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# St Georges Works Trowbridge, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Ref: 112030.03 February 2016



# **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

### Prepared for:

T C Sports Ltd
Unit 2 St Georges Works
Silver Street
Trowbridge
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Report Ref: 112030.03



#### **Quality Assurance**

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<sup>\*</sup> I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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# **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

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Cover image: Test pit 3 and rear of Silver Street, view from the south-east



### **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

#### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by TC Sports Ltd to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for residential development at St Georges Works, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (centred on NGR 385766 157956). The proposed archaeological trial trenching comprised the excavation of two trenches measuring 10 m x 1.30 m and a test pit measuring 2 m x 2 m in land currently used as a car park. The work took place on 18th and 19th January 2016.

Of the two trenches, Trench 1, to the north, produced features dating to the medieval period and possibly relating to burgage plots. The Test pit 3 also produced features dating to this period. The remaining trench, Trench 2, contained no archaeological features. It should be noted, however, that this area was heavily disturbed by footings relating to the modern works, having in all likelihood previously been levelled. These actions may have truncated any earlier features.



## **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

## Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Terry Sims who commissioned the work on behalf of TC Sports Ltd. The assistance of John Hussey who provided the plant and oversaw the works was also greatly appreciated. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Rachel Foster, Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire County Council, who monitored the works and made several insightful and helpful comments.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Lee Newton and Bianca San Martin. The report was written by Lee Newton and the illustrations prepared by Nancy Dixon. The finds analysis was compiled by Lorraine Mepham. The project was managed by Wessex Archaeology by Gareth Chaffey.



## **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by TC Sports Ltd ('the Client') to undertake a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at St Georges Works, Silver Street in Trowbridge, Wiltshire (hereafter 'the Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 385766 157956.

#### 1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located to the south of Silver Street within the centre of Trowbridge to the north of the River Biss.
- 1.2.2 The Site measures approximately 0.34 ha and is bounded to the north-west by the Post Office and to the north and west by buildings fronting on to silver street. The Site is currently occupied by mid to late 19th century industrial buildings surrounded by tarmac hardstanding. The hardstanding is formed of concrete of 6" to 9" in depth which has been tested by boreholes across the site.
- 1.2.3 The site is situated within the Trowbridge Central conservation area and within a zone of higher archaeological potential' as identified by the West Wiltshire Local Plan (WWDC 2004).
- 1.2.4 The Site is relatively flat, lying at approximately 46 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology of the site is recorded as Jurassic Cornbrash formation, comprising of limestone, with no superficial deposits recorded (British Geological Survey).

#### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background to the Site and surrounding area was presented in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2016), a summary of this is included below.

#### 2.2 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric (900,000 BC-AD 43)

2.2.1 In advance of construction of The Shires shopping centre 200 m west of the Site, Bronze Age boundaries, a number of pits and some possible plough marks were excavated. These have been interpreted as representing a focus of early land division and agricultural utilisation of the prehistoric landscape. These prehistoric remains were located on the same free draining Cornbrash ridge as the Site.



#### Romano-British & Saxon (AD43-1066)

2.2.2 Limited numbers of Romano-British artefacts have been discovered around Tonbridge from the archaeological excavations at Castle Place and the fire station to the west of the Site (WCAS 2004). However the town of Trowbridge appears to be of Anglo-Saxon foundation, based in the area now occupied by The Shires at the top end of Castle Street. The remains of a church, graveyard and possible manorial complex were discovered during excavations there in 1986-8.

Medieval and post-medieval (AD 1066–1800)

- 2.2.3 In the Domesday Book, Trowbridge is referred to as Straburg and was held by Brictric, a Saxon. During the Medieval period, a motte and bailey castle was constructed on top of the Saxon manorial complex between 1086 and 1139. Around the castle the medieval town developed, with the concentric lines of its defensive 'bailey' ditches reflected now by streets, including Silver Street (Rogers 1984). The town flourished as a local market throughout the Middle Ages and then developed as one of the principal woollen towns of south-west England during the post-medieval period.
- 2.2.4 Silver Street marked the south-eastern extent of the medieval town and until the mid-19th century was occupied by medieval timber-framed houses and shops. Most were demolished during street widening in 1861, but their street-frontage positions and the extents of the 'burgage' garden plots are still preserved in the long narrow plots that extend back from Silver Street.

19th century and modern (AD 1800–present)

- 2.4.1 As recently as 1803 buildings in Silver Street were restricted to the street frontage, but by 1860 linear developments and courts had filled the backlands of Silver Street as far back as their present extent. By then, Silver Street had become a fledgling industrial zone, with all of the extant buildings within the Site dating from the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 2.2.5 In 1814 George Haden set up shop in Silver Street at Nos 7-8 Silver Street, within the St Georges Works. The company was recorded within the Site as recently as 1939.

#### 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 WSI (WA 2016), this is summarised below:



- 3.2.2 A single test pit (2 m x 2 m) and two machine-excavated trial trenches (10 m in length By 1.6 m wide) were excavated within the potential development area (**Figure 1**). A further proposed trench was not excavated as it was located within the footprint of an existing building.
- 3.2.3 The trial trenches were excavated using a 360° excavator equipped with a toothless bucket under constant supervision by WA staff. Concrete covering the Site was broken out at the trench locations by the Client's contractor prior to the trenches and test pit being excavated. Once the level of archaeological deposits was exposed by machine, archaeological features were sampled sufficiently to address the aims of the evaluation, and recorded to professionally accepted standards.
- 3.2.4 Investigations were recorded commensurate with the archaeological results using WA's *pro forma* recording system and a comprehensive day book. Recording also included written, drawn and photographic elements as conditions determined.
- 3.2.5 A full photographic record was compiled using digital images. The record illustrated both the detail and the general context of the Site as a whole. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process that has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 3.2.6 A real time kinematic (RTK) survey was carried out using a Leica Viva series GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service. All survey data was recorded in Ordnance Survey National Grid coordinates and heights above Ordnance Datum (Newlyn), to a three-dimensional accuracy limit of 30 mm.
- 3.2.7 A unique code **112030** 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 override 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 and 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.

#### 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information contained within the Trench Tables in **Appendix 1** and the Site archive. Details of individual excavated contexts and features are retained in the trench tables and the Site archive.

### 4.2 Summary

- 4.2.1 Trench 1 and Test pit 3 both contained features relating to medieval occupation of the Site (**Figure 1**). No archaeological features or deposits were found within Trench 2. This may reflect the medieval pattern of land use in this part of Trowbridge.
- 4.2.2 It is to be expected that medieval activity would increase towards the north-western end of the Site, as this borders Silver Street, which until the mid-19th century was occupied by timber-framed houses and shops of medieval construction.



#### 4.3 Medieval

- 4.3.1 Trench 1 contained two intercutting ditches, both dated to the medieval or early post-medieval period (**Figure 2, Plate 1**). One of these, **106**, was aligned in a north-west to south-east direction, sharing the alignment of the alleyways running at approximately right angles to Silver Street. This feature measured approximately 1.25 m wide and 0.42 m deep. The other, **108**, followed a north to south alignment and measured 0.75 m wide and 0.57 m deep.
- 4.3.2 The Test pit 3, contained a single posthole, **306**, dated to the medieval period (**Plate 2**). It also contained a pit, **308**, also dated to the medieval period and measuring 1.20 m wide and 0.35 m deep. This feature continued beyond the edge of the trench after 0.95 m in length.

#### 4.4 Post-medieval

4.4.1 Pit **308** in Test pit 3 was sealed by material dated to the post-medieval period.

#### 4.5 Modern

4.5.1 Much of the site until relatively recently lay beneath St Georges Works. It is likely that foundations and levelling activity associated with this modern factory may have truncated earlier archaeological deposits, particularly within Trench 2.

#### 5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

#### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The evaluation yielded a small assemblage of finds, in a restricted range of material types (animal bone, pottery and metal). Finds were recovered from two of the three trenches excavated (no finds were recovered from Trench 2), and all derived from stratified layers and feature fills. **Table 1** gives the breakdown of finds by context.

Table 1: All finds by context (number / weight in grammes)

Context	Animal Bone	Iron	Pottery
103			1/16
107	44/736		3/101
109	5/28	1/7	1/6
303			2/26
307			2/10
309			9/213
Total	49/764	1/7	18/372

#### 5.2 Pottery

- 5.2.1 Datable finds are limited to the 18 sherds of pottery recovered; these comprise 12 medieval and six post-medieval sherds.
- 5.2.2 Three ware types are represented amongst the medieval sherds, and these can be correlated with the type series created for the large published assemblage from Trowbridge Castle (Mepham 1993). Two of these ware types, one sandy and one containing crushed limestone inclusions (Trowbridge fabrics Q401 and C400 respectively) find parallels in the published sequence from Bath, where they were found in contexts



from the 10th to 13th centuries, and were considered to have a common source in the Avon valley (Vince 1979, fabrics A and B); given their prevalence in the Trowbridge Castle assemblage, an alternative source in or near the town seems likely. There is one jar rim here in fabric C400, and one body sherd in the same fabric has combed decoration.

- 5.2.3 There are six sherds with a visibly micaceous clay matrix (Trowbridge fabric Q403); this can be paralleled in Warminster, where it almost certainly represents one of the products of the medieval Crockerton industry (Smith 1997, fabric D). As for the Bath types, this ware has a lengthy currency, spanning the 11th to early 14th centuries. There is one jar rim here.
- 5.2.4 In most contexts, the medieval sherds occurred as residual finds alongside post-medieval wares. The single sherds from subsoil **103** and ditch **108** provide the sole dating evidence for these contexts, but given the small quantities this cannot be taken as definitive.
- 5.2.5 The six post-medieval sherds include five in glazed redwares. One of these belongs to a white-slipped (and possibly sgraffito-decorated) flanged dish, one to a flanged bowl, and one to a bunghole vessel. The date range is likely to be 16th to 18th century. There is also one sherd from a feathered slipware cup of a type manufactured in both Staffordshire and Bristol (later 17th or 18th century). Post-medieval sherds provide the dating evidence for ditch 106, make-up layer 303, posthole 306 and pit 308.

#### 5.3 Animal Bone

5.3.1 This derived mainly from ditch **106**, and includes cattle (forelimb and pelvis), sheep (teeth/mandible) and bird (duck).

#### 5.4 Iron

5.4.1 A single iron object, a handmade nail, was recovered from ditch **108**. This object is not closely datable.

#### **6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

6.1.1 No environmental samples were taken during the evaluation.

#### 7 DISCUSSION

#### 7.1 Summary

7.1.1 The evaluation has confirmed that the Site does contain some archaeological activity dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods.

#### 7.2 Conclusions

- 7.2.1 The Site can be broadly split into two halves, with Trenches 1 and 2, in the northern portion of the Site, containing archaeological material, while Trench 2, in the southern part, did not contain any archaeological features or deposits.
- 7.2.2 This distribution of material may reflect the proximity to Silver Street, which borders the Site to the north-west. As recently as 1803 buildings here were restricted to the street frontage and consisted of domestic dwellings and shops. It is therefore perhaps to be expected that the archaeological material should be concentrated in this area. However, an alternative hypothesis would be that any material present in Trench 2 has been truncated by modern development. Trench 2 contained the remains of two large sandstone footings associated with the modern St Georges Works, as well as a



considerable depth (up to 1 m) of made ground. Given that the natural clay was encountered at 0.75-0.80 m in the other two trenches, it is suggested that the ground surrounding Trench 2 was levelled prior to the construction of the works. There is potential, therefore, for this process to have truncated any archaeological features remaining at that time.

- 7.2.3 Ditch **106** shares the approximate alignment of the long narrow plots and access routes that currently extend back from Silver Street. The position of these date to the medieval period. Given the nature of the material recovered from this feature, it is suggested that **106** may represent the boundary of one of the narrow 'burgage' garden plots which certainly existed here during the medieval period.
- 7.2.4 Ditch **108**, although containing material dating to the medieval period, followed a different alignment from **106**. Although these features intercut, no relationship was visible in either of the sections.
- 7.2.5 Posthole **306** was dated to the medieval period. Given its position close to Silver Street this could be associated with the medieval structures which fronted the road until 1861. These were destroyed at this time in order to facilitate street widening. It is possible that **306** lay within a burgage plot to the rear of these structures. Pit **309** is dated to the medieval period and probably lay within a burgage plot to the rear of structures bordering Silver Street. Deposit **303** is interpreted as a layer of post-medieval dumped material, most likely intended to level the ground.

#### 7.3 Recommendations

- 7.3.1 The evidence from Trench 2 suggests considerable landscaping may have occurred during the construction of St Georges Works. This disturbance may therefore extend and include the south-eastern part of the Site, which previously comprised stores and assembly areas.
- 7.3.2 Monitoring or assessment of any geo-technical works within this area of the Site would help confirm the extent and depth of any disturbance and help inform any further archaeological mitigation works that might be required.
- 7.3.3 The evaluation has demonstrated the potential for medieval and post-medieval features within the north-western part of the Site and therefore further archaeological mitigation may be required in these areas upon redevelopment of the Site. This may take the form of an archaeological watching brief during any construction groundworks.

#### 8 STORAGE AND CURATION

#### 8.1 Museum

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

#### 8.2 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 Museum Service, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).



#### 8.3 Discard policy

- 8.3.1 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.
- 8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002).

### 8.4 Copyright

8.4.1 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 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 to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

#### 8.5 Security Copy

8.5.1 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.

#### 9 REFERENCES

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## 10 APPENDICES

# 10.1 Appendix 1:Trench Tables

BgI = below ground level

	Dimensions :	8.85m x 1.30m x 0.80	Ground		
Trench 1	Centre line Coordinates (NGR):		surface level:		
Context	Category	Description	De	pth (bgl)	
101	Layer	Concrete-modern carpark. Seals 102		)-0.12m	
102	Layer	Made ground-very compact mid pink/brown silty sa with 50% corn brash <40mm. Seals 103, sealed by 101		12-0.29m	
103	Layer	Subsoil-dark grey/brown silty clay with 10% charce flecks, 3% sub-angular shelly limestone <70mm across & 3% rooting/bioturbation. Contains 1x sligl abraded pottery fragment. Distinct horizon with 10-Seals 104, sealed by 102	ntly 0.2	29-0.75m	
104	Natural	Mid yellow/brown and grey/blue mottled clay containing 5% limestone flecking throughout. Sealed by 103		0.75m+	
105	Cut	Modern disturbance. Sealed by 102	0.2	20m deep	
106	Linear	NW-SE aligned ditch, 1.25m wide. Uncertain relationship with 108. Sealed by 107		2m deep	
107	Fill	Fill of [106] Mid grey/brown silty clay with flecks of mid yellow/brown silty clay. Contains 5% limestone flecks, sparse snail shells, rare oyster shell, occasional pottery fragments and moderate anima bone.  Seals 106, sealed by 103	•	12m thick	
108	Linear	North-south aligned ditch, 0.75m wide. Uncertain relationship with 106. Sealed by 109	0.5	57m deep	
109	Fill	Fill of [108] Dark grey/brown silty clay. Contains 39 limestone fragments, moderate snail shells, sparse abraded pottery, sparse charcoal flecks and 1 x Fe nail Seals 108, sealed by 103	)	57m thick	

Trench 2	Dimensions : Centre line Coordinates (NGR):	10m x 1.30m x 1.20  Grosur leve			
Context	Category	Description		Dep	th (bgl)
201	Layer	Concrete-modern carpark. Seals 202		0-0.15m	
202	Layer	Brick rubble make-up for 201. Seals 203, sealed by 201			5-0.30m
203	Layer	Stiff mid grey clay containing frequent charcoal flecks			)-0.60m
204	Layer	Redeposited natural. Stiff light yellow/brown clay containing patches of light grey clay. Sealed by 203, seals 205		0.60	)-0.80m
205	Layer	Stiff light grey clay containing occasional charcoal			



		flecks. Made ground. Sealed by 204, seals 206	
206	Layer	Natural. Stiff light/yellow/brown clay containing light grey mottling. Sealed by 205	1m +

	Dimensions :	2m x 2m x 0.80	Grou	ınd	
Trench 3	Centre line Coordinates (NGR):		surface level:		
Context	Category	Description		Depth (bgl)	
301	Layer	Concrete-modern carpark. Seals 302		0-	0.15m
302	Layer	Brick rubble make-up for 301. Seals 303, sealed by 301		0.15	5-0.30m
303	Layer	Mixed make-up layer. Post-medieval. Mid grey silty clay. Contains fragments of Ceramic Building Material, lime mortar, pottery and charcoal. Seals 304, sealed by 302			)-0.50m
304	Layer	Dark grey clay. Contains occasional animal bone & oyster shell. Make-up layer. Sealed by 303, seals 305			)-0.80m
305	Layer	Natural. Stiff mid yellow clay with light grey mottling. Sealed by 304.			80m+
306	Posthole	Sub-circular posthole 0.48 x 0.32m, near-vertical sides, flat base. Sealed by 307		0.25	m deep
307	Fill	Fill of [306] Light grey clay with moderate coarse limestone grit. Contains moderate pottery fragments & 1 x large post-packing stone (limestone) Seals 306, sealed by 304		0.25	im thick
308	Pit	Sub-circular pit, partly obscured beneath edge of excavation. 0.94m wide. Shallow sides, flat base. Sealed by 309		0.35	im deep
309	Fill	Fill of [308] Light grey clay with moderate coarse grit fragments. Contains moderate pottery fragments and frequent charcoal flecks. Seals 308, sealed by 304			om thick



#### 10.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

#### OASIS ID: wessexar1-240852

**Project details** 

Project name St Georges Works, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

Short description of the

project

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by TC Sports Ltd to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land proposed for residential development at St Georges Works, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (centred on NGR 385766 157956). The proposed archaeological trial trenching comprised the excavation of two trenches measuring 10 m x 1.30 m and a test pit measuring 2 m x 2 m in land currently used as a car park. The work took place on 18th and 19th January 2016. Of the two trenches, Trench 1, to the north, produced features dating to the medieval period and possibly relating to burgage plots. The Test pit 3 also produced features dating to this period. The remaining trench, Trench 2, contained no archaeological features. It should be noted, however, that this area was heavily disturbed by footings relating to the modern works, having in all likelihood previously been levelled. These actions may have truncated any earlier features.

Project dates Start: 18-01-2016 End: 19-01-2016

Previous/future work Not known / Not known

Any associated project

reference codes

112030 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial

Monument type DITCH Medieval

Monument type PIT Medieval

Monument type POST HOLE Medieval

Significant Finds POT Medieval

Significant Finds ANIMAL REMAINS Medieval

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

**Project location** 

Country England

Site location WILTSHIRE WEST WILTSHIRE TROWBRIDGE St Georges Works, Trowbridge,

Wiltshire

Postcode BA14 8AA

Study area 0.34 Hectares

Site coordinates ST 85766 57956 51.320027294992 -2.204279429146 51 19 12 N 002 12 15 W

**Point** 



Height OD / Depth Min: 39.98m Max: 40.85m

**Project creators** 

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology

Project brief originator Landowner

Project design originator Wessex Archaeology

Project director/manager Gareth Chaffey

Project supervisor Lee Newton

Type of sponsor/funding

body

Landowner

**Project archives** 

Physical Archive recipient Wiltshire Museum Service

Physical Archive ID 112030

Physical Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics"

Digital Archive recipient Wiltshire Museum Service

Digital Archive ID 112030

Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Wiltshire Museum Service

Paper Archive ID 112030

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Drawing", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

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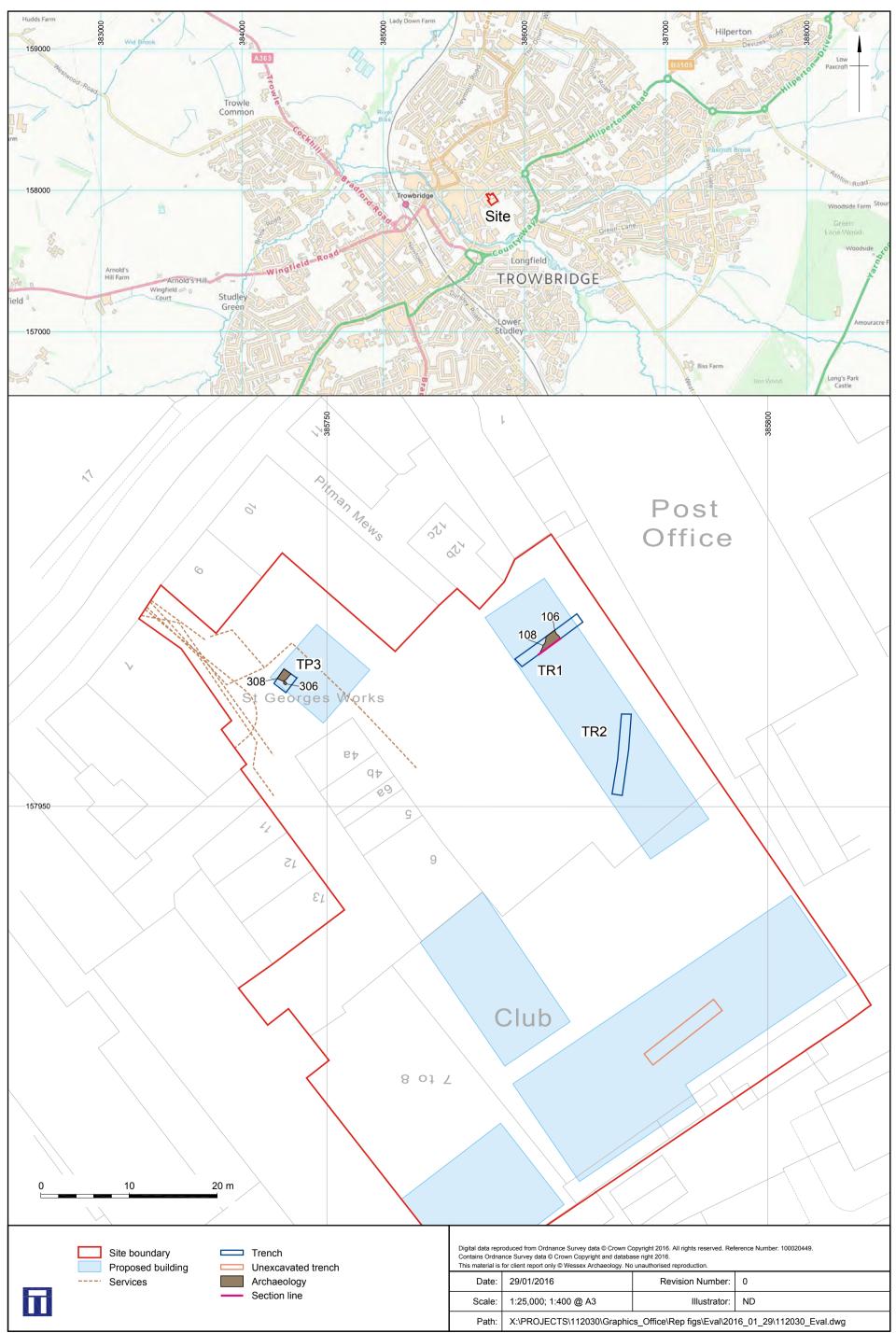
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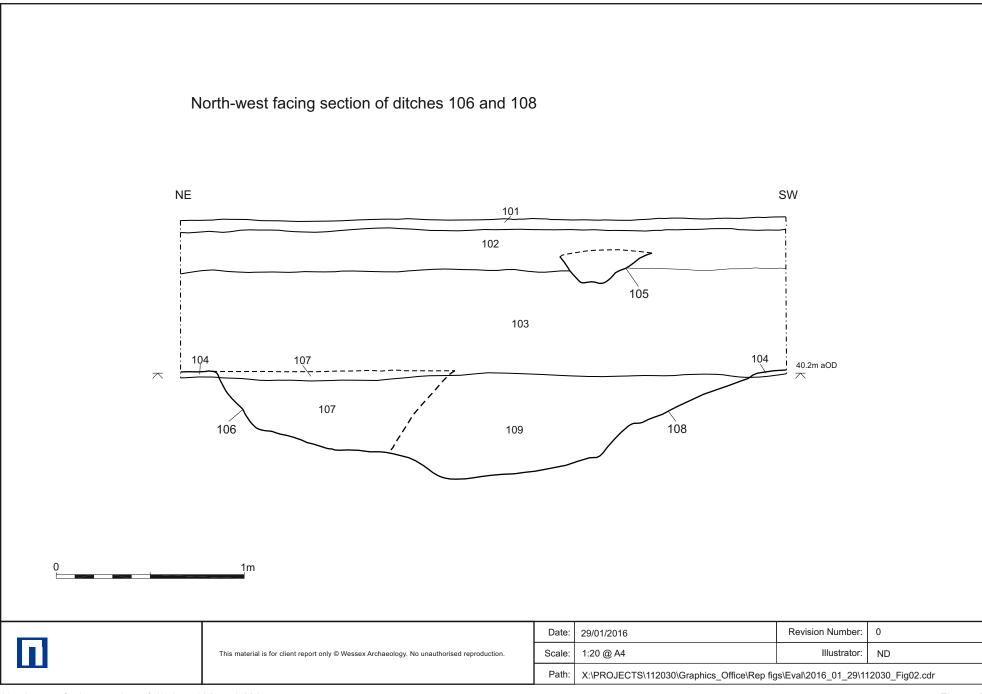




Plate 1: North-west facing section of ditches 106 and 108, oblique view



Plate 2: South-facing section of posthole 306

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



Plate 4: South-east facing section through pit 308

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