35 WEST STREET, WILTON, WILTSHIRE

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Planning background	1
	1.2 Site location, topography and geology	2
	1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background	
2	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	
	2.2 Site Specific Aims	4
3	FIELDWORK STRATEGY	5
4	EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY	5
	4.1 Health and Safety	5
	4.2 Monitoring	
	4.3 Fieldwork	
	4.4 Service Location	6
	4.5 Excavation	
	4.6 Depth of Trench	
5	RECORDING	
6	FINDS STRATEGY	
	6.1 Introduction	
	6.2 Finds	
	Human Remains	
	Treasure	8
7	ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING STRATEGY	
8	POST-EXCAVATION AND REPORTING	
9	PUBLICATION OF RESULTS	
10	ARCHIVE	
11	PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING	
12	PROGRAMME	
13	QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES	
14	BIBLIOGRAPHY	

FIGURES

Figure 1 Site location showing evaluation test pits, proposed development and excavation trench.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

- 1.1.1 This document has been prepared by Wessex Archaeology, who have been commissioned by Archstone Lifestyle Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological excavation in advance of the redevelopment of land to the rear of 35 West Street, Wilton, Wiltshire (NGR) 409400 131320 (hereafter the Site).
- 1.1.2 It is anticipated that planning permission will soon be granted for the construction of a series of domestic dwellings and that this document will form the basis of a programme of archaeological mitigation works that will be required by Wiltshire County Council.
- 1.1.3 An archaeological evaluation comprising of the excavation of 6 test pits was undertaken on the Site by Wessex Archaeology in January 2006 (Wessex Archaeology, 2006) in order to allow an assessment of the archaeological potential of the Site (in line with Planning Policy Guidance 16: archaeology and planning (November 1990) and to help inform any subsequent decisions with regard to any further mitigation that might be required.
- 1.1.4 The evaluation revealed the presence of medieval archaeological remains, sealed beneath approximately 1m of post-medieval / modern deposits. Two areas containing possible structures and occupation evidence were highlighted, in Test pits 1 and 4, in the north-east and central parts of the Site. Due to the limited areas exposed within the test pits it is difficult to positively determine the nature of the archaeological remains uncovered. However, a hearth or kiln, crucible fragments, metalworking debris and relatively large quantities of fired clay indicate copper alloy working and iron smithing of probable 13th century date. This is likely to represent craft / industrial activity within the backyard areas of one or more properties fronting West Street.
- 1.1.5 Test Pit 1 lies beneath an area proposed for car parking and so archaeological deposits in this area will be effectively preserved *in situ*. However a new building is proposed in location of Test Pit 4 (**Figure 1**) and therefore it has been agreed with Helena Cave-Penney of Wiltshire County Council's Libraries and Heritage Service (WCCLHS) that an archaeological excavation of all archaeological deposits within the footprint of this new building will be required.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site covers an area of approximately 3000m² and comprises a sub-rectangular shaped plot located to the rear of Salisbury Demolition, an operating architectural salvage yard situated towards the north-west end of West Street (**Fig. 1**). The Site is bounded to the north and west by houses and gardens, to the east by West Street, and to the south by St Mary and St Nicholas's Church and churchyard. The Site's centre is located at National Grid Reference (NGR) 409400 131320. The current land use is as storage for architectural salvage materials, and access to the Site is from West Street.
- 1.2.2 The Site lies at approximately 55m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). Early maps indicate a small stream, one of several in the area, flowing northwest to south east, just beyond the western boundary of the Site.
- 1.2.3 The underlying geology is a spur of Valley Gravel overlying solid geology consisting of Cretaceous Upper Chalk (Ordnance Survey 1976).

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological evidence from Wilton has recently been collated and synthesised as part of the extensive survey of Wiltshire's towns (Wiltshire County Council 2002). The existence of prehistoric and Romano-British activity on the gravel island which Wilton occupies has been postulated, but little archaeological evidence has so far been uncovered (Andrews et al. 2000, 200). Haslam (1976) suggests that there may have been an early river crossing utilising the gravel island, but implies that a significant Romano-British settlement or presence is unlikely as the main road between Dorchester and Old Sarum crosses the Nadder approximately two kilometres east of Wilton.
- 1.3.2 The Saxon settlement of Wilton probably originated in the 5th or 6th century. The Saxons are known to have favoured this type of site, particularly for royal residences. The first documentary reference to Wilton dates to 838AD, in the form of a concordat between the King of Wessex and the Archbishop of Canterbury written at Kingston upon Thames and confirmed at Wilton (Haslam 1976). The confirmation of the document at Wilton shows the presence of the King of Wessex at Wilton, emphasising the importance of this settlement.
- 1.3.3 The status of Wilton as a royal seat during the 9th century is further indicated by the charter 854AD in which King Ethelwulf tithed his lands (Haslam 1976). This document was dated at Wilton, although the council was held at Winchester. This shows that Wilton remained important even though Winchester was becoming predominant as the administrative centre of Wessex. By the time of Alfred's reign in the later 9th century the importance of Wilton as a royal seat was on the wane and Winchester was the major town of the Kingdom.

- 1.3.4 During the 9th and 10th centuries Wilton was a stronghold comprising part of a chain of defensive centres or burhs created by Alfred and listed in the Burghal Hidage a document drawn up in the 10th century by one of Alfred's immediate successors. West Street is likely to have originated as one of the principal streets within the burh. Wilton was also the principal mint for the shire in this period. After 1003, when the town was sacked by the Danes, the moneyers appear to have preferred the more defensible site at Old Sarum, although Wilton was not abandoned as a mint until 1250 (VCH 1962).
- 1.3.5 The Domesday survey records that the Borough of Wilton paid a substantial custom of £50. Eighteen burgesses under seven manors are recorded, paying 14s, 15d. In addition, two other manors held five houses in Wilton, paying 4s, 10d. The suburb of Ditchampton to the north-west (just beyond the Site) was held by the Bishop of Bayeux; it had a small agricultural assessment, but contained four mills. At the end of the 11th century the town possessed eight parish churches with an additional four in the suburbs, suggesting a considerable population. The presence in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries of a large Jewish community suggests both economic prosperity and a significant urban population with a cosmopolitan attitude (VCH 1962).
- 1.3.6 Wilton suffered a decline in importance in the 13th and 14th centuries, caused primarily by the establishment of the planned town of New Sarum (Salisbury) in 1219 and by the building of the Harnham bridge in 1244 (Haslam 1976, 51), and has seen limited development since. This has led to both its archaeological obscurity and archaeological potential. Relatively few disturbances have damaged the archaeological deposits within the town in the intervening centuries, but for the same reason recent development-led glimpses of the town's archaeology have been few.
- 1.3.7 Despite the significance of the town in the Late Saxon period, archaeological evidence is rare. However, evaluation of the St John's Hospital site (immediately to the north of the Site under consideration here) in the 1970s (Anon. 1971; Anon. 1972) and by Wessex Archaeology in 1993 (WA 1993), followed by an excavation and watching brief in 1996 and 1997 (WA 1996; WA 1997; Andrews et al. 2000), revealed a well-preserved and complex sequence through the Late Saxon burh defences comprising a ditch and bank. The Late Saxon defences may have been modified during the 13th century, but there were very few other features of medieval or post-medieval date (Andrews et al. 2000, 189).
- 1.3.8 The evaluation undertaken on the Site by Wessex Archaeology in January 2006 has indicated the presence of well-preserved medieval archaeological remains, sealed beneath approximately 1m of post-medieval / modern deposits. No Late Saxon deposits or finds were identified, although the Site lies within the area enclosed by the burh defences.
- 1.3.9 The absence of Late Saxon remains may be explained by the small size of the test pits, but possibly also by the Site lying in a relatively peripheral location, close to the burh defences which ran south-west to north-east less

than 50m to the north. The Site also lay almost 50m from West Street, well to the rear of any Late Saxon structures which may occupied the street frontage.

- A few sherds of pottery assigned an 11th / 12th century date, all from Test 1.3.10 Pit 1 but probably residual, may indicate early medieval activity in the vicinity, perhaps along West Street. Two areas containing possible medieval structures and occupation evidence were highlighted in Test Pits 1 and 4, in the north-east and central parts of the Site. Due to the limited areas exposed within the test pits it is difficult to positively determine the nature, density, extent and layout of the archaeological remains uncovered. However, a hearth or kiln, crucible fragments, metalworking debris and relatively large quantities of fired clay indicate copper alloy working and iron smithing of probable 13th century date. This is likely to represent craft / industrial activity within the backyard areas of one or more properties fronting West Street. Anecdotal evidence suggests a forge occupied part of the Site in the 17th century, and it is just possible that the association with metalworking spanned several hundred years. The existing building in the southernmost property on the street frontage, formerly an inn, is of apparent 18th or possibly 17th date.
- 1.3.11 Test Pits 3 and 5 revealed the approximate extent of a former stream channel thought to have run through the rear of the Site (see Fig. 1), probably infilled (and ? culverted) in the Post-medieval and modern periods. No Post-medieval structures or features were identified, perhaps again reflecting the limited extent of the test pits, but possibly also their distance from West Street. There is likely to have been considerable contraction of the town from its Anglo-Saxon and medieval heyday, a contraction also indicated by the paucity of later medieval and Post-medieval features at, for example, St John's Hospital (Andrews et al. 2000, 189) immediately to the north of the Site.
- 1.3.12 Stream channel infill deposits of probably Post-medieval / modern date were present over most of the western half of the Site and this area is likely to be of relatively limited archaeological interest.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 The aims of the project are to record and investigate to the standards set out below, all archaeological features uncovered and to assess the extent of the medieval (or earlier) activity on the development site.

2.2 Site Specific Aims

- To identify the nature and function of the possible structures on the site.
- To define the construction date of the structures on the site.

- To define the disuse/destruction date of the structures on the site.
- To define the date and extent of terracing activity on the site

3 FIELDWORK STRATEGY

3.1.1 It is proposed to excavate a single trench measuring 20m by 10m in plan to a depth of *c*. 1.2m in the location indicated in Figure 1.

4 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

4.1 Health and Safety

- 4.1.1 Health and Safety considerations will be of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices will override archaeological considerations at all times.
- 4.1.2 All work will be carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.
- 4.1.3 Wessex Archaeology will prepare a Risk Assessment before the commencement of any fieldwork. The Risk Assessment will have been read and understood by all staff attending the Site before any groundworks commence.

4.2 Monitoring

- 4.2.1 Wiltshire County Council's Archaeological Officer will be notified in advance of the commencement of fieldwork and will be informed at this time of Wessex Archaeology's Key Staff.
- 4.2.2 An appropriate programme of monitoring visits by Wiltshire County Council's Archaeological Officer and the Client will be agreed in advance of the commencement of fieldwork.

4.3 Fieldwork

- 4.3.1 All archaeological fieldwork will be conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (as amended 1999), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 4.3.2 Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, arrangements will be made with Wiltshire Museum Service for deposition of the archive and finds, subject

to agreement with the landowner. A museum Accession Number will also be sought at this time.

4.4 Service Location

- 4.4.1 Before any fieldwork begins, statutory authorities will be consulted, where this has not already been done, for information regarding the presence of any below/above ground services. The Site will be walked over and inspected to visually identify, where possible, the location of above and below ground services.
- 4.4.2 All excavation areas will be scanned before and during excavation with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) to verify the absence of any live underground services. Survey
- 4.4.3 The excavation area (**Figure 1**) will be surveyed using a Total Station (TST) and tied in to the Ordnance Survey. Individual features and deposits will be recorded using the same system.

4.5 Excavation

- 4.5.1 All archaeological work will be conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (as amended 1999), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 4.5.2 The area illustrated in Figure 1 will be excavated under archaeological conditions. This will involve the removal of the topsoil by use of a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket under the constant supervision of a qualified archaeologist.
- 4.5.3 Machine excavation will continue down to the first recognisable archaeological horizon, or to the depth required by the development, whichever is reached first.
- 4.5.4 When the appropriate depth is achieved machining will cease. The area will then be hand cleaned as appropriate in order to identify any features or deposits of archaeological significance.
- 4.5.5 Where archaeological features are identified they will be excavated using the following principles
- A minimum 50% sample of all non-linear discrete features will be excavated. All linear feature intersections, overlaps and terminals will be fully excavated.
- A minimum 20% sample of all linear features will be excavated. All linear feature intersections, overlaps and terminals will be fully excavated.
- Archaeological deposits of moderate value will be hand excavated in order to elucidate their character, origin and date. Subsequently these can be removed by machine.

- Archaeological deposits of high value should be subject to 100% hand excavation.
- All features of high archaeological value should be subject to 100% excavation. Decisions regarding the relative value of archaeological features/deposits will be made in consultation with the County Archaeological Service.

4.6 Depth of Trench

4.6.1 The general depth of the excavation area is not expected to exceed 1.2m, to comply with Health and Safety regulations. However, should excavation beyond this depth prove unavoidable, trench sides will be stepped or battered as appropriate.

5 RECORDING

- 5.1.1 All exposed archaeological deposits will be recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.
- 5.1.2 A complete drawn record of excavated archaeological features and deposits will be compiled. This will include both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels will be calculated and plans/sections will be annotated with OD heights.
- 5.1.3 A full photographic record will be maintained using both colour transparencies and black and white negatives (on 35 mm film). Digital photography will be employed as appropriate. The photographic record will illustrate both the detail and the general context of the principal features, finds excavated, and the site as a whole.

6 FINDS STRATEGY

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Finds will be treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (as amended 1994), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 6.1.2 The principle aim of finds assessment will be the collection of data to meet the excavation objectives. The strategy used will be to determine the general potential of the Site and experience gained from work on other similar sites in the vicinity will be drawn upon.

6.2 Finds

- 6.2.1 All artefacts will be retained from excavated contexts, except features or deposits of undoubtedly modern date. In these circumstances sufficient artefacts will only be retained to elucidate the date and function of the feature or deposit. The excavated spoil will be examined for artefacts and these will be retained and recorded. Material of undoubtedly modern date from the spoil heaps will be noted but not retained.
- 6.2.2 All artefacts will, as a minimum, be washed, marked, counted, weighed and identified. The metalwork will be X-rayed and stored in a stable condition along with other fragile and delicate material. The X-raying of objects and other conservation needs will be undertaken by the staff of Wiltshire Museums and Library Service Conservation Consortium, Salisbury.
- 6.2.3 A suitable metal detector may be used to enhance artefact recovery.

Human Remains

- 6.2.4 In the event of discovery of any human remains, they will initially be left *in situ*. Following discussions with the Coroner and Wiltshire County Council's Archaeological Officer, the need for and appropriateness of their excavation/removal will be determined. Where deemed appropriate they will be fully recorded, excavated and removed from the site subject to compliance with the relevant Home Office Licence which will be obtained by Wessex Archaeology.
- 6.2.5 Should human remains be excavated, all excavation and post-excavation will be in accordance with the standards set out in IFA Technical Paper 13 Excavation and post-excavation treatment of cremated and inhumed remains. Appropriate specialist guidance/site visits will be undertaken by Jackie McKinley of Wessex Archaeology. The final placing of human remains following analysis will be subject to the requirements of the Home Office Licence.

Treasure

6.2.6 In the event of discovery of artefacts covered or potentially covered by The Treasure Act, their excavation and removal will be undertaken following notification of the Coroner and Wiltshire County Council's Archaeological Officer.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING STRATEGY

7.1.1 The strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits and structures will be developed in consultation with Wessex Archaeology's Environmental Manager Dr. Mike Allen. The basis of agreed strategies will be the 'Working Papers of the Association of Environmental archaeology and archaeological evaluations (1995)'.

- 7.1.2 Bulk environmental soil samples of a minimum of 10 litres would normally be taken from sealed archaeological features or deposits for plant macrofossils, small animal bones and small artefacts. Where appropriate, column samples for molluscan remains would also be taken.
- 7.1.3 Any bulk environmental soil samples which are taken will be processed by flotation and scanned to assess the environmental potential of deposits, but will not be fully analysed. The residues and sieved fractions will be recorded and retained with the project archive.
- 7.1.4 Where appropriate, a specialist geo-archaeologist will visit the Site to comment on and record significant deposit sequences, to inform an understanding of site formation processes. Detailed soil micromorphological analysis will not however be undertaken at this stage.
- 7.1.5 A statement on the environmental potential of excavated deposits will be included in the assessment report. It is not proposed to undertake full analysis of environmental samples at this stage.

8 POST-EXCAVATION AND REPORTING

- 8.1.1 Within 3 months of the completion of all archaeological fieldwork, an archaeological assessment report will be produced.
- 8.1.2 Once approved, bound copies will be forwarded to the Client and Wiltshire County Council's Archaeological Officer.
- 8.1.3 This document will be in accordance with the standards set out in Appendices 4 and 5 of the document *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991). The assessment report will present detailed proposals for further analysis, report production, publication and archiving, along with the strategies, estimated resources, and programme necessary to carry out such work.
- 8.1.4 The assessment report will contain, as a minimum:
 - a site location plan at an appropriate scale
 - details of the archaeological organisation and personnel involved
 - the date of works
 - a site-centred grid reference
 - a concise non-technical summary of the results
 - specialist assessment reports
 - a summary of the archive contents
 - a copy of this Project Design as an appendix
 - survey and technical illustrations as appropriate

- 8.1.5 An assessment of the potential of the archive (including the evaluation archive) for further analysis will be undertaken. The assessment phase may include the following elements:
 - The conservation of appropriate materials, including the X-raying of metalwork
 - The spot-dating of all pottery from excavated contexts. This will be corroborated by scanning of other categories of material
 - The preparation of site matrices with supporting lists of contexts by type (ditch fill, pit fill etc.), by spot-dated phase (Saxon, Medieval, Post-medieval etc.) and by structural grouping (e.g. contexts by structure, by ditch etc.) supported by appropriate scaled plans
 - An assessment statement will be prepared for each category of material, including reference to quantity, provenance, range and variety, condition and existence of other primary sources
 - The bulk soil samples will be taken for artefactual, economic, environmental and dating purposes. The samples will be assessed and a statement made on charred food and plant remains, waterlogged remains and mollusca, including references as for the categories of finds material. An assessment of monoliths for pollen and foraminfera will be undertaken if appropriate
 - A statement of potential for each material category and for the data set as a whole will be prepared, including specific questions that can be answered and the potential value of the data to local, regional and national investigation priorities.

9 PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

9.1.1 The results of the fieldwork will be published, at least to summary level within one year of completion of fieldwork. In an appropriate local or national journal.

10 ARCHIVE

10.1.1 The completed project archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage (UKIC 1990)*. The archive from the project, including the finds and environmental samples and subject to the wishes of the landowner, and the requirement for any further stages of fieldwork in mitigation, will be deposited with Wiltshire Museums Service, unless Wessex Archaeology receives instruction to do otherwise.

11 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

- 11.1.1 The fieldwork will be directed and supervised by a Project Officer from Wessex Archaeology's core staff, who will be on site at all times. The overall responsibility for the conduct and management of the project will be held by the Project Manager, who will visit the Site as appropriate to monitor progress and to ensure that the scope of works is adhered to. The appointed Project Manager and Project Officer will be involved in all phases of the evaluation through to its completion.
- 11.1.2 The analysis of the finds and environmental data will be undertaken by Wessex Archaeology core staff or external specialists, using Wessex Archaeology's standard *pro forma* recording system.

12 PROGRAMME

- 12.1.1 Fieldwork may commence within 10 working days of approval of this document.
- 12.1.2 It is anticipated that fieldwork will be undertaken by a team of three archaeologists over a period of three working weeks.

13 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

- 13.1.1 Wessex Archaeology operates a computer-assisted project management system. Projects are undertaken under the direction of Project Managers who are responsible for the successful completion of all aspects of the project. Their performance is monitored by the Operations Director and Head of General Development. The Reports Manager ensures the consistency and academic quality of the published output. The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of quality standards for all the companies work.
- 13.1.2 All work is monitored and checked whilst in progress on a regular basis, and all reports and other documents are checked by the Operations Director and Head of General Development before being issued. A series of guideline documents or manuals form the basis for all work. Additional assistance and advice is provided by the Technical Support Managers (for Computing, Environment, Finds and Publication).
- 13.1.3 Although Wessex Archaeology is not currently certificated as a result of assessment against ISO9000, the practice nevertheless holds approved status from a number of clients as a result of assessment of the systems and past experience, including government departments and agencies, and multi-national companies.

- 13.1.4 Wessex Archaeology Limited is registered as an archaeological organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists (first registered in 1997).
- 13.1.5 Wessex Archaeology fully endorses the *Code of Conduct*, the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*, and the Standards and Guidance documents of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. All staff are employed in line with the Institute's Codes and will usually be members of the Institute.
- 13.1.6 The Trust for Wessex Archaeology Ltd is enrolled as an Approved Environmental Body (EB) by ENTRUST (The Environmental Trust Scheme Regulatory Body Ltd).

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