



Land at Sparrow Street, Southview Park Trowbridge, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Wiltshire Council Planning Application Ref: 16/05154/FUL
Ref: 115550.04
November 2018



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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wiltshire Council to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Sparrow Street, Southview Park, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 386170 156835. The evaluation was undertaken in two phases and comprised of eight trenches. This report provides a combined report on both phases the earlier covering Parcels 2 and 3 (fieldwork undertaken between 13th and 14th March 2017), and the most recent phase covering Parcels 4 and 6 (fieldwork undertaken between 29th October and 2nd November 2018).

The site had been proposed for the construction of 50 affordable homes, as well as associated landscaping and access. Conditional planning permission (Wiltshire Council Ref: 16/05154/FUL) had been granted and an archaeological condition (Condition 13) was placed on the approved notice.

No significant archaeological features or deposits were recorded in any of the four land parcels. In two of the parcels it was noted that the natural soil sequence had been truncated and then built-up with made ground, which was due to the parcels being used as construction compounds. In this instance it is demonstrated that, despite the presence of an earlier construction compound, significant archaeological features were likely to have survived and retain their significance.

This archaeological evaluation has effectively demonstrated a low potential for the presence of significant archaeological features or deposits which may be adversely affected by the proposed construction works, and is in fulfilment of Condition 13 of the planning permission, and in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Wiltshire Council for commissioning the archaeological evaluation, in particular Anthony Dixon. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Rachael Foster (Assistant County Archaeologist), who monitored the project for Wiltshire Council, and to Tim Haygreen for his assistance during the course of the works.

The fieldwork was directed by Matt Kendall, with the assistance of Emma Clark and Jamie Porter. This report was written by Matt Kendall and edited by Steve Beach. The graphics were prepared by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed by Simon Woodiwiss on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.



Land at Sparrow Street, Southview Park Trowbridge, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wiltshire Council (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation at four locations within the Southview Park housing development on land at Sparrow Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7SS (**Fig. 1**).

1.1.2 The site has been proposed for the development of 50 affordable homes over four land parcels, to be evaluated in two phases. These four areas were located as follows; Phase 1: Parcel 2, centred on Nation Grid Reference (NGR) 386290 156890 and Parcel 3 on NGR 386330 156875; Phase 2: Parcel 4 on NGR 386240 156805 and Parcel 6 on NGR 386040 156850. Outline planning consent was approved with an archaeological condition (Condition 13):

“No development shall commence on this site until a programme of archaeological investigation (archaeological evaluation), which should include on-site work and off-site work such as analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved programme of archaeological work is to be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The work should be conducted by a professional archaeological contractor and there will be a financial implication for the applicant.

Reason: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.”

1.1.3 The fieldwork strategy and methodology was documented in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Wessex Archaeology 2017) and was submitted to and approved by the Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service (WCAS) prior to fieldwork commencing.

1.1.4 This document presents the reporting of the complete evaluation of all four parcels which took place between the 13th and 14th March 2017 and 29th October to 2nd November 2018.

1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed description of the results of the evaluation, to interpret the results within a local, regional or wider archaeological context and assess whether the aims of the evaluation have been met.

1.2.2 The presented results will provide further information on the archaeological resource that may be impacted by the proposed development and facilitate an informed decision with regard to the requirement for, and methods of, any further archaeological mitigation.



1.3 Location, topography and geology

- 1.3.1 The site is located approximately 1.5 km south-east of the historic centre of Trowbridge (**Fig. 1**). It is within an area that is to the south of Longfield, to the east of the River Biss, north of Drynham and east of the railway. Parcels 2 and 3 are located immediately to the west of Sparrow Street with Eagle Park to the north and Swift Drive to the south. Parcel 4 is situated to the south of Sparrow Street, west of Swift Drive and east of Kingfisher Close. Parcel 6 is located immediately to the east of the railway line, south of Lambale Grove, west of Sparrow Street and north of Toucan Street.
- 1.3.2 The four parcels of land that make up the site total 7,670 m² on an area of gently sloping land at 40–45 m above Ordnance Datum (OD).
- 1.3.3 The underlying geology is mapped predominantly as Jurassic Oxford Clay Formation, mudstone (BGS Online Viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) for a previous phase of works at the site (Wessex Archaeology 2006) was used to assess the archaeological and historical background and the results are briefly summarised below.
- 2.1.2 The area around Trowbridge is one of moderate–high archaeological potential with a number of archaeological features on or near the area of Cornbrash geology approximately 1.2 km north of the development. These sites have been identified from excavation, recovery of stray finds and aerial photographs. Little settlement evidence is known in the lower lying river valleys where the geology of Oxford Clay and alluvial deposits can mask archaeological deposits.
- 2.1.3 The earliest reference to Trowbridge is in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Morris 1979, 67, 7). Trowbridge probably developed as a town in the course of the 12th century, with the right to hold a weekly market being granted in 1200. References to a castle at Trowbridge date from 1139; it was demolished sometime between 1460 and 1540 (Graham and Davies 1993). The parish boundary for Trowbridge is recorded as following the course of the Drynham Brook along the eastern edge of the development. The ecclesiastical parish was probably established during the medieval period although the site would have been peripheral to any settlement activity from this period.
- 2.1.4 The survival of Trowbridge as a market town from the end of the 14th century onwards was largely due to the growth of the woollen industry, based on the introduction of fulling mills to the area. Despite a decline in the 16–17th centuries, Trowbridge became an industrial town of considerable importance in the 18–19th centuries.
- 2.1.5 Beyond the historic core of Trowbridge, a recent archaeological evaluation at Blackball, 1 km north-east of the site, revealed the presence of a short-lived post-medieval settlement on the Oxford Clay (Wessex Archaeology 2005). The 1773 Andrews and Dury map makes reference to Black Ball and the settlement is shown on the 1840 Westashton (sic) tithe map.



3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General aims

3.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017) and in compliance with the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a), were:

- *Clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains with 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, and;*
- *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.*

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

4.2.1 The trench locations were set out using GPS, in the approximate positions as those proposed in the WSI, though trenches 1, 3 and 5 had to be slightly moved from their original positions because of on-site obstacles such as trees and other groundworks (**Fig. 1**).

4.2.2 Eight sample trenches, ranging from 15 m to 30 in length and 1.70 m wide, were excavated in level spits using a wheeled excavator equipped with a toothless bucket, under the constant supervision and instruction of the monitoring archaeologist. Machine excavation proceeded until either the archaeological horizon or the natural geology was exposed.

4.2.3 Where necessary, the base of the trench/surface of archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand. A sample of archaeological features and deposits identified was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the evaluation.

4.2.4 Spoil derived from both machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval.

4.2.5 Trenches completed to the satisfaction of the Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council, were backfilled using excavated materials in the order in which they were excavated, and left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

Recording

4.2.6 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete drawn record of excavated features and deposits was made including both plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales



(generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections), and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD: Newlyn) heights of all principal features were calculated, and levels added to plans and section drawings.

- 4.2.7 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological features. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.8 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Artefactual and environmental strategies

- 4.3.1 Appropriate strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of artefacts and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b) and *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011).

4.4 Monitoring

- 4.4.1 The Assistant County Archaeologist, on behalf of Wiltshire Council, monitored the evaluation. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with both the client and the Assistant County Archaeologist.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Work comprised of the machine excavation of eight trenches measuring between 15 m and 30 m, and their subsequent recording and backfilling..
- 5.1.2 The following section provides the results of the evaluation and detailed descriptions of the individual contexts are provided in the trench summary tables (Appendix 1).

5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

- 5.2.1 All the trenches were situated within small parcels of land, where some of the parcels had previously been used as construction compounds during the development of the surrounding housing estate.
- 5.2.2 The underlying natural geology across all of the trenches was observed to be mid grey to brown yellowish silty clay.
- 5.2.3 Exposed areas of undisturbed soil were only observed within the parts of Parcel 2, and within Parcel 3; where the natural geology was overlain by approximately 0.40 m of topsoil and subsoil. Within Parcels 4 and 6 the topsoil and subsoil was almost completely removed, and in the case of Parcel 6, replaced with made-ground.



5.3 Summary of evaluation results

Parcel 2 (Trenches 5 and 6)

- 5.3.1 Trenches 5 and 6 (**Fig. 2**) contained no archaeological features or deposits. Excavation of the trenches identified the remains of a recent construction compound which covered the vast majority of Parcel 2. Within the area of the previous compound the topsoil and part of the subsoil had been removed, and geo-textile and hardcore been laid down. While the underlying substrate had not been truncated, it had been compacted and had areas of contamination. Only the southernmost 7 m of Trench 5 (**Plate 1**) and the easternmost 12 m of Trench 6 remained undisturbed.

Parcel 3 (Trenches 7 and 8)

- 5.3.2 Trench 7 (**Fig. 2** and **Plate 2**) contained no archaeological features or deposits but contained a land drain which ran the length of the trench.
- 5.3.3 Trench 8 (**Fig. 2**) contained a single posthole which was of a modern date as it could be seen cutting through the subsoil and therefore was not investigated. The trench also contained two land drains which were located in the north-eastern half of the trench. The south-westernmost seven metres of Trench 8 had been impacted as the area had been used as a soil storage area during the previous developments.

Parcel 4 (Trenches 3 and 4)

- 5.3.4 Trenches 3 and 4 (**Fig. 3**) contained no archaeological features or deposits. The original topsoil and subsoil seem to have been removed in the majority of the parcel, possibly for the establishment of a now removed construction compound. The current topsoil within the parcel was of modern date, most likely put down after the compound was removed. Within part of Trench 4 was a 0.14 m thick layer of hardcore material which was overlain by the current topsoil, which may have been the remains of a car park (**Plate 3**). While the natural substrate had not been truncated by the establishment of the compound, patches had been compacted into denser clay.

Parcel 6 (Trenches 1 and 2)

- 5.3.5 Parcel 6 (**Fig. 3**) had, until recently, been utilised as a construction compound (which was still in use in March 2017). Consequently both Trenches 1 and 2 contained layers of made ground relating to recent construction activity and soil storage. In both trenches the topsoil and subsoil had been removed or mostly removed; apart from the south-eastern half of Trench 2 where subsoil was present. Within Trench 1, a layer of buried soil (102) was identified which ran the length of the trench and contained a large quantity of post-medieval artefacts (glass bottles, blue-and-white china and animal bone; **Plate 4**). Initially thought to be an *in-situ* Victorian rubbish layer, the presence of modern bottles (plastic and glass) within the same deposit indicated that the material had been deposited recently, possibly during the construction of earlier housing estates. No archaeological features or deposits were present in both trenches and the natural geology had not been extensively truncated.

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Post-medieval and modern artefacts were recovered from all the trenches, but these were not retained.



7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 No material suitable for environmental analysis was present within the site and accordingly no samples were taken.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Summary

- 8.1.1 The archaeological evaluation revealed no archaeological features or deposits, aside from top and subsoils in Parcels 2 and 3. The fact that Parcels 4 and 6 had been used as construction compounds explains the lack of top and subsoils and also the presence of modern made ground.
- 8.1.2 Given that some of the parcels had been used as compounds, there seemed to be little truncation to the natural geology and the potential for survival of archaeological features and deposits was deemed good.

8.2 Discussion

- 8.2.1 This archaeological evaluation has been successfully completed in fulfilment of Condition 13 of the conditional planning permission, and in accordance with the approved WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017).
- 8.2.2 The archaeological evaluation identified no features or deposits of archaeological interest, and has effectively demonstrated a low potential for encountering archaeological features or deposits during the proposed construction works within Parcels 2-4 and 6.

9 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

9.1 Museum

- 9.1.1 The archive resulting from the evaluation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury under the site code **115550**. Wiltshire Museum Service has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

9.2 Preparation of the archive

- 9.2.1 The archive, which includes paper 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 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

- 9.2.2 All archive elements are marked with the **site code**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:

- 1 files/document cases of paper records

9.3 Selection policy

- 9.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows national guidelines on selection and retention (SMA 1993; Brown 2011, section 4). In accordance with these, and any specific guidance prepared by the museum, a process of selection and retention will be followed so that only those



artefacts or ecofacts that are considered to have potential for future study will be retained. The selection policy will be agreed with the museum, and is fully documented in the project archive.

- 9.3.2 In this instance, the following categories are selected to not be retained: Post-medieval and modern artefacts.

9.4 Security copy

- 9.4.1 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.

9.5 OASIS

- 9.5.1 An OASIS online record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) has been initiated (**OASIS ID: wessexar1-333808**). Key fields and a .pdf version of the final report will be submitted subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality. Copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

10 COPYRIGHT

10.1 Archive and report copyright

- 10.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. 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 conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

- 10.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

10.2 Third party data copyright

- 10.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (eg, Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.



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Coordinate system:
OSGB36 (OSTN15/OSGM15)



Phase 1
Phase 2

Evaluation trench
Archaeology



Base mapping supplied by client.

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Site and trench locations

Figure 1



- Site boundary
- Trench
- Archaeology
- Disturbance

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Phase 1: Parcels 2 and 3

Figure 2



Phase 2: Parcels 4 and 6

Figure 3



Plate 1: View of Trench 5 from north



Plate 2: View of Trench 7 from south-east


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Plate 3: Representative section Trench 4



Plate 4: Representative section Trench 1

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench summaries

NGR coordinates and OD heights taken at centre of each trench; depth bgl = below ground level

Trench 1	22.00 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386037.78 156872.79	45.14 – 46.25 m OD
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description	Depth bgl (m)
101	Made ground		Dark greyish brown silty clay. Common building waste (brick, tarmac, concrete, stone. Common ceramic and glass. Loosely compacted. Clear interface with (102).	0 – 0.53 m
102	Made ground		Dark greyish black clayey silt. Occasional building rubble, ceramic and glass. Clear interface with (103).	0.53 – 0.74 m
103	Natural		Mid greyish yellow silty clay. Mottled with occasional patches of light grey clay. Iron flecking throughout. Patches of modern disturbance.	0.74 m+

Trench 2	25.10 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386056.53 156834.81	43.41 – 44.40 m OD
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description	Depth bgl (m)
201	Topsoil		Mid greyish brown silty clay. Common SA-SR concrete & tarmac rubble. Loosely compacted. Diffuse interface with (202).	0 – 0.22 m
202	Made ground		Mid yellowish brown clay. Very common SA-SR gravel & building rubble. Increased quantities of building waste to the north. Very compacted. Sharp interface with (203).	0.22 – 0.46 m
203	Subsoil		Mid greyish brown sandy silt. Common charcoal flecking, sparse SA-SR gravel & tarmac frags. Clear interface with (204).	0.46 – 0.66 m
204	Natural		Mid greyish yellow sandy silt. Occasional rooting. Patches of hydrocarbon contamination and modern disturbance throughout.	0.66 m+

Trench 3	19.80 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386236.81 156788.98	38.31 – 38.95 m OD
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description	Depth bgl (m)
301	Topsoil		Dark greyish brown clayey silt. Very sparse SA-SR gravel. Clear interface with (302).	0 – 0.21 m
302	Natural		Mid greyish brown silty clay. Mottled with light grey clay throughout. Sparse SA-SR gravel. Very firm.	0.21 m+

Trench 4	19.00 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386234.30 156809.15	39.02 – 39.12 m OD
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description	Depth bgl (m)
401	Topsoil		Mid greyish brown sandy silt. Occasional SA-SR gravel. Moderately compacted. Clear interface with (402).	0 – 0.09 m
402	Made ground		Light greyish red silty sand. Abundant SA-SR gravel. Clear interface with (403).	0.09 – 0.23 m
403	Natural		Mid greyish brown silty clay. Mottled with mid brownish red, dark & light brownish grey throughout. Sparse rooting. Very firm.	0.23 m+



Trench 5		30.00 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386281.00 156882.42		38.80 – 38.88 m OD	
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description			Depth bgl (m)	
501	Topsoil		Dark greyish brown silty clay. Occasional small - medium SA stone & gravel.			0 – 0.18 m	
502	Subsoil		Mid orange brown silty clay. Occasional small - medium SA flint & gravel inclusions.			0.18 – 0.36 m	
503	Natural		Light greyish orange clay. Occasional small - medium SA flint & gravel inclusions. Northern extent disturbed/ contaminated			0.36 m+	

Trench 6		30.00 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386292.27 156904.38		38.63 – 38.86 m OD	
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description			Depth bgl (m)	
601	Topsoil		Dark greyish brown silty clay. Common small - medium SA-SR gravel & stone. Occasional small - medium SA flint frags.			0 – 0.15 m	
602	Subsoil		Mid orange brown silty clay. Common small - large SA flint, stone & gravel.			0.15 – 0.40 m	
603	Natural		Light orange brown clay. Occasional small-medium SA flint & gravel.			0.40 m+	

Trench 7		15.00 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386344.59 156895.41		37.71 – 38.22 m OD	
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description			Depth bgl (m)	
701	Topsoil		Dark greyish brown silty clay. Common small - medium SA-SR gravel.			0 – 0.24 m	
702	Subsoil		Mid orange brown silty clay. Common small - medium SR-SA flint & gravel inclusions.			0.24 – 0.40 m	
703	Natural		Light brownish orange clay. Common small - medium SA-SR flint & gravel.			0.40 m+	

Trench 8		15.00 m x 1.70 m		NGR 386330.95 156863.14		37.92 – 38.02 m OD	
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description			Depth bgl (m)	
801	Topsoil		Dark greyish brown silty clay. Occasional small - medium SA-SR stone & gravel.			0 – 0.22 m	
802	Subsoil		Mid orange brown silty clay. Occasional small - medium SR stone & gravel.			0.22 – 0.38 m	
803	Natural		Light brownish orange clay. Common small - medium SA flint & gravel.			0.38 m+	



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