

Archaeological Evaluation



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Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Laing O'Rourke Infrastructure to carry out archaeological evaluation of land at Peak Cavern Car Park, Castleton, Derbyshire, between NGR 414770, 382908 and 414821, 382811.

Human remains likely associated with a newly discovered Anglo-Saxon cemetery were recovered from a single test pit (test pit 4) during the evaluation.

The remaining three test pits contained no archaeological features, deposits, significant artefacts, or human remains. Bones recovered from test pit 2 are thought to be animal bones, although confirmation of this by a specialist is outstanding.

Detialed analysis of the recovered human remains and the modest finds assemblage is expected to occur as part of the University of Sheffield's wider project in the area.

The construction of the car park does not appear to have had a significant impact on the Site. However, the potential archaeological horizon is very thin, with undisturbed geological deposits present close to the surface (minimum 0.15 m below ground level). Human remains were recovered from a buried topsoil layer immediately below the tarmac car park surface, suggesting that further human remains may be present just below the surface of the car park, and in areas of undisturbed topsoil nearby. The presence of disarticulated human remains in a layer of former topsoil suggests that they had been disturbed, perhaps by ploughing or some other process. The presence of as-yet-unidentified archaeological cut features containing human remains is a possibility.

The proposed installation of a pipeline across the site is unlikely to significantly impact on the archaeological resource. Direct drilling of the pipeline is proposed and it should be possible to install the pipeline from reception pits situated in non-archaeologically sensitive locations as identified by this evaluation.

It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation is deposited with Buxton Museum and Art Gallery. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, with an accession code yet to be determined. An OASIS form, wessexar1-286334, has been completed for this project and will be finalised when the archive is deposited.

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Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Laing O'Rourke Infrastructure and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Jennifer Collier in this regard. The project was monitored for the Peak District National Park Authority by Natalie Ward.

The fieldwork was carried out by Jonathan Buttery. This report was written by Ashley Tuck with illustrations by Alix Sperr. The human bone assemblage was assessed by Heather Tamminen. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Alexandra Grassam.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Laing O'Rourke Infrastructure (hereafter the 'Client') to carry out archaeological evaluation of land at Peak Cavern Car Park, Castleton, Derbyshire, between NGR 414770, 382908 and 414821, 382811 (hereafter 'the Site', Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation comprised four hand dug test pits located along the proposed route of a new water pipeline (Fig. 2). The evaluation is required to ascertain the presence or absence of human remains under the Peak Cavern Car Park. Skeletal remains have been recovered, both from archaeological investigations and as chance finds, around the car park and are currently believed to represent an Anglo-Saxon cemetery. Investigations by Sheffield University are ongoing in the immediate vicinity. The Peak Cavern Car Park has, therefore, been identified as having a high potential for containing significant archaeological remains.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by Wessex Archaeology (2017), detailing how the evaluation would be carried out. The WSI was approved by Natalie Ward, the Senior Conservation Archaeologist at the Peak District National Park Authority prior to the commencement of work. The WSI conformed to current best practice and guidance (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014a-c; Historic England 2015).

1.2 Site location, topology and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site is located at the car park for Peak Cavern in the village of Castleton. It is surrounded by pasture to the west, and residential development to the north, east and south.
- 1.2.2 The Site is located on relatively flat land, gently sloping from 194 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the south to 199 m (aOD) in the north.
- 1.2.3 The underlying geology of the scheme has been mapped as Bowland Shale Formation, comprising mudstone, siltstone, and sandstone, with superficial deposits of Head comprising clay, silt, sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 2017).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 No archaeological Desk-based Assessment has been prepared for the Site. The following section contains information summarised from the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017) which was based on readily available internet resources, such as Heritage Gateway and Pastscape, with additional information provided by the Peak District National Park during consultation. Further unpublished results provided by the University of Sheffield are included.

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2.2 Prehistoric and Romano-British

2.2.1 Bronze Age activity is recorded at Peak Cavern, and Romano-British coins were recovered nearby.

2.3 Early medieval and medieval

- 2.3.1 The presence of an Anglo-Saxon settlement in Castleton is indicated by its inclusion in the Domesday Book in 1086 AD, however the entry suggests a comparatively small settlement likely comprising a scatter of farmsteads. The present layout of Castleton is a product of the impact of the Norman Conquest, following the establishment of Peveril Castle and the adjacent planned settlement.
- 2.3.2 A number of records for the chance discovery of human remains around the Peak Cavern Car Park exist from the early 20th century onwards, including during the making of a tennis court in the 1930s approximately 60 m to the east of the proposed Site. A project is currently in progress by the University of Sheffield and the Castleton Historical Society which includes the investigation of this area of Castleton through test pitting. Further human remains have been identified, much of which has been in the form of disarticulated elements. A number of *in-situ* burials have, however, also been recorded between 2013 and 2016 in an area immediately to the west of the proposed Site. It is evident that the area contains a previously unknown cemetery. Radiocarbon dates from samples taken have produced an early medieval date. The area and length of use of the cemetery are currently unknown. The discovery is considered to be of high importance.

2.4 Post-medieval

- 2.4.1 The available historical ordnance survey maps indicate the car park has remained undeveloped throughout the later 19th and 20th centuries. There is no information on any below ground services within the Site other than a BT cable which was laid out along the western edge.
- 2.4.2 While the Site has been largely undisturbed with the exception of the car park, the wider area is abundant in post-medieval and modern activity such as the Grade II Listed Goosehill Hall, dating to the 18th century.

3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Project aim

3.1.1 With due regard to current best practice and guidance (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014a-c; Historic England 2015), the principle aim of the evaluation was to assess and record the archaeological resource in advance of the installation of a pipeline using appropriate methods and practices. The results of the evaluation should inform any subsequent mitigation strategy.

3.2 Specific aims and objectives

- 3.2.1 The identification of *in situ* early medieval burials in the area of the Site is a significant archaeological discovery and is changing the understanding of Castleton and more widely settlement activity in the Hope Valley during this period. Key aims and objectives of this evaluation were:
 - to investigate the archaeological resource within an area of proposed groundworks, including clarifying and recording the extent of any buried archaeological remains;
 - to identify, within the constraints of the works, the date, character, condition and importance of any surviving archaeological remains encountered:

- to assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits and/or structures;
- to assess the presence/absence of in situ human burials;
- to avoid the disturbance, damage or destruction of in situ human burials;
- to analyse and interpret the results, and;
- to produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report on any archaeological deposits, burials and/or structures present within the excavated areas.
- 3.2.2 The specific aims of the evaluation were:
 - to determine the potential for direct impact by the proposed scheme on the buried archaeological resource, and;
 - to explore options to mitigate the impact of the proposed scheme on the buried archaeological resource.
- 3.2.3 The evaluation also has the potential to provide information to contribute to the wider cultural and environmental context with reference to specific regional research aims as set out in *The Archaeology of the East Midlands* (Cooper 2006) including:
 - osteological studies of early medieval cemeteries (ibid., 166 and 214);
 - the recognition of seventh to ninth-century cemeteries (ibid., 166);
 - the recognition and study of burial rites and associated ritual (ibid., 170), and;
 - understanding the development of settlements before and after the Norman Conquest (ibid., 211).

3.3 Excavation

- 3.3.1 All work was carried out in accordance with best practice and current guidance (e.g. ClfA 2014a-c; Historic England 2015).
- 3.3.2 Four test pits were excavated under the supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist. Machine excavation, in successive level spits, was halted initially at either the upper archaeological horizon, or at natural geology, whichever was reached first. Ultimately, each test pit was excavate to a depth of 1 m in order to test the natural deposits encountered. Mechanical excavation was carried out by a tracked mechanical excavator and operator provided by the client under the supervision of Wessex Archaeology staff. The excavator was fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Hardstanding was broken out with a toothed bucket.
- 3.3.3 The test pits initially measured 1 m by 1 m in plan. Test pit 4 was expanded to 2 m by 2 m in plan following identification of archaeological remains.
- 3.3.4 Archaeological deposits and features were investigated by excavation and were recorded commensurate with the scale of work using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system. Recording includes written, drawn, and photographic elements. Archaeological features and deposits were surveyed using a GPS and related to Ordnance Survey datum.

3.4 Human remains

3.4.1 Due to the high potential for the discovery of human remains, a Ministry of Justice Licence was obtained prior to the evaluation commencing.

- 3.4.2 In the first instance human remains were left *in situ*, covered and protected, pending discussions between the Client, Wessex Archaeology and PDNPA. It was deemed appropriate to lift some of the human remains in order to investigate the underlying Site stratigraphy. These human remains were fully recorded, excavated and removed from the Site in compliance with the Ministry of Justice Licence.
- 3.4.3 All excavation and post-excavation was in accordance with WA protocols, and undertaken in line with current guidance documents (e.g. McKinley 2013) and the standards set out in ClfA Technical Paper 13 *Excavation and post-excavation treatment of cremated and inhumed remains* (McKinley and Roberts 1993).
- 3.4.4 In consultation with the PDNPA and the University of Sheffield, the human remains recovered during these works have been transferred to the University of Sheffield to allow for their analysis alongside the human remains recovered from the University of Sheffield's ongoing programme of test pitting in the surrounding area. The transferal of human remains to the University proceeded after an appropriate Ministry of Justice Licence was obtained.
- 3.4.5 The final deposition of human remains subsequent to the appropriate level of osteological analysis and other specialist sampling/examinations will follow the requirements set out in the appropriate Ministry of Justice Licence.

3.5 Finds

- 3.5.1 Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance (ClfA 2014a; Walker 2001), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except where these were of obvsiously modern date.
- 3.5.2 A suitable metal detector was used to enhance artefact recovery during the course of the fieldwork.
- 3.5.3 All retained artefacts were, as a minimum, washed, weighed, counted and identified. Any artefacts requiring conservation or specific storage conditions were dealt with immediately in line with *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 1998).
- 3.5.4 It is proposed to transfer the finds recovered during these works to the University of Sheffield to allow for their analysis alongside material recovered from the University of Sheffield's ongoing programme of test pitting in the surrounding area.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information held in the Site archive, with a full list of context numbers and context descriptions contained in Appendix 1.

4.2 Test pit 1

4.2.1 The natural undisturbed geological substrate in test pit 1 (Pl. 1) comprised brown stony sand likely representing geological "head" deposit (102). Part of test pit 1 was sealed with 0.15 m of brown sand topsoil (101). The other part of test pit 1 was sealed with the same depth of compact gravel car park surface (103). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified in test pit 1.

4.3 Test pit 2

4.3.1 In test pit 2 (Pl. 2), the natural was observed 0.64 m below ground level and comprised orange brown sand with abundant stones (204). This natural deposit was also likely an example of "head". An orange brown sand buried subsoil extended across some of the test

pit between 0.34 m and 0.64 m below ground level (203). The remainder of the test pit was occupied by disturbed made ground at this depth (205). A layer of buried topsoil comprising dark brown, silty sand was present between 0.15 m and 0.34 m below ground level (202). The test pit was capped with a tarmac car park surface (201).

4.3.2 Animal bone and pottery was recovered from buried topsoil 202. The pottery has not yet been assessed by a specialist but is thought to comprise two joining sherds of lightly oxidised yellow glazed late medieval/early post-medieval ware accompanied by a post-medieval glazed redware sherd. The finds from test pit 2 are thought to be of low significance and likely relate to agricultural use of the Site in the post-medieval (and possibly late medieval) periods.

4.4 Test pit 3

4.4.1 In test pit 3 (Pl. 3) undisturbed geological "head" deposit comprising orange silt clay below 0.4 m below ground level (303) was overlain by brown silt sand buried topsoil (302) sealed by 0.2 m of tarmac (301). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recovered from test pit 3.

4.5 Test pit 4

- 4.5.1 Test pit 4 contained bedrock (403) 0.3 m below ground level, although excavation through the loose bedrock was ultimately possible to a depth of a full metre (Pl. 4). A thin (0.2 m thick) layer of buried topsoil comprising brown silt sand (402) overlay the bedrock and the test pit was covered in the tarmac of the car park surface (401).
- 4.5.2 Human remains (Pls 5–10) were identified within the thin layer of buried topsoil from test pit 4 (402). The human remains were generally disarticulated although some small elements of articulation may have been present (Fig. 2). Only preliminary analysis of the human bone has been carried out at this stage (see below).
- 4.5.3 A copper alloy pin accompanied the human remains but has not yet been assessed by a specialist. Assessment of the copper alloy pin is expected to be undertaken by Sheffield University.

5 ARTEFACTUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Preliminary osteological assessment

Animal bone

5.1.1 Fragments of animal bone were recovered from deposit 202 in test pit 2. The bones were in a poor state and very fragmentary. One fragment of bone showed evidence of butchery in the form of four cut marks. Three of these were light and left small cuts in the bone whereas the fourth was significant enough to cleanly cut the bone.

Human bone

- 5.1.2 Human bone was recovered from deposit 402 in test pit 4. A total of 147 fragments were assessed representing a minimum number of 4 individuals. Two juveniles were represented in the assemblage with the left ilium being the only element represented more than once, and which were over 75% complete in both cases. Both individuals were determined to be between 5-7 years of age at death. Age was determined based on epiphyseal fusion.
- 5.1.3 The two adult individuals were also represented. Four left maxillary teeth (C, P2, M1, and M2) were used to determine that the age of one of the individuals was >40 years at death. Sex could not be determined based on the remains present. The size and robustness of the bones suggested that one individual was better represented in the assemblage than the other, however, the bones cannot definitively be assigned to one individual or the other. The

ulnar shaft was found to occur three times, with each fragment clearly from separate bones. Two ulnar shafts, a right and left, appear much more gracile than the other arm and pectoral girdle bones that were present.

- 5.1.4 Minimal pathology was found on the remains. A left adult femur and tibia both showed very mild signs of periostitis, possibly due to an infection, but the extent of it was not significant. On the maxillary teeth there was evidence of mild linear dental enamel hypoplasia approximately half way up the teeth. One right rib fragment demonstrated an expanded rib ending which can be indicative of infection. Some elements, specifically some of the shoulder and arm bones, were very robust and had significant muscle attachments.
- 5.1.5 The appearance of disarticulated remains due to the intercutting of burials is not uncommon in graveyards, and the assemblage represents the remains of at least four truncated and redeposited individuals.

5.2 Recommendations for future work

- 5.2.1 Consultation with the PDNPA and the University of Sheffield has led to the consensus that full osteological analysis of the human remains and small finds assemblage would be most appropriate as part of the larger scheme of test pitting currently being undertaken by the University. In this way, the results of this evaluation can best be undertstood within the context of the recently identified early medieval cemetary, Castleton and the wider Hope Valley.
- 5.2.2 Transferal of human remains to the University of Sheffield has taken place in accordance with an appropriate license from the Minitry of Justice.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 Human remains likely associated with a newly discovered Anglo-Saxon cemetery were recovered from a single test pit (test pit 4) during the evaluation. The remaining three test pits contained no archaeological features, deposits, significant artefacts, or human remains, although animal bone was recovered from test pit 2.
- 6.1.2 The construction of the car park does not appear to have had a significant impact on the Site. However, the potential archaeological horizon is very thin, with undisturbed geological deposits present close to the surface (minimum 0.15 m below ground level). Human remains were recovered from a buried topsoil layer immediately below the tarmac car park surface, suggesting that further human remains may be present just below the surface of the car park, and in areas of undisturbed topsoil nearby. The presence of disarticulated human remains in a layer of former topsoil suggests that they had been disturbed, perhaps by ploughing or some other process. The presence of as-yet-unidentified archaeological cut features containing human remains is a possibility.
- 6.1.3 The proposed installation of a pipeline across the site is unlikely to significantly impact on the archaeological resource. Direct drilling of the pipeline is proposed and it should be possible to install the pipeline from reception pits situated in non-archaeologically sensitive locations as identified by this evaluation.
- 6.1.4 Full analysis of the recovered human remains and the modest finds assemblage is expected to occur as part of the University of Sheffield's wider project in the area. With the caveat that examination full analysis of the human remains and artefacts is outstanding, the aims of the evaluation have been met.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Buxton Museum and Art Gallery. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under an accession code yet to be determined.

7.2 Preparation of archive

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

7.3 Discard policy

7.3.1 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.

7.4 Security copy

7.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

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8.2 Online resources

British Geological Survey 2017 Geology of Britain Viewer (accessed May 2017) http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1:Context descriptions

Test Pit 1	Test Pit 1						
Context	Description	Depth (m)					
Number							
101	Topsoil – brown sand	0-0.15					
102	Natural – brown stoney sand	0.15-1+					
103	Made ground car park surface – gravel, well compacted	0-0.15					

Test Pit 2	Test Pit 2						
Context	Description	Depth (m)					
Number							
201	Made ground car park surface – gravel, well compacted	0-0.15					
202	Buried topsoil – dark brown silt sand	0.15-0.34					
203	Buried subsoil – orange brown sand with stones	0.34-0.64					
204	Natural – orange brown sand with abundant stones	0.64-1+					
205	Possible made ground	0.34-0.64					

Test Pit 3	Test Pit 3						
Context	Description	Depth (m)					
Number							
301	Tarmac car park surface	0-0.2					
302	Buried topsoil – brown silt sand	0.2-0.4					
303	Natural – hillwash or glacial till. Orange silt clay	0.4-1					

Test Pit 4	Test Pit 4						
Context	Description	Depth (m)					
Number							
401	Tarmac car park surface	0-0.1					
402	Buried topsoil – brown silt sand	0.1-0.3					
403	Natural – bedrock	0.3-1+					

9.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-286334

Project details

Project name Peak Cavern Car Park, Castleton, Derbyshire

Short description of the project

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Laing O'Rourke Infrastructure to carry out archaeological evaluation of land at Peak Cavern Car Park, Castleton, Derbyshire, between NGR 414770, 382908 and 414821, 382811. Assessment and/or analysis of recovered human remains and the modest finds assemblage is expected to occur as part of the University of Sheffield's wider project in the area. With the caveat that examination of the human remains and artefacts is outstanding, the aims of the evaluation have been met. Human remains likely associated with a newly discovered Anglo-Saxon cemetery were recovered from a single test pit (test pit 4) during the evaluation. The remaining three test pits contained no archaeological features, deposits, significant artefacts, or human remains. Bones recovered from test pit 2 are thought to be animal bones, although confirmation of this by a specialist is outstanding. The construction of the car park does not appear to have had a significant impact on the Site. However, the potential archaeological horizon is very thin, with undisturbed geological deposits present close to the surface (minimum 0.15 m below ground level). Human remains were recovered from a buried topsoil layer immediately below the tarmac car park surface, suggesting that further human remains may be present just below the surface of the car park, and in areas of undisturbed topsoil nearby. The presence of disarticulated human remains in a layer of former topsoil suggests that they had been disturbed, perhaps by ploughing or some other process. The presence of as-yet-unidentified archaeological cut features containing human remains is a possibility. The proposed installation of a pipeline across the site is unlikely to significantly impact on the archaeological resource. Direct drilling of the pipeline is proposed and it should be possible to install the pipeline from reception pits situated in non-archaeologically sensitive locations as identified by this evaluation.

Project dates Start: 24-04-2017 End: 25-04-2017

Previous/future

work

No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes

116280 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Field evaluation
Site status National Park

Current Land use Transport and Utilities 2 - Other transport infrastructure

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds HUMAN REMAINS Early Medieval

Methods & techniques

"Test Pits"

Development type Pipelines/cables (e.g. gas, electric, telephone, TV cable, water, sewage,

drainage etc.)

Prompt Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice

Project location

Country England

Site location DERBYSHIRE HIGH PEAK CASTLETON Peak Cavern Car Park

Postcode S33 8WP

0 Hectares Study area

SK 14770 82908 53.342595785945 -1.778133209432 53 20 33 N 001 46 41 W Site coordinates

Line

Site coordinates SK 14821 82811 53.341722364931 -1.777371663724 53 20 30 N 001 46 38 W

Line

Height OD / Depth Min: 194m Max: 199m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology

Project brief originator

Peak District National Park Authority

Project design originator

Wessex Archaeology

Project director/manager Alexandra Grassam

Project supervisor

Jonathan Buttery

Type of

sponsor/funding

Water Authority/Company

body

Name of

Laing O'Rourke Infrastructure

sponsor/funding

body

Project archives

Physical Archive

recipient

Buxton Museum

Physical Contents "Human Bones","Metal"

Digital Archive

recipient

Buxton Museum

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"

Paper Archive

recipient

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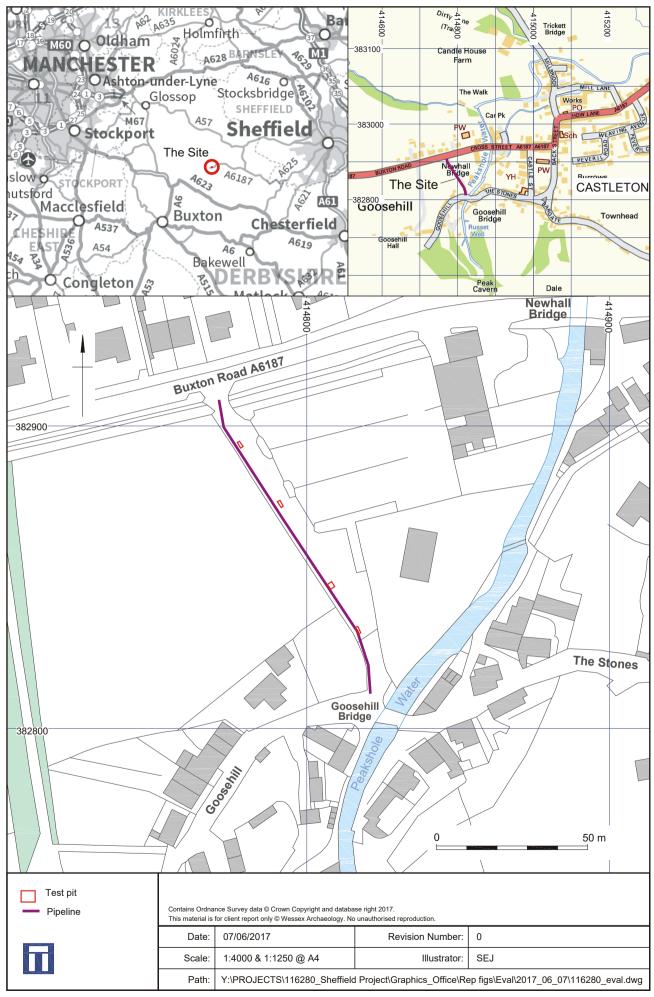
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Site and Test pit location Figure 1

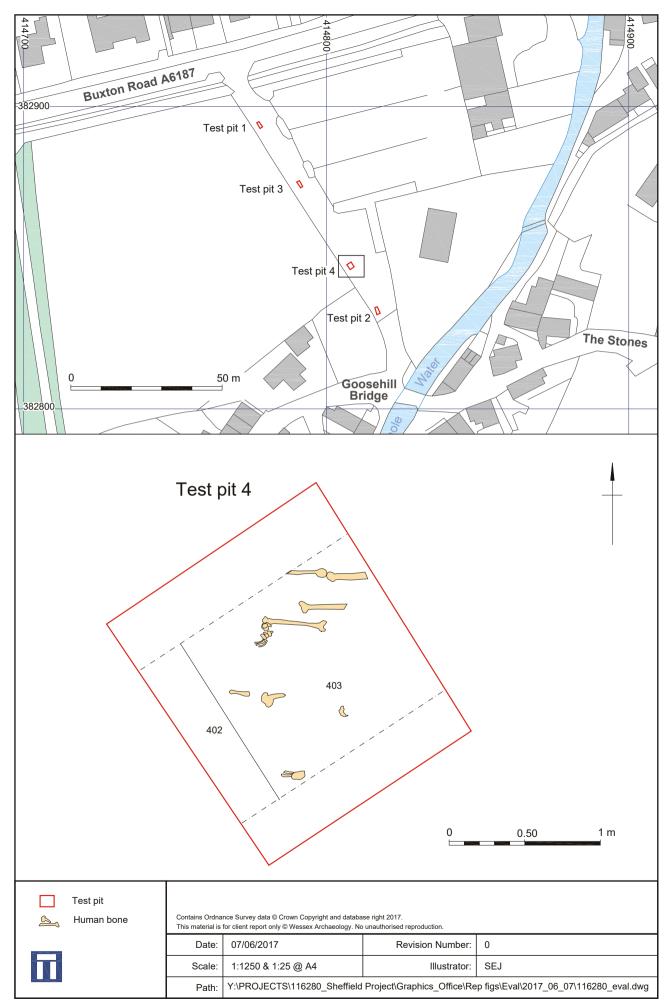




Plate 1: Test pit 1 from the east



Plate 2: Test pit 2 from the west

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Plate 3: Test pit 3 from the west



Plate 4: Test pit 4 sondage

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Plate 5: Test pit 4 overview of human remains from the west



Plate 6: Test pit 4 human maxilla from the west

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Plate 7: Test pit 4 human remains from the south



Plate 8: Test pit 4 human remains from the south

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Plate 9: Test pit 4 human remains from the west



Plate 10: Test pit 4 human remains from the south

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