



WT0605,
Junior Ranks Dining Centre,
Land Warfare Centre,
Warminster, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**WT0605
JUNIOR RANKS DINING CENTRE
LAND WARFARE CENTRE
WARMINSTER
WILTSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

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PLANNING APPLICATION REF.		NGR		388613 146389	

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned on behalf of Mansells Construction Services Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with development at the Land Warfare Centre, Warminster, Wiltshire.

The development comprised the construction of a new Junior Ranks Dining Hall with associated landscaping and access. The development formed part of the wider Project Allenby/Connaught proposals, which sought to comprehensively redevelop the barrack accommodation and facilities within a number of military bases in the Salisbury Plain area.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief.

Significant levels of modern truncation caused by the previous construction related activity within the site has significantly reduced the potential for the survival of any archaeological features in the northern portion of the site; the degree of this truncation appeared to be somewhat reduced in the southern portion of the site.

The fieldwork was conducted during March and April 2012.

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Acknowledgements

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Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank David Vaughan of Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service for his assistance.

The report was compiled by Stephen Beach. The illustrations were prepared by Ken Lymer and Kitty Foster. The fieldwork was conducted by Steve Thompson and Stephen Beach. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

**JUNIOR RANKS DINING CENTRE
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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned on behalf of Mansells Construction Services Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with development at the Land Warfare Centre (LWC), Warminster, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 388613 146389, hereafter referred to as 'the Site' (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The development comprises the construction of a new Junior Ranks Dining Hall with associated landscaping and access. The development forms part of the wider Project Allenby/Connaught proposals, which seek to comprehensively redevelop the barrack accommodation and facilities within a number of military bases in the Salisbury Plain area.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site is located within the Land Warfare Centre, to the north-east of Warminster and is situated on the south-east facing slopes of Cradle Hill.
- 1.2.2 The British Geological Survey map for the area (1:50,000 Solid and Drift Series, sheet 281) indicates that the underlying geology of the Site consists of Lower Chalk.
- 1.2.3 The Site lies at an elevation of approximately 132m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 An Archaeological Desk-based Study was prepared in advance of the works (Entec 2002) and provided a comprehensive synthesis of the known archaeological and historical resource within the Site.

2.2 Background

- 2.2.1 The Site is situated on the western boundary of the extensive and highly significant prehistoric funeral and monumental landscape of the Salisbury Plain, featuring many important sites and find spots of a predominantly Neolithic and Bronze Age date.
- 2.2.2 The local landscape is dominated by the Iron Age hillfort of Battlesbury Camp, c. 900m to the south-east of the Site. Excavations undertaken by Wessex Archaeology to the north of the hillfort recorded extensive Late

Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement evidence comprising post-built structures, pits, ditches, burials and structured ritual deposits. An Iron Age earthwork enclosure on Mancombe Down is situated approximately 400m to the north-east of the Site. Additionally, an extensive combe lynchet system, representing medieval or earlier farming, was recorded on Oxendean Down, c. 700m to the east of the Site.

- 2.2.3 The archaeological evaluation works, undertaken at the Land Warfare Centre by Wessex Archaeology in 2003, comprised the mechanical excavation of seven trenches (Wessex Archaeology 2003a and 2003b). A single undated linear feature was identified in close proximity to the Site. In addition, a buried soil horizon was recorded at a depth of between 1.2m and 1.4m below the current ground level, in a trench located immediately to the east of WT0609 and WT0610. The buried soil overlay a deposit of soft chalky clay observed to a maximum depth of 2.1m below the current ground level.
- 2.2.4 No archaeological features or finds were identified during a watching brief (WA 2010) undertaken in the north-east of the camp in 2010
- 2.2.5 The Land Warfare Centre was first recorded on the Ordnance Survey map of 1960/1961, where a number of the present buildings are .

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was designed to establish within the constraints of the agreed strategy the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, and depth of any surviving archaeological remains which may have been affected by the proposed development.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was concerned with any groundworks within the Site which were conducted beneath the present ground surface.
- 4.1.2 The mechanical excavation was undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket and wherever practicable, under constant supervision by Wessex Archaeology.
- 4.1.3 The watching brief was conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the *Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008).
- 4.1.4 A digital photographic record of each individual test pit was maintained using a digital camera of 12.1 megapixels resolution.

5 FIELDWORK RESULTS

- 5.1.1 Brief soil and stratigraphic descriptions including a NGR grid reference for the location of each sequence can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.1.2 No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the groundwork within the Site.

5.1.3 The initial phase of groundwork comprised the removal of the overlying topsoil across the entire Site. The topsoil deposits were found to be between 0.20-0.40m deep and were sealing topsoil derived re-worked or re-deposited layers contained large quantities of modern ceramic building material (CBM) and other modern construction or demolition debris. This stratigraphic sequence is typical of modern disturbance.

5.1.4 Much of the north-eastern portion of the Site had been subjected to extensive modern truncation and landscaping, presumably during previous phases of construction within the Land Warfare Centre (**Figure 1**). This is likely to have removed or badly damaged any archaeological features or deposits which might have been present in this portion of the Site.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief.

6.1.2 The significant levels of modern truncation caused by the previous construction related activity within the Site has significantly reduced the potential for any archaeological features. The degree of this truncation appears to be somewhat reduced in the southern portion of the Site.

7 ARCHIVE

7.1 Preparation and Deposition

7.1.1 The complete Site archive, which will include paper records and photographic records, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Wiltshire Museum Service, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007).

7.1.2 All archive elements are marked with the site code (84670), and a full index has been prepared. The archive comprises the following:

- 1 A4 File
- Photographs

7.1.3 Arrangements will be made with the Museum of Salisbury and South Wiltshire for the deposition of the archive. Provision has been made for the cost of long-term storage.

7.1.4 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).

7.2 Copyright

7.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however,

will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

7.3 Security Copy

- 7.3.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Archaeological Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology. Alternatively, the security copy may be in the form of a pdf file.

8 REFERENCES

- ENTEC 2002: Defence Estates: Project Allenby. Archaeological Desk-top Assessment (2 vols.). Unpublished client report
- IfA 2008: Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief. Institute for Archaeologists
- Wessex Archaeology 2003a: Project Allenby/Connaught: Archaeological Evaluation: The Salisbury Plain Camps: Warminster Training Centre and Battlesbury Barracks. Report reference: 52279.3
- Wessex Archaeology 2003b: Aspire Warminster/Bulford, Wiltshire. Archaeological Evaluation Report. Report reference: 54257.01
- Wessex Archaeology 2010: WXC605, WT0609 and WT0610, Land Warfare Centre, Warminster, Wiltshire Archaeological Watching Brief Report, Reference: 74402.01

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLE

Stratigraphic Sequence (Northern portion of Site)		NGR (centre point): 388612 146411
Context Number	Soil Description	Depth below ground level (m)
100	Topsoil	0-0.20
101*	Re-worked topsoil – mid to light brown silty clay with inclusions of common modern building rubble	0.20-0.40
102	Lower or coombe chalk – mid to light grey brown powdery chalk	0.40→

*At equivalent stratigraphic level (aOD) to contexts 202, 301 and 402 (see below).

Stratigraphic Sequence (Centre of Site)		NGR (centre point): 388617 146393
Context Number	Soil Description	Depth below ground level (m)
201	Modern made ground – modern CBM and hardcore	0-1.40
202*	Re-worked topsoil – mid to light brown silty clay with inclusions of common modern building rubble	1.40-1.70
203	Disturbed of re-deposited green-brown clay	1.70-2.00
204	Lower or coombe chalk – mid to light grey brown powdery chalk	2.00→

*At equivalent stratigraphic level (aOD) to contexts 102, 301 and 402.

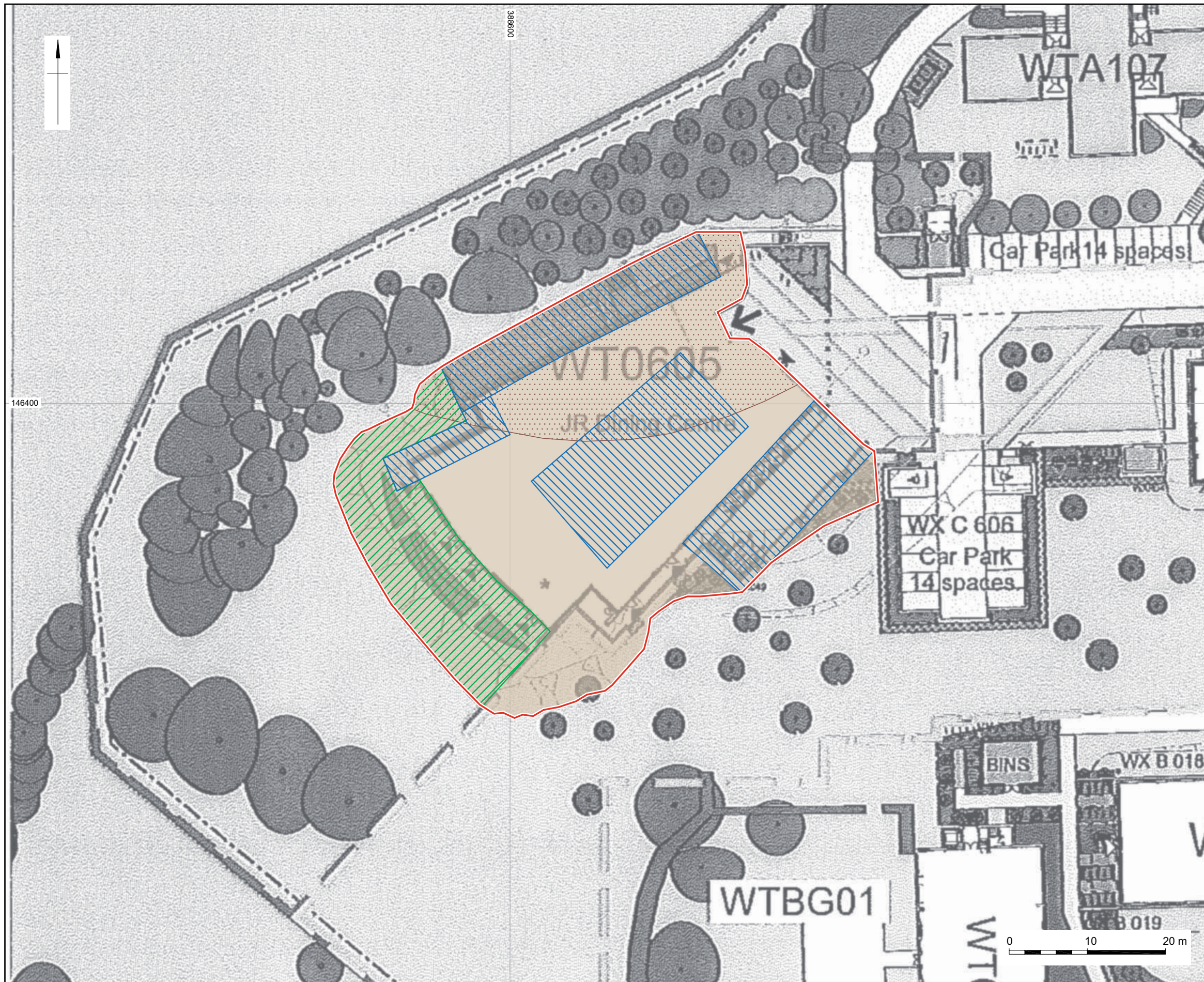
Stratigraphic Sequence (Southern portion of Site)		NGR (centre point): 388617 146393
Context Number	Soil Description	Depth below ground level (m)
300	Topsoil	0-0.20
301*	Re-worked topsoil – mid to light brown silty clay with inclusions of common modern building rubble	0.20-0.40
302	Lower or coombe chalk – mid to light grey brown powdery chalk	0.40→

*At equivalent stratigraphic level (aOD) to contexts 102, 202 and 402.

Stratigraphic Sequence (North-western portion of Site)		NGR (centre point): 388586 146392
Context Number	Soil Description	Depth below ground level (m)
401	Modern made ground – modern CBM	0-1.70

	and hardcore	
402*	Re-worked topsoil – mid to light brown silty clay with inclusions of common modern building rubble	1.70-2.00
403	Tree root disturbance	2.00-2.20
404	Lower or coombe chalk – mid to light grey brown powdery chalk	2.20→

*At equivalent stratigraphic level (aOD) to contexts 102, 202 and 301.



- Site
- Tree removal watching brief
- Area watched after ground level change
- Topsoil strip watching brief
- Previously truncated ground

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Site location plan

Figure 1



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