

SASL12



## SALISBURY ROAD IN STEEPLE LANGFORD, WILTSHIRE

*Archaeological Evaluation*

*for Synergy Housing*

*PE/2001/0510*

*January 2012*

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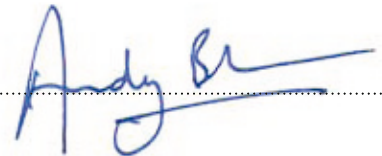
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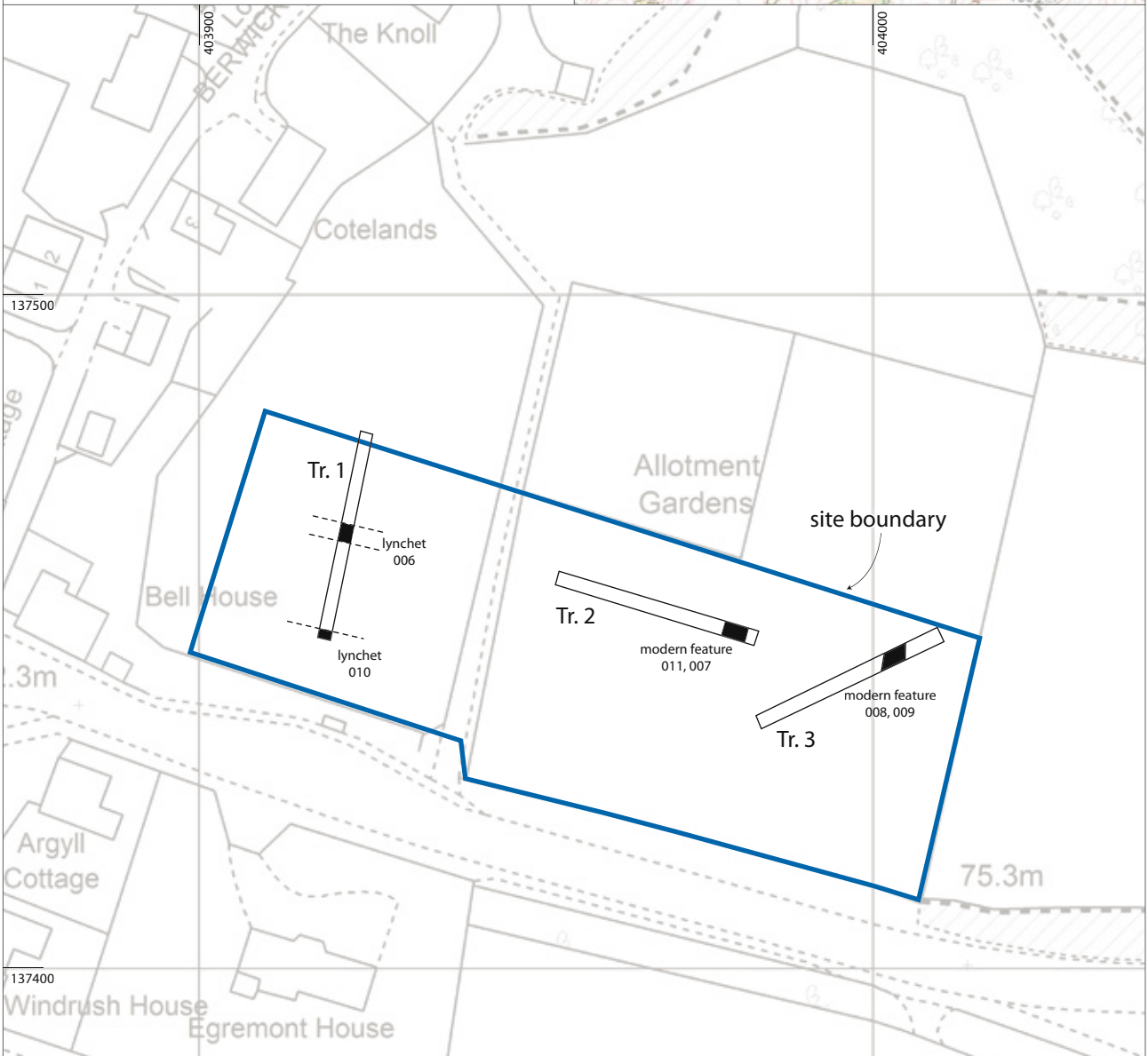
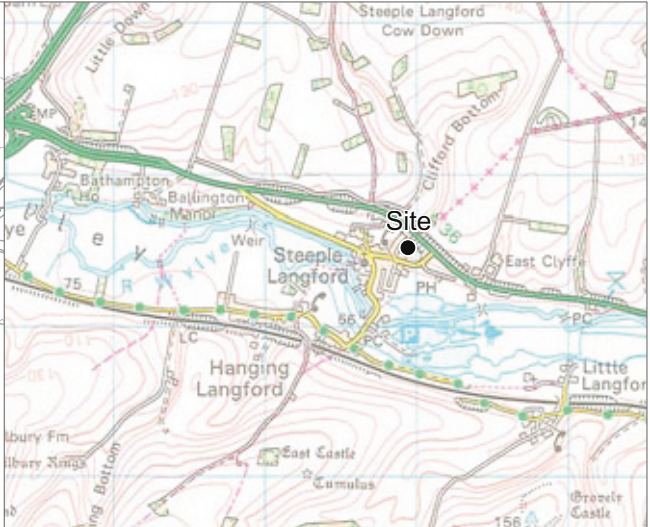
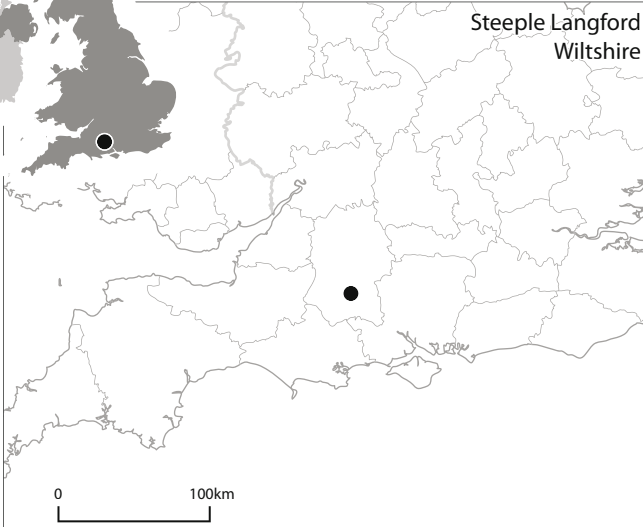
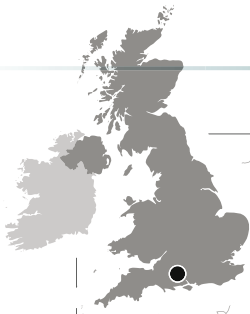
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Scale 1:1,000 @ A4



0 50m

Illus 1  
Site location

# SALISBURY ROAD IN STEEPLE LANGFORD, WILTSHIRE

## Archaeological Evaluation

*Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Sherlock Boswell Architecture to carry out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Salisbury Road in Steeple Langford, Wiltshire. The work was undertaken in advance of the submission of a planning application to develop the site (ref; PE/2001/0510).*

*Evidence of activity dating back to the Neolithic period is present in the nearby area taking the form of bowl and round barrows. Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman finds have also been found close to the village.*

*Three trenches were excavated within the proposed development area. Lynchets of unknown date were identified in the field nearest to the village by the evaluation and finds from the same area included post medieval glazed pottery.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Salisbury Road in Steeple Langford, Wiltshire NGR SU 03965 37444. A planning application to develop the site (ref; PE/2001/0510) was being prepared by Synergy Housing via their agent Sherlock Boswell Architecture. The proposed development comprises the building of eight semi detached houses and two flats on the site. Due to the potential presence of archaeological remains, Wiltshire Council had requested further information on the archaeological potential of the site under Policy H6 of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5). The policy (HE6.1) explains 'Where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation'. A Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Clare King, the Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire determined that a field evaluation amounting to 4% (173m<sup>2</sup>) of the total impact area (4320m<sup>2</sup>) was appropriate in this instance to ascertain the existence, location and level of survival of any archaeological features which may have been present within the site.

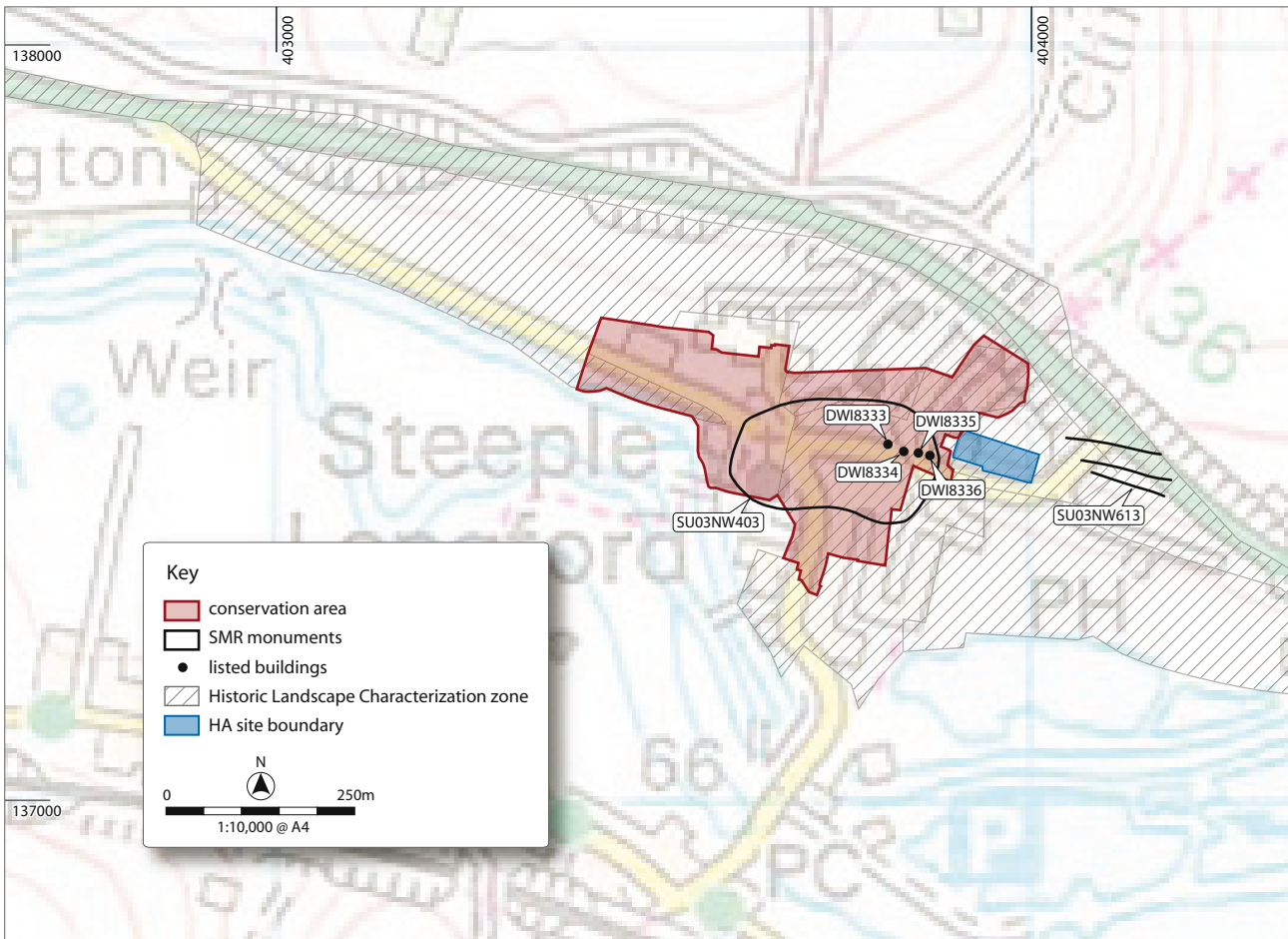
### 2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1

The site is located on the eastern edge of the village of Steeple Langford (SMR Number-SU03NW403) to the south of the A36 and on the north side of Salisbury Road between Warminster and Salisbury. The village itself dates from at least the late Saxon period as demonstrated by the pre-conquest masonry in the church. The church also contains a Norman font. The village was mentioned in Domesday and has been variously known through time as 'Great Langford' 'Langford Magna' and 'The Langfords', the name Langford may refer to a ford on the River Wylve while Steeple (also formerly 'Stapel', 'Stapol' or 'Steppul') may refer either to a grant for a market or to the ford being protected by stakes. Around the eastern edge of the village evidence of Medieval field systems are preserved as lynchets, strips of land farmed by individual farmers. Lynchets are recorded on the SMR (SU03NW613) in a field to the east of the proposed development area.

Fern Cottage lies immediately adjacent to the west of the proposed development area, and is a listed building (DWI8336). Other listed buildings in the nearby area include 'Large Cottage' (DWI8335), 'Swaynes with attached stable block' (DWI8333) and an un-named building (DWI8334).

The population of the village peaked in 1861 at 628, the 1801 census recorded the number at 501, which is close to the number recorded in 2001.



2

Illus 2

*HER/SMR locations adjacent to the site*

### 3. SITE LOCATION

The site is located on the south facing slope of a hill (at approximately 79m above Ordnance Datum) that slopes down towards Salisbury Road to the south at between 72m and 75.5m above Ordnance Datum. The soft geology of the site comprises colluvium overlying chalk and flint. Ground cover in the area consisted of pasture and allotments. The archaeological evaluation was carried out on the 17th and 18th of January 2012.

### 4. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the evaluation was to determine whether any archaeological remains were present within the area of the proposed development, characterize them by date, extent, preservation and significance, produce a report and deposit the archive with a local repository.

### 5. METHOD

An HER search was undertaken to gather archaeological and historical information relevant to the site.

The archaeological field evaluation comprised a total of 176m<sup>2</sup> of trenching. Three trenches were excavated, each measuring 30m by 2m in plan. The northern end (2m) of Trench 1 fell outside the development proposal area, but the required 4% sample of the proposed development area was achieved. The trenches were positioned at intervals across the site to achieve maximum coverage of the proposed development area. Excavation was carried out by a mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-bladed bucket, under direct archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation ceased at the first significant archaeological horizon or undisturbed natural deposits, whichever was reached first. Excavation and recording then proceeded by hand. Excavation was sufficient to characterize deposits and features.

#### 5.1 RECORDING

All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance. All contexts were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards. A 'Harris' matrix was compiled. 35mm colour transparencies and black-and-white prints were taken; a graduated metric scale was clearly visible. Digital photographs on a 7.2mp camera

were taken for illustrative purposes but will not form part of the site archive.

Plans of the evaluation trenches were drawn by hand at 1:100 scale and representative 1m sample sections were drawn at 1:10 scale. Levels were taken using a dumpy level and tied in to spot heights recorded on the client's development plans. A temporary site benchmark was used on site to tie in level values, the value of the TBM (TBM 1) was 80.75m OD, taken from a spot height on the road with an ordnance value of 74.1m OD.

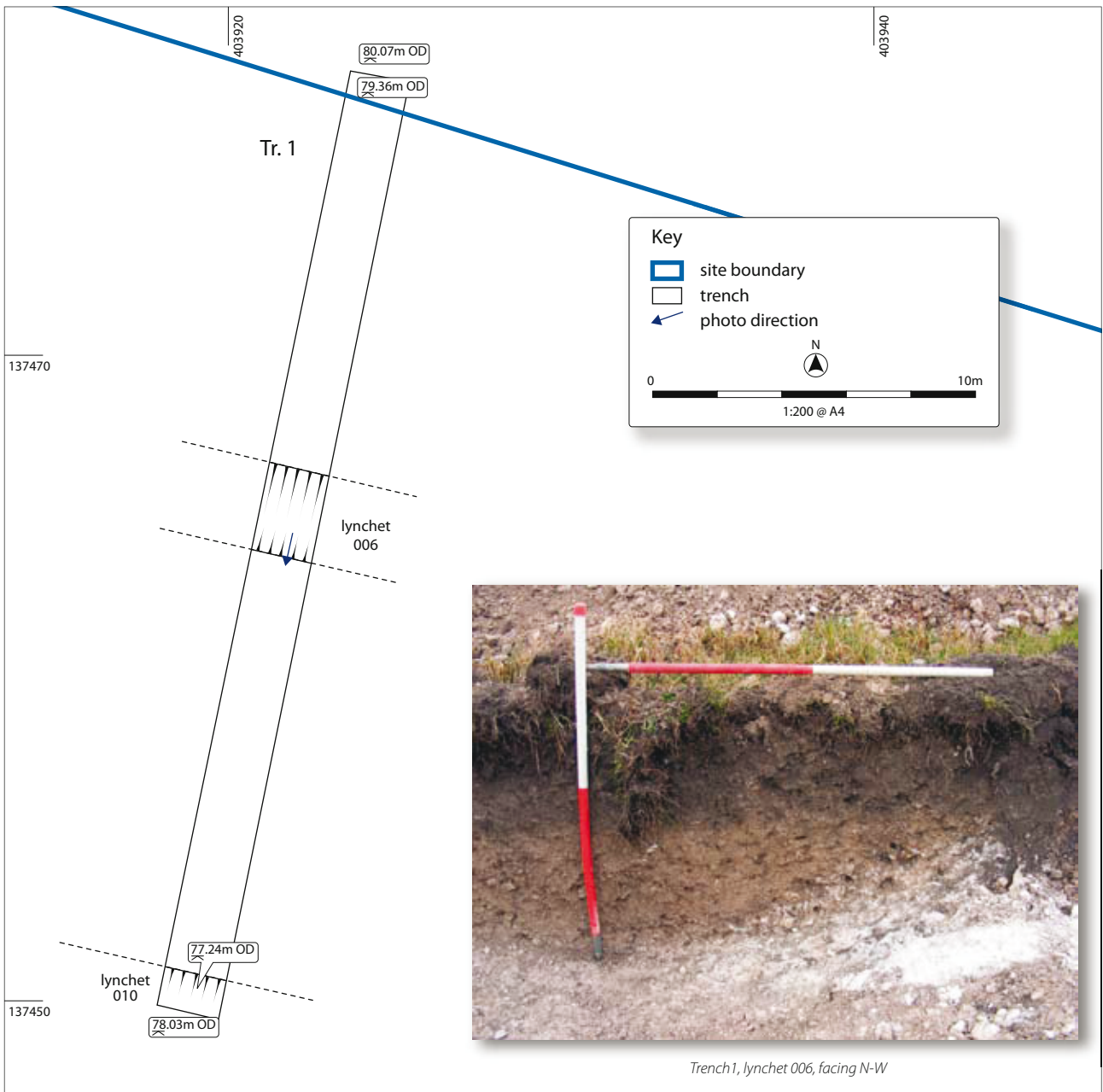
An overall site plan was provided by the client and trench locations were illustrated on this plan. The site plan was accurately linked to the National Grid.

## 5.2 MONITORING

Access to the site was afforded to Clare King of Wiltshire Council for monitoring purposes on the 18th of January 2012.

## 6. RESULTS

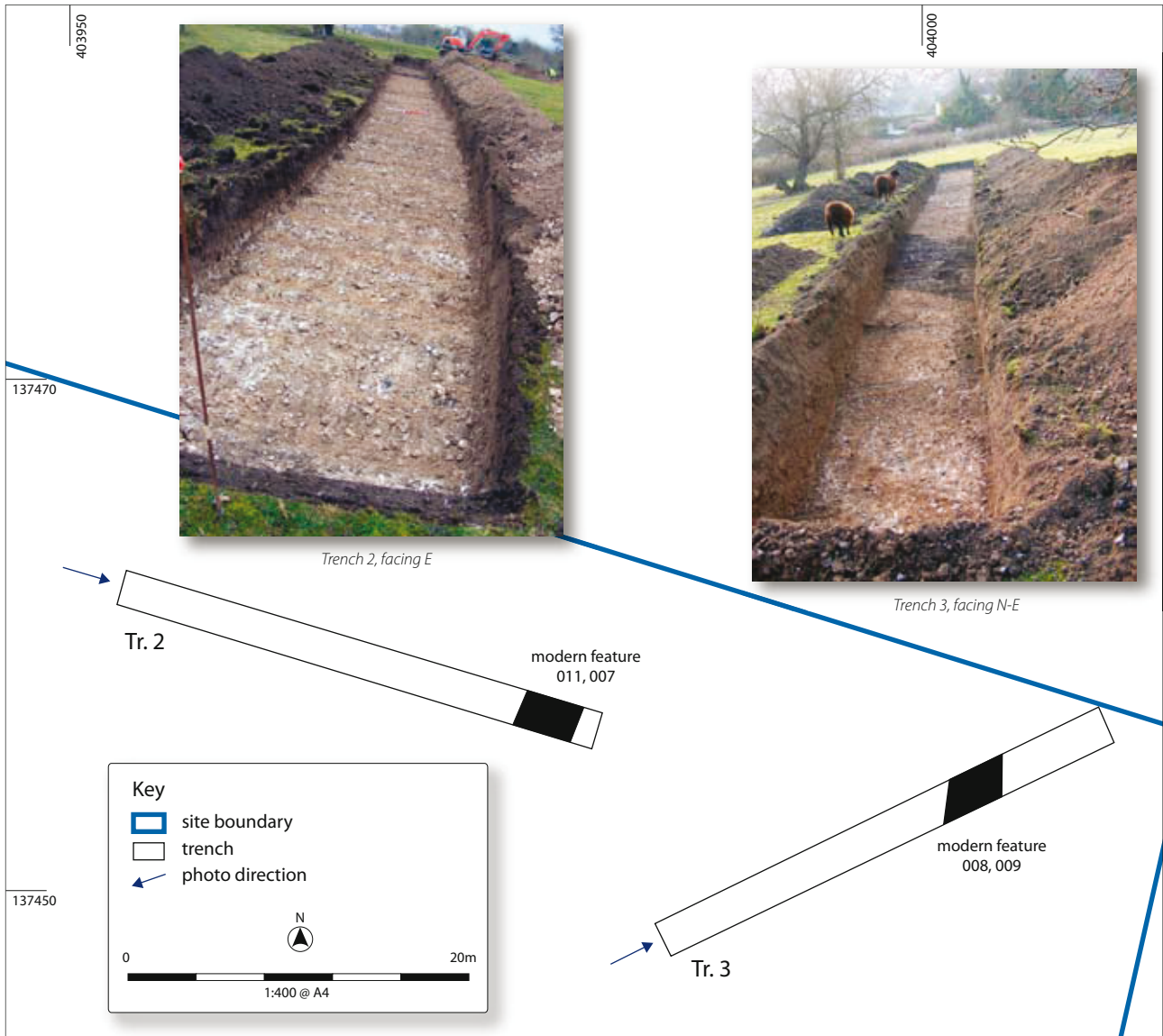
Three trenches were excavated on the site, one (Trench 1) was located in the western field while the other two (Trenches 2 and 3) were located in the adjacent eastern field. Context descriptions are provided in Appendix 1.



3

Illus 3  
Trench 1, lynchets





Illus 4

Trench 2 & 3

## 6.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located centrally in the west field on an approximately north-south alignment. The turf-line and topsoil [001] were removed, exposing a light brown colluvium deposit [002] below. At the interface of the colluvium with the layer below [003], at around 0.5m deep, linear features [004/005] were observed that were aligned north-south. The linear features appeared similar to plough marks but were in fact natural Peri-glacial features that are apparently quite common on south facing hillsides in this part of the country. These features were present in all of the evaluation trenches. Also underlying the colluvial deposit were two features that are likely to be the remains of lynchets, and probably of a Medieval date. The lynchets [006] and [010] were aligned east-west across the field. The northern lynchet [006] was located approximately half way up the east field and appeared as a slight dip (on the south side) followed by a rise towards

the north from the natural to around 0.5m – 0.6m high. Feature [010] was only visible in the first 1m of the south end of Trench 1 and appeared to dip down towards the south by at least 0.2m. Both features were shown to Clare King of Wiltshire Council Archaeology on her site visit and were considered to be probably lynchets but of ‘low significance’ due to their eroded (possibly ploughed) condition. Glazed Post Medieval pottery sherds were found in deposit [002] and were retained, all other finds from Trench 1 were modern and were not retained.

## 6.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was excavated in the eastern field on an east-west alignment, parallel to, and south of the south boundary of the present allotment area. A water main supplying the allotment was identified running on a north-south alignment along the inside of the west edge of the field. Trench 2 was positioned to avoid the possibility of

damaging the water main. The topsoil [001] and colluvial deposits [002] were not very deep in this part of the site, not exceeding 0.50m total depth. A single modern feature [007] was present within the area of Trench 2 cut from the present ground level. The feature appeared as a 3m wide, bowl shaped profile and may have been a former hollow in the field, later filled with detritus from the activity in the allotment [011]. Finds from the fill included iron nails, pieces of bottle glass, string and pottery. All the finds from Trench 2, whether from topsoil or from the fill of [007] were modern and were not retained.

### 6.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the south-east of the eastern field on a NE-SW alignment. The depth of deposits [001] and [002] to the natural chalk/flint deposit [003] was not more than 0.4m deep at the SW end of the trench, rising to almost 1m deep at the NE end. The topsoil depth was consistently around 0.25m while the depth of the underlying colluvium increased [as the ground rose to the north] to a depth of 0.8m. A single modern feature measuring 3.7m wide by at least 0.6m deep was present within Trench 2 [009] cutting obliquely across the line of the trench. As it could be seen that the feature cut all the way down into the chalk it was not fully excavated. The feature was visible prior to the excavation of the trench showing as a roughly rectangular slumped patch in the grass. When excavated it could be seen that the feature had vertical sides, probably cut by machine, and was mainly filled with dark silty material [008] that was very much like the fill [011] in feature [007] in Trench 2, and very similar to the topsoil deposit over all three trenches. The fill of the feature contained modern finds of bottle glass, brick fragments, metal objects and modern pottery. No finds were retained from Trench 3. No further finds or features were present in the excavated areas.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The evidence from the three evaluation trenches shows little sign of significant early activity in the area. There was no evidence for activity in the prehistoric periods or before the medieval period. The most significant evidence present on the site came from Trench 1 in the western field immediately adjacent to the east edge of the village. The evidence seems to imply that this area has always been outside of the settled part of the village and has probably been in agricultural use for a considerable amount of time. The eroded remains of the lynchets could be early medieval in origin, possibly even Saxon.

The condition of the lynchets within Trench 1 was poor, probably due to having been ploughed over in the Post medieval period or more recently. Their significance is low considering that much better preserved examples survive in the local area, good examples of better

preserved lynchets can be seen even in the adjacent field immediately to the east of the development site.

The lynchet [006] seen in the north part of Trench 1 appears to align well with one of the better preserved neighbouring lynchets outside the development area to the east, and is likely to be the remains of a continuation of the line of one of them. Though they were not picked up in Trenches 2 or 3, it seems likely that they continue through the east field, though probably in a similarly poor condition to [006] due to ploughing.

The feature [010] located near the southern end of Trench 1, also thought probably to be a lynchet does not appear to align with any features visible to the east of the proposed development area, but if it is a lynchet, it is likely to be related to this group of features.

The only pre-modern pottery from the site dates from the post medieval period and is equally insignificant. Due to the close proximity of known archaeological sites and features, the survival of significant archaeological features in other parts of the site, yet unexcavated, cannot be ruled out but the results of the evaluation would suggest that this is unlikely.

## 8. REFERENCES

- Craddock-Bennett. L 2011 *Land off Salisbury Road, Steeple Langford, Wiltshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation*, Headland Archaeology.
- Planning Policy Statement 5 2010 *Planning for the Historic Environment*.



## 9. APPENDICES

### 9.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

#### Context register

Trench no.	Context no.	Description	Dimensions	Deposit depth	
1	001	Topsoil. Coarse clayish silt, dark greyish brown, contains occasional small (up to 1cm) sub-rounded stones and rare/occasional charcoal flecks. Moderately compacted. Modern finds.	30m x 2m	0.26m average depth. Deepest just south of lynchet feature [006] where 0.33m deep.	
1	002	Colluvial deposit. Fine clayish silt, pale (coffee) brown, contains mixed angular chalk/flint inclusions up to 2.5cm. Moderate to firm compaction. Post Medieval pottery finds.		0.20m average depth. Stone content probably derived from ploughing into underlying deposit [003].	
1	003	White chalk and flint (poor quality flint). Natural geological deposit.		Not excavated.	
1	004/005	Periglacial features, vertical banding (approximately N-S aligned) brown bands of clayish material, common natural features on the local south facing hill slopes (Pers' comm. Clare King)		Average 0.2m wide by 0.15m deep, some with V shaped profile.	
1	006	Probable lynchet, rounded rise in the chalk/flint [003] towards the north end of Trench 1, very eroded feature. Considered of low significance (Pers' comm Clare King). Aligns W-E, located aprox half way up the western field. Appears to align with lynchet features in the field located to the east of the development site.		Rises between 0.6 and 0.8m high from [003] in Trench 1. Width unknown.	
1	010	Probable lynchet, drop in the chalk/flint [003] towards the south end of Trench 1. Considered of low significance (Pers' comm Clare King). Aligns W-E, located in the lower third of the western field. Does not appear to align with more obvious lynchet features in the field located to the east of the development site.		Drops from [003] in south end of Trench 1. Width unknown.	
6	2	001	Topsoil. Coarse clayish silt, dark greyish brown, contains occasional small (up to 1cm) sub-rounded stones and rare/occasional charcoal flecks. Moderately compacted. Modern finds.	30m x 2m	0.26m average depth. Deepest just south of lynchet feature [006] where 0.33m deep.
2	002	Colluvial deposit. Fine clayish silt, pale (coffee) brown, contains mixed angular chalk/flint inclusions up to 2.5cm. Moderate to firm compaction.		0.20m average depth. Stone content probably derived from ploughing into underlying deposit [003].	
2	003	White chalk and flint (poor quality flint). Natural geological deposit.		Not excavated.	
2	004/005	Periglacial features, vertical banding (approximately N-S aligned) brown bands of clayish material, common natural features on the local south facing hill slopes (Pers' comm Clare King).		Average 0.2m wide by 0.15m deep, some with V shaped profile.	
2	007	Modern cut feature adjacent to the south boundary of the allotment. Appears to have a bowl shaped profile. Filled by [011].		3m wide by at least 0.5m deep	
2	011	Mixed fills of [007] consisting of re-deposited colluvium [002] and grey/black clayish silt. Contains modern pottery, twine, fe nails, pottery.		3m wide by at least 0.5m deep	
3	001	Topsoil. Coarse clayish silt, dark greyish brown, contains occasional small (up to 1cm) sub-rounded stones and rare/occasional charcoal flecks. Moderately compacted. Modern finds.	30m x 2m	0.26m average depth. Deepest just south of lynchet feature [006] where 0.33m deep.	
3	002	Colluvial deposit. Fine clayish silt, pale (coffee) brown, contains mixed angular chalk/flint inclusions up to 2.5cm. Moderate to firm compaction.		0.20m average depth. Stone content probably derived from ploughing into underlying deposit [003].	
3	003	White chalk and flint (poor quality flint). Natural geological deposit.		Not excavated.	
3	004/005	Periglacial features, vertical banding (approximately N-S aligned) brown bands of clayish material, common natural features on the local south facing hill slopes (Pers' comm Clare King).		Average 0.2m wide by 0.15m deep, some with V shaped profile.	
3	009	Modern cut feature adjacent to the south east of the allotment. Has vertical sides, appears to be machine cut. Filled by [008].		3m wide by at least 0.5m deep	
3	008	Mixed fills of [009] consisting of re-deposited colluvium [002] at the top, appears to be a secondary fill overlying grey/black clayish silt. Contains modern pottery, twine, fe nails, pottery, very similar to fill [011].		3m wide by at least 0.5m deep	

*Photographic register*

Photo no.	B&W print	Colour slide	Digital	Direction facing	Description
01	–	–	0001	–	–
02	–	–	0002	–	–
03	–	–	0003	–	–
04	643/1	629/1	0004	N/A	Photo register ID shot
05	643/2	629/2	–	N	Trench 1, shows the linear Periglacial features.
06	643/3	629/3	–	N	Trench 1, West facing section
07	643/4	629/4	–	S	Trench 1, North facing section
08	643/5	629/5	0005	N	'V' shaped profile of Periglacial feature [004]/[005]
09	643/6	629/6	0006	W	Profile of lynchet [006]
10	643/7	629/7	0007	NW	The lynchet [006]
11	643/8	629/8	0008	N	The lynchet [006]
12	–	–	0009	–	–
13	–	–	0010	–	–
14	–	–	0011	–	–
15	–	–	0012	–	–
16	643/9	629/9	0013	E	Trench 2 from the west end
17	643/10	629/10	0014	W	Trench 2 from the east end
18	643/11	629/11	–	–	Black sheep raiding the site
19	643/12	629/12	0015	N	Feature [007]-modern rubbish dump in Trench 2, allotment waste.
20	–	–	0016	NE	South facing section in Trench 2 showing fill [011] and cut [007]
21	643/13	629/13	0017	N	South facing section in Trench 2 at the West end
22	643/14	629/14	0018	NE	Trench 3 facing towards the NE, feature [009]/[008] at top of picture
23	643/15	629/15	0019	SW	Trench 3 facing south-west, feature [009]
24	643/16	629/16	0020	NE	Well preserved lynchets in the adjacent field (to the east)
25	643/17	629/17	0021	SW	Feature [009] in Trench 3
26	–	–	0022	SW	Feature at NE end of Trench 3 [009]/[008]
27	643/18	629/18	–	–	Blank test shot



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