Wessex Archaeology

37 Fowler's Road
Salisbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Fieldwork Report

Ref: 79780.02

November 2011

37 Fowler's Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2QS

Archaeological Evaluation
Fieldwork Report

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Quality Assurance

Site Code	79780	**Accession Code**	Tbc	**Client Code**	n/a
Planning Application Ref.	S/2011/1149/OUT	**NGR**	415090 129824		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	E	P A Harding	N D Truckle		09/11/2011
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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

37 Fowler's Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2QS

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Contents

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Swift Architectural Design to undertake archaeological evaluation of land proposed for redevelopment to the rear of 37 Fowler's Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2QS (the Site - centred on OS NGR 415090 129824). The archaeological works were required as part of a package of measures in response to rejection of an outline planning application (S/2011/1149/OUT) to erect 3 no. three bedroom detached houses on the proposed Site.

Previous research examining the provenance of all known Lower and Middle Palaeolithic finds from Southern England identified over 300 hand axes recovered from the Higher Terrace Gravel forming Milford Hill, making it one of the most prolific sites of the period in Southern England, and certainly the second most prolific such site in Wiltshire. Artefacts are known from all parts of this geological deposit, including considerable numbers from the west facing slope of the knoll and specifically from the general Fowler's Road location, comprising at least 70 of the hand axes recovered.

Three machine-excavated test pits measuring 1m by 2m were excavated, each centred approximately within the footprint of each of the proposed properties. Beneath a relatively uniform sequence of topsoil and thin gravelly subsoil, Pleistocene gravel was encountered to the maximum test pit depth of 1m within Test Pits 1 and 3. The gravel can be characterised as comprising pockets of mixed yellow fine sandy material or yellow-brown clay silt, containing sparse sub-angular flint clasts that graded to dense matrix supported medium/fine, poorly sorted, unbedded, sub-angular flint gravel in orange silty clay, with occasional lenses of virtually stone-free compact yellow brown clay silt. Individual flint clasts were invariably bleached/ patinated, with some pieces vertically aligned.

Test Pit 2, excavated to a maximum depth of 1.5m without encountering solid or drift geology, comprised beneath topsoil a relatively loose unconsolidated mixed fill containing yellow-brown silt with subangular flint gravel, and scattered poorly defined pockets of chalk pellets. The main body of this material trended from southwest to northeast and at a depth of approximately 1m at the south end overlay a deposit of dark silt, which contained fragments of post-medieval/ modern roof tile. It is probable that this test pit was located within a large back-filled post-medieval/modern feature of indeterminate extent and depth: in the context of the location, this is most likely to be a small localised gravel extraction quarry.

The evaluation has confirmed that Pleistocene gravels are present on the Site, though no Palaeolithic artefacts were located therein. In a wider context, the results of the work have indicated that the Pleistocene deposits bear immediate comparison to those recorded during ground works to construct the performing arts centre at the Godolphin School (Harding and Bridgland 1998) and which are known from that work to contain Palaeolithic artefacts, both hand axes and flake tools. Harding and Bridgland (op. cit.) also demonstrated that the gravel deposits represented fluvial deposits of the River Avon that were derived primarily from soliflucted Chalk that had become incorporated into the main river system, represented at the Godolphin School site by small areas of bedded chalky gravel containing water worn clasts.

This description of the deposits at the Godolphin School can be matched to those recorded at Fowler's Road, where the upper part of the sequence was not truncated. However the full depth of the deposits is not known with any certainty. It is likely that the chalk-rich deposits, which included water worn clasts and which were recorded within the relatively unconsolidated post-medieval/ modern fill identified at Test Pit 2, were derived from the base of the fluvial deposits somewhere in the vicinity.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance and co-operation shown throughout this project by Stephen Mankin of Swift Architectural Design, who commissioned the investigations. Wessex Archaeology would also like to acknowledge the assistance shown by James Butcher (Director – H W Whites) during the course of the project. The collaborative role of Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service is also gratefully acknowledged, and in particular Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger (Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service County Archaeologist) who monitored the fieldwork, and Clare King and David Vaughan (Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service Assistant County Archaeologists) who reviewed, commented on and approved the project Written Scheme of Investigation.

The fieldwork was directed in the field by Phil Harding, assisted by Moi Watson. This report was compiled by Phil Harding, edited by Andy Crockett, and the illustrations prepared by Ken Lymer. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andy Crockett.

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Archaeological Evaluation
Fieldwork Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Swift Architectural Design to undertake archaeological evaluation of land proposed for redevelopment to the rear of 37 Fowler's Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2QS (the Site - centred on OS NGR 415090 129824; **Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The archaeological works were required as part of a package of measures in response to rejection of an outline planning application (S/2011/1149/OUT) to erect 3 no. three bedroom detached houses on the proposed Site.

1.2 Scope of Works

1.2.1 The scope of works required the excavation of three machine-excavated test pits, each measuring approximately 1m by 2m, and located within the footprint of each of the proposed properties. All test pits were positioned according to the layout submitted of the proposed development (**Figure 1**).

1.2.2 As an initial measure a Written Scheme of Investigation (the WSI) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology, setting out the methodology to be employed in the proposed archaeological works. This document was submitted to and approved by Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service (WCAS).

1.3 Site location, topography and geology

1.3.1 No. 37 Fowler's Road is a large Victorian villa that is currently undergoing conversion for residential use. The Site forms the rear garden to the property and is currently an unmaintained lawn.

1.3.2 Fowler's Road lies at the southern end of a ridge of land forming the watershed between the valleys of the Salisbury Avon and the River Bourne.

1.3.3 The ridge is capped, at approximately 70m aOD, by deposits of gravel mapped as Higher Terrace Gravel, which extend more or less from St Marks roundabout to the north, to Southampton Rd in the south, with eastern and western limits defined by the railway line/ Wain-a-long Road and Rampart Road/ Tollgate Road respectively.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Palaeolithic

2.1.1 The Southern Rivers Palaeolithic Project (SRPP: Wessex Archaeology 1993) examined the provenance of all known Lower and Middle Palaeolithic finds from Southern England.

This survey plotted the positions of considerable quantities of Palaeolithic material, catalogued in Salisbury and South Wilts Museum, which had been found during development of the area from the mid-19th and early 20th centuries.

2.1.2 Over 300 hand axes are known from the Milford Hill area of Salisbury making it one of the most prolific sites of the period in Southern England, the second most prolific in Wiltshire.

2.1.3 Artefacts are known from all parts of this geological deposit, including considerable numbers from the west facing slope of the knoll and specifically from the general Fowler's Road location, as follows (reference numbers refer to the original SRPP code):

- *SAL-2, No. 25: Milford Hill – Fowler's Road junction; 5 hand-axes*
- *SAL-2, No. 26: Just above Milford Hill – Fowler's Road junction; 10 hand-axes*
- *SAL-2, No. 28: Garden of 32 Fowler's Road; hand-axe*
- *SAL-2, No. 33: "Hillbrow", 31 Fowler's Road; 2 hand-axes*
- *SAL-2, No. 34: Gravel pit (Foley's Pit) north-east of Fowler's Road; at least 50 hand-axes*
- *SAL-2, No. 35: "The Hollies", 39 Fowler's Road; hand-axe*
- *SAL-2, No. 37: 'Angle' between Fowler's Hill and Southampton Road; hand-axe*
- *SAL-2, No. 38: 3 Fowler's Hill; hand-axe*

2.2 Recent investigations in the area

2.2.1 Development work at The Godolphin School in 1995, approximately 200m northeast of the Site (Harding and Bridgland 1998) established for the first time that the deposits on Milford Hill comprise decalcified, fluvial gravels that were laid down by the River Avon. One hand axe was recovered from small scale foundation trenches.

3 AIMS AND METHODS

3.1 Aims and Objectives

3.1.1 The evaluation aimed to identify and characterise the major stratigraphic units and to compare them with those known from the work at the Godolphin School, which were known to contain Palaeolithic artefacts.

3.1.2 The general objectives of the archaeological evaluation were therefore:

- *To confirm the presence of undisturbed geological deposits that are known to contain archaeological remains, specifically Lower Palaeolithic hand axes;*
- *To aid in the early identification of significant archaeological constraints, thereby educing the risk of unforeseen discoveries during construction; and*
- *To identify areas for additional archaeological mitigation as necessary.*

3.2 Methodology

Mechanical evaluation

3.2.1 The three test pits were positioned to examine the footprint of each of the proposed developments. This strategy aimed to evaluate the deposits within each proposed building

and made it possible to reconstruct a transect across the Site tangential to the slope of the knoll.

3.2.2 All test pits were laid out using tapes from fixed points within the boundary of the Site.

3.2.3 The test pits were excavated using a tracked JCB mini-digger (1.6 tonne) fitted with a 1m wide toothless grading bucket. Each test pit measured approximately 2m by 1m, and up to 1m deep in the first instance. The WSI anticipated that a maximum depth of *c*. 1m would be sufficient to resolve the principal aims of the evaluation in the first instance. However, contingency was included for machine-excavated sondages to be excavated through the base of the test pits in the event that further evaluation was necessary to achieve the aims and objectives of the project.

3.2.4 Each test pit was excavated in horizontal spits. These rarely exceeded 0.05m in depth due to the compacted nature of the deposits. The work was directed under constant archaeological supervision by a recognised specialist in Palaeolithic archaeological excavation.

3.2.5 All excavation spoil and heaps were monitored for artefacts. The compact nature of the material made it possible to observe spoil with considerable care, negating the need to employ a systematic sieving programme.

3.2.6 Representative annotated sections from each test pit were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and photographed (see below) once excavation had reached its full depth. A digital photographic record of each test pit was also maintained, including working shots documenting all aspects of the field work and reinstatement.

3.2.7 All test pits were excavated in one sequence, to allow WCAS inspection of all works simultaneously. Test pits were then backfilled level with the pre-existing ground surface and compacted following completion of recording and inspection by WCAS.

Recording

3.2.8 All context numbers were related to the relevant test pit numbers to ensure that a unique project-wide geo-referenced sequence was maintained. All archaeological deposits were recorded on annotated hand-drawn section drawings.

3.2.9 Full written, drawn and photographic records were made of Test Pits 1 and 3. Test pit locations were plotted according to the Site plan supplied by the Client, with only minor adjustments being made to accommodate on-site obstructions (sheds).

3.2.10 A representative hand-drawn and annotated section of Test Pits 1 and 3 were recorded at a scale of 1:10. Test Pit 2 was dug into made-up ground and was recorded by photography but was not drawn. Drawings were made in pencil on permanent drafting film. Written records were included using pro-forma record sheets.

3.2.11 Test pits and sections were levelled to the Ordnance Datum.

Artefact recovery

3.2.12 As noted above, because of the very shallow nature of machine-excavated spits, sieving to aid artefact identification was not required. All spoil from mechanical excavation was scanned for objects relating to human exploitation of the area.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Stratigraphy

Introduction

4.1.1 The three test pits all measured approximately 2m long and 1m wide and were aligned along a transect from northeast to southwest, more or less tangential to the slope at this point. Excavation ceased at a depth of 1m below the ground surface, though a sondage approximately 0.30m wide was excavated through the base of Test Pit 2 to attempt to identify the natural bedrock. This test pit appeared to be located within a large post medieval/modern relatively loosely back-filled feature, and all excavation ceased at 1.5m depth (maximum reach for the excavator) where the filling remained disturbed, and bedrock still not encountered.

4.1.2 All test pits were sealed by approximately 0.30-0.35m of modern dark grey, well rooted, silty loam topsoil that was mixed with a scatter of sub angular flint gravels.

Test Pit 1

4.1.3 This pit was located at the northeastern end of the transect (**Figure 2**). The topsoil horizon, which formed part of an overgrown ornamental flower bed, overlay a thin gravelly subsoil, approximately 0.05m thick. The undisturbed Pleistocene gravel deposits below this (**Figure 2: Plate 1**) comprised pockets of mixed yellow fine sandy material or yellow-brown clay silt, containing sparse sub angular flint clasts that graded to dense matrix supported medium/fine, poorly sorted, unbedded, sub angular flint gravel in orange silty clay.

4.1.4 Individual flint clasts were invariably bleached/ patinated and included some pieces that were aligned vertically. In places the pockets comprised compact yellow-brown clay silt.

Test Pit 2

4.1.5 This was excavated approximately 8m to the southwest of Test Pit 1. The topsoil and subsoil horizons overlay a loose body of material that contained yellow-brown silt with subangular flint gravel, and scattered poorly defined pockets of chalk pellets (**Figure 2: Plate 2**). The main body of this material trended from southwest to northeast and at a depth of approximately 1m at the south end overlay a deposit of dark silt, which contained fragments of roof tile.

4.1.6 Excavation continued below the standard 1m depth using a 0.30m wide bucket to dig a narrow sondage through the base of the test pit to locate the Pleistocene gravels or the natural bedrock. The deposit remained unchanged to a depth of 1.5m, further tile was recovered and excavation ceased with no hint of the full depth.

4.1.7 There was nothing to indicate the full extent of this feature or its original function, although it may have served as a small scale gravel pit during development in the 19th century. The filling of this feature was undoubtedly derived from the Milford Hill area. The presence of yellow silt, sub rounded flint pebbles and water worn chalk are all features of the deposits that were noted by Harding and Bridgland (1998). The presence of chalk is especially notable; this feature provided the most compelling evidence to confirm that the Milford Hill deposits were laid down in a fluvial environment.

Test Pit 3

4.1.8 Test Pit 3 was excavated at the southwest end of the Site. The topsoil and subsoil horizons conformed to those seen elsewhere on the Site. The subsoil horizon comprised

approximately 0.35m of dark grey brown silt loam that was generally stone free but contained subangular flint clasts that merged into the underlying Pleistocene deposits.

4.1.9 Pleistocene deposits were again present to the base of the modern soil profile (**Figure 2: Plate 3**) and were characterised primarily by festoons of densely packed, compacted, poorly sorted, medium–fine subangular flint gravel in a yellow brown silty matrix. Elsewhere they were replaced by compact yellow brown clay silt that was virtually stone free.

4.2 Artefacts

4.2.1 Three fragments of post medieval roof tile were found at a depth of approximately 1m and 1.5m in Test Pit 2. These pieces were noted and photographed, but not retained.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 The archaeological project, using a methodology employing a strategy of machine-excavated test pits to evaluate the deposits to the rear of 37 Fowler's Road, has confirmed that Pleistocene gravels are present on the Site (at least within Test Pits 1 and 3), though no Palaeolithic artefacts were located therein. Test Pit 2 appears to be located within a backfilled post-medieval feature of indeterminate depth and extent; this may be the remains of a small scale localised gravel extraction pit.

5.1.2 In a wider context, the results of the work have indicated that the Pleistocene deposits bear immediate comparison to those recorded during ground works to construct the performing arts centre at the Godolphin School (Harding and Bridgland 1998) and which are known from that work to contain Palaeolithic artefacts, both hand axes and flake tools.

5.1.3 Harding and Bridgland (op. cit.) demonstrated that the gravel deposits represented fluvial deposits of the River Avon that were derived primarily from soliflucted Chalk that had become incorporated into the main river system. This material was represented at the Godolphin School site by small areas of bedded chalky gravel containing water worn clasts.

5.1.4 The gravel at Godolphin had undergone extensive decalcification, which had seriously disrupted the bedding, and was represented by material that varied in character, but was predominantly dark yellow brown flinty gravel in a clayey matrix with pockets of silt and sand. In addition Harding and Bridgland (op. cit.) noted that many of the individual clasts had a sub-vertical orientation which they ascribed to periglacial activity that had deformed the upper part of the deposit.

5.1.5 This description of the deposits at the Godolphin School can be matched to those recorded at Fowler's Road, where the upper part of the sequence was not truncated. However the full depth of the deposits is not known with any certainty. It is likely that the chalk-rich deposits, which included water worn clasts and which were recorded within the relatively unconsolidated post-medieval/ modern fill identified at Test Pit 2, were derived from the base of the fluvial deposits somewhere in the vicinity.

6 ARCHIVE

6.1.1 The project archive has been prepared to the standards set out in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (EH 2006) and in accordance with procedures outlined in *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (MGC 1992) and the requirements of Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum. The written archive is on clean, stable materials, and suitable for photocopying. The materials used

are of the standard recommended in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Evaluation Archives for Long-term Storage* (Walker 1990). The basic computerised data forms part of the Site archive. Wessex Archaeology will finalise an agreement with Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum regarding deposition of the archive.

6.1.2 Details of the Site have also been submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database (see **Section 8**).

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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8 OASIS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Manage Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

Printable version

OASIS ID: wessexar1-112942

Project details

Project name	37 Fowlers Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire
Short description of the project	Machine-excavated trial pit excavation, to evaluate (primarily) Palaeolithic potential in advance of proposed residential development
Project dates	Start: 02-11-2011 End: 02-11-2011
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	S/2011/1149/OUT - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	GRAVEL PIT Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Grab-sampling','Test Pits'
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Position in the planning process	After outline determination (eg. As a reserved matter)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WILTSHIRE SALISBURY SALISBURY 37 Fowlers Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire
Postcode	SP1 2QS
Study area	6.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 15090 29824 51.0670165511 -1.784618451410 51 04 01 N 001 47 04 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 67.27m Max: 67.64m

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	A Crockett
Project supervisor	PA Harding
Type of sponsor/funding body	Consultant
Name of sponsor/funding body	H W White Estate Agents

Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Salisbury and South Wilts Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Diary','Microfilm','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	37 Fowler's Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation Fieldwork Report
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Other bibliographic details	WA report no. 79780.01
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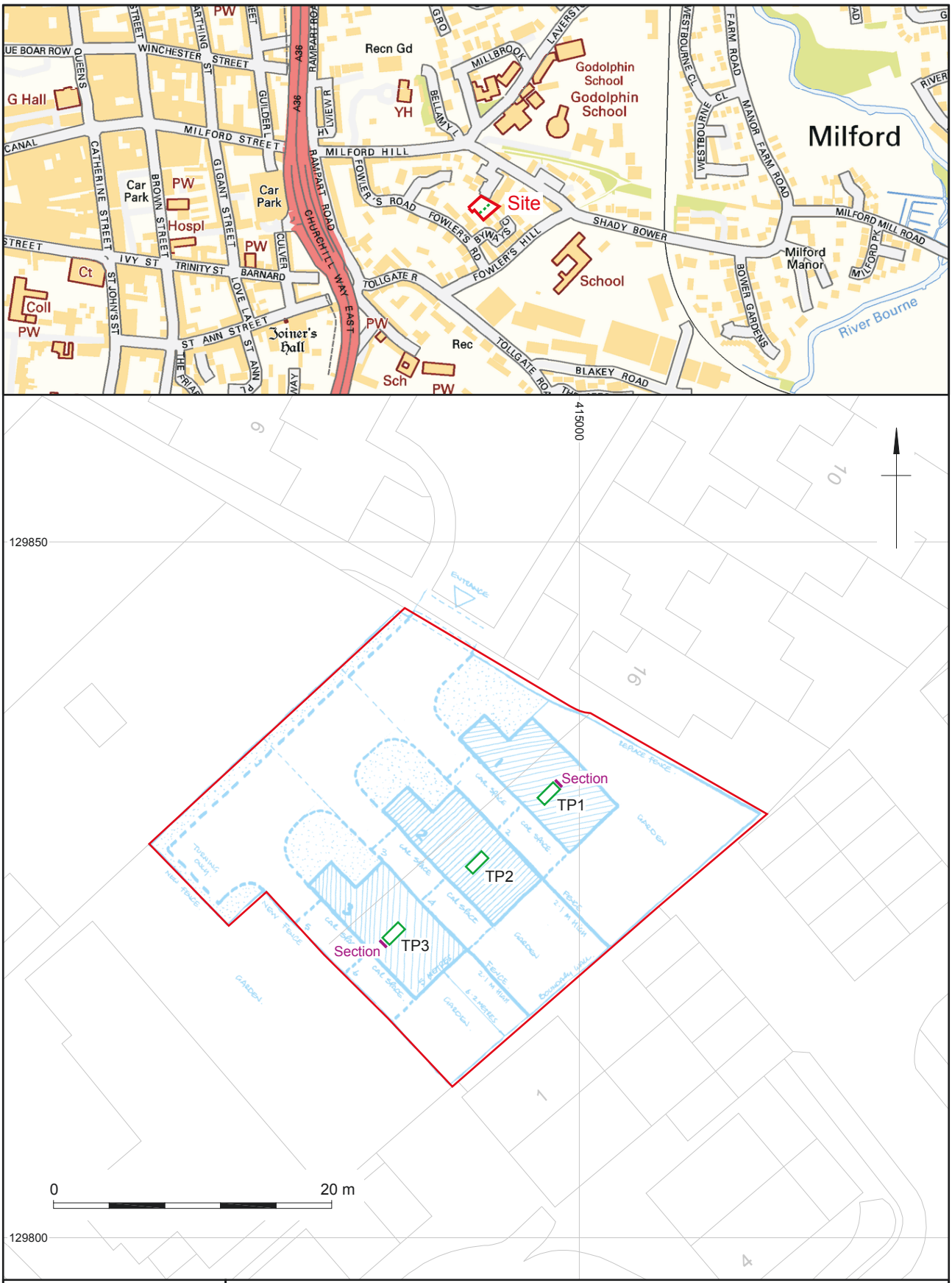
Entered on	11 November 2011



Site

Test pit

Proposed development

Wessex Archaeology

Date:	04/11/11	Revision Number:	0
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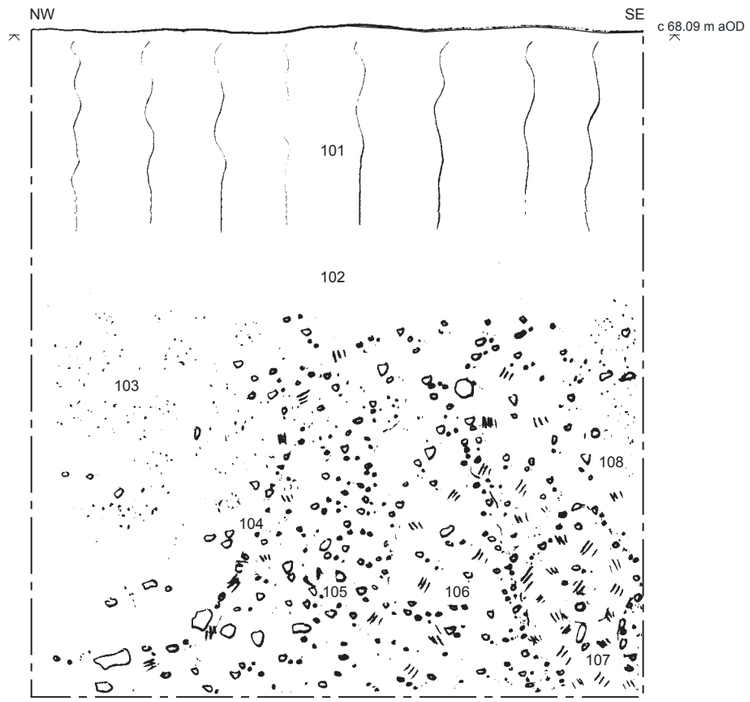
Site location plan

Figure 1

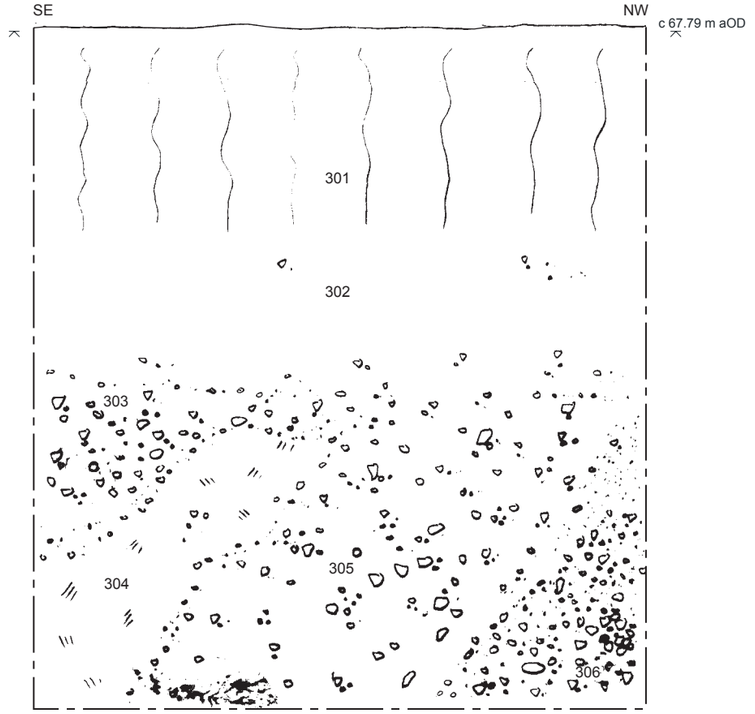
Plate 1: Test pit 1, view from the west

Plate 2: Test pit 2 showing chalk at 1 m depth with sondage to 1.5 m

Plate 3: Test pit 3, view from north-east



Test pit 1 section



Test pit 3 section

Wessex Archaeology

Date:	04/11/11	Revision Number:	0
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Test pits 1, 2 and 3: sections and photographs

Figure 2

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