remains present.*
- *To examine, record and interpret archaeological deposits, features and structures;*
- *As appropriate, retrieve artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within the investigation area;*
- *To study the records made and objects gathered during fieldwork; and*
- *To publish the results of that study in detail.*

4 METHODOLOGIES

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Setting-out, mechanical excavation and reinstatement, recording, artefact and sample recovery and examination of human remains will all proceed in accordance with the

established methodologies as covered in the original Trial Trench Evaluation *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI; WA 2012).

4.2 Excavation

- 4.2.1 All archaeological remains discovered will be hand-cleaned where necessary, and then photographed and planned using both GPS survey equipment and hand-drawn plans. A representative section for the investigation area will also be photographed and drawn, demonstrating the typical stratigraphic sequence and depth, and highlighting significant atypical variations to this sequence.
- 4.2.2 A sufficient sample will be excavated from archaeological features (e.g. ditches, pits, post-holes etc.) to fulfil the aims and objectives of the works. Excavation of cut features will therefore include examination of feature intersections to establish relative chronologies, feature terminals to ascertain presence/absence of terminal features and/or deposits, and where feasible at least one 'clean' section away from potential sources of contamination to obtain secure dating evidence and environmental samples. This will aim to achieve a minimum 10% by length excavation of 'linear' features (i.e. ditches, gullies, beam slots etc.).
- 4.2.3 Discrete features (pits, post-holes etc.) will in general be 50% excavated. Where considerable numbers of closely-spaced morphologically-similar discrete features are encountered, it may be considered appropriate, in consultation with the Curator, to excavate a representative sample of such features rather than all present.
- 4.2.4 The spread previously revealed in Trench 103, and if encountered other lithic or artefact concentrations, will be examined through a systematic hand-excavated sample, sufficient to determine the date, composition and character of the concentration. Although dependent on the precise nature of the concentration, hand-excavation will generally comprise a gridded regular array of 1m square and 0.1m thick collection units (spits), aligned on the OS national grid. As a minimum, this work will aim to examine 10% by surface area of the deposit(s) under examination.
- 4.2.5 Although unlikely, if areas of extensive archaeological stratification are encountered, these will not be machine-excavated without first ascertaining their precise nature, date and composition. Such investigative work may include hand-dug discrete test-pits through the deposit(s), hand-augering or excavation of archaeological features cutting into such deposits. This investigative work will inform any decisions on subsequent additional detailed excavation, to be agreed with the Client and Curator prior to instigation.

4.3 Monitoring

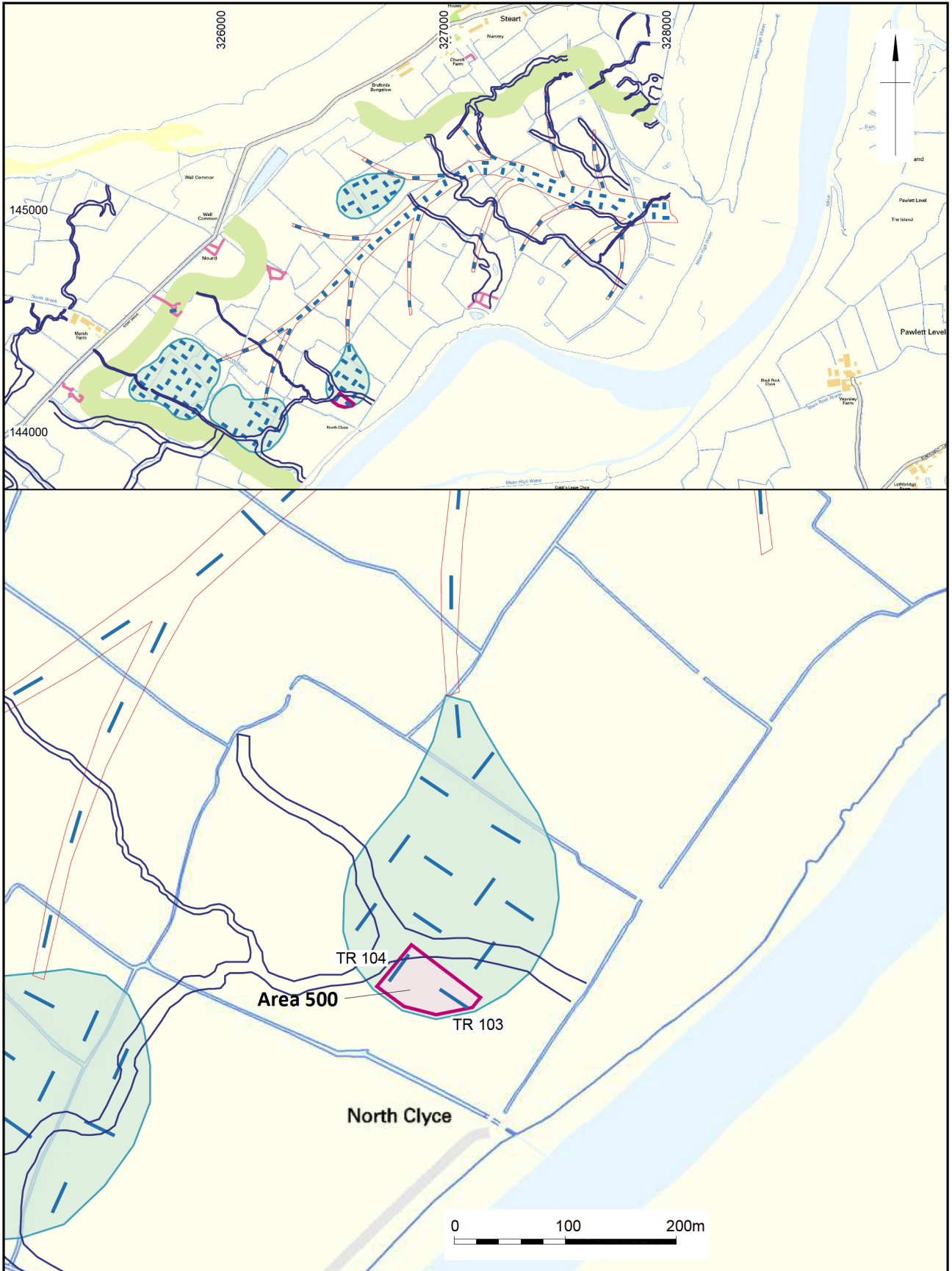
- 4.3.1 The Client and Curator, and/or their appointed representatives, will have unrestricted access to the site, site records or any other information as required.

5 POST-FIELDWORK

- 5.1.1 All finds and environmental samples will be processed according to procedures set out in the original evaluation WSI (WA 2012). A report on the results of this investigation will be incorporated into the overall assessment reporting for the trial trench evaluation.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Wessex Archaeology [WA], 2012, *Land adjacent to Steart Village, Steart Point, Somerset, TA5 2PX: Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological trial trench evaluation*, unpublished client report no. 77221.05



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Site and proposed excavation Area 500

Figure 1