

Bitham Brook Phase 2

Archaeological Evaluation Report



wessexarchaeology



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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Wiltshire Council, to undertake an archaeological evaluation and watching brief of a 2.16 ha parcel of land located at Bitham Brook Primary School, Westbury, Wiltshire. A planning application (ref. 16/07361/FUL) was submitted to Wiltshire Council for an extension to the existing primary school to be developed in two phases.

Phase 1 of these works, a watching brief, was completed in February 2017. Phase 2 of the works involved two small-scale evaluations, which resulted in a watching brief. The first of these evaluations was originally comprised of four proposed trenches. This was reduced to three trenches prior to work on site as Trench 1 was located on an area to be retained as grass and therefore would not be impacted on by the development.

During the evaluation Trenches 2 and 3 were not excavated due to onsite constraints. Trench 2 was found to be positioned on an area of hardstanding material from previous phases of construction with the proposed location bounded by a tarmac footpath and a large and overgrown spoil heap (fenced in) immediately to the north-west. The location of Trench 3 was found to be occupied by the spoil heap. Consideration was given to the relocation of the trenches, however, due to the constraints of the site, with obstacles such as trees and located services, it was agreed with Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service to proceed only with Trench 4.

Trench 4 did not contain any archaeological features or deposits. However, within the subsoil some evidence was found of background activity relating to the medieval and post-medieval periods, represented by a small quantity of residual pottery, along with a small selection of degraded and fragmented bone.

Following the results of this first evaluation it was proposed that the new building footprint should be stripped under archaeological supervision. During the initial strip, it became clear that this was not feasible given the thickness of material overlaying any potential archaeological deposits and was therefore abandoned in favour of a single evaluation trench. The excavation of this trench did not reveal any evidence of archaeological features or deposits and so, following consultation with Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service, it was agreed to proceed with a watching brief during the excavation of footings and any associated services.

The watching brief, carried out during the excavation of the footings for the extension, revealed the remains of a truncated subsoil below what was in the previous works considered the geology.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Ridge and Partners LLP for commissioning the archaeological evaluation on behalf of Wiltshire Council. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service, who monitored the project for Wiltshire Council, and to Tim Haygreen and Tim Davis for their cooperation and help on site.

Bitham Brook Primary School Phase 2

Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Project and planning background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Wiltshire Council, to undertake an archaeological evaluation and watching brief of a 2.16 ha parcel of land located at Bitham Brook Primary School, Arundell Close, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3UA, centred on NGR 387695 151785 (**Fig. 1**).
- 1.1.2 A planning application (ref. 16/07361/FUL) was submitted to Wiltshire Council for an extension to the existing primary school to be developed in two phases, comprising: Phase 1; expansion to the hall and two additional classrooms, and Phase 2; a further four additional classrooms, technology room and group room, and associated external hard play areas.
- 1.1.3 A desk-based assessment (DBA) was produced by Wessex Archaeology in May 2016 and was submitted as supporting information with the planning application (Wessex Archaeology 2016). As part of this process, the known archaeology and built heritage of the site and its surroundings was considered which provided information for Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service (WCAS), archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 1.1.4 Phase one of archaeological fieldwork (watching brief) was completed in February 2017 and an interim report produced detailing the results (Wessex Archaeology 2017). Phase 2 of the works (evaluation) comprises of the original proposed trenching plan of four trenches, which was reduced to three (Trenches 2-4, **Fig. 1**). The area where Trench 1 was located is now to be retained as a grassed area.
- 1.1.5 Planning application (ref. 16/07361/FUL) was granted, subject to conditions, one of which relates to archaeological investigation:

No development shall take place within the area indicated (proposed development site) until:

- A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local planning Authority; and
- The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with approved details.

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

1.1.6 WCAS had advised on a pragmatic approach to offset the threat of the proposed development on potential archaeological deposits, comprising:

- An archaeological trial trench evaluation within the Phase 2 development area, to be undertaken prior to construction with a subsequent mitigation phase, if necessary, dependent on the results; and
- An intra-construction archaeological watching brief covering the Phase 1 development area [as there is a lack of space for trial trenches because of existing areas of hardstanding and outbuildings].
- 1.1.7 All works were undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed in order to undertake the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2016). WCAS approved the WSI, on behalf of the LPA, prior to fieldwork commencing.
- 1.1.8 An evaluation comprising of one trial trench (15 x 1.5 m) was undertaken on the 26 October 2020.
- 1.1.9 Following the abandonment of the proposed excavation a second evaluation trench was excavated on the 22 February 2021. The watching brief comprising the final phase of archaeological fieldwork was undertaken intermittently between the 16th and 23rd March 2021.

1.2 Scope of the report

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed description of the results of the evaluation, to interpret the results within a local, regional or wider archaeological context and assess whether the aims of the evaluation have been met.
- 1.2.2 The presented results will provide further information on the archaeological resource that may be impacted by the proposed development and facilitate an informed decision with regard to the requirement for, and methods of, any further archaeological mitigation.

1.3 Location, topography and geology

- 1.3.1 The evaluation area was located at Bitham Brook Primary School and occupied a subrectangular parcel of land of approximately 2.16 hectares (ha) located at the north-eastern edge of the town of Westbury, Wiltshire. The site comprised the eastern extent of this land holding.
- 1.3.2 The site is currently occupied by the existing Bitham Brook Primary School, with the main school building positioned in the south-west. A car park is situated in the east with access from Arundell Close and ancillary buildings are positioned to the north of the main school building, with hard sports pitches / playground and a mobile classroom to the west. The area to the west of the site is occupied by an associated playing field with surrounding mature hedges on all sides, with modern residential development beyond.
- 1.3.3 The site is relatively level and lies at a height of approximately 60 m to 61 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). Local topography is generally flat, falling gently to the north-west towards Bitham Brook, approximately 250 m away.
- 1.3.4 The underlying bedrock geology throughout the site is mapped as Sedimentary Mudstone of the Gault Formation. No superficial deposits are recorded on the majority of the site, but



Quaternary Head deposits of Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel may be encountered in the southeastern corner (British Geological Survey online viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A search of the Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record (WSHER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) was undertaken within a 1 km radius study area of the site in order to inform the DBA (Wessex Archaeology 2016). Historic maps and other primary and secondary sources were also consulted. The results from this DBA are briefly summarised below by period, though the DBA concluded that the main potential within the site was for buried remains relating to the Romano-British period (Wessex Archaeology 2016).
- 2.1.2 The main potential for buried archaeological remains is more particularly considered to relate to funerary activity with the possibility of further Romano-British inhumation graves. Though there is also a lower potential for Iron Age/Romano-British features unrelated to funerary activities, as well as some potential for medieval ridge and furrow and post-medieval ditches the latter agricultural features being of less archaeological significance.

2.2 Designated heritage assets

2.2.1 There are no designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields or Conservation Area) within the site itself. Though a number of Listed Buildings lie within the wider Study Area, none of these lie immediately adjacent to the site. Westbury Conservation Area lies close to the south-west of the site and comprises the historic core of the town.

2.3 Previous investigations related to the proposed development

- 2.3.1 Within the site, during the construction of the current school buildings in 1992, disarticulated human remains were found on a spoil heap. Following an inspection by staff from Wiltshire County Council Library and Museum Service, remains of a second individual were found *insitu* in an inhumation grave, located in the area of the present school car park. A salvage excavation of the *in-situ* Romano-British burial was subsequently undertaken, with the rest of the stripped area 'briefly examined' but no traces of further burials or other archaeological features were found (AC Archaeology 1992).
- 2.3.2 There have also been a number of archaeological investigations within close proximity of the site: an evaluation and excavation ahead of housing in 1993, approximately 150 m north of the site, revealed general prehistoric activity represented by broadly undiagnostic worked flint and a fragment of saddle quern [known in England from the 4th millennium BC] as well as medieval ridge and furrow field system with associated boundaries (Wessex Archaeology 1993). In addition, an evaluation 150 m to the south-west of the site at Gibbs Close identified a post-medieval ditch (AC Archaeology 2010).
- 2.3.3 A number of archaeological events are also recorded approximately 350–400 m to the north-west on agricultural land, either side of the A350. A range of buried remains were uncovered west of the A350 including a number of shallow undated pits, medieval ridge and furrow, post-medieval and later drainage and field boundary ditches (Wessex Archaeology 2015). East of the A350, an evaluation uncovered evidence of ditches, gullies and pits representing two separate phases of activity dating to the Early/Middle Iron Age and the Romano-British periods, though no structural evidence was identified to confirm settlement;



medieval ridge and furrow and later drainage ditches were also uncovered (Wessex Archaeology 2014).

- 2.3.4 Approximately 350 m to the south-west of the site, a watching brief was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in 2001 at Bitham Mill. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered, only made ground over truncated natural silts and gravels (Wessex Archaeology 2001). A subsequent watching brief by Bath Archaeological Trust during the demolition of the Listed Building similarly did not discover any archaeological remains.
- 2.3.5 In 2017 following the Phase 1 watching brief, the works of which this report detail the Phase 2 evaluation, and is a continuation of, was successful in noting two archaeological features and a post-medieval or modern hollow, and a modern rubbish dump / spread of material. In the southern area of the site the ground had been heavily truncated and disturbed by the construction of the school and its associated services.
- 2.3.6 Of the two archaeological features recorded, a gully was found to contain pottery spot dated to be Iron Age / Romano-British, and a ditch, undated. A further hollow feature contained archaeological components that appeared to be post-medieval or modern in-date. The surviving archaeology was found to be heavily truncated by the construction of the school and associated groundworks (Wessex Archaeology 2017).

2.4 Archaeological and historical context

Palaeolithic and Mesolithic (500,000 BC - 4, 000 BC)

2.4.1 There are no recorded Palaeolithic finds within the Study Area, and limited activity of Mesolithic date evidenced by a single findspot of a Mesolithic tool approximately 500 m east of the site, a thick blade flake with oblique point and retouch along both edges.

Neolithic and Bronze Age (4,000 BC - 2, 400 BC)

2.4.2 There is more evidence of activity from the Neolithic period, again this is predominantly evidenced by flint artefacts, with the closest Neolithic monument, a long barrow, known some 2 km to the east at Bratton Camp. A number of flint artefacts were retrieved from fieldwork associated with the proposed eastern by-pass of Westbury, to the south-east of the site, as found in two clusters, the first cluster 600 m to the south-east contained a small amount that could be dated as Neolithic and the second 850 m to the south-east comprised 42 blades or blade fragments, six cores, one hammer stone and one axe fragment. It should also be realised that some of the finds of general prehistoric date uncovered during another evaluation undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in 1993 could also relate to this period (above).

Bronze Age and Iron Age (2, 400 BC – AD 43)

- 2.4.3 Most of the evidence for these periods comes from investigations along the proposed route of the Westbury bypass, undertaken over a number of phases, approximately 450–800 m to the east / south-east of the site. The most significant discovery was that of a large midden site which contained a dense concentration of Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age pottery along with a large quantity of animal bone and struck flint. The ceramic assemblage has similarities to those at the All Cannings, East Chisenbury and Potterne midden sites. The presence of pits and potential 'chalk platforms' cutting midden layers suggests the complex stratification of these remains (Wessex Archaeology 2003).
- 2.4.4 Just west of the midden site, an Iron Age enclosed settlement was also discovered defined by two intercutting ditches containing Early Iron Age pottery, possible fence-lines, pits, and a possible base of a small hearth or furnace (WA 2003 and 2004). Disarticulated undated



human remains were also recovered from an animal burial by the cement works during the original evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2003).

- 2.4.5 A Middle–Late Bronze Age cremation burial and two possible cremation burials were also discovered in further evaluation relating to the proposed bypass (Wessex Archaeology 2008).
- 2.4.6 Approximately 350 m north-west of the site, ditches and pits containing Early / Middle Iron Age pottery and other finds were found during a recent evaluation to the east of the A350 (Wessex Archaeology 2014).

Romano-British (AD 43–410)

- 2.4.7 As stated above, human remains of two individuals, one disarticulated on the spoil heap and another within an inhumation grave have been recovered within the site during the school construction in 1992 and the information presented below is gained from an interim report on the recuse excavation (AC Archaeology 1992). The extended supine inhumation of a probable adult male was found in poor condition with a darker fill around the skeleton suggested that it was originally within a coffin. A small mass of corroded iron was found around the feet, and two iron nails, a copper alloy fragment and two sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the lower context, with another greyware pottery sherd and another nail form the overlying chalky backfill context. It was suggested that the orientation of the burial and the lack of grave goods may indicate that the burial was Christian, and therefore from the latter part of the period (AC Archaeology 1992).
- 2.4.8 Rare Roman pottery was found in the evaluation approximately 150 m north of the site (Wessex Archaeology 1993). An evaluation to the east of the A350 uncovered some ditches and pits indicating some activity of Romano-British date (Wessex Archaeology 2014).
- 2.4.9 Approximately 2 km to the north-west of the site at Hawkeridge, evaluation for the proposed bypass uncovered a large area of Romano-British settlement associated with a field system. A crouched inhumation, a circular grave containing the remains of an infant inhumation and articulated human remains were also exposed within a ditch, though as this was an evaluation the human remains were not excavated. Another Roman settlement site was discovered during iron ore digging in the late 19th century approximately 1 km north-east of the site, though the excavations were poorly recorded (Wessex Archaeology 2003).

Saxon and medieval (AD 410–1500)

- 2.4.10 Westbury is first mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086 as *Westberie*. The name is from Old English and means 'westerly stronghold or fortified place'. Westbury is known to have been the site of a Saxon royal manor; though the precise location of the manor is unknown, it has been postulated to be somewhere north of the present parish church, where urban settlement subsequently developed, as well as around the mills. A weekly market was granted in the 13th century and the current parish Church of All Saints dates from the 14th and 15th century.
- 2.4.11 Despite this, there is relatively little recorded evidence from the WSHER within the Study Area for the Saxon period; the only find recorded is a single 8th century coin, a *scaetta* discovered approximately 570 m to the north-east of the Site. Some medieval findspots have also been recorded outside of the historic core of the town. It is probable that the site lay within the agricultural hinterland of the developing town in these periods.
- 2.4.12 The excavations conducted directly to the north of the Site revealed medieval ridge and furrow field system with associated field boundaries. A moderate amount of pottery was



discovered, interpreted as probably being discarded along with night soil l.e., manuring from the nearby settlement of Westbury (Wessex Archaeology 1993).

Post-medieval to modern (AD1500-present day)

- 2.4.13 The town of Westbury continued to flourish on the back of the local cloth trade, with sites such as Bitham Mill, described as a large fulling mill situated 200 m to the south of the site. However, the early 19th century saw the general collapse in the cloth trade. But the construction of the railway, with Westbury becoming an important interchange and the discovery of nearby iron ore resulted in other industries coming to prominence. Mining and smelting at the iron foundry occurred just to the west of the Study Area and other industries also grew in the town.
- 2.4.14 The site is likely to have been occupied by agricultural land and the 1808 Westbury enclosure map shows two fields within the Site with very little change shown on later maps including the 1884 First Edition Ordnance Survey map. Post-medieval boundaries and drainage ditches have been revealed during other nearby archaeological investigations (above), and the footings of a post-medieval barn were uncovered by the Bratton Road approximately 350 m to the south-east during the bypass evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2003).

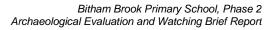
3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Evaluation Aims

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2016) and in compliance with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a), were to:
 - Clarify the presence / absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site that may be impacted by development;
 - Identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character and condition of any surviving remains within the Site;
 - Assess the degree of pre-existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits; and
 - Produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the site's archaeological potential.

3.2 Watching Brief Aims

- 3.2.1 With due regard to the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014b), the aims of the watching brief were to:
 - Identify the presence/absence of any buried archaeological remains within the site;
 - Where appropriate, to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of material in question, that an archaeological find has been for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient;
 - Record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the date, character and condition of any surviving archaeological deposits; and





• Produce a report to disseminate the results of the watching brief.

3.3 Site-specific objectives

- 3.3.1 The site-specific objectives defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2016) were to:
 - Determine the nature, date, character, extent and significance of any Romano-British funerary practises within the site.

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2016) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in CIfA guidance (CIfA 2014a and 2014b). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

Evaluation

- 4.2.1 The trench locations were set out using a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), in the approximate positions proposed in the WSI. The original proposed trenching plan of four trenches been reduced to three prior to commencement of fieldwork (Trenches 2-4, Fig. 1). The area where Trench 1 was to be located was no longer going to be impacted by the development and is to be retained as grass.
- 4.2.2 During the evaluation Trenches 2 and 3 were not excavated. The location of Trench 2 running parallel with the north-west side of the school was found to be positioned on an area of hardstanding material from previous phases of construction. The location was bounded by an existing tarmac footpath adjacent to the school, and a large spoil heap (fenced in) immediately to the north-west (**Plate 1**). Due to the restricted nature of the location, the potential for unknown buried services, and with the area used for school access, unable to be reinstated to a level similar to its present condition, it was agreed with WCAS not to proceed with this trench.
- 4.2.3 Similarly Trench 3 was also abandoned, its location immediately to the north-west of Trench 2, occupied by a large overgrown spoil heap (**Plate 2**). With the top of the heap approximately 1.5 m above ground level and dimensions of approximately 20 x 26 m, time constraints would not allow for the relocation of the spoil to safely excavate Trench 3. Consideration was given to the relocation of the trenches, however due to onsite constraints, including trees and located services, it was agreed with WCAS to proceed with Trench 4 as designed, and to strip the entirety of the building footprint..
- 4.2.4 Trench 4, measuring 15 m in length and 1.50 m wide, was excavated in level spits using a 360° excavator equipped with a toothless bucket, under the constant supervision and instruction of the monitoring archaeologist. Machine excavation proceeded until either the archaeological horizon or the natural geology was exposed.
- 4.2.5 In the next phase of work the archaeological stripping of the building footprint was started as Trench 5. However, natural deposits were not encountered until 0.70 m BGL. This was both too deep structurally and too great a volume of material to store and re-use on site. The oversite strip was therefore halted and a single standard evaluation trench excavated. This would be Trench 6.



- 4.2.6 Trench 6 was excavated along the south-western side of the extension footprint, extending from the back of the existing building on a roughly south-east to north-west alignment. This Trench was excavated using a 1.80 m grading bucket to a length of 15 m.
- 4.2.7 Spoil from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, although those from features of modern date (19th century or later) were recorded on site and not retained.
- 4.2.8 The trenches were completed to the satisfaction of the client and WCAS, and were backfilled using excavated materials in the order in which they were excavated, and left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

Watching Brief

- 4.2.9 Groundworks consisting of the excavation of footings for the new extension were subject to archaeological monitoring. The footings were excavated with a 360° excavator with a toothless bucket and the area excavated allocated a trench number (Trench 7) by the monitoring archaeologist for recording purposes.
- 4.2.10 Spoil from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, although those from features of modern date (19th century or later) were recorded on site and not retained.

Recording

- 4.2.11 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological works. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSTN15 and OSGM15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.12 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 16 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Finds and environmental strategies

4.3.1 Strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of finds and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2016). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014c) and *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011).

4.4 Monitoring

4.4.1 The County Archaeologist for WCAS monitored the evaluation on behalf of the LPA. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with the client and WCAS.



5 STRATIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Of the original three proposed trenches for Phase 2, only Trench 4 was excavated (Fig. 1). No archaeological features or deposits were observed (Plate 3). However, within the subsoil (403) there is some evidence of background activity in the area dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods, as represented by a small quantity of residual pottery, along with a small selection of degraded and fragmented bone. Trenches 5 and 6 (Plate 5), which were excavated within the footprint of the extension also contained no evidence of archaeological features or deposits. The watching brief for the excavation of the footings, (Trench 7; Plate 6) revealed the possible truncation of the original topsoil and subsoil and modern elevation of the ground.

5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

- 5.2.1 Detailed descriptions of individual stratigraphic contexts are provided in the trench summary tables (**Appendix 1**). The location of the representative section for Trench 7 (**Plate 7**) is indicated on **Fig. 1**.
- 5.2.2 In summary, the soil sequence for Trench 4 was comprised of 0.25 m of made ground (401), compact hard standing gravel, most likely relating to previous construction work associated with the school. Beneath this was a recent reinstated topsoil (402) comprised of a dark yellowish-brown loamy clay of loose compaction with a well-defined level horizon onto the subsoil, 0.25 m thick. This was almost certainly a buried plough soil horizon. Below this the subsoil (403) was of light yellowish-brown, moderately compact silty clay, 0.18 m thick, with a well-defined and level horizon onto the underlying natural Sedimentary Mudstone (404).
- 5.2.3 Trench 5 and Trench 6 were both located very close together and exhibited very similar soil sequences. The representative section in Trench 6 was located where the soil sequence was deeper and showed deposits of possible redeposited topsoil with elements of modern building material that suggest it was part of the old spoil heap located on the site. Below this there was a possible reinstated topsoil (603), a layer of subsoil (604) and redeposited natural Sedimentary Mudstone (604). The natural was found at a depth of 0.95 m below ground level at the north-west end of the trench but at the south-east end, closer to the existing school building the natural was 0.70 m below the existing ground level.
- 5.2.4 Trench 7 is defined by the footprint of the proposed building. The soil sequence for this trench was comprised of made ground (701), a layer of compact standing gravels probably related to the recent construction of the near school building. Below the made ground, reinstated topsoil (702) and a layer of subsoil (703), with a clear level horizon onto a layer of sedimentary mudstone (704), at 0.62 m below ground level.

6 FINDS EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A very small quantity of finds was recovered from the evaluation, deriving from two contexts (buried soil 402 and subsoil 403); quantities are given in Table 1. The assemblage ranges in date from medieval to post-medieval.

| Table 1 | All finds by context (number / weight in grammes) |
|---------|---|
|---------|---|

| Context | Animal Bone | СВМ | Pottery | Other finds |
|---------|-------------|-------|---------|-------------------|
| 402 | 3/20 | 4/148 | 2/34 | 1 plaster; 1 iron |



| 403 | 3/144 | 2/25 | 2/15 | 1 glass |
|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|
| Total | 6/164 | 6/173 | 4/49 | |

CBM = ceramic building material

6.2 Pottery

- 6.2.1 Of the four sherds of pottery recovered, two are medieval and two post-medieval. Both medieval sherds are in fine-grained sandy fabrics, slightly micaceous and both paralleled within the range of coarsewares recorded at Warminster and assumed to originate from the Crockerton production centre (Smith 1997). One sherd is glazed, although undiagnostic, and the other is from the base of a jug. A date range of 12th-/13th-century can be suggested. One sherd was found in each of contexts 402 and 403.
- 6.2.2 The post-medieval sherds are both earthenwares, one (from subsoil 403) a redware which is also a possible Crockerton product (17^{th-}/18th-century) and the other, from buried soil 402, a pale-firing Verwood type from east Dorset (probably 18th-century or later), and the other

6.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

6.3.1 The CBM comprises fragments of brick, roof tile and drainpipe, with one undiagnostic piece. The brick and drainpipe are post-medieval/modern, but the roof tile (all from flat peg tiles) is more broadly dated as medieval/post-medieval.

6.4 Glass

6.4.1 A small piece of vessel glass from subsoil 403 is from a thin-walled drinking vessel of 17th-century date. The laminating surfaces suggest that lower quality potash or mixed-alkali glass was used rather than higher quality soda glass. Although the overall form is uncertain, it is likely to have been a beaker, and the vessel was decorated with optic-blown bosses, quite neatly formed (e.g., Wilmott 2002, type 3.3). Beakers with optic-blown decoration were made in England, for example at the late 16th-century Hutton and Rosedale glasshouses in Yorkshire (Crossley and Aberg 1972) and in the 17th century at Haughton Green near Manchester (Hurst Vose 1994), but it could equally well have been made in the Netherlands.

6.5 Other Finds

6.5.1 Other finds comprise six pieces of animal bone (including cattle and sheep), a small piece of mortar and a small iron object, possibly part of a key.

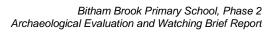
7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1.1 No deposits or features suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the works.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Summary

- 8.1.1 During the archaeological fieldwork, which comprised evaluation and watching brief, no archaeological features were observed.
- 8.1.2 Despite the limited scope of the initial evaluation, the further investigations undertaken were successful in identifying a general lack of archaeology within the area of impact of the development. The presence of residual pottery dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods within subsoil layers indicates a level of background activity within the area, in keeping with the general history of the site and its surroundings.





8.2 Discussion

- 8.2.1 Of the original three proposed trenches for Phase 2, only Trench 4 was excavated due to a number of constraints found to be present on the site. On excavation this trench was found not to contain any archaeological features or deposits, revealing a clean layer of natural Sedimentary Mudstone along its length at a depth of 0.68 m bgl. Given the potential for archaeology relating to Romano-British funerary practises to be present within the site, the absence of features in Trench 4 suggests that any further existing activity of this nature is focused further to the south-east, where remains of an in-situ Romano-British burial were discovered in 1992.
- 8.2.2 Trenches 5 and 6 were excavated at the south-west side of the footprint for the new building, revealing a similar stratigraphy to that within Trench 4. No archaeological features were observed in the trenches, with only a modern storm drain identified truncating the Sedimentary Mudstone layer in Trench 5.
- 8.2.3 Following the excavation of the three trenches and consultation with WCAS it was determined that further investigation was needed. An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the excavation of the footings for the school extension.

9 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

9.1 Museum

9.1.1 The archive resulting from the evaluation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury. Wiltshire Museum has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project. An accession number will be allocated at the time of deposition. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

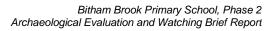
9.2 **Preparation of the archive**

Physical archive

- 9.2.1 The archive, which includes paper records, graphics, artefacts and ecofacts, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014d; Brown 2011).
- 9.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the accession code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:
 - 1 box of artefacts and ecofacts
 - 1 file of paper records

Digital archive

9.2.3 The digital archive generated by the project, which comprises born-digital data (e.g., site records, survey data, databases and spreadsheets, photographs and reports), will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, in this instance the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by metadata.





9.3 Selection Strategy

- 9.3.1 It is widely accepted that not all the records and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during the course of an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving Museum.
- 9.3.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; Wessex Archaeology's internal selection policy) and follows ClfA's *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists, external specialists, local authority, museum) and fully documented in the project archive.
- 9.3.3 In this instance, given the relatively low level of finds recovery, the selection process has been deferred until after the fieldwork stage was completed. Project-specific proposals for selection are presented below. These proposals are based on recommendations by Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists and will be updated in line with any further comment by other stakeholders (museum, local authority). The selection strategy will be fully documented in the project archive.
- 9.3.4 Any material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by Wessex Archaeology.

Finds

9.3.5 This is a very small assemblage, even when combined with the material from the earlier watching brief, and its archaeological significance and potential for further analysis is correspondingly very limited. The piece of 17th-century vessel glass is of intrinsic interest and should be retained, but none of the other finds warrants retention.

Documentary records

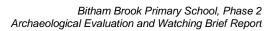
9.3.6 Paper records comprise site registers (other pro-forma site records are digital), drawings and reports (Written Scheme of Investigation, client report). All will be retained and deposited with the project archive.

Digital data

9.3.7 The digital data comprise site records (tablet-recorded on site) in spreadsheet format; finds records in spreadsheet format; survey data; photographs; reports. All will be deposited, although site photographs will be subject to selection to eliminate poor quality and duplicated images, and any others not considered directly relevant to the archaeology of the site.

9.4 Security copy

9.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g., Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.



9.5 OASIS

9.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main) has been initiated, with key fields completed (Appendix 2). A .pdf version of the final report will be submitted following approval by the County Archaeologist for WCAS on behalf of the LPA. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

10 COPYRIGHT

10.1 Archive and report copyright

- 10.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

10.2 Third party data copyright

10.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g., Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench summaries

NGR coordinates and OD heights taken at centre of each trench; depth bgl = below ground level

| Trench No | n No 4 Length 15 m | | Width 1.50 m | | Depth 0 | .70 m | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------|---------------------|---|---|------------------------------|------------------|
| Easting 38 | 37695 | | Northing 15 | orthing 151785 m OD 60.58 m | | | |
| Context Number | Fill Of/Filled With | | rpretative egory | Description | | | Depth BGL (m) |
| 401 | | Mad | e ground | Type 2 hard standi previous compound sheet at the base. | 00 | | 0.0-0.25 |
| 402 | | Buri | ed soil | Reinstated topsoil: brown loamy clay w compaction and cle with the s subsoil. S flecks and stones. bone, pottery, CBM plaster fragment. | vith a loc ear boun Sparse c Finds: ar | ose dary halk nimal | 0.25-0.50 |
| 403 | | Sub | soil | Light yellowish brow a moderate compa horizon with the na chalk flecks. Possil human bone, roma pottery, CBM, glass | ction and tural. Sp ple disart n and m | d clear arse ticulated | 0.50-0.68 |
| 404 | | Natu | ıral | Light greyish white mud stone with a n compaction and no | noderate | U U | +0.68 |

| Trench No | nch No 5 Length 7 m | | Width 3.80 m | Depth (|).80 m |
|-------------------|--|-------------|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Easting 38 | Easting 387653 Northing 1 | | 51756 | m OD 62.39m | |
| Context Number | Fill Of/Filled Interpretati With Category | | Description | | Depth BGL (m) |
| 501 | | Made ground | Dark brown clay sil gravel. | t with occasional | 0.00-0.25 |
| 502 | | Made ground | Type 2 hard standi previous compound sheet at the base. | | 0.25-0.33 |
| 503 | | Topsoil | Reinstated topsoil, brown soil with few occasional CBM. | | 0.33-0.50 |
| 504 | | Subsoil | Greyish brown clay occasional CBM. | silt with | 0.50-0.70 |
| 505 | | Natural | Light greyish white mud stone with a m compaction and no | noderate | +0.70 |

| Trench No | 6 | Length | 15 m | Width 2 | m | | Depth 1 | .10 m |
|------------|----------------|---------|--------------|-------------|---|--------|---------|-----------|
| Easting 38 | 7653 | | Northing 151 | 56 | | m OD 6 | 62.39m | |
| Context | Fill Of/Filled | I Inter | rpretative | Description | n | | | Depth BGL |
| Number | With | Cate | egory | | | | | (m) |

| 601 | Made ground | Dark brown clay silt with occasional gravel. | 0.0-0.40 |
|-----|-------------|---|-------------|
| 602 | Made ground | Dark grey brown clay silt with fine black inclusions and few very fine CBM. | 0.40-0.60 |
| 603 | Topsoil | Possible original topsoil, reddish brown clay silt with rare fine white inclusions, quite compact and solid. | 0.60-0.72 |
| 604 | Subsoil | Dark grey, plastic clayey soil with common medium white (sandstone) and black (charcoal) inclusions | 0.72-0.0.95 |
| 605 | Natural | Light greyish white highly degraded mud stone with a moderate compaction and no inclusions. Long storm drain along the trench cut in the natural. | +0.95 |

| Trench No | 7 | Length 24 m | Width 21.40 m | Depth 1 | .15 m |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Easting 38 | Easting 387683 Northing | | 51780 | m OD 61.34m | |
| Context Number | Fill Of/Filled With | d Interpretative Category | Description | | Depth BGL (m) |
| 701 | | Made ground | Type 2 hard standi gravels with a terra base. | | 0.0- 0.02 |
| 702 | | Buried topsoil | Dark greyish browr no visible inclusion compaction. Clear (703). | s and moderate | 0.02-0.22 |
| 703 | | Subsoil | Mid greyish brown firm compaction an with (704) . No visil inclusions. Occasio charcoal. | d clear horizon ble natural | 0.22-0.37 |
| 704 | | Sedimentary mudstone | Light greyish white mud stone with a n compaction and no Moderate compact horizon with (705). | noderate inclusions. | 0.37-0.62 |

Appendix 2 OASIS record

OASIS ID: wessexar1-407136

Project details

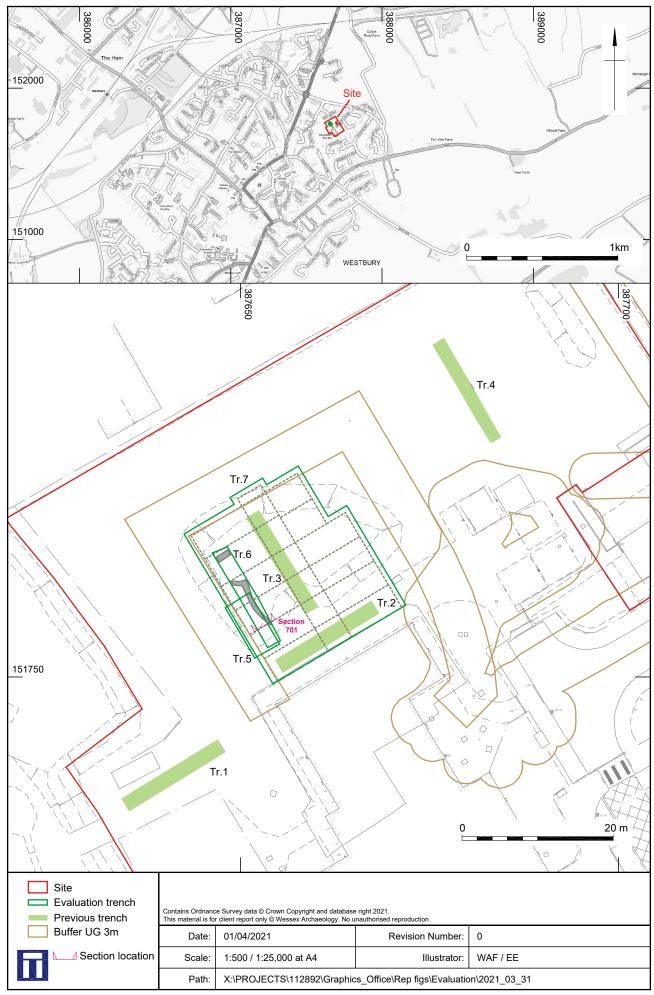
| Project name | Bitham Brook Phase 2, Archaeological Evaluation |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Short description of the project | Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Wiltshire Council, to undertake an archaeological evaluation and watching brief of a 2.16 ha parcel of land located at Bitham Brook Primary School, Westbury, Wiltshire. No archaeological features or deposits were found. |
| Project dates | Start: 26-10-2020 End: 23-03-2021 |



| Previous/future work | Yes / Not known |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Any associated | 112892 - Contracting Unit No. |
| project reference codes | |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | None |
| Current Land use | Community Service 1 - Community Buildings |
| Monument type | NONE None |
| Significant Finds | POT Medieval |
| Significant Finds | POT Post Medieval |
| Methods & techniques | """Sample Trenches""" |
| Development type | Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.) |
| Prompt | National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF |
| Position in the planning process | After full determination (e.g. As a condition) |
| Project location | |
| Country | England |
| Site location | WILTSHIRE WEST WILTSHIRE WESTBURY Bitham Brook Primary School |
| Postcode | BA13 3AU |
| Study area | 2.16 Hectares |
| Site coordinates | ST 387695 151785 50.932251875059 -2.871429423336 50 55 56 N 002 52 17 W Point |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 60m Max: 61m |
| Project creators | |
| Name of Organisation | Wessex Archaeology |
| Project brief originator | Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body |
| Project design originator | Wessex archaeology |
| Project director/manager | Bill Moffat |
| Project supervisor | Steve Froud |
| Project supervisor | Tom Dawkins |
| Project supervisor | Eva Estela Jaume |
| Project archives | |
| Physical Archive recipient | Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre |
| Physical Archive ID | 112892 |
| Physical Contents | "Ceramics" |
| Digital Archive recipient | Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre |
| Digital Archive ID | 112892 |
| Digital Contents | "other" |



| Digital Media available | "Images raster / digital photography","Text" |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Paper Archive recipient | Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre |
| Paper Archive ID | 112892 |
| Paper Contents | "other" |
| Paper Media available | "Report" |
| Project bibliography | |
| 1 | |
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | Bitham Brook Phase 2, Archaeological Evaluation |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Froud, S. |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Estela Jaume, E. |
| Other bibliographic details | 112892.03 |
| Date | 2020 |
| Issuer or publisher | Wessex Archaeology |
| Place of issue or publication | Wessex Archaeology - Salisbury |
| Description | A4 bound client report |
| URL | ttp://www.oasis.ac.uk |
| Entered by | Eleanor Legg (e.legg@wessexarch.co.uk) |
| Entered on | 8 April 2021 |
| | |



Site location and trench plan



Plate 1: Proposed location for Trench 2, from the north-east.



Plate 2: Proposed location for Trench 3, from the north.

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|----------|---|---|------------------|-----|
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Plate 3: Trench 4 from the south-east. Scales: 1 and 2 metres.



Plate 4: South-west facing section, Trench 4. Scale: 1 metre.

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Plate 5: Trench 6 from the south-east. Scales: 1 and 2 metres.



Plate 6: Footings in Trench 7 from the NW. Scales: 1 and 2 metre.

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Plate 7: Representative section of site from NW. Scale: 1 metre.

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