making sense of heritage

Beer Wall
Othery, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Report Ref: 106060.03
Accession Code: TTNCN 92/2014
December 2014

archaeology

Beer Wall
Othery, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Somerset County Council (SCC) to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation and borehole transect programme at Beer Wall, Othery, Somerset centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 339293 131515. The fieldwork was undertaken from the 29th September to 2nd October 2014.

The work was undertaken as part of a development project designed to improve the conveyance of water beneath the A372 road involving the construction of culverts beneath the road and the lowering of the adjacent ground. Beer Wall is listed on the Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) as a medieval wall that protected Aller Moors from flooding. Archaeological investigations comprised the excavation of four stepped trial trenches which attempted to located the wall and six boreholes arranged either side of the A372 which aimed to locate the relict river channel.

No traces of the Beer Wall, or any associated structures were identified within the footprint of the four evaluation trenches and it is possible the course of the wall falls beneath the current line of the A372. The trenches revealed deposits associated with possible road construction and water management in the form of ditches and banks.

Laminated peat sequences were recorded in the trenches and boreholes though no dating material was recovered to provide a date for the formation of these deposits. Material could be extracted from these peat deposits for radiocarbon dating and a range of palaeoenvironmental techniques undertaken; however these deposits do not warrant further investigation due to the lack of associated archaeological remains at this location.

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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Somerset County Council (SCC) and would like to thank Richard Needs in this regard. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful to Richard Brunning (Senior Levels and Moors Heritage Officer) for his assistance during the project. We also acknowledge the help and advice of Ed Wilson, Environment Agency.

The evaluation was undertaken by Susan Clelland with the assistance of Neil Fitzpatrick, with the borehole drilling monitored by Richard Payne. The borehole drilling was undertaken by Structural Soils (Bristol). This report was written and prepared by Susan Clelland and Steve Thompson, with specialist reports by Richard Payne (boreholes) and David Norcott and Nicki Mulhall (environmental). The report illustrations were prepared by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Gareth Chaffey.

Beer Wall
Othery, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Somerset County Council (SCC) (hereafter 'the Client') to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation and borehole transect programme at Beer Wall, Othery, Somerset (hereafter 'the Site') centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 339293 131515 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 Beer Wall is listed on the Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) as a medieval wall that protected Aller Moors from flooding. The proposed archaeological evaluation included a borehole transect programme to locate the relict river channel and examine its relationship with Beer Wall.

1.1.3 The work was undertaken as part of a development project designed to improve the conveyance of water beneath the A372 involving the construction of culverts beneath the road and the lowering of the adjacent ground. Archaeological investigations comprised the excavation of four stepped trial trenches and six boreholes aligned broadly north-east to south-west and arranged either side of the A372.

1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the evaluation (WA 2014) was prepared by WA and submitted to, and approved by, the Client and Steve Membery (Senior Historic Environment Officer for SCC) prior to the start of fieldwork. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the guidelines and standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (IfA 2008).

1.1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken from the 29th September to 2nd October 2014.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The Site is located between the villages of Othery and Beer, and is bisected by the A372 road. The Site is situated on the low-lying North Moor, less than 5m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), immediately east of the Sowy River, an artificial flood relief channel constructed in the 1960s to alleviate flooding of the River Parrett. The Langacre Rhyne flows parallel to the Sowy.

1.2.2 The bedrock geology of the Site is the Mercia Mudstone Group of the Early Triassic to Late Triassic epoch, comprising mudstone and halite-stone. To the south and immediate north of the A372, this is overlain by superficial deposits of Holocene alluvium, whilst peat deposits of the Quaternary period overlie the bedrock north of the road. The Site is at the southern edge of a broad band of peat that stretches from the area around Westonzoyland eastwards towards Dundon.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1.1 A limited number of findspots have been recorded 2-4km to the south of the Site, including a Lower Palaeolithic handaxe from the gravels at Oath Hill and a stone axe hammer of Bronze Age date from fields to the west of Aller. Two adjacent ring ditches, possibly the remains of two Bronze Age round barrows, were noted from aerial photographs of Aller Moor. A prehistoric flint scatter and sickle of Iron Age or Romano-British date, and human remains, were also found on Aller Moor. Romano-British remains have been reported from Burrowbridge, approximately 3km to the south-west, including a large number of coins and several sherds of late Romano-British pottery.

2.1.2 Further afield, extensive waterlogged remains of international importance have been excavated *c.* 11-13km to the north east of the Site. These comprise a Neolithic trackway known as the Sweet Track, and the Iron Age Lake Villages at Glastonbury and Meare.

2.1.3 An Anglo-Saxon causeway, known as Burrow Wall, is located between Burrowbridge and Othery. Burrow Mump, an outcrop of Keuper Marl and site of St Michael's Church, is also located at Burrowbridge. Initially constructed during the 13th century, with additions in the 14th–16th centuries, the church was extensively restored in the middle of the 19th century.

2.1.4 Beer Wall is recorded on the HER for Somerset as Site No. 32364, and is located across the parishes of Othery and Aller. Built in the 13th century, it was designed to protect Aller Moors from flooding. A watching brief carried out in 2013 identified that the wall had been built along the line of an alluvial-filled channel. Stakes discovered in the upper silts of the channel were thought to be associated with the construction of the wall.

2.1.5 Other monuments in the area relate to medieval and post-medieval settlement and agriculture, predominantly houses and farm buildings.

3 AIMS

3.1 General aims and objectives

3.1.1 All aspects of the fieldwork were carried out in accordance with the methodology as set out in the WSI (WA 2014).

3.1.2 The general 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 (either directly or by compression/dewatering in the immediate location);*
- *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 Specific aims

3.2.1 In addition, a number of questions defined by Richard Brunning, Senior Levels and Moors Heritage Officer, were also considered:

- ***The remains of Beer Wall****: what date was the wall constructed? How was it constructed and where did the material come from? Is there evidence for repair over time?*
- ***The relic channel****: when was the channel flowing? When did it go out of use and what was the character of the channel?*
- ***The peat****: when was peat forming in this area and how did the landscape change over time? When did the peat stop forming? Are any structures or stray artefacts present, especially prehistoric wooden trackways linking Othery to High Ham?*

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Fieldwork methodology

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within this WSI and in compliance with the standards outlined in the IfA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (IfA 2008), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

Evaluation

4.1.2 A total of four trial trenches each measuring 30m in length and 6m wide were machine-excavated and positioned as shown on **Figure 1**. The trenches were stepped to allow excavation to a depth of 2m aOD.

4.1.3 All trenches were laid out using GPS and trench locations scanned with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT). A minor adjustment was made to the proposed location of Trench 3 in order that safe access and egress into the field could be maintained and to avoid the tree canopy. Trench 4 was also moved to avoid impacting a water filled drainage ditch. All trench locations were tied in to the Ordnance Survey.

4.1.4 The trial trenches were excavated using a tracked 360º excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket and under constant supervision by WA. Machine excavation under the instruction of the monitoring archaeologist proceeded in spits, *c.* 50-200mm at a time. Where appropriate, hand cleaning was undertaken to establish the nature of the deposits.

4.1.5 A monolith sample was taken from Trench 1 to a depth of 2m aOD. Associated bulk samples were also taken for plant macro fossils and insect remains.

4.1.6 Trenches were backfilled using the excavated material in the approximate order in which they were excavated by WA and left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

Geoarchaeological boreholes

4.1.7 A programme of geoarchaeological coring was undertaken concurrently during the groundworks. The boreholes were located 30m apart on a north-east to south-west aligned transect. Two boreholes were positioned to the south of the A372 and four to the north, as represented on **Figure 1**.

4.1.8 Core sampling was undertaken using a mechanical window-sampling rig (Terrier-type) retrieving 1m long sleeved cores of *c.*100mm diameter at specified locations.

4.1.9 The location of each geoarchaeological core was surveyed using a GPS and related to Ordnance Survey (aOD).

4.1.10 The cores were returned to the WA laboratories for geoarchaeological description and interpretation.

4.2 Recording

4.2.1 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using WA's *pro forma* recording system. Representative sections recording the exposed deposits were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels have been calculated and plans/sections have been annotated with OD heights.

4.2.2 A photographic record was maintained during the evaluation using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images subject to managed quality control and curation processes will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING

5.1.1 Modern artefacts present within the upper trench deposits were noted but not retained. No other artefacts were recovered during the site investigation.

5.1.2 Environmental sampling was undertaken in accordance with. WA's *Guidelines for Environmental Sampling* along with policies outlined in the IfA's Standard and Guidance documents and *Environmental Archaeology; A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition)* (English Heritage 2011).

6 EVALUATION RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information held within the Site archive. Details of individually excavated contexts are retained in the Site archive and a tabulated version of these can be found in **Appendix 1**.

6.2 Trench 1

6.2.1 Following the removal of 0.10m of turf and topsoil (106) a 0.15m thick alluvial clay deposit 105 (equal to 203 and 403) was revealed sealing interface deposit 104; a clay loam with common lenses of alluvial clay. Deposit 104 capped a series of four peat deposits; 103, 102, 101 and 101 which were recorded to a depth of 2m below the current ground surface, to *c*.1.86m aOD. Two monolith columns were taken from the exposed peat sequence in Trench 1 (Environmental Samples 10 and 11) (**Figure 2**, **Plate 1**). The results are provided below. No archaeological features were noted.

6.3 Trench 2

6.3.1 Following the removal of 0.25m of current turf and topsoil (200) and further 0.20m of subsoil (201), a 0.25m thick modern made ground layer 202 (equal to 301) – composed of stiff orange clay and numerous modern finds (plastic, metal etc) was revealed at the southern end of the trench. The material was derived from the clearing out of an adjacent road side drainage ditch. Below 202 was a 0.25m thick light yellow grey alluvial deposit 203 (equal to 105 and 403) which capped a series of three peat deposits (204, 205 and 206) which were recorded to a depth of 2m below the current ground surface, to *c*.1.90m aOD (**Plate 2**). No archaeological features were noted.

6.4 Trench 3

6.4.1 Following the removal of 0.20m of current turf and topsoil (300) a 0.20m thick made ground layer (301 equal to 202) was revealed at the northern end of the trench. Adjacent to 301 was 308; a remnant of a roadside drainage ditch bank. The made ground layer sealed backfilled NNW–SSE aligned ditch 306; a probable drainage ditch or ream which was filled with lower fill 307 (0.30m thick) sealed by upper fill 302 (0.20m thick). The ditch cut through 0.45m thick peat layer 303, which in turn sealed peat layer 304 and 305; these were recorded to a depth of *c*.2m below the current ground surface to 2.07m aOD.

6.5 Trench 4

6.5.1 Following the removal of 0.05m of turf and topsoil (400) and a further 0.10m of subsoil (401), modern deposit (402) was revealed; a remnant of a parallel bank (0.70m thick), aligned with the current road (equal to 308). Below the bank was 0.30m thick alluvial deposit (403) which capped three peat deposits (404, 405 and 406) which were recorded to a depth of 2m below the current ground surface to 1.92m aOD. No archaeological features were noted.

6.6 Borehole results

6.6.1 Of the six boreholes taken, the cores from BH4 and BH5 contained very little sediment due to poor retention as a result of the very wet and compressible deposits through which the boreholes were drilled. As a result there was not enough sediment retained for detailed descriptions. Sediment descriptions and interpretations for the remaining cores BH1, BH2, BH3 and BH6 where there was moderate retention can be found in **Appendix 2**.

6.6.2 The core samples extend to 11m in BH1, 11m in BH2, 8m in BH3 and 10m in BH6.

6.6.3 In all core samples examined, a dark reddish brown silt loam topsoil overlay a brown silty clay topsoil. Below the topsoil and subsoil in all core samples a black organic fibrous moderately humified peat was recorded.

6.6.4 In BH 1 the peat was recorded to a depth of 10.46m, at approximately 2m in depth large woody fragments were noted along with a strong sulphurous smell. It must be noted that there was no recovery from 4m to 10m and the peat from 10.25m – 10.46m was very disturbed and may have been dragged down from higher up by the coring action. From 10.46m to 11.0m a dark greenish grey clay that was soft and disturbed was recorded.

6.6.5 In BH2 the peat was recorded from 0.56m to 4.5m and was similar to that in BH1, moderately humified, fibrous with occasional woody fragments with large wood fragments noted at 2m, with a strong sulphurous smell. From 4.5m to 11m a dark greenish grey clay with occasional thin organic bands, patches and rooting from overlying peat was recorded representing a period of marine transgression. From 10.3m to 11m the clay was soft and disturbed due to the coring action.

6.6.6 In BH3 the peat was recorded from 0.82m to 6.5m and was similar to that in BH1, moderately humified, fibrous with occasional woody fragments with large wood fragments noted at 2m, with a strong sulphurous smell. From 6.5m to 8m a dark greenish grey clay with occasional thin organic bands and patches and rooting from overlying peat was recorded representing a period of marine transgression. Peat was recorded from 7.3m to 7.8m, but was disturbed and probably dragged down by the corer.

6.6.7 In BH4 the peat was recorded from 0.68m to 4.91m and was similar to that in BH1, moderately humified, fibrous with occasional woody fragments with large wood fragments noted at 2m, with a strong sulphurous smell. From 4.91m to 9.93m a dark greenish grey clay with occasional thin organic bands and patches and rooting from overlying peat was recorded representing a period of marine transgression, with a diffuse lower boundary. At the base of the corer from 9.93mm to 10m a black organic fibrous peat with a large fragment of wood was recorded.

6.7 Borehole Summary

6.7.1 The deposits described here are representative of the deposition of clay sediment in an estuarine alluvial environment, such as salt marsh or estuarine mudflats, in a period of rising relative sea-level ('marine transgressive' phase). These estuarine deposits were then overlain by between 3.5m to 5.7m of peat, representing a highly vegetated freshwater-dominated wetland environment, during a marine regressive phase (fall in – or pause in the rise of - relative sea level). The larger woody fragments recorded in all the cores at approximately 2m in depth from the surface (also observed in the trenches) is suggestive of the establishment of woodland, possibly fen carr. The peat in turn was overlain by the modern topsoil.

6.7.2 Of the four cores described here, all penetrated below the peat providing a sequence from which samples could be taken covering the entire period of the peat formation. No sediments representative of channel deposits were observed and the deposits underlying the estuarine alluvium were not encountered.

7 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

7.1.1 All finds recovered were of modern date; these were recorded and then discarded on Site.

8 ENVRIONMENTAL EVIDENCE

8.1.1 Two monolith samples, <10 & 11> were taken through peat deposits in Trench 1 (**Figure 2**). The sediment descriptions can be found in **Appendix 3**. These samples, forming a continuous 2m section, were described in the lab by a geoarchaeologist following Hodgson (1997).

8.1.2 The results mirror those from the upper core sequences, with woody fragments near the 2m mark (indicative of possible carr woodland).

8.1.3 The deposits have potential for good preservation of a range of palaeoenvironmental indicators; however in the absence of association with archaeological remains no further work is recommended on the samples.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1.1 The evaluation was successful in its general stated aims of identifying an absence of archaeological remains which would be impacted upon by the proposed development at the Beer Wall. Due to the absence of archaeological remains within the Site a number of the Specific Aims (see above) were unable to be answered during this programme of works.

9.1.2 No traces of the Beer Wall were identified therefore no date was ascertained for its construction and likewise no information regarding its construction method, origin of materials or evidence for repair over time was established. It is possible the course of the

Beer Wall has been fossilised under the current A372 road which bisects the Site, as the road is clearly raised at this point.

9.1.3 No traces of the relic channel were identified, and therefore questions regarding when it was flowing, when it went out of use and what the character of the channel was could not be answered.

9.1.4 Due to the lack of dating recovered from the peat deposits revealed in both the trenches and the boreholes it is difficult to derive meaningful information from the deposits, regarding landscape change and peat formation timescales.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Archaeology

10.1.1 No further work is proposed for the Site.

10.2 Palaeoenvironmental

10.2.1 Peat sequences are present in these borehole samples from which material could be extracted for radiocarbon dating and a range of palaeoenvironmental proxy techniques; however, this is the case across most of the local area, and indeed the region.

10.2.2 The sequences are not particularly remarkable in terms of content, completeness or preservation - given this, and in the absence of archaeological remains on the Site, further work would not be recommended here.

11 STORAGE AND CURATION

11.1 Museum

11.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Taunton Museum. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

11.2 Preparation of archive

11.2.1 The complete site archive, which includes paper records, photographic records, graphics, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the local museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013). An OASIS online record record http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/ will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Somerset HER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive). A copy of the OASIS entry has been included in this report (**Appendix 4**).

11.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with both the Site code (**106060**) and accession code (**TTNCN 92/2014**), and a full index will be prepared. The archive of all records and finds will be consistent with the principles of Management of *Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (English Heritage 2006).

11.3 Discard policy

11.3.1 WA 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.

11.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995).

11.4 Security copy

11.4.1 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.

12 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1 – TRENCH TABLES

Trench 1	Dimensions: 30m x 6m x 2m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (NNE), 339287.4480 , 131577.0230 , 3.86m aOD (SSW), 339283.7670 , 131553.0020, 3.73m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
100	Layer	Peat: Mid orange brown clay peat with frequent small to tree branch sized roots.	0.8-2m+
101	Layer	Peaty clay: Mid brown homogenous deposit, frequent small to fine rooting. Gradual interface with **100**	0.6-0.8
102	Layer	Peaty loam: Dark brown black homogenous deposit with occasional fine rooting. Moderate to sharp interfaces	0.46-0.6m
103	Layer	Peaty loam: Mid brown black deposit with occasional small fine roots & horizontal organic fragments. Sharp lower horizon.	0.3-0.46m
104	Layer	Interface between **103** & **105**. Mid-dark black brown clay loam with occasional fine roots & Fe veins. Occasional sub-circular lenses of alluvial clay	0.2-0.35m
105	Layer	Alluvail clay: Light yellow grey deposit with Fe veining throughout.	0.1-0.25m
106	Layer	Turf and topsoil: Mid grey silty clay.	0-0.1m
Monolith samples 10 & 11 taken in conjunction with pollen series 20			

Trench 2	Dimensions: 30m x 6m x 2m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (NNE), 339253.8800, 131529.5390, 3.90mm aOD (SSW), 339257.1654, 131528.7634, 4.15mm aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
200	Layer	Turf and topsoil: Mid grey silty clay.	0-0.25m
201	Layer	Subsoil: Dark orange brown clay. Diffuse interface with **202**. May be part of **202**.	0.15-0.4m
202	Layer	Made ground: Mixed deposit of stiff orange brown clay, frequent Fe veins and occasional fine rooting. Metal bar & plastic carton not retained. Likely to derive from roadside drainage ditch clearance. South end of trench only	0.3-0.55m
203	Layer	Alluvial clay: Light yellow grey deposit with Fe veining throughout. Deposit thickest to south adjacent to road.	0.45-0.7m
204	Layer	Peaty loam: Dark brown black homogenous deposit with occasional fine rooting. Diffuse lower horizon. Plastic carton noted in upper 0.05m of deposit southern end of trench. Occasional fine horizontal lenses of grey clay observed. Difficult to identify after oxidization.	0.6-1.05m
205	Layer	Peaty clay: Homogenous orange brown deposit with frequent fine rooting rare large tree roots. Diffuse horizons.	0.95-1.8m
206	Layer	Peat: Mid orange brown humic deposit with straw like rooting to branch sized tree remains.	1.8-2m+

Trench 3	Dimensions: 30m x 6m x 2m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (NNE), 339255.8200, 131500.1820, 4.40m aOD (SSW), 339246.4970, 131473.3630, 4.07m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
300	Layer	Turf and topsoil: Mid grey silty clay.	0-0.2m
301	Layer	Made ground: Mixed deposit of stiff orange brown clay, frequent Fe veins and occasional fine rooting. Likely to derive from roadside drainage ditch clearance. North end of trench only.	0.1-0.3m
302	Layer	Alluvial clay: Light yellow grey deposit with Fe veining throughout. Deposit thickest within ream **306** to north adjacent to road.	0.25-0.45m
303	Layer	Peaty loam: Dark brown black homogenous deposit with occasional fine rooting. Diffuse lower horizon.	0.3-0.75m
304	Layer	Peaty clay: Homogenous orange brown deposit with frequent fine rooting rare large tree roots. Diffuse horizons.	0.65-1.05m
305	Layer	Peat: Mid orange brown humic deposit with straw like rooting to branch sized tree remains.	1.05-2m+
306	Cut	NNW-SSE aligned ream at base of roadside ditch and bank. Extant prior to machine excavation. Filled by layers **302** & **307**	0.4-0.75m
307	Layer	Mixed deposit of reworked black brown peaty clay, orange brown stiff clay & fragments of alluvial clay.	0.2-0.5m
308	Layer	Mixed deposit of stiff orange brown clay with Fe veins occasional CBM and stone. Forms bank parallel to roadside ditch.	0-0.5m
Trench moved to east of proposed location to maintain safe site access and egress and to avoid tree canopy.			

Trench 4	Dimensions: 30m x 6m x 2m		
	Land use: Pasture		
	Coordinates: (NNE), 339285.4477, 131492.0528, 4.57m aOD (SSW), 339277.7021, 131465.3443, 3.92m aOD:		
Context	Category	Description	Depth
400	Layer	Turf and topsoil: Mid grey silty clay.	0-0.05m
401	Layer	Subsoil: Dark orange brown clay. Diffuse interface with **402**.	0.05-0.15m
402	Layer	Mixed deposit of stiff orange brown clay with Fe veins occasional CBM and stone. Forms bank parallel to roadside ditch.	0.05-0.75m
403	Layer	Alluvial clay: Light yellow grey deposit with Fe veining throughout.	0.4-0.7m
404	Layer	Peaty loam: Dark brown black homogenous deposit with occasional fine rooting. Diffuse lower horizon.	0.15-0.55m
405	Layer	Thin lens of black brown peaty clay similar to **404**	0.7-0.8m
406	Layer	Peat: Mid orange brown humic deposit with straw like rooting to branch sized tree remains (0.02m dia to 0.4m dia).	0.8-2m+

APPENDIX 2 – BOREHOLE TABLES

Location:	339263.3 131462.27	**Borehole ID:**	BH1	**Comments:** 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	3.92m OD	**Drg:**		

Depth		**Sediment description**	**Interpretation**	**Unit**
Mbg	mOD			
0 – 0.2	3.92 – 3.72	Compression gap		
0.2 – 0.38	3.72 – 3.54	5YR 3/2 dark reddish brown silt loam top soil with a granular structure and gradual lower boundary	Topsoil	
0.38 – 0.48	3.54 – 3.44	7.5YR brown silty clay subsoil with a blocky/granular structure and a diffuse lower boundary	Subsoil	
0.48 – 1.0	3.44 – 2.92 –	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
1.0 – 1.10	2.92 – 2.82	Compression gap		
1.10 – 2.0	2.82 – 1.92	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment. Large wood fragments at 2m, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
2.0 – 2.3	1.92 – 1.62	Compression gap		
2.3 – 3.0	1.62 – 0.92	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
3.0 – 3.2	0.92 – 0.72	Compression gap		
3.2 – 4.0	0.72 – -0.08	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
4.0 – 10.0	-0.08 – -6.08	No recovery		
10.0 – 10.25	-6.08 – -6.33	Compression gap		
10.25 – 10.46	-6.33 – -6.54	Very wet, soft and disturbed 5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide. Very soft and disturbed	Disturbed peat from higher up profile brought down by coring.	
10.46 – 11.0	-6.54 – -7.08	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey soft disturbed clay, no visible structure.	Disturbed by corer	

Location:	339269.97 131462.27	**Borehole ID:**	BH2	**Comments:** 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	4.02m OD	**Drg:**		

Depth		**Sediment description**	**Interpretation**	**Unit**
Mbg	mOD			
0 – 0.23	4.02 – 3.79	Compression gap		
0.23 – 0.37	3.79 – 3.65	5YR 3/2 dark reddish brown silt loam top soil with a granular structure and gradual lower boundary	Topsoil	
0.37 – 0.56	3.65 – 3.46	7.5YR brown silty clay subsoil with a blocky/granular structure and a diffuse lower boundary	Subsoil	
0.56 – 1.0	3.46 – 3.02	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
1.0 – 1.46	3.02 – 2.56	Compression gap		
1.46 – 2.0	2.56 – 2.02	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment. Large wood fragments at 2m, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
2.0 – 2.15	2.02 – 1.87	Compression gap		
2.15 – 3.0	1.87 – 1.02	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
3.0 – 3.2	1.02 – 0.82	Compression gap		
3.2 – 4.0	0.82 – 0.02	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
4.0 – 4.15	0.02 – -0.13	Compression gap		
4.15 – 4.5	-0.13 – -0.48	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
4.5 – 5.0	-0.48 – -0.98	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay becoming light orange brown on exposure. Very occasional thin organic band <0.01m, evidence of rooting from overlying peat.	Estuarine alluvium	
5.0 – 10.0	-0.98 – -5.98	No recovery		
10.0 – 10.3	-5.98 – -6.28	Compression gap		

Location:	339269.97 131462.27	**Borehole ID:**	BH2	**Comments:** 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	4.02m OD	**Drg:**		

Depth		**Sediment description**	**Interpretation**	**Unit**
Mbg	mOD			
10.3 – 11.0	-6.28 – -6.98	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey soft disturbed clay, no visible structure.	Disturbed by corer	

Location:	339282.033 131522.701	**Borehole ID:**	BH3	**Comments:** 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	4.02m OD	**Drg:**		

Depth		**Sediment description**	**Interpretation**	**Unit**
Mbg	mOD			
0 – 0.46	4.02 – 3.56	Compression gap		
0.46 – 0.65	3.56 – 3.37	5YR 3/2 dark reddish brown silt loam top soil with a granular structure and gradual lower boundary	Topsoil	
0.65 – 0.82	3.37 – 3.2 –	7.5YR brown silty clay subsoil with a blocky/granular structure and a diffuse lower boundary	Subsoil	
0.82 – 2.0	3.2 – 2.02	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment. Large wood fragments at 2m, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	
2.0 – 4.0	2.02 – 0.02	No recovery		
4.0 – 4.3	0.02 – -0.28	Compression gap		
4.3 – 5.0	-0.28 – -0.98	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
5.0 – 5.4	-0.98 – -1.38	Compression gap		
5.4 – 6.0	-1.38 – -1.98	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
6.0 – 6.25	-1.98 – -1.38	Compression gap		

Location:	339282.033 131522.701	Borehole ID:	BH3	Comments: 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	4.02m OD	Drg:		

Depth		Sediment description	Interpretation	Unit
Mbg	mOD			
6.25 – 6.5	-1.38 – -2.48	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
6.5 – 7.0	-2.48 – -2.98	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay becoming light orange brown on exposure. Very occasional thin organic band <0.01m, evidence of rooting from overlying peat.	Estuarine alluvium	
7.0 – 7.3	-2.98 – -3.28	Compression gap		
7.3 – 7.8	-3.28 – -3.78	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat (some disturbance poss dragged down by corer)	
7.8 – 8.0	-3.78 – -3.98	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay becoming light orange brown on exposure. Very occasional thin organic band <0.01m, evidence of rooting from overlying peat.	Estuarine alluvium	

Location:	339306.78 131607.132	Borehole ID:	BH6	Comments: 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	3.78m OD	Drg:		

Depth		Sediment description	Interpretation	Unit
Mbg	mOD			
0 – 0.4	3.78 – 3.38	Compression gap		
0.4 – 0.55	3.38 – 3.23	5YR 3/2 dark reddish brown silt loam top soil with a granular structure and gradual lower boundary	Topsoil	
0.55 – 0.68	3.23 – 3.1	7.5YR brown silty clay subsoil with a blocky/granular structure and a diffuse lower boundary	Subsoil	
0.68 – 1.0	3.1 – 2.78	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
1.0 – 1.6	2.78 – 2.18	Compression gap		
1.6 – 2.0	2.18 – 1.78	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment. Large wood fragments at 2m, with strong smell of hydrogen sulphide.	Peat	

Location:	339306.78 131607.132	**Borehole ID:**	BH6	**Comments:** 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	3.78m OD	**Drg:**		

Depth		**Sediment description**	**Interpretation**	**Unit**
Mbg	mOD			
2.0 – 2.65	1.78 – 1.13	Compression gap		
2.65 – 3.0	1.13 – 0.78	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
3.0 – 3.48	0.78 – 0.3	Compression gap		
3.48 – 4.0	0.3 – -0.22	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment,	Peat	
4.0 – 4.46	-0.22 – -0.68	Compression gap		
4.46 – 4.91	-0.68 – -1.13	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment, Sharp lower boundary.	Peat	
4.91 – 5.0	-1.13 – -1.22	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay. Very occasional thin organic band <0.01m, evidence of rooting from overlying peat.	Estuarine alluvium	
5.0 – 5.10	-1.22 – -1.32	Compression gap		
5.10 – 5.8	-1.32 – -2.02	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with occasional larger woody fragment.	Peat, very disturbed due to coring, probably dragged down.	
5.8 – 6.0	-2.02 – -2.22	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay. Very occasional thin organic band <0.01m, evidence of rooting from above.	Estuarine alluvium	
6.0 – 6.6	-2.22 – -2.82	Compression gap		
6.6 – 7.0	-2.82 – -3.22	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay. Very occasional small organic patches, evidence of rooting from above.	Estuarine alluvium	
7.0 – 7.55	-3.22 – -3.77	Compression gap		
7.55 – 8.0	-3.77 – -4.22	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay. Very occasional small organic patches, evidence of rooting from above.	Estuarine alluvium	
8.0 – 9.0	-4.22 – -5.22	Compression gap/sloppy disturbed clay		

Location:	339306.78 131607.132	**Borehole ID:**	BH6	**Comments:** 106060 Beer Wall
Level (top):	3.78m OD	**Drg:**		

Depth		**Sediment description**	**Interpretation**	**Unit**
Mbg	mOD			
9.0 – 9.6	-5.22 – -5.82	Compression gap/sloppy disturbed clay		
9.6 – 9.93	-5.82 – -6.15	Gley 1 4/10Y dark greenish grey clay. Very occasional small organic patches, evidence of rooting from above. Diffuse lower boundary	Estuarine alluvium	
9.93 – 10.0	-6.15 – -6.22	5YR 2.5/1 black organic silty loam, fibrous, moderately humified with large fragment of wood at base..	Peat	

APPENDIX 3 –ENVIRONMENTAL TABLES

Location:		Trench 1	**Mono:**	11 and 10	**Comments: 106060 Beer Walls** **Monoliths 11 and 10 taken from a stepped section in trench 1. Monolith 11 is from the top section, monolith 10 is from the bottom section.**		
Level (top):		3.784mOD	**Drg:**	1A			
Depth		**Context**	**Samples**	**Sediment description**		**Interpretation**	
Mono	mOD						
0.00-0.11		106		10YR 3/3 dark brown fairly stiff silty clay with occasional dark yellowish brown iron mottling. Moderate aquatic snails throughout, identified as: *Succinea/Oxyloma* sp. (marshy species), *Galba truncatula* and *Anisus leucostoma* (both amphibious and indicating seasonal flooding). Abundant roots, 0.5% fine pores. Clear diagonal boundary.	Topsoil that is subject to occasional flooding.	Topsoil that is subject to seasonal flooding and drying out.
0.11-1.80		105 104 103 102 101 100		10YR 2/2 very dark brown-2/1 black organic, fibrous and moderately humified peat. Abundant roots throughout. Slightly finer and with fewer roots at 0.54-0.68. It is especially crumbly and fibrous from 0.80 to base. Large piece of wood at 1.55-1.60. Six contexts have been recorded in the field but these have been impossible to discern in the lab.	Peat.	Peat.

APPENDIX 4 – OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: wessexar1-197093

Project details

Project name	Beer Wall, Othery, Somerset
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Somerset County Council (SCC) to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation and borehole transect programme at Beer Wall, Othery, Somerset centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 339293 131515. The fieldwork was undertaken from the 29th September to 2nd October 2014. The work was undertaken as part of a development project designed to improve the conveyance of water beneath the A372 road involving the construction of culverts beneath the road and the lowering of the adjacent ground. Beer Wall is listed on the Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) as a medieval wall that protected Aller Moors from flooding. Archaeological investigations comprised the excavation of four stepped trial trenches which attempted to located the wall and six boreholes arranged either side of the A372 which aimed to locate the relict river channel. No traces of the Beer Wall, or any associated structures were identified within the footprint of the four evaluation trenches and it is possible the course of the wall falls beneath the current line of the A372. The trenches revealed deposits associated with possible road construction and water management in the form of ditches and banks. Laminated peat sequences were recorded in the trenches and boreholes though no dating material was recovered to provide a date for the formation of these deposits. Material could be extracted from these peat deposits for radiocarbon dating and a range of palaeoenvironmental techniques; however these deposits do not warrant further investigation due to the lack of associated archaeological remains at this location.
Project dates	Start: 29-09-2014 End: 02-10-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	106060 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	TTNCN 92/2014 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 1 - Minimal cultivation
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches","Vibro-core"
Development type	Service infrastructure (e.g. sewage works, reservoir, pumping station, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SOMERSET SEDGEMOOR OTHERY Beer Wall, Othery, Somerset
Postcode	TA7 0QL
Study area	0 Hectares
Site coordinates	ST 339313 131520 50.913494891 -2.939909643 50 54 48 N 002 56 23 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	WGS 84 Datum
Height OD / Depth	Min: 37.00m Max: 40.00m

Project creators

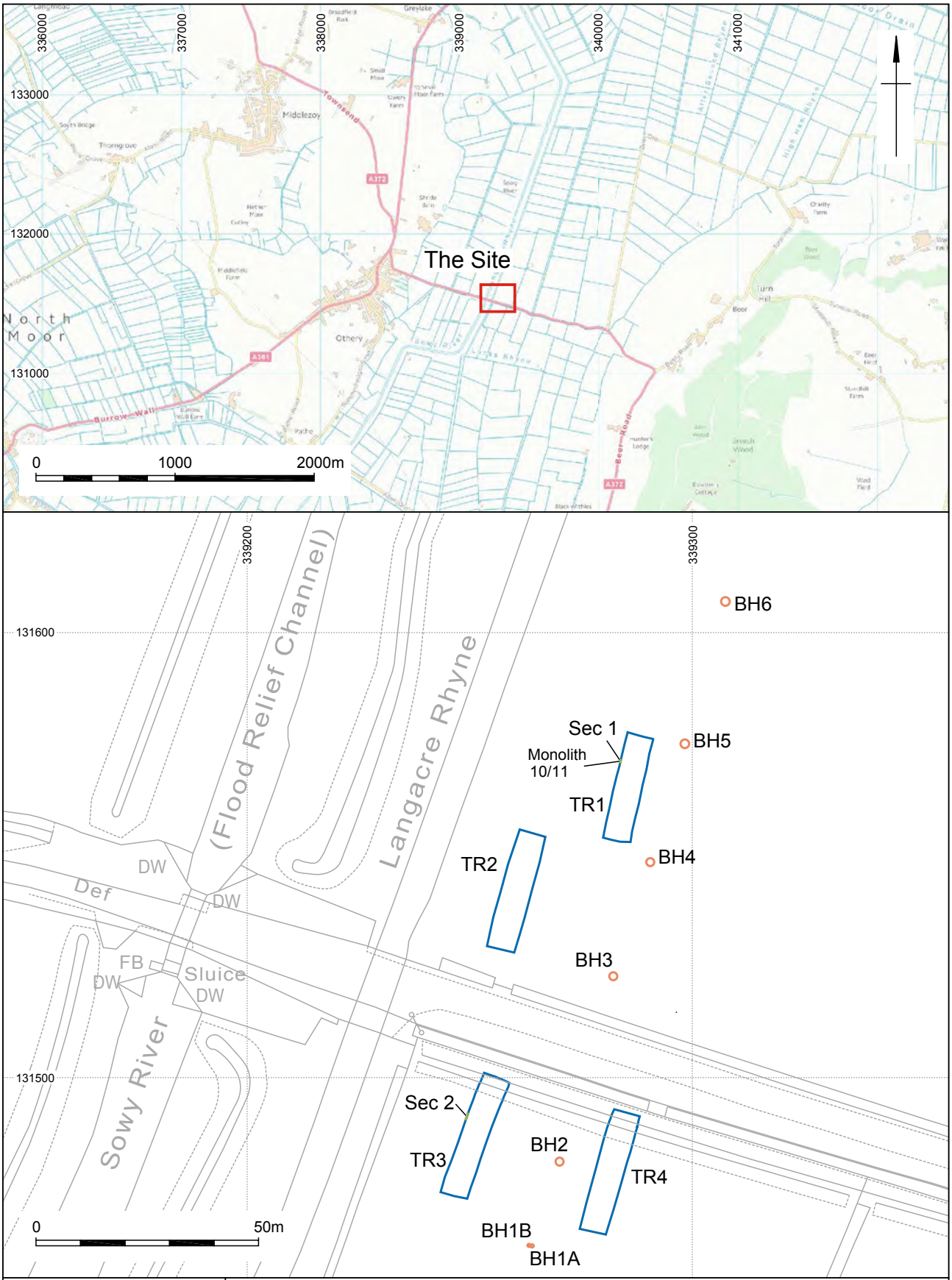
Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Somerset County Council
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Gareth Chaffey
Project supervisor	S Clelland
Type of sponsor/funding body	County Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Somerset County Council

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Somerset County Museum
Physical Archive ID	106060
Physical Contents	"Environmental","other"
Digital Archive recipient	Somerset County museum
Digital Archive ID	106060
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Somerset County Museum
Paper Archive ID	106060
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Beer Wall, Othery, Somerset
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Clelland, S
Other bibliographic details	106060.03
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury
Description	A4 illustrated client report
Entered by	Gareth Chaffey (g.chaffey@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	3 December 2014



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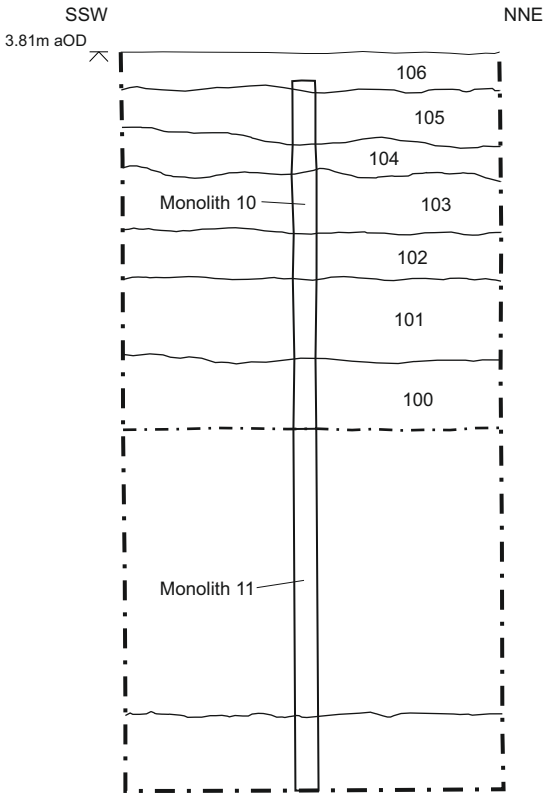
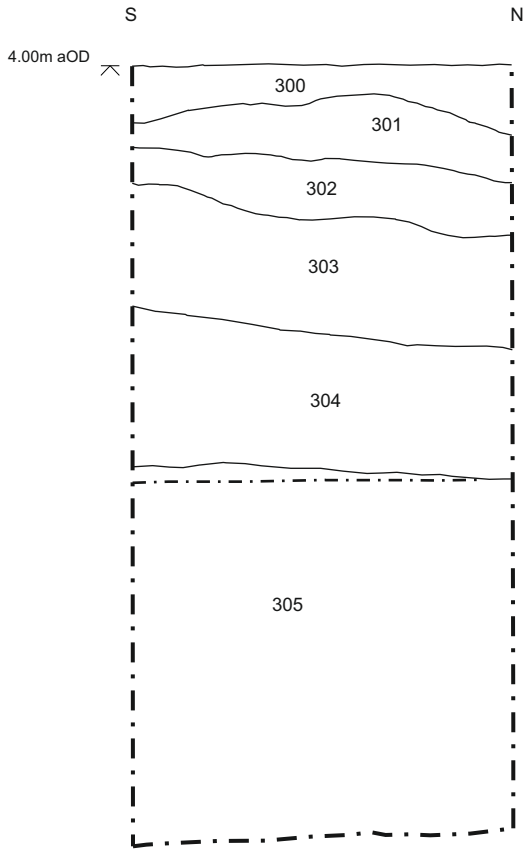
Trench and borehole locations

Figure 1



Section 1 - Trench 1: east facing section from showing Monoliths 10 and 11



Section 2 - Trench 3: south-east facing section

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Sections

Figure 2

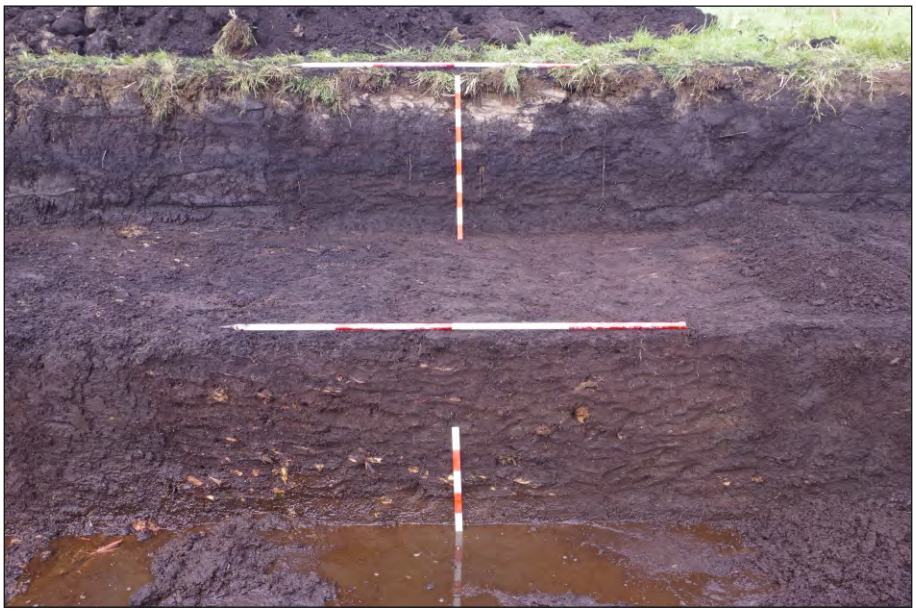

Plate 1: East facing section of Trench 1

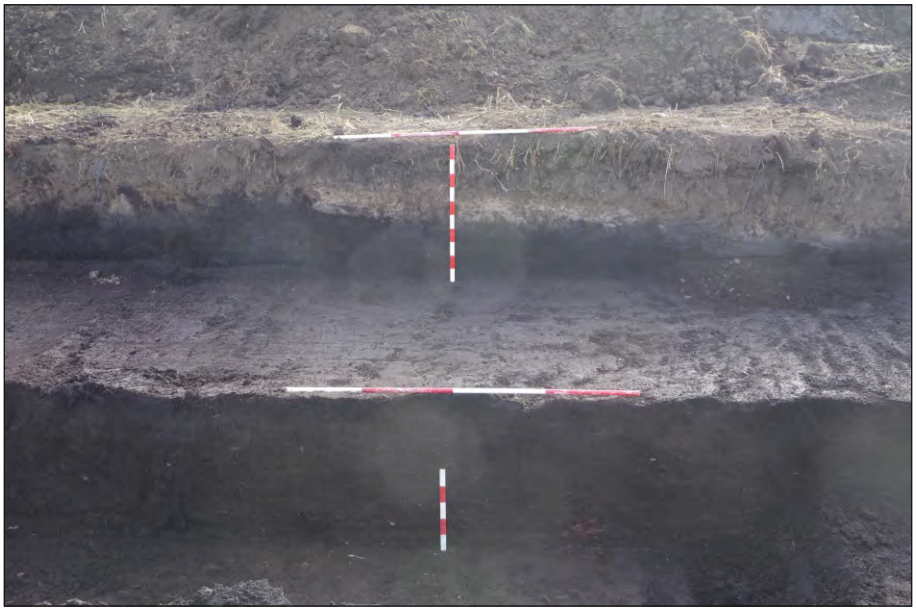

Plate 2: East facing section of Trench 2

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Plate 3: West facing section of Trench 3 with probable drainage ditch 306

Plate 4: Working shot showing borehole drilling

Date:	02/12/2014	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	N/A	Illustrator:	ND
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\106060\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\Eval\2014_12_02\106060_Plates.cdr		

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