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Land at the junction of Tollgate Road and Fowler's Hill Salisbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



Planning Ref: 14/04255/FUL
Ref: 102391.02
May 2016



**Land at the junction of Tollgate Road and Fowler's Hill
Salisbury, Wiltshire**

Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared for:

Front Row Projects Ltd
11 Tollgate Road
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP1 2JA

Prepared by:

Wessex Archaeology
Portway House
Old Sarum Park
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP4 6EB

www.wessexarch.co.uk


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Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Front Row Projects Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during redevelopment work of land at the junction of Tollgate Road and Fowler's Hill, Salisbury. This site lies on the lower slopes of Milford Hill which is recognised as a source of Lower Palaeolithic hand axes. In addition this part of the city formed the location of Anglo-Saxon settlement.

The watching brief primarily monitored sections in a deep excavation into the natural Chalk. The results established that the Chalk is capped by a veneer of fluvial gravel, which forms the feather edge of terrace deposits. These observations extend the margins of the deposits beyond those mapped by The British Geological Survey. Any traces of possible Anglo-Saxon settlement, if present, will have been removed by former development on the site.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance and cooperation shown throughout the project by Mark Bugden of Front Row Projects Ltd, who commissioned the work and provided results of ground survey for use in the investigations. The collaborative role of Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service and its representatives is also recognised.

Academic discussion with Professor D R Bridgland of Durham University also proved invaluable and has been greatly appreciated.

The field work was undertaken by Phil Harding, who also compiled this report. The illustrations were prepared by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andy Crockett, who also edited this report.



Land at the junction of Tollgate Road and Fowler's Hill Salisbury, Wiltshire

Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Front Row Projects (the Client) to carry out an Archaeological Watching Brief on ground works arising from redevelopment of land at the junction of Tollgate Road and Fowler's Hill, Salisbury, Wiltshire (hereafter 'the Site', Figure 1), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 415034 129740.
- 1.1.2 The proposed phased development necessitated the demolition of former properties on the Site (comprising 27 Tollgate Road, 2 Fowler's Hill ("Glendale") and Kimberly House Nursing Home), and construction of a new nursing home in the style of two Victorian villas.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological work was requested as a condition of planning permission by Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service (WCAS), who advise the Local Planning Authority (LPA). This work followed an Archaeological Heritage Statement (WA 2014) and aimed to establish the archaeological and historical potential of the Site and any impacts to this resource arising from the proposed development.
- 1.1.4 The proposed works comprised:
- *Observation of ground works during demolition and grubbing out prior to development; and*
 - *Preparation of a report detailing the results of the work.*

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 Salisbury lies in the south-eastern part of Wiltshire at the confluence of five rivers. It is an early medieval planned city and lies to the south of the earlier settlement known as Old Sarum. The Site is situated within the eastern part of Salisbury, some 200m from the medieval core of the city. The Site comprised approximately 0.17 hectares of land situated at the junction of Tollgate Road and Fowler's Hill (Figure 1).
- 1.2.2 The Site formerly consisted of three residential properties (27 Tollgate Road, Kimberly House and Glendale, 2 Fowler's Hill), ranging in size between a large three storey town house and a single storey bungalow. Topographically the Site was situated on a relatively steep south-west facing slope, which had been extensively terraced to construct the former properties and provide access and parking.
- 1.2.3 The Site ranged in height from between 54.5m to 59m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology of the area is mapped (British Geological Survey) as the Newhaven Chalk Formation with some overlying deposits of valley gravel and 'Head' gravel immediately to the south of the Site.



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background to the site was considered in detail in WA's Heritage Statement (WA 2014). This report concluded that the Site's archaeological potential contained two issues of concern – apart from its location in the near vicinity of the medieval city of Salisbury:

- *The location on the south-western edge of Milford Hill, an area noted for a large concentration of Palaeolithic implements; and*
- *The proximity to the eastern edge of the Anglo-Norman settlement around St Martin's Church.*

2.2 Palaeolithic

2.2.1 River terrace gravel caps Milford Hill, which overlooks the Site. This geological deposit constitutes the source of 'one of the richest Lower Palaeolithic assemblages in the Valley of the Salisbury Avon' (Harding and Bridgland 1998). Many of the flint implements discovered in the area still retain sharp edges which may imply that they have not moved far from their original point of loss or discard. This has led to the suggestion that 'a primary context site may be preserved somewhere on the hill, perhaps covered by solifluction deposits on its upper slopes.' (WA 1993, 112). Consequently, the Milford Hill area is considered to be of at least regional and probably national importance in terms of Palaeolithic archaeology.

2.2.2 Additional test pit evaluation was undertaken (WA 2011) on land to the rear of 37 Fowler's Road, approximately 200 m north of the Site. The test pit results confirmed that Pleistocene gravels, typical of those on Milford Hill, were present at that location.

2.3 Anglo-Norman

2.3.1 The parish of St Martin is the oldest in the city, and was founded before 1220 when the new city of Salisbury was developed. It was referred to as the "Old Town outside the walls" as late as 1750 and forms part of the *veteras sarisbirias* described as the location for the new city in the Dunstable Annalist (Crittall 1962, Langlands 2014). The extent of the settlement is unknown, but certainly includes an 11th century church and extensive domestic activity on the site of St Martin's Church (De Mallett-Morgan 1956), and may have extended as far north as Milford Street (Hawkes 1996, Cave-Penney 2004).

2.3.2 The arrangement of properties along St Martin's Church Street and the northern end of Tollgate Road also follows a very different alignment from the chequers of the medieval city, or the relatively late developments along Milford Hill, and it is considered at least possible that these properties represent a fossilisation of an earlier street pattern (Heaton 2003).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

3.1.1 With due regard to the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), the archaeological watching brief aimed:

- *To determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains, and should such remains be present, to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard;*



- *To confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, using artefacts or other evidence;*
- *To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any remains, their condition and state of preservation;*
- *To prepare a report on the results of the watching brief.*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 Details of the proposed archaeological methodology to be adopted to meet the aims and objectives of the watching brief were included in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2015). This document complied with the ClfA's Standard and guidance: archaeological watching brief (IfA 2014).
- 3.2.2 The principal task required that groundwork and ground reduction should be monitored, including service runs, through previously undisturbed soils.
- 3.2.3 The WSI included issues relating to Health and Safety and service location but principally dealt with procedures to be adopted for the appropriate record and treatment of archaeological and geological deposits, features and artefacts. These issues related to complex archaeological deposits and features, human remains or treasure. Methodologies for topographic survey and appropriate environmental sampling strategies were also included. Arrangements were also made for WCAS to monitor progress of the watching brief in site visits if necessary.
- 3.2.4 Records were compiled using WA's pro forma recording system under the unique site code 102391. This archive included written, drawn, and photographic elements as conditions required.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken over two days in December 2015 and February 2016. The initial visit coincided with the demolition of 27 Tollgate Road and confirmed that any surface features or deposits had been removed in the construction of the building.
- 4.1.2 However it was noted that fluvial deposits were exposed in the section at the higher, northern end of the site. In view of the proximity of the deposits on Milford Hill it was considered that these deposits merited further examination when deep sections were created by the construction of basements. It was likely that the deposits would be fully exposed along the entire length of the Site. This work was undertaken in the second site visit, when two sections were cleaned and recorded.

4.2 Section 1

- 4.2.1 A representative section, approximately 0.60 m deep, showing fluvial deposits, was cleaned and recorded in the northern part of the Site where the ground surface height was approximately 59.30 m aOD.
- 4.2.2 The surface of the natural Chalk was overlain, at a clear contact, by a deposit of unsorted sub angular chalk rubble, with sparse fine flint gravel, in a yellow-green sandy matrix. This deposit, which measured approximately 0.25 m thick, was overlain by a unit of poorly sorted, clast supported, sub rounded flint gravel. The deposit included occasional pockets of material contained within a yellow-green sand matrix, which also included fragments of



chalk. The upper part of the section was of similar type and composition but was contained within orange sand.

4.2.3 No artefacts were observed.

4.3 Section 2

4.3.1 The sequence of fluvial deposits could be traced intermittently downslope to Tollgate Road, at approximately 56 m aOD, where deposits were more clearly bedded and sediments better sorted. A section, approximately 0.60 m thick was cleaned and recorded.

4.3.2 The sediments fined upwards from poorly sorted medium/fine matrix supported gravel at the base, which graded into a bed of horizontally bedded fine flint gravel in a light grey sandy matrix. This unit was itself overlain by fine horizontally bedded light yellow/grey sand with isolated flint clasts.

4.3.3 These deposits were sealed beneath a bed of horizontally bedded fine flint gravel in a yellow sandy matrix, which was itself capped by light grey silt/sandy silt that was heavily root disturbed.

4.3.4 No artefacts were observed.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was commissioned to examine two contrasting aspects of the site, its geological structure and Palaeolithic potential, especially in relation to deposits upslope on Milford Hill and the possible presence of early medieval settlement remains.

5.1.2 The results have confirmed and elaborated details of the geological sequence as mapped by the British Geological Survey, which recorded fluvial terrace deposits that extend to the south of Tollgate Road. The watching brief has traced the terrace gravels northwards beyond Tollgate Road and demonstrated that they 'feather out' beyond the north end of the Site.

5.1.3 The presence of sand in the northern section confirms that these deposits were of fluvial origin. The increased quantities of chalk rubble suggest that this section lay on the fringes of the terrace feature where chalk was incorporated into the river system from the higher ground. The lower, southern section was characterised by more consistently bedded deposits, reflecting their location within a totally fluvial environment.

5.1.4 The relatively large quantities of Chalk within the gravel undoubtedly reflect their relatively recent origin. This is in stark contrast to those much older deposits recorded on Milford Hill, which are heavily decalcified, despite having contained Chalk when they were originally laid down.

5.1.5 The deposits recorded on Tollgate Road during the archaeological watching brief are therefore confirmed as being of fluvial origin but are sufficiently thin to be considered unworthy of being included by the BGS.

5.1.6 Confirmation that Tollgate Road effectively defines the extent of the terrace gravels may also indicate the limits of the Anglo-Saxon settlement on the well-drained terrace, sheltered beneath Milford Hill and overlooking the River Avon.



5.1.7 No archaeological features or deposits were noted. This may to some extent relate to the fact that the Site lay near the periphery of the medieval settlement but is more likely to result from groundwork undertaken to construct the former buildings on the site.

6 THE ARCHIVE

6.1 Museum

6.1.1 The designated receiving museum will be Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, Kings House, Salisbury.

6.2 Preparation of Archive

6.2.1 The complete Site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the appropriate Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; Brown 2011; ADS 2013; ClfA 2014c).

6.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the Site/accession code and a full index will be prepared.

6.2.3 The site archive will be prepared for long-term storage in accordance with current guidelines (e.g. Walker 1990; MGC 1992 etc.). It is proposed in principle that, subject to the wishes of the landowner, the entire archive will be donated to and deposited with recipient museum.

6.2.4 Until final deposition with the museum the archive will be stored at the offices of WA Southern Region in Salisbury.

6.3 Discard policy

6.3.1 WA follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections (SMA 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.

6.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples will follow nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; EH 2002).

6.4 Security copy

6.4.1 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.

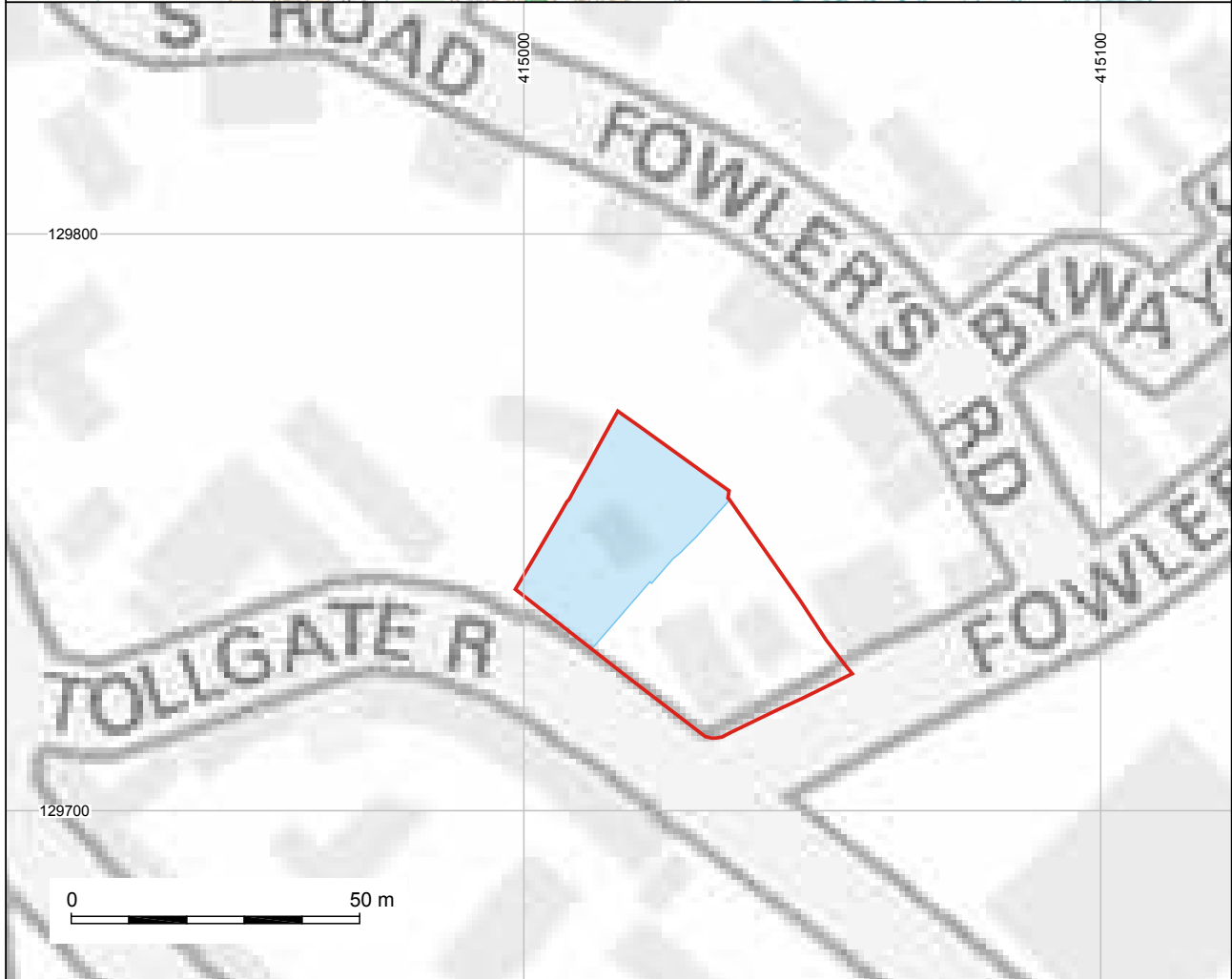
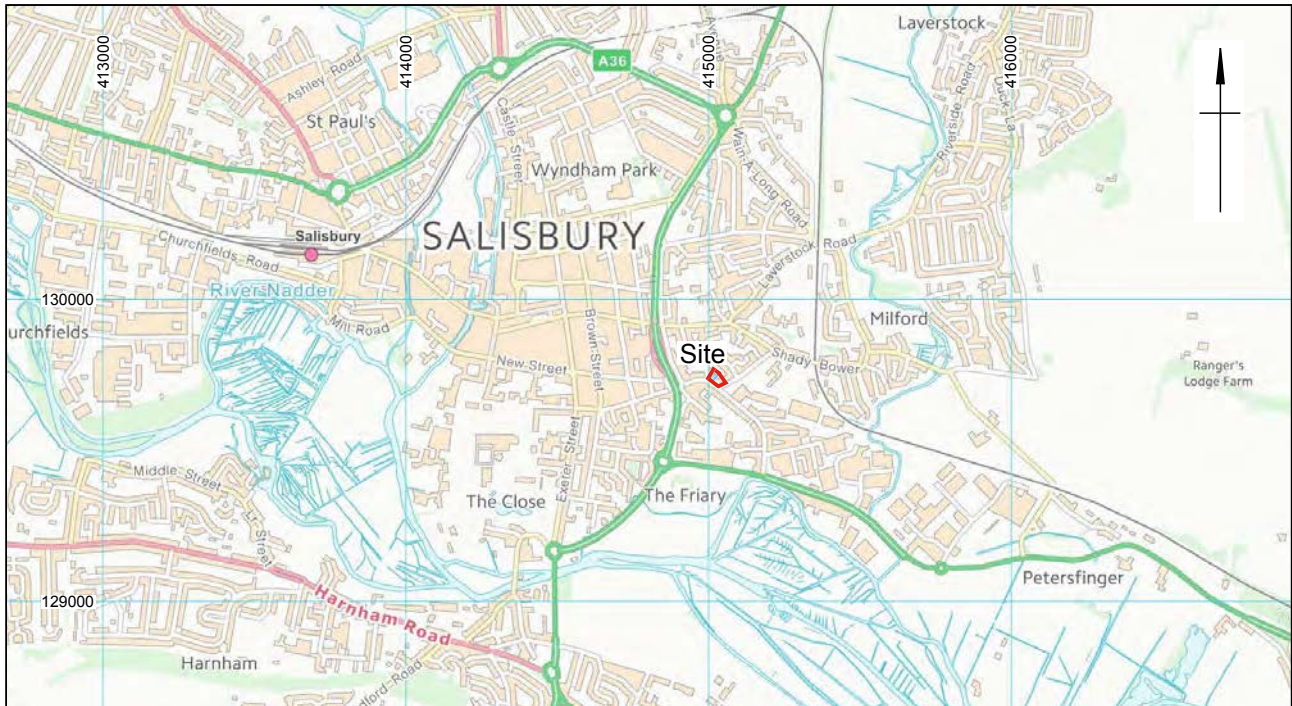
6.5 Copyright

6.5.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by WA 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.



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- Site boundary
- Watching brief area

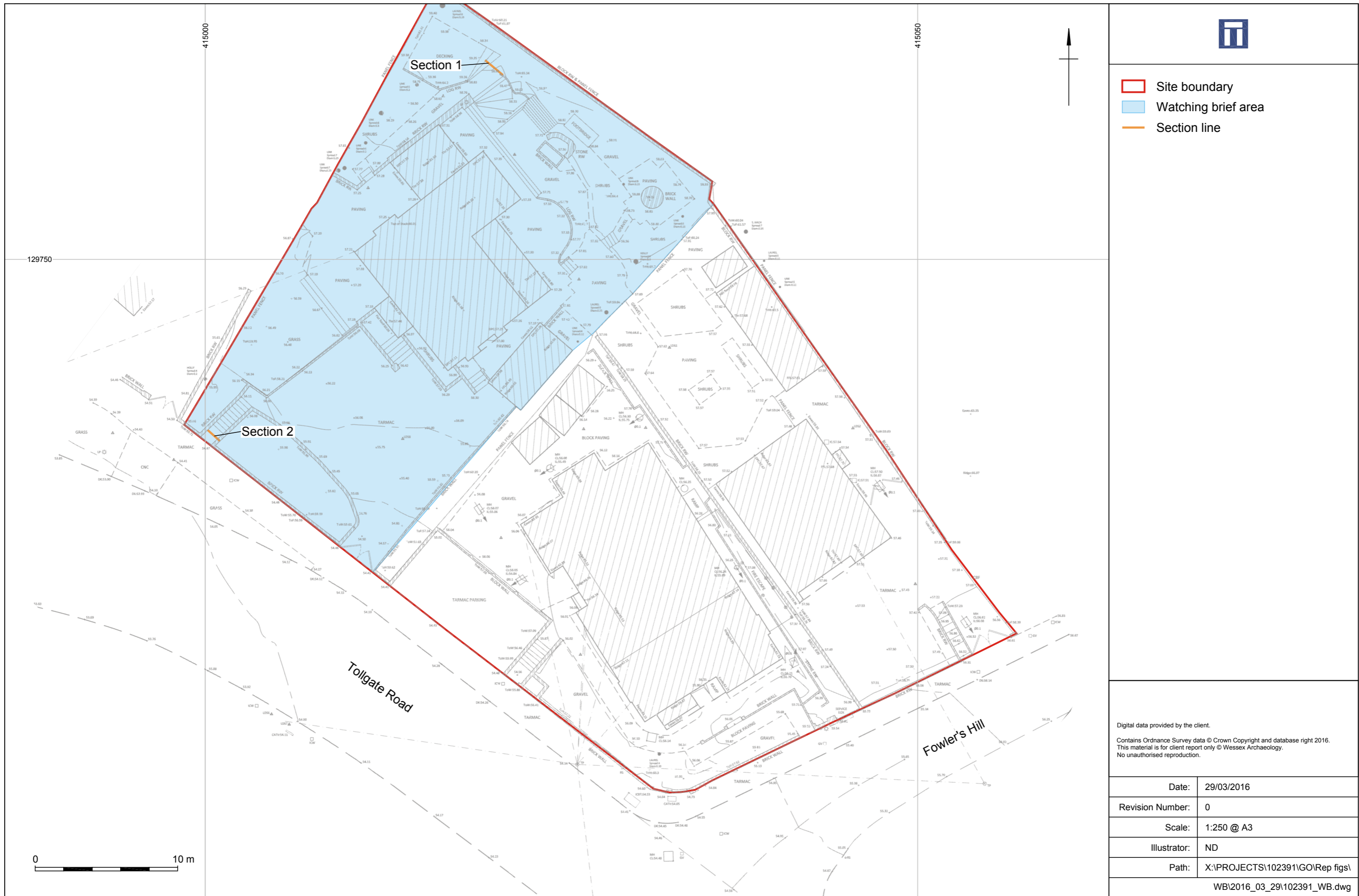


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Site location

Figure 1



Site plan and location of sections

Figure 2



As below, but within orange sand matrix

Poorly sorted, unbedded, clast supported coarse/fine sub-rounded flint gravel. Occasional pockets of matrix supported material in yellow/grey sandy matrix. Occasional chalk clasts

Unsorted yellow/grey sand with sub-angular chalk rubble, sparse, fine flint gravel. Clear contrast with natural chalk below

Chalk

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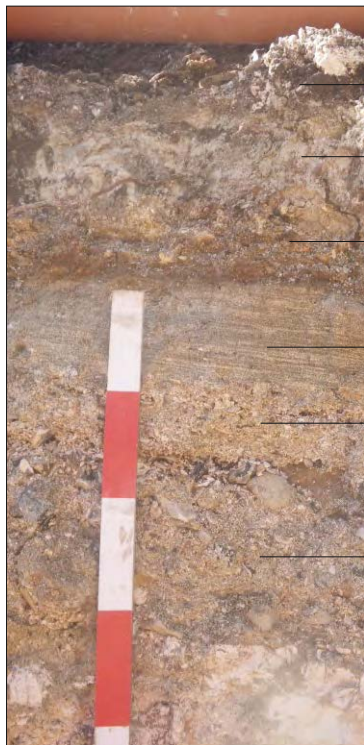
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- Disturbed
- Light grey silt/sandy silt, heavily root disturbed, clear contrast with deposit below
- Horizontally bedded, fine flint gravel in yellow sandy matrix, some panning at the base at contact with bed below
- Fine horizontally bedded light yellow/grey sand with isolated flint clasts
- Horizontally bedded fine flint gravel in light grey sandy matrix. Single bed of clast supported material at top
- Poorly sorted medium/fine matrix supported gravel with open frame-work at the top

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Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



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