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Swinton Barracks, Perham Down Garrison, Perham Down, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Ref: 101680.03
October 2013



**Swinton Barracks, Perham Down Garrison,
Perham Down, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Swinton Barracks, Perham Down Garrison, Perham Down, Wiltshire

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Aspire Defence Capital Works to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Swinton Barracks, Perham Down Garrison, Perham Down, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference 425876 148972.

The fieldwork was required by the Assistant County Archaeologist following the submission of a planning application (13/03328/FUL) for two new three storey 40 bed Junior Ranks accommodation blocks and associated infrastructure, along with the relocation of an existing car park.

The evaluation consisted of the mechanical excavation of four trenches measuring between 10m to 20m in length and situated in two areas of the camp. The evaluation was carried out on the 14th to the 15th October 2013.

Although the natural chalk geology was exposed in all four trenches, there were indications that it had been truncated and disturbed, likely by former building work. The most northerly trench also encountered a significant depth of made ground deposits.

The continuation of a presumed prehistoric ditch recorded on the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record and known from previous evaluation trenching within the camp and extant remains (Scheduled Monument number 1009833) to the south was located in one of the southern trenches, though it was substantially truncated. Although a slot was excavated through the feature, it remained undated during this work. Brick walls located in the adjacent trench are thought to be the remains of a guardhouse shown on OS maps from the 1930s to the 1970s.



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Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Aspire Defence Capital Works and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Amy Longworth and Nick Herne in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Claire King (Wiltshire Assistant County Archaeologist) for her advice and assistance and the 22nd Engineer Regiment for their hospitality and forbearance.

The fieldwork was carried out by Naomi Brennan assisted by Andy Sole. This report was written and compiled by Naomi Brennan and illustrations prepared by Elizabeth James. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.



Swinton Barracks, Perham Down Garrison Perham Down, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Aspire Defence Capital Works ('the Client'), to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Swinton Barracks, Perham Down Garrison, Perham Down, Wiltshire centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 425876 148972 (hereafter 'the Site', **Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 A planning application (13/03328/FUL) has been submitted to Wiltshire Council for two new three storey 40 bed Junior Ranks accommodation blocks and associated infrastructure, along with the relocation of an existing car park. The Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council advised that the Site is of archaeological interest and that an archaeological field evaluation should be undertaken ahead of the determination of the planning application to assess the archaeological potential of the Site.
- 1.1.1 As part of Project Allenby/Connaught, comprehensive evaluation of the five Army Camps across the Salisbury Plain Training Area has been previously undertaken. At Perham Down, 38 trenches were machine-excavated and revealed three undated ditches and two pits. The features included a single truncated ditch, of likely prehistoric date, recorded within the area of proposed car parking.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was undertaken on the 14th to the 15th October 2013.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 Perham Down Garrison is positioned on the top of a gentle chalk knoll, to the east of Tidworth, in south-east Wiltshire. Swinton Barracks is in the east of the camp and bounded to the east by Somme Road and to the south by Tidworth Road.
- 1.2.2 This evaluation comprised two areas of investigation. Area 1 was situated within the north-eastern periphery of the camp within currently landscaped areas. Area 2 was situated in the southern part of the camp, to the north of Tidworth Road and in an area of trees and grass.
- 1.2.3 The proposed parking at the south of the Site was on relatively level ground at an elevation of 134m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), but dropped away to the north, lying at an elevation of 130m aOD.
- 1.2.4 The underlying geology comprises Upper Chalk (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1975).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 Perham Down is set within the archaeologically rich and nationally significant Salisbury Plain Training Area, which is noted for its highly preserved prehistoric landscapes. A

cluster of likely Bronze Age barrows are recorded to the south of the camp and further barrows are recorded to the north-west on Pickpit Hill and Windmill Hill

- 2.1.2 A Scheduled linear boundary earthwork (list entry: 1009833) is recorded on Lamb Down to the south-west of the Site. The substantial linear bank and ditch, presumed to be of prehistoric date, crosses the Site from SSW-NNE. Although the monument still survives as an earthwork south of the modern camp, it was also mapped within the Site until being levelled and built upon prior to 1936.
- 2.1.3 Further evidence recorded from aerial photography has identified additional elements of the prehistoric landscape including ditches and trackways. Several find spots are also recorded including isolated sherds of Romano-British pottery, one of which is known from within the camp.
- 2.1.4 An archaeological evaluation (WA 2003) undertaken in response to proposed development at Perham Down comprised the mechanical excavation of 38 trenches and 5 test pits across the camp. The fieldwork recorded three undated ditches, one possible prehistoric ditch and two possible pits. It was considered likely that the prehistoric ditch was a continuation of the Scheduled linear to the south-west, albeit, in a truncated form. A small quantity of finds were also collected during the evaluation and consisted of a single sherd of Romano-British pottery and a quantity of worked flint and animal bone. The evaluation also established significant and extensive truncation within the camp, caused both by area clearance and localised disturbance from foundation and below-ground services.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological field evaluation 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 existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.*
- *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 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 The full detailed methodology of the archaeological works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2013) and is summarised below:

3.2.2 The evaluation comprised the mechanical excavation of four trenches, measuring between 10m and 20m long and 1.9m wide and positioned in two areas of proposed development. The length and position of the trenches was constrained by the space available and the position of known services (**Figure 1**).

3.2.3 The trenches were excavated using a JCB type mechanical excavator fitted with a wide toothless bucket, operating under constant archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation continued in spits through the topsoil, subsoil and any other modern deposits,

until reaching either the uppermost archaeological features or natural deposits, whichever was encountered first.

- 3.2.4 Topsoil was separated from the subsoil and all other arisings, and was stored at a minimum of 1m from the trench edge. The spoil from the trenches was scanned for artefacts. Upon completion of the fieldwork and recording, the trenches were backfilled with the excavated spoil, topsoil last in order to preserve the soil stratigraphy.
- 3.2.5 Where encountered, the archaeological features were investigated by hand, with a sufficient sample of each layer/feature type excavated in order to establish, where possible, their date, nature, character, extent and condition.
- 3.2.6 The trenches, archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system which uses a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Archaeological features and deposits were hand-drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20, including both plans and sections; these were referred to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels were calculated. A representative section of each trench was recorded showing the depth of the overburden deposits.
- 3.2.7 A full photographic record was maintained using digital photography. The photographic record illustrated both the detail and the general context of the principal features and finds excavated as well as the Site as a whole. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 3.2.8 The survey was carried out with a Leica Viva series GNSS unit, using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.
- 3.2.9 A unique project code **101680** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

3.3 Health and Safety

- 3.3.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices took precedence over archaeological considerations at all times.
- 3.3.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974*, the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992* and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

3.4 Best practice

- 3.4.1 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The general stratigraphic sequence was broadly consistent and consisted of between 0.18-0.34m of overlying topsoil either lying directly onto the natural chalk or intervening

modern made ground. Full details of the stratigraphic sequence can be found in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Area 1

- 4.2.1 Trench 1 was the most northerly of the trenches and was situated within a small triangle of landscaped ground between the current car park and an existing road. Due to the space available and the presence of nearby utilities the length of the trench was reduced to 10m. Within the trench a series of modern made ground deposits were recorded suggesting that the ground had been substantially built up. Due to the compact nature of these deposits and the depth of the trench the decision was made to step in the lower part of the trench (**Plate 1**).
- 4.2.2 A north--west – south--east aligned ditch **106** was located in the south-west part of the trench (**Figure 2**), however, matting material within the upper part of this fill indicated that it was a modern feature. Another feature **108** was partially visible to the north of this; investigation suggested that this was a tree-throw with root fragments still in evidence.
- 4.2.3 Although the natural chalk was encountered at a depth of 1.2m it appeared to have been previously stripped as there was no sign of the periglacial weathering typical in this area. Both features identified cutting into the chalk they were considered to be modern in date.
- 4.2.4 Trench 2 lay adjacent to three accommodation blocks within an area previously landscaped; there were originally plans to construct a fourth accommodation block on this site for which some of the ground works were completed (Major Martin Homer *pers. comm.*). The evidence from the trench excavation supports this as although natural chalk was uncovered in the north-west end of the trench, the majority of the trench was characterised by areas of disturbance cut into redeposited or disturbed chalk (**front cover**). These included defined linear areas of stone chippings as well as a partially constructed inspection chamber pit or drain. Where encountered the natural chalk was extremely 'clean' indicating that it had been previously stripped and the upper surface removed.

4.3 Area 2

- 4.3.1 Trench 3 lay just to the north of a trench from the previous evaluation in which a prehistoric ditch had been identified. The continuation of this ditch **303** was identified but severely truncated and cut through by a utility trench. The ditch was south-west – north-east aligned and only the lower two deposits remained (**Plate 2; Section 1**). The lower primary fill **305** was principally composed of redeposited chalk rubble and overlain by a silty secondary fill **304** potentially derived from the erosion of a bank or the feature sides.
- 4.3.2 Immediately to the west of the ditch another utility trench was recorded, containing a wooden baton to which was affixed some metal clips. This was considered to relate to a former cable route. In general, the chalk was extremely weathered and broken within its upper surface suggesting that it may have been previously stripped and left exposed for a period of time.
- 4.3.3 Trench 4 lay just to the east of Trench 3 and was found to contain several brick-built wall bases **404** (**Figure 1, Plate 3**). An area of dark brown silt loam in the western part of the trench was investigated and shown to be a relatively shallow layer cut by the construction cut **405** of the adjacent wall. It may represent an area of levelling or a buried soil horizon and is likely to reflect the need to create a level construction platform.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

- 5.1.1 Apart from demonstrably modern material (which was noted but not retained) no finds were recovered from this evaluation.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 In general all the trenches indicated that there was been significant disturbance on Site with evidence in all the trenches that the natural chalk had previously been exposed and potentially truncated. There was also evidence in Trench 1 of a considerable depth of modern made ground deposits.
- 6.1.2 Trench 2 uncovered evidence of previous groundwork associated with the planned construction of a structure as well as evidence that the ground had been reduced and the natural geology truncated.
- 6.1.3 Trench 3 revealed the continuation of the ditch identified further south in the previous evaluation. Although, unlike previously, there were no overlying made ground deposits it had, as before, been severely truncated.
- 6.1.4 Trench 4 identified structural remains consisting of a series of brick-built wall bases. Historical mapping indicates a succession of structures in this area from the mid-1920s into the 1970s (**Figure 3**). It is likely that the remains identified relate to the guardhouse first depicted on the 1930 OS map and still shown extant on the 1970-1973 OS map. Nevertheless the presence of other structures in the area in the 1920s suggest that the ground had already been disturbed.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

- 7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project currently under the project code **101680**. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

7.2 Archive

- 7.2.1 The complete Site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 7.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the project code **101680**, and a full index will be prepared.
- 7.2.3 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> has been initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms (**Appendix 2**). All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the WHER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

7.3 Copyright

- 7.3.1 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*.
- 7.3.2 This report 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 we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report

7.4 Security Copy

- 7.4.1 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.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

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<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/services/digmap50wms.html>
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9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1: Stratigraphic summaries

bgl = below ground level

TRENCH 1			
Dimensions: 10.20x1.90m		Max. depth: 1.20m	Ground level: 131.12-131.58m aOD
Easting: 425725		Northing: 149175	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
101	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Dark brown silt loam. 2% stone, sub-angular – rounded, <1-4cm. Homogeneous. Humic. Friable but moderately compact. Under grass. Overlies 102.	0.00-0.25 bgl
102	<i>Made ground</i>	Modern made ground. Pale grey-brown silt loam. Mixed deposit. 5% chalk rubble. Occasional clinker and CBM fragments. Very compact. Overlies 103.	0.25-0.50 bgl
103	<i>Made ground</i>	Modern made ground. Re-deposited chalk rubble. Occasional CBM fragments. Fairly homogeneous. Very compact. Overlies 104.	0.50-0.70 bgl
104	<i>Made ground</i>	Modern made ground. Pale grey-brown silt loam. Mixed deposit. 2% chalk fragments. Occasional CBM fragments. Very compact. Overlies 103.	0.70-1.20 bgl
105	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk. Occasional flint nodules. Compact.	1.20+ bgl
106	Cut	North-north-west – south-south-east aligned modern ditch filled with 107. Unexcavated. Cuts 105.	-
107	<i>Deposit</i>	Secondary fill of modern ditch 106 . Mid grey-brown silty clay. 2% chalk, sub-angular – rounded, <1-3cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact. Unexcavated.	-
108	Cut	Cut of tree-throw filled 109. Only partially seen in plan. Cuts 105.	-
109	<i>Deposit</i>	Secondary fill of tree-throw 108 . Mid brown silt loam. 2% chalk and flint, sub-angular – rounded, <1-2cm. Includes root fragments. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact.	-

TRENCH 2			
Dimensions: 15.00x1.90m		Max. depth: 0.30m	Ground level: 131.26-131.39m aOD
Easting: 425753		Northing: 149113	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
201	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Mid brown silty clay loam. 2% chalk and stone, sub-angular – rounded, <1-4cm. Homogeneous. Humic. Friable but moderately compact. Under grass. Overlies 202.	0.00-0.20 bgl
202	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk. Occasional flint nodules. Compact.	0.20+ bgl

TRENCH 3			
Dimensions: 17.30x1.90m		Max. depth: 0.34m	Ground level: 134.57-135.22m aOD
Easting: 425649		Northing: 148952	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
301	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Mid brown silt loam. 2% chalk and stone, sub-angular – rounded, <1-3cm. Homogeneous. Humic. Friable but moderately compact. Under grass. Overlies 302.	0.00-0.34 bgl
302	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk. Occasional flint nodules. Weathered and disturbed.	0.34+ bgl
303	Cut	South-west – north-east aligned ditch filled with 304 and 305. Straight, steep sides, flat base. ~1.0m wide though north-west slightly diffuse. Heavily truncated. Undated. Cuts 302.	0.56 deep
304	<i>Deposit</i>	Secondary fill of ditch 303 . Pale white-brown silt. 10% chalk, sub-angular, <1-3cm. Contains degraded chalk within the sediment	0.35 deep



		matrix. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact. Overlies 305.	
305	<i>Deposit</i>	Primary fill of ditch 303 . Pale white-brown silt. 50% chalk, sub-angular, <1-5cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact. Overlies 303 .	0.35 deep

TRENCH 4			
Dimensions: 19.30x1.90m		Max. depth: 0.40m	Ground level: 133.70-134.28m aOD
Easting: 425681		Northing: 148953	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
401	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Mid brown silt loam. 2% chalk and stone, sub-angular – rounded, <1-4cm. Homogeneous. Humic. Friable but moderately compact. Under grass. Overlies 402.	0.00-0.18 bgl
402	<i>Made ground</i>	Modern made ground. Pale white-brown silt loam. Mixed deposit. 5% chalk rubble. Occasional clinker and CBM fragments. Very compact. Overlies 403.	0.18-0.40 bgl
403	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk. Occasional flint nodules. Slightly disturbed by modern activity.	0.40+ bgl
404	<i>Structure</i>	West-south-west – east-north-east and south-south-west – north-north-east aligned wall remains. Red machine cut air-bricks within pale yellow sandy cement mortar. Within construction cut 405 .	-
405	Cut	Construction cut for structure 404, filled with 404 and 406.	-
406	<i>Deposit</i>	Deliberate backfill of construction cut 405 . Chalk rubble. Moderately compact.	-

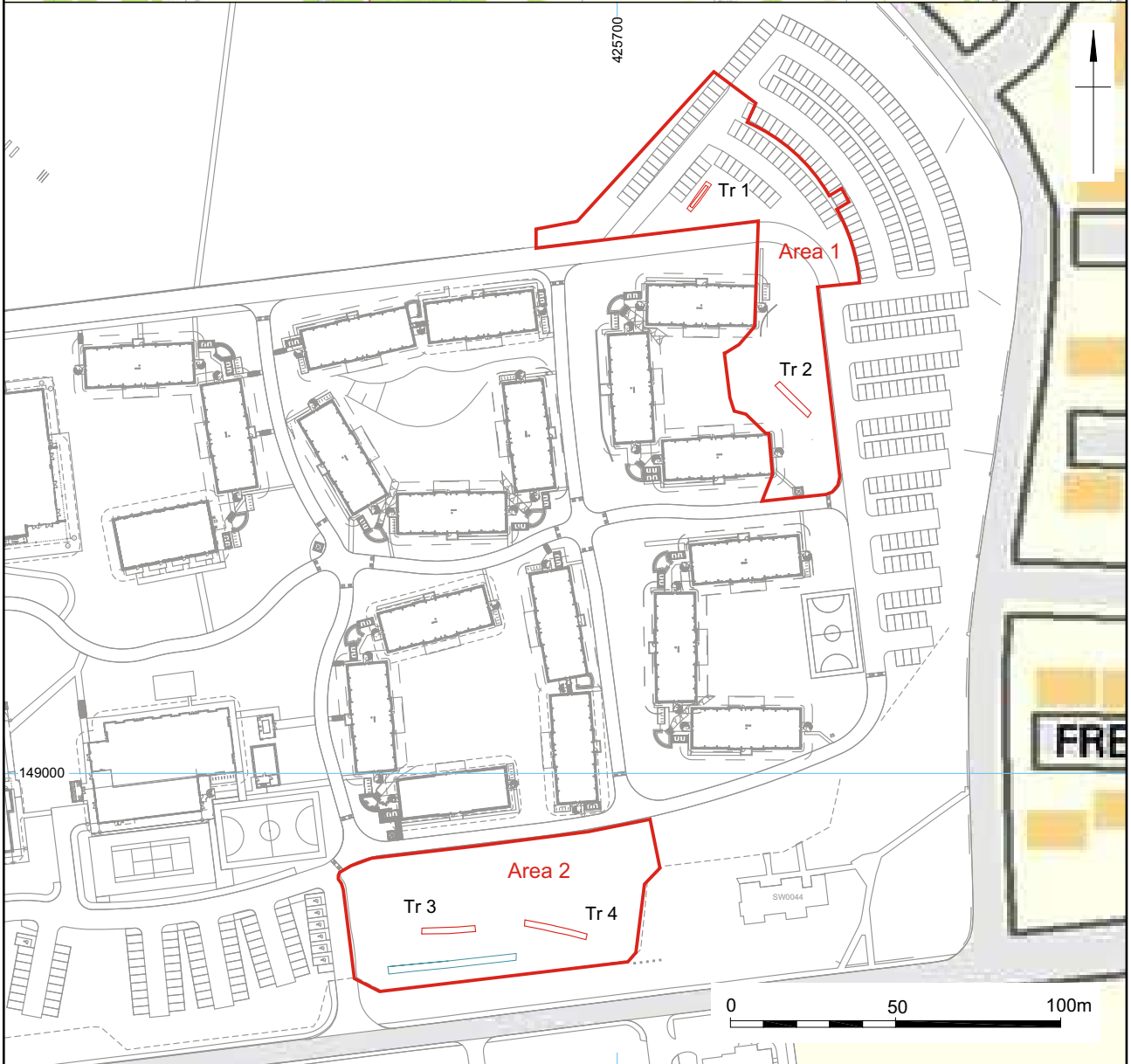






9.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

Swinton Barracks, Perham Down, Wiltshire - Wessex Archaeology

OASIS ID - wessexar1-163077

Versions				
View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	S Farr	s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk	31 October 2013
Completed sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1
Validated sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1
File submission and form progress				
Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s		
Report release delay specified?	Yes	Release delay		Release into ADS library once signed off
Images submitted?	No	Image filename/s		
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename		
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?		



 <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Site outline  Evaluation trench  2003 Evaluation trench 	Digital site data reproduced by permission of Client Contains Ordnance Survey open data © Crown Copyright and database right 2012. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.		
	Date: 28/10/13	Revision Number:	0
	Scale: 1:50000 & 1:2000	Illustrator:	SEJ
	Path: Y:\PROJECTS\101680\Drawing Office\Report figs\Eval\2013_10_28\101680_eval.dwg		

Location of Site and Evaluation Trenches

Figure 1

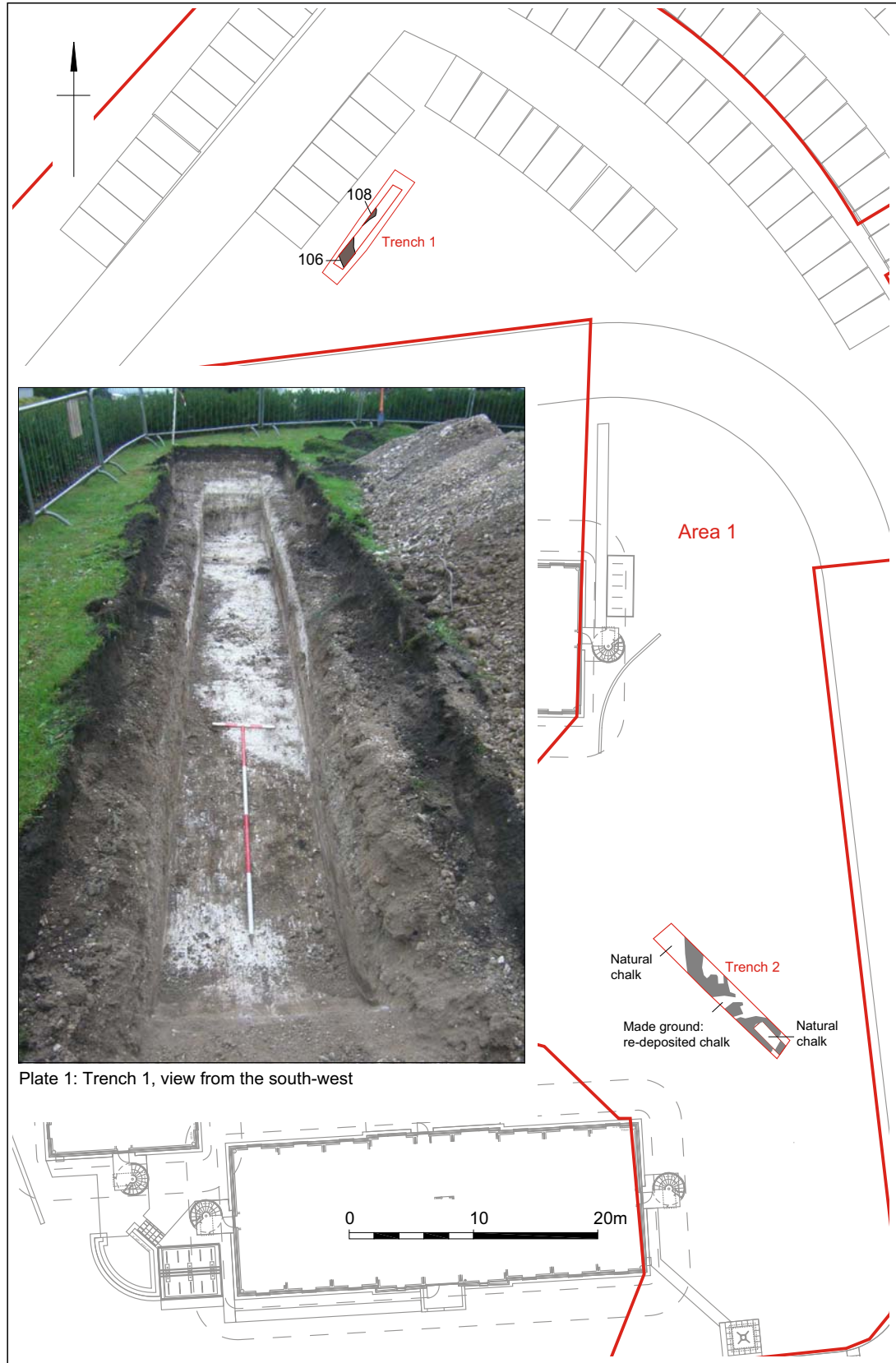
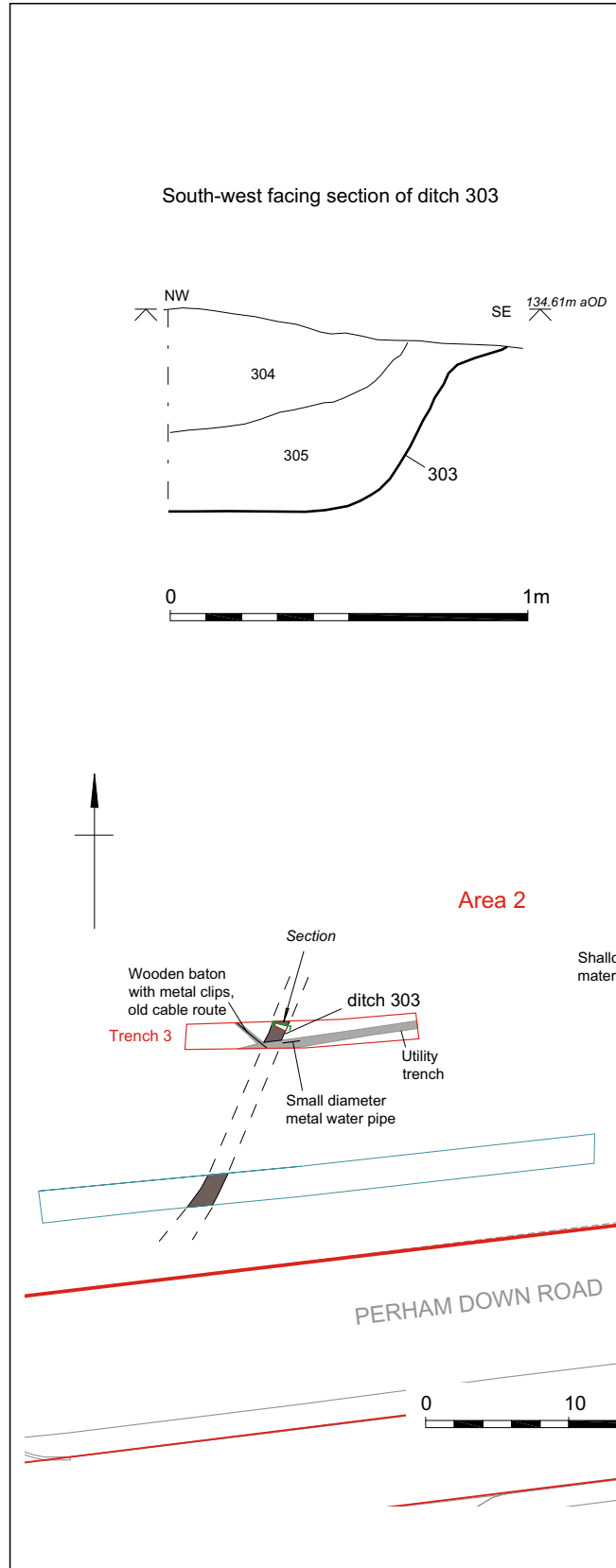


Plate 1: Trench 1, view from the south-west



Trenches 3 and 4

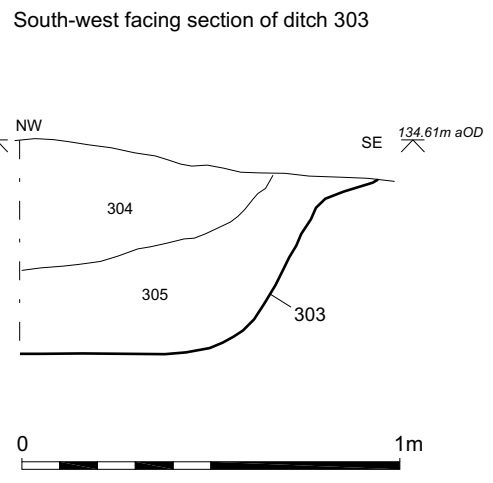


Plate 2: South-west facing section of ditch 303

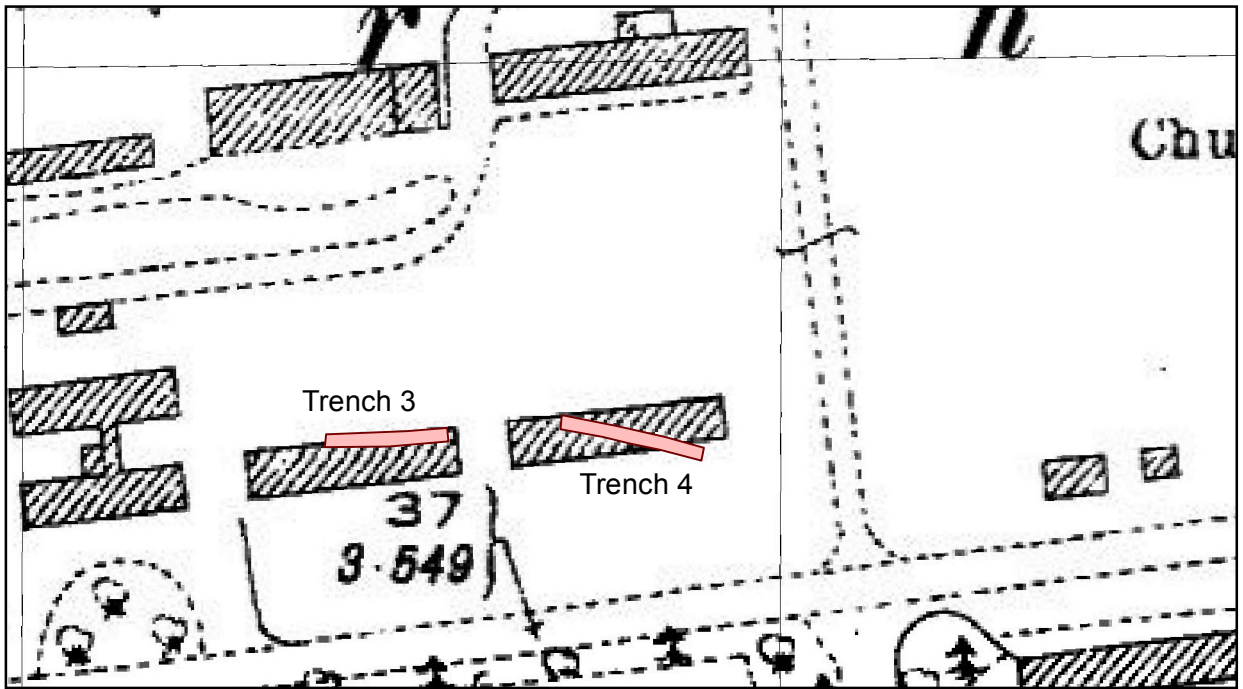


Plate 3: Trench 4, view from the west

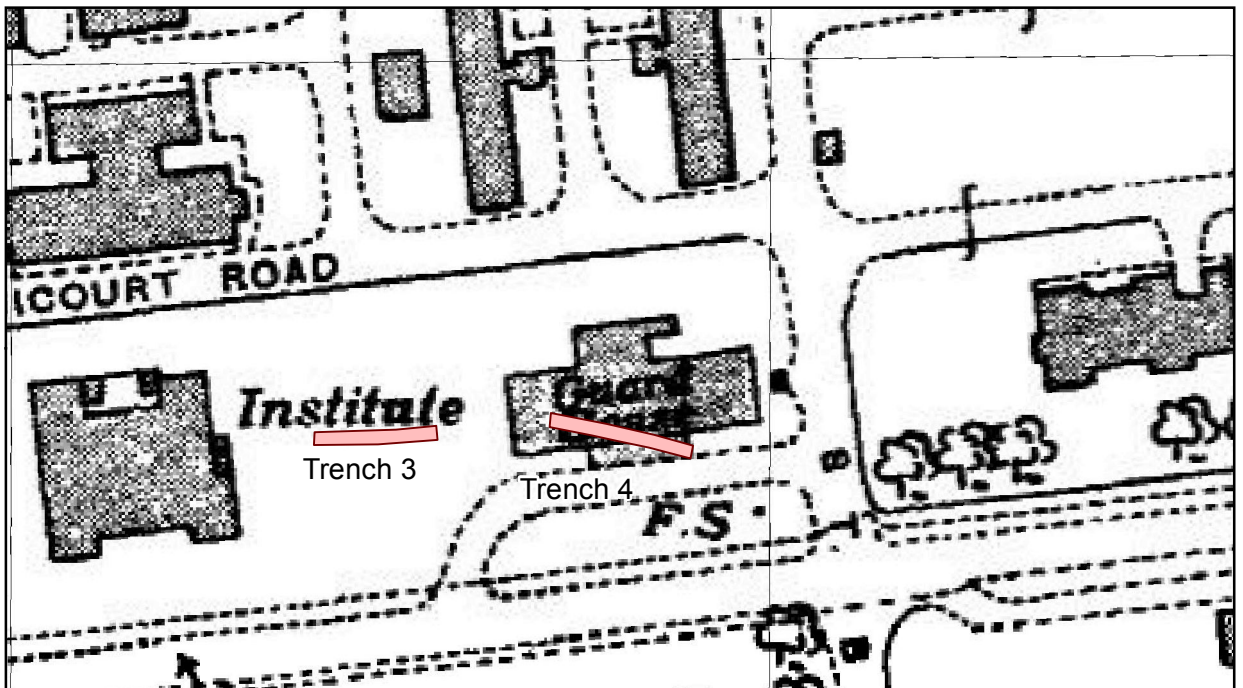
	Evaluation trench		Archaeology		Disturbance
	2003 Evaluation trench		Wall		Utility trench

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
Date:	28/10/13	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	Plans 1:500, section 1:20	Illustrator:	SEJ
Path:	Y:\PROJECTS\101680\Drawing Office\Report figs\Eval\2013_10_28\101680_eval.dwg		



1924 OS map 25"/1:2500



1930 OS map 25"/1:2500

 Evaluation trench

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Date: 17/10/2013

Revision Number: 0

Scale: 1:1000 at A4

Illustrator: NB

Path: X:\PROJECTS\101680\For GO



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