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OP19 Hardstanding SPTA Eastern Infrastructure Project Tilshead, Wiltshire

Archaeological Excavation Report



Ref: 103290.01
March 2014



**OP19 Hardstanding
SPTA Eastern Infrastructure Project
Tilshead, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Excavation Report

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March 2014

Report Ref: 103290.01



Quality Assurance

Project Code	103290	Accession Code		Client Ref.	
Planning Application Ref.		Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	403260 149850		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	E	GSC	AK		27/03/14
File:	X:\PROJECTS\103290\Report\OP19 Hardstanding_report				
File:					
File:					
File:					
File:					

* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by White Young Green to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring (strip, map and record) during ground works associated with the construction of OP19 Hardstanding, part of the Eastern Infrastructure Project, Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire. These works were part of a larger programme to enhance the infrastructure of the training estate, and to improve the connectivity of the training areas across Salisbury Plain. The site was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 403260 149850. The archaeological fieldwork was carried out from 19th to 28th February 2014.

A number of archaeological features representing Romano-British activity were recorded during the works, indicating that the site was used during the 2nd to 4th-centuries AD. These included a number of large pits of unknown function, enclosure ditches and a single inhumation grave, although no structural evidence was recorded. The artefactual assemblage included pottery, a number of quern stone fragments, two stone spindle whorls, a brooch and a single coin. The range of material culture is sufficient to indicate something of the nature of the Romano-British activity in this area, possibly reflecting an economy of mixed farming with limited, small-scale craft/industrial activities. The pottery provides evidence for the trading links, ceramic influences and the types of vessels used.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Martin Brown of WYG for commissioning the archaeological works on behalf of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation. Wessex Archaeology would also like to acknowledge Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council for her advice and assistance during the course of the project. Staff of Landmarc are also thanked for their efforts.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Dave Murdie, Darryl Freer, Mark Stewart, Ed Grenier, Angus Forshaw, Phoebe Olsen, Matthew Kendall and Natalia Hunt. This report was written by Gareth Chaffey. Finds were identified by Rachael Seager Smith, Lorrain Higbee (animal bone) and Jacqueline McKinley (human bone). The environmental samples were processed by Tony Scothern and were assessed by Sarah Wyles. The illustrations were drawn by Karen Nichols, and the project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andy King.



OP19 Hardstanding SPTA Eastern Infrastructure Project Tilshead, Wiltshire

Archaeological Excavation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by White Young Green (WYG) to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring (strip, map and record) during groundworks associated with the construction of OP19 Hardstanding, part of the Eastern Infrastructure Project (EIP), Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 403260 149850 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The works were part of a wider programme of improvements to enhance the infrastructure of the training estate, and to augment the connectivity of the training areas across Salisbury Plain.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological monitoring (WYG Planning and Environment 2014) was prepared by WYG Environment on behalf of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and submitted to, and approved by, the Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council.
- 1.1.4 The monitoring (strip, map and record) was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (amended 2008a) and *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (amended 2008b).
- 1.1.5 The archaeological fieldwork was carried out from 19th to 28th February 2014.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located within the Defence Training Estate (DTE) Salisbury Plain, c. 2km north of Tilshead. The development of the Site includes the construction of a c. 0.3ha Hardstanding measuring 60m by 40m. The area is bounded by a stone trackway to the north, and open pasture to the east and west.
- 1.2.2 The British Geological Survey map for the area shows that the Site lies on Upper Chalk (Sheet 282). The surface topography of the Site is generally flat at an elevation of between 145-147m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), and of open terrain broken intermittently by small woodland plantations.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) is well known for its prehistoric archaeology including round and long barrows, field systems and enclosures. It contains over 2,300 archaeological sites and monuments from all ages. The area has been in military use for over 100 years and contains features associated with the development of military equipment and training techniques over this period.



- 2.1.2 No Scheduled Monuments fall within the boundaries of the development area and aerial photographs of the vicinity do not suggest the presence of archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity. The surrounding landscape, however, contains field systems and enclosures which have been identified from aerial photographs. There are three potential lynchet systems within a few hundred meters of the site: to the southwest (monument number 903832), southeast (monument number 903819) and northwest (monument number 904344) respectively. The recognition of archaeological features relatively close to the site, coupled with the significant evidence for prehistoric to historic use of the Salisbury Plain landscape, suggests that there is at least moderate, if not high potential for archaeological features in the proposed development site.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 Prior to the commencement of the works, a methodology was written (WYG Planning and Environment 2014), which set out the agreed aims of the archaeological monitoring (strip, map and record) and the methods by which these aims would be achieved.

- 3.1.2 The general aim of the monitoring was to provide initial information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the constraints of the proposed ground work programme. Further aims were to:

- *Identify archaeological features and deposits of interest;*
- *Excavate and record any identified archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their significance and the extent of impacts upon them;*
- *Undertake sufficient post-excavation analysis to confidently interpret archaeological features identified during site works;*
- *Report the results of the investigation in the field and subsequent post-excavation analysis and place these results within their local and regional context; and*
- *Compile and deposit a site archive at a suitable repository.*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 The archaeological monitoring was conducted in accordance with the agreed WSI (WYG Planning and Environment 2014). Prior to machining, the area was scanned by WA staff using a cable tracing device. The excavation was stripped to the surface of the natural geology under constant archaeological supervision using a tracked 360° mechanical excavator employing a toothless grading bucket. The topsoil and subsoil was separated and stockpiled at a safe working distance from the stripped area.

- 3.2.2 A sample of potential features and deposits of possible archaeological origin were excavated to ascertain their nature and function and were fully recorded using WA's *pro forma* record sheets. Several features were identified and surveyed, but not excavated.

- 3.2.3 Archaeological features and deposits were hand-drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate. The Site limits and individual archaeological features were located using a Leica Viva series GNSS unit using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network and referenced to OS mapping.



3.2.4 A digital photographic record was maintained throughout the course of the works. The record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features, finds excavated and the Site as a whole.

3.2.5 A unique site code of **103290** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The excavation was successful in identifying a number of archaeological features (**Figure 1**). Limited quantities of artefactual material were recovered, and some of the features remain undated. More detailed descriptions of the archaeological features and deposits can be found in the paper and digital archive.

4.2 Romano-British (AD 43 - 410)

4.2.1 A moderate amount of activity attributable to the Romano-British period was identified during the excavation, although no clear evidence of settlement was found.

Pits

4.2.2 A total of four pits were investigated during the course of the excavation. Pit **1005**, located on the western extents of the Site represented the best example (**Plate 1**). Measuring 2.02m in length, 1.13m in width and 1.00m in depth, the feature contained two distinctly different infilling deposits. The substantial pit contained a range of distinctly Romano-British artefacts including pottery, two ceramic spindle whorls or weights (**ON 3** and **13**), fragments of quern stone (**ON 6** and **14**), as well as a copper alloy T-shaped brooch (**ON 12**). All were recovered from the lower fill of the feature which appeared to have been deliberately discarded in a single backfilling event.

4.2.3 Small pit **1012** lay c. 1.5m to the north of pit **1005** on the western edge of the Site. The feature measured 0.54m in length, 0.22m in width and 0.11m in depth, and contained Romano-British pottery and quern stone fragments which may have acted as packing material.

4.2.4 Pit **1022** was similar in size and shape to pit **1005**. Located just to the right-angled corner of ditch **1044**, the feature was 1.70m in length, 1.16m in width and 0.75m in depth. The feature contained sparse fragments of pottery and worked flint, and had been deliberately backfilled. The pit was south-east of two similar pits, both unexcavated. Its true function was not clear.

Ditches

4.2.5 Ditch **1044** was located in the centre of the Site. The feature, aligned roughly south-east north-west, ran for 24m before turning at a right angle northwards for a further 16m. The ditch terminated at the western end (**1011**), whilst the eastern end was unclear, probably a result of truncation. The ditch was poorly dated, however, with a small pottery assemblage recovered from intervention **1029**. An undated possible shallow hearth pit **1009** was cut through terminus **1011**.

4.2.6 A series of similarly aligned ditches were recorded in the north-eastern corner of the Site, indicating repeated recutting and re-establishment of the boundary. A single intervention noted four separate phases of ditches (**1032**, **1034**, **1036**, **1038** and **1040**) (**Plate 3**), the majority of which contained relatively large quantities of Romano-British pottery.

- 4.2.7 A possible shallow ditch terminus **1003** was recorded on the central northern edge of the Site. Only 2.5m of the feature was noted within the limits of the excavations, and measured 1.5m in width and 0.30m in depth. The terminus was filled with a single silting deposit which contained pottery, stone, quern stone fragments (**ON 2, 5** and **15**) and a single Romano-British copper alloy coin (**ON 1**) of the late 3rd-century AD. The ditch truncated an earlier, circular pit (**1018**) which contained two large stones deliberately (**ON 8** and **9**) deposited at its base (**Plate 2**). Both stones lay above a burnt deposit.

Grave 1025

- 4.2.8 The remains of a burial, male supine and extended (**1026**) in grave **1025** (**Plates 4** and **5**) was recorded in the north-eastern corner of the Site. The grave itself measured 2.15m in length, 0.95m in width and 0.58m in depth and was south-west north-east aligned. The head of the individual was located at the south-western end of the grave, with the left arm extended by the side, and the right arm bent at the elbow with the right hand on the pelvis. The legs and feet were positioned together. The grave was undisturbed and the preservation was generally good. During excavation, an overhang was noted over the left-hand side of the individual.
- 4.2.9 No grave goods or grave furniture were found associated with the inhumation. A single sherd of Romano-British pottery was recovered from the top of the deliberate backfill of the grave which was formed of high levels of redeposited natural and topsoil material.

Features of an uncertain date

- 4.2.10 Pit **1014** was a small, yet well defined, pit isolated in the south-western corner of the Site. Its single fill was strikingly red in colour, possibly a dump of material associated with an episode of burning or heating. No datable material was recovered from the feature.
- 4.2.11 Three lynchet remnants were recorded across the Site. All were roughly north-south aligned and were seen as shallow, but distinct, linear voids in the ground. None were investigated further.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Just under 32kg of finds were retained from 15 contexts in 12 of the excavated features. All the artefacts have been quantified (number and weight of pieces) by material type within each context; this information is summarised in **Table 1**. All material types were then scanned on a context by context basis to assess their date, range and condition. The pottery has provided the primary dating evidence, but, where appropriate, this has been combined with information from other chronologically diagnostic artefact types (e.g. a coin, a brooch and the quern stones) allowing broad spot-dates to be assigned to each context. In general, the artefacts survive in moderately good condition.

5.2 Pottery

- 5.2.1 The pottery is all of Romano-British date. To provide a basic minimum archive, sherds from each context were sub-divided into broad ware groups (e.g. oxidised wares, greywares) or known fabric types (e.g. North Wiltshire colour-coated ware) and quantified by the number and weight of pieces present. A breakdown of the assemblage by ware type is shown in **Table 2**. Spot-dates, used to inform the stratigraphic phasing, were then assigned to each fabric group and, in combination with any dating evidence provided by other artefact types, to the context as a whole.

- 5.2.2 Overall, the mean sherd weight is c. 11.2g; a figure of between 10g and 20g is generally considered 'normal' for Romano-British sites in central southern England. Some surface abrasion and edge damage is apparent among the softer, more lightly fired sherds, but in the main, the assemblage survives in moderate condition, although many of the rims were broken at the neck/shoulder junction.

Table 1: Finds totals by material type (number of pieces/weight in grammes)

Material	No.	Wt.
Animal bone	58	454
Burnt flint	177	1544
Copper alloy	2	11
Fired clay	38	435
Flint	9	43
Human bone	1 individual	
Pottery	173	1824
Slag	4	121
Stone	16	27338

- 5.2.3 Continental imports were limited to a single sherd from a Central Gaulish samian form 18/31 dish (pit **1005**), probably of 2nd-century AD date. British finewares are similarly scarce, restricted to just five sherds (three joining) from North Wiltshire colour-coated ware beakers, one with barbotine scale decoration, found in ditch 1007. Evidence from other sites in Wiltshire (Anderson 1978, 383; Seager Smith 2001, 240-41) indicates that these wares were made c. AD 125 – 140/150, perhaps over the lifespan of a single potter.
- 5.2.4 The oxidised wares occurred in a variety of fabrics containing variable quantities of sand and/or mica; many were abraded, but most probably derived from relatively local sources (e.g. Anderson 1980, 55; Tomber and Dore 1998, 192; Hartley 2001, 223; Seager Smith 2001, 238, fabric 15). Rims were limited to three necked jar/bowl sherds (ditch **1003**), all broken at the neck/shoulder junction but possibly from the same vessel, and a single piece from a small, neckless jar or beaker with a flared rim (ditch **1036**).
- 5.2.5 The remaining, reduced, coarseware fabrics included the entire range of coarse, utilitarian 'kitchen' vessels as well as finer beakers and bowls for use at table. These were dominated by the sandy greywares, made in the Savernake Forest (Hopkins 1999, fabric 5), at Purton and other kilns to the west of Swindon (Anderson 1979, 14) and on the Greensand ridge to the north and west of the county (e.g. Rogers and Rodham 1991; Anderson 1979, fig.2, Broomsgrove kiln) from the 2nd-century AD onwards, as well as by the major regional industry in the New Forest during the later 3rd and 4th-centuries AD. Vessel forms include bead, everted and hooked rimmed jars, as well as pieces from two shallow, plain rimmed dishes (pit **1005**) and a rope-rimmed storage jar (ditch **1040**), certainly of New Forest origin (Fulford 1975, 103, type 40.3). Two bases, one flat and from a jar, the other a fine, burnished footring base from a bowl, had been deliberately trimmed to form roughly circular discs. Both came from pit **1005**.
- 5.2.6 Most of the Savernake-type wares occurred as thick-walled storage jar sherds in the hard, Romanised, lighter coloured versions of this fabric, made Whitehill and Toothill Farms to the west of Swindon (Anderson 1979, 13) as well as in the Savernake Forest itself, from the later 1st until at least the 3rd-century AD, if not beyond. Two sherds of this ware, again from pit **1005**, had been made into spindle whorls or weights (**ON 3** and **13**). The South-east Dorset Black Burnished wares, including rims from everted rim jars (Seager Smith

and Davies 1993, 231, types WA 2 and 3) also span the period from the 2nd – 4th-centuries AD, while the single sand and fine flint-tempered sherd is probably of earlier Roman date.

- 5.2.7 Overall, the assemblage contains the usual range of fabrics and forms typical of relatively small-scale, rural farming communities in the vicinity (e.g. Swan 1971; Mephram 1993; 1999; Millard 1996; Seager Smith 1996; 2006). The only notable absences were the Late Roman finewares and mortaria from the New Forest and Oxfordshire industries, although this is likely to be the result of assemblage size. The assemblage is predominantly of 2nd – 4th-century AD date, but only four of the feature groups could be more closely dated, pit **1005** and ditches **1003**, **1036** and **1040** all being of later 3rd to 4th century AD date.

Table 2: Pottery totals by ware type

Ware	No.	Wt.
Central Gaulish samian	1	6
Greyware	109	1106
N Wilts colour-coated ware	5	11
Sand and flint-tempered ware	1	7
Oxidised ware	16	71
Savernake-type wares	18	442
SE Dorset Black Burnished ware	23	181
Total	173	1824

5.3 Copper alloy

- 5.3.1 The only metalwork consisted of two copper alloy objects. One, a radiate *antoniniani* coin (**ON 1**) of the late 3rd-century AD, came from ditch **1003** and probably represents a contemporary, 'barbarous' copy of the 'official' coinage, possibly struck to compensate for gaps in the supply of coinage to Britain and to provide sufficient small change for the province's needs. It is unclear whether these copies were officially sanctioned, if at all, but they are not uncommon as site finds, and seem to have circulated in the same fashion as the officially struck coins.
- 5.3.2 The second object, a hinged, T-shaped brooch (**ON 12**), survived intact and in almost perfect condition despite occurring residually in pit **1005**. A comparable brooch is known from Wanborough and the type, possibly made near Charterhouse-on-Mendip, Somerset, belongs within the second half of 1st or early 2nd-century AD (Butcher 2001, 57, fig. 24, 105).

5.4 Fired clay

- 5.4.1 Most of the fired clay came from ditch **1003** (10 pieces, 96g) and pit **1005** (23 pieces, 279g). These were all made in fine, slightly micaceous fabrics tempered with moderate amounts of poorly-sorted calcined flint up to 7mm across, and probably derive from a single clay disc or plate. One of the pieces from this feature (recorded as **ON 4**) was 32mm thick, while another from the same or a similar object, found in ditch **1003**, was 37mm thick. Although thicker than most, similar objects have been recorded on other sites in the vicinity (Coe, Jenkins and Richards 1991; Mephram 1993, fig. 13, 2 and 3; Seager Smith 1996, 58, Allen and Seager Smith 2006, 122), generally associated with Late Roman pottery. Suggested functions include use as lids for cheese presses (Miles 1978, 78) or storage jars (Lambrick and Robinson 1979, fig. 28,124-7), as 'kiln furniture' in domestic ovens or hearths or as "hot plates" for keeping food warm at table (Perrin 1999, 124). Similar items have also been found associated with pottery kilns (Hopkins 1999,

plate 3; Perrin 1999, fig. 74, 503, 504), and locally at Durrington (Wessex Archaeology 2012), although there is no other evidence to suggest ceramic production at this site.

- 5.4.2 The remaining pieces (post-hole **1018** and ditch **1040**) were made in oxidised, flint-tempered fabrics and consisted of consisted of small featureless scraps, probably of structural origin.

5.5 Stone

- 5.5.1 In addition to six quern stone fragments (**ON 2, 5** and **15** – ditch **1003**; **ON 6** and **14** – pit **1005**; **ON 7** – post-hole **1013**), the stone assemblage included ten pieces (17986g) with no obvious signs of working. The two largest of these, consisting of a flattish, slab-like piece of Greensand (**ON 8**) and an irregularly-shaped piece of fine white limestone, perhaps from the Vale of Wardour (**ON 9**), both had weathered surfaces and had been deliberately positioned in the base of pit **1018** (**Plate 2**). This feature was cut by ditch **1003**, and as no other artefacts were recovered, a prehistoric date remains a possibility.

- 5.5.2 Four of the other pieces without signs of working or utilisation consisted of relatively thin shelly limestone fragments (385g) probably from the Upper Purbeck Beds in the Vale of Wardour. These were found in ditch **1003** and it is possible that they derive from polygonal roof tiles; a common roofing material on other Salisbury Plain sites (e.g. Hayward 2006, 135; Marter Brown and Seager Smith 2011, 45). The other four pieces, all Greensand, came from pit 1012 (3 pieces, 108g) and ditch 1036 (1 piece, 93g).

- 5.5.3 All three of the quern fragments from ditch **1003** were made in hard, dense sandstone with a reddish hue, possibly a fine Quartz Conglomerate from the Forest of Dean area. One (**ON 5**) belongs to Curwen's (1937, 146) late or post-Roman disc-type quern, one (**ON 15**) was of rotary type, while the third (**ON 2**) with part of only one smoothed, slightly concave surface surviving, could be from a saddle quern or rubstone. The two fragments (**ON 6** and **14**) from pit **1005** were also from disc-type querns, both made from hard, fine-grained, red sandstone, possibly fine Greensand. The final piece, of Quartz Conglomerate from pit **1012**, came from a stone at least 50mm thick but it remains unclear whether it is complete (a disc-type quern) or a flake from a thicker, rotary stone. Similar querns are also known from other sites in the vicinity (e.g. Every 2006, 136; Marter Brown and Seager Smith 2011, 45-7).

5.6 Other finds

- 5.6.1 The struck flint flakes all occurred residually, in contexts with pottery and other artefacts of Romano-British date (ditch **1003**, pit **1022** and gully **1032**), but their presence serves to highlight the potential for further prehistoric activity in the area. One possible candidate is pit **1014**. All the burnt flint, generally interpreted as indicative of prehistoric activity, was recovered from this feature, but unfortunately no other artefacts were found.
- 5.6.2 Two small pieces (29g) of fuel ash slag or vitrified hearth lining came from pit **1005**, while iron smithing slag (2 pieces, 92g) was found in the upper fill of ditch **1036**. All are likely to be of Romano-British date.

5.7 Human bone

- 5.7.1 Human bone from the remains of a single unaccompanied burial (**1026**) was subject to assessment. The burial position (supine and extended) and associated features suggest a Romano-British or post-Roman date for the interment, but this cannot currently be confirmed (the fragment of residual Romano-British pottery in the upper fill could have infiltrated at any time).

- 5.7.2 The remains were subject to a rapid scan to assess the condition of the bone, demographic data, potential for recovery of skeletal indices, and the presence of pathological lesions. Assessments of age and sex were based on standard methodologies (Beek 1983; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). Grading for preservation of the unburnt bone follows McKinley (2004, fig 6).
- 5.7.3 The contents of the deep grave (**1025**; 0.58m) were undisturbed. The bone is in good visual condition (Grade 1), with limited post-depositional fragmentation and c. 99% skeletal recovery.
- 5.7.4 The remains represent those of a large, robust adult male c. 40-55 years of age at death. Numerous pathological lesions were observed including moderate-extensive dental lesions (calculus, ante mortem tooth loss, dental caries and an abscess) the patterns of which may provide insights into the nature of the individual's diet and potentially, thereby, their social status. Lesions indicative of various forms of joint disease were seen in the spinal and extra-spinal joints including osteoarthritis (cervical and thoracic spine), degenerative disc disease (all areas of the spine), and osteophytes (distal left femur & patella, glenoid fossae, right distal humerus and proximal ulna, acetabulae, rib facets, and thoracic vertebrae body surface margins). These lesions, together with enthesophytes (new bone at tendon/ligament insertions; seen in patellae, calcanea and iliac crests) are often indicative of physical stresses potentially related to occupation and lifestyle.
- 5.7.5 Two large hydatid cysts recovered from the right abdominal region are testament of parasitic infection by the tape worm, genus *Echinococcus*. The latter lives in the intestines of dogs and foxes, and if food or water supplies contaminated by the egg-carrying faeces of these animals is ingested by humans, they too will become infected (Manchester 1983, 49). The worm develops multi-cystic structures which may inhabit various of the body's organs, predominantly the liver and, less frequently, the lungs (*ibid.*). The effects of tapeworm infestation include constant blood loss, diarrhoea and abdominal discomfort, which in advanced cases could lead to the death of the individual (Manchester 1983, 50).

Potential

- 5.7.6 Full analysis of the remains may provide tighter age range for the individual. With some minor reconstruction it will be possible to calculate the major skeletal indices such as stature. A full record and study of the pathological lesions will enable a broad assessment of the health status of the individual and by comparison with contemporaneous data, some indication of his social status.

Proposed methods and recommendations

- 5.7.7 The age of individual will be further assessed using standard methodologies (Brothwell 1972; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). A standard series of measurement will be taken (Brothwell and Zakrzewski 2004) and skeletal indices calculated (Bass 1987; Trotter and Gleser 1952; 1958). Non-metric traits will be noted (Berry and Berry 1967; Finnegan 1978). Pathological lesions will be recorded in text and via digital photography. Several lesions are likely to warrant photographing for publication purposes.
- 5.7.8 It is strongly recommended that a bone sample is submitted for radiocarbon dating to enable the deposits to be studied within its correct temporal context.

5.8 Animal bone

- 5.8.1 Bone was recovered from four separate features of Romano-British date. Once conjoins are taken into account, the total number of pieces (**Table 1**) falls to just 33 fragments.

- 5.8.2 The assemblage was rapidly scanned and, where applicable, the following information was recorded: species, skeletal element, preservation condition, fusion and tooth ageing data, butchery marks, metrical data, gnawing, burning, surface condition, pathology and non-metric traits. This information was directly recorded into a relational database (in MS Access) and cross-referenced with the relevant contextual information.
- 5.8.3 Overall, 45% of fragments were identifiable to species and skeletal element. The following species, listed in order of relative abundance, were identified: sheep/goat, cattle and horse.
- 5.8.4 The largest group of bone fragments was from pit **1005**. The identified bones from this feature include several sheep/goat cranial fragments, a sheep/goat radius, and the proximal end of a cattle radius. Ditches **1036** and **1040**, and grave **1025**, also produced relatively small amounts of bone. Most of the identified fragments belong to sheep/goat and include both cranial and post-cranial elements. Other identified bones include fragments of cattle pelvis, femur and tibia, all from separate features, and a near complete horse tibia from ditch **1040**. The three fragments recovered from grave **1025** are all sheep/goat bones from the ankle and foot (i.e. two carpals and a second phalanx). These bones are likely to represent incidental finds within the grave backfill rather than deliberately placed grave goods. The two struck flint flakes both occurred residually, in contexts with pottery and other artefacts of Romano-British date, but their presence serves to highlight the potential for prehistoric activity in the area.

5.9 Finds potential and recommendations

- 5.9.1 The assessment results show that the preservation of artefacts is generally good. Chronological evidence, primarily from the pottery, indicates that the Romano-British activity is predominantly of 2nd to 4th century AD date, although more precise dating is hampered by the relatively small size of the feature groups and the brokenness of the sherds recovered.
- 5.9.2 All the finds have all been recorded to fairly detailed levels (e.g. animal species/anatomical element, pottery ware types), and no further work on any of the material types is proposed at this stage. With some modification and supporting illustration (of the brooch, querns and pottery as appropriate), the comments made in this report could be incorporated in any future publication.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 A total of two bulk samples were taken from undated pit **1018** and hearth **1009**. These samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and wood charcoal.

6.2 Charred plant remains

- 6.2.1 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5mm mesh, residues fractionated into 4mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>4mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains recorded in **Table 3**. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary and Hopf (2000, Tables 3, page 28 and 5, page 65), for cereals.

Table 3: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Samples				Flot								
Feature	Context	Sam ple	Vol. Ltrs	Flot (ml)	% roots	Charred Plant Remains				Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Anal ysis
						Grain	Chaff	Other	Comments			
Undated Pit												
1018	1019	1	9	90	65	A*	-	C	Hulled wheat, barley and ?free-threshing wheat grain frags. <i>Avena/Bromus</i>	3/3 ml	Moll-t (A**)	-
Undated Hearth												
1009	1008	2	9	60	65	C	-	-	Barley grain frags	0/1 ml	Moll-t (A*)	-

Key: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5; Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs

- 6.2.2 The flots were moderately large with relatively high numbers of roots and modern seeds that may be indicative of stratigraphic movement and the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Charred material comprised varying degrees of preservation.
- 6.2.3 A large quantity of cereal remains were recorded in the flot from pit **1018**. These included grain fragments of hulled wheat, emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and possibly a few of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum turgidum/aestivum* type). No chaff elements were observed. The small number of weed seeds noted in this assemblage included seeds of oat/brome grass (*Avena/Bromus* sp.).
- 6.2.4 The small assemblage recovered from hearth **1009** included a few barley grain fragments.
- 6.2.5 The assemblage from pit **1018** may be indicative of cleaned grain or material from a late stage of crop processing (Hillman 1981).
- 6.3 Wood charcoal**
- 6.3.1 Wood charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Table 3**. A small quantity of wood charcoal fragments greater than 4 mm was retrieved from pit **1018**.
- 6.4 Land snails**
- 6.4.1 Mollusc shells were noted in the flots of the bulk samples. Nomenclature is according to Anderson (2005) and habitat preferences according to Kerney (1999). The presence of these shells may aid in broadly characterising the nature of the wider landscape.
- 6.4.2 The high number of shells recorded in the sample from pit **1018** included specimens of the shade-loving species *Discus rotundatus*, *Carychium tridentatum*, *Clausilia bidentata*, *Oxychilus cellarius* and *Aegopinella nitidula*, the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and *Cochlicopa* sp., and the open country species *Helicella itala*, *Vallonia costata*, *Vallonia excentrica*, *Pupilla muscorum*, *Vertigo pygmaea* and Introduced Helicellids.
- 6.4.3 The moderate land snail assemblage recovered from hearth **1009** included shells of the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus*, and the open country species *Helicella itala*, *Vallonia costata*, *Vallonia excentrica*, *Pupilla muscorum* and *Vertigo pygmaea*.



- 6.4.4 These assemblages may be reflective of an open landscape of grassland and/or arable with possibly areas of longer grassland and scrub/hedgerow/woodland in the vicinity of pit **1018**.

6.5 Potential

Charred plant remains

- 6.5.1 The analysis of the charred plant assemblage from undated pit **1018** has the potential to provide some limited information on the range of crops and the stage of crop processing.

Wood charcoal

- 6.5.2 There is no potential for the analysis of the wood charcoal due to the paucity of remains recovered.

Land snails

- 6.5.3 The analysis of the land snail assemblages is unlikely to provide very detailed information on the nature of the local landscape.

7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1.1 The excavation at OP19 has revealed a reasonable quantity of archaeological remains which attest to settlement of the Site during the 2nd-4th-century AD. Although no structural evidence was recovered, a number of features such as pits, ditches and a single grave indicate a degree of occupation and utilisation of the immediate landscape during the late Romano-British period.

- 7.1.2 Although there is no clear indication as to the nature of the activity on the Site, a reasonable amount of artefactual remains suggest a degree of economy. No items of particular intrinsic interest were found, but the range of material culture is sufficient to indicate something of the nature of the Romano-British activity in this area. With the exception of the possible stone roof tile fragments, no structural remains were encountered, suggesting that the area was peripheral to any settlement, although the volume of finds suggests that such activity cannot be located far away. The animal bone and quern stones indicate that the economy was based upon a mixed strategy of arable farming and livestock husbandry, with limited, small-scale craft/industrial activities, represented by the fired clay and slag. The pottery provides evidence for the trading links, ceramic influences and the types of vessels used. Although present residually, the struck flint flakes and the burnt, unworked flint highlight the potential for further prehistoric remains in the vicinity.

- 7.1.3 Radiocarbon dating of the human remains recovered from the single grave has the potential of identifying contemporary landscape use and burial rites, whilst the dating of animal bones may refine the dating sequence.

- 7.1.4 The excavation has achieved the principal aims identified in the WSI in that it has defined the nature, extent, character and date of the archaeological remains within the areas of excavation.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum, 41 Long Street, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1NS. The Museum

has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

8.2 Preparation of Archive

8.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Wiltshire Heritage Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013). Details of the excavation will also be entered into the online "Oasis" database maintained by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). A copy of the OASIS entry has been included in this report (**Appendix 1**).

8.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site code **103290**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- *5 cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts & ecofacts, ordered by material type*
- *1 file/document cases of paper records & A3/A4 graphics*

8.3 Discard policy

8.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002).

8.3.3 For this assemblage, it is recommended that the burnt flint and unworked stone fragments are discarded prior to depositing the archive with the Wiltshire Heritage Museum.

8.4 Security Copy

8.4.1 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.

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10 APPENDIX 1 – OASIS REPORT

OASIS ID: wessexar1-175904

Project details

Project name	OP19 Hardstanding
Short description of the project	<p>Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by White Young Green to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring (strip, map and record) during ground works associated with the construction of OP19 Hardstanding, part of the Eastern Infrastructure Project, Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire. These works were part of a larger programme to enhance the infrastructure of the training estate, and to improve the connectivity of the training areas across Salisbury Plain. The site was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 403260 149850. The archaeological fieldwork was carried out from 19th to 28th February 2014. A number of archaeological features representing Romano-British activity were recorded during the works, indicating that the site was used during the 2nd to 4th centuries AD. These included a number of large pits of unknown function, enclosure ditches and a single inhumation grave, although no structural evidence was recorded. The artefactual assemblage included pottery, a number of quern stone fragments, two stone spindle whorls, a brooch and a single coin. The range of material culture is sufficient to indicate something of the nature of the Romano-British activity in this area, possibly reflecting an economy of mixed farming with limited, small-scale craft/industrial activities. The pottery provides evidence for the trading links, ceramic influences and the types of vessels used.</p>
Project dates	Start: 19-02-2014 End: 28-02-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	103290 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	PIT Roman
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	PIT Roman
Monument type	GRAVE Uncertain
Significant Finds	COIN Roman
Significant Finds	BROOCH Roman
Significant Finds	QUERN STONE Roman
Significant Finds	SPINDLE WHORL Roman
Significant Finds	POT Roman
Investigation type	"Full excavation"



Prompt General structure plan/local plan/minerals plan guidance

Project location

Country England
Site location WILTSHIRE SALISBURY TILSHEAD OP19 Hardstanding, Tilshead, Wiltshire
Postcode SP3 4SE
Study area 0.30 Hectares
Site coordinates SU 403615 148837 50.9314398943 -1.42558973518 50 55 53 N 001 25 32 W
Point
Height OD / Depth Min: 145.77m Max: 148.58m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator Consultant
Project design originator Consultant
Project director/manager Andy King
Project supervisor D Murdie
Type of sponsor/funding body Landowner

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Physical Archive ID 103290
Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Human Bones","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Digital Archive ID 103290
Digital Contents "none"
Digital Media available "Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient Wiltshire Heritage Museum

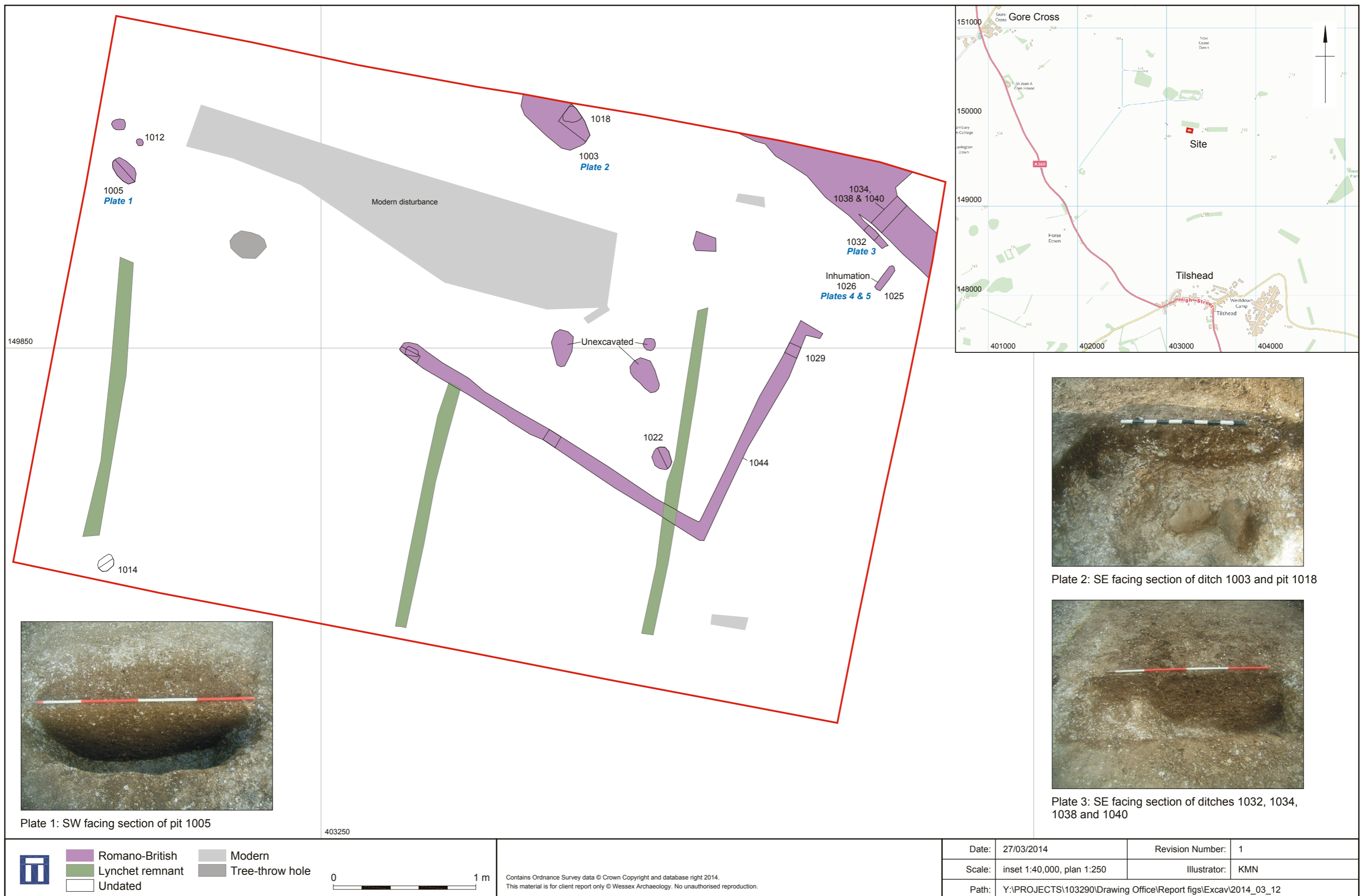


Paper Archive ID	103290
Paper Contents	"Human Bones"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Diary", "Drawing", "Map", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Plan", "Report", "Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	OP19 Hardstanding, SPTA EIP, Tilshead, Wiltshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Chaffey, G
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury
Description	A4 bound client report with illustrations and plates

Entered by	Gareth Chaffey (g.chaffey@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	27 March 2014



Site location and archaeological features showing numbers and plates


Figure 1



Plate 4: Grave 1025, inhumation 1026, view from NE



Plate 5: Detail of inhumation 1026

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	Date:	12/03/2014	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	N/A	Illustrator:	KMN
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