



Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief



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County	Gloucestershire
National grid reference (NGR)	418205 219998 (SP 18205 19998) 417939 219782 (SP 17939 19782)
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Museum name	Corinium Museum
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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Morrison Water Services Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two Trial Pits located at NGR 418205 219998 and 417939 219782. adjacent to Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, GL52 2PD

No archaeological features or deposits were exposed during the watching brief. The stratigraphic sequence revealed layers of alluvium beneath the topsoil, with a peat deposit and river terrace gravels exposed within Trial Pit 1. Blue grey clay was observed in Trial Pit 2 which was possibly the top of the natural geology or an earlier alluvial deposit.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Morrison Water Services Ltd, for commissioning the archaeological watching brief, in particular Zach Way. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Team Leader for Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service, who monitored the project for Cotswold District Council.



Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Morrison Water Services Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two Trial Pits at Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, GL52 2PD, located at NGR 418205 219998 and 417939 219782 (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies, and standards to be employed (Wessex Archaeology 2022). Team Leader for Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing. The watching brief was undertaken 29 November to the 1 December 2022.

1.2 Scope of the report

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the watching brief, to interpret the results within their local or regional context (or otherwise), and to assess their potential to address the aims outlined in the WSI, thereby making available information about the archaeological resource (a preservation by record).

1.3 Location, topography and geology

- 1.3.1 The watching brief was located on agricultural land midway between the villages of Bourton-on-the-Water and Little Rissington in the Cotswolds area of Gloucestershire. The site is bounded by Bourton-on-the Water Sewage Works to the north and Rissington Road to the south.
- 1.3.2 The site lies partially within the floodplain of the River Dikler, which flows from north to south across the western edge of the site. There is a confluence between the River Dikler and the larger River Windrush, 1 km to the south of the site.
- 1.3.3 Existing ground levels were recorded as 124 m OD at Trial Pit 1 and 126 m OD at Trial Pit 2.
- 1.3.4 The underlying geology is mapped as Jurassic Mudstone of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation. Within the floodplain of the River Dikler, the solid geology is overlain by Quaternary alluvium (British Geological Survey 2022). Excavations at Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Works and elsewhere within the Dikler and Windrush valleys have shown that Pleistocene river terrace deposits exist beneath the mapped alluvium.



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background is drawn from Know Your Place (2022) and other online resources. A summary of the results is presented below, with relevant entry numbers from the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (GHER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) included. Additional sources of information are referenced, as appropriate.

2.2 Previous investigations related to the development

2.2.1 There have been no previous archaeological investigations within the site.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

Lower Palaeolithic (970,000 – 300,000 BC)

2.3.1 In 1963, a Middle Acheulian cleaver (GHER 2558) was found Santhill gravel pit, close to the east bank of the River Windrush, 0.7 km to the south of the site.

Upper Palaeolithic (40,000 – 10,000 BC)

2.3.2 In 1973, a mammoth tusk (GHER 41161) was recovered during the construction of the Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works. The tusk was found in river terrace deposits, 1.88–3.66 m below ground level. A radiocarbon date obtained from the tusk produced a date of cal. 39,098–35,277 BC.

2.3.3 A series of mammoth remains (GHER 41159) have also been found within Burn Barn Quarries (now lakes), 0.4–1 km to the north-west of the site. These remains were recovered between 1920 and 1970, but the exact locations of the findspots are unknown.

2.3.4 Palaeolithic faunal remains have also been found in similar geological contexts 2 km downstream. These remains, which comprised three red deer and three horse bones, were found next to the River Windrush, in gravel deposits 1.6 m below ground level (Cotswold Archaeological Trust 1992, 23, fig. 4).

Neolithic and Bronze Age (4000 – 800 BC)

2.3.5 Neolithic remains, comprising a causewayed enclosure and finds of late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age pottery and worked flint, have been recorded within Salmondsbury Camp scheduled monument (NHLE 1017340), 1 km to the north-west of the site (Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust 2006; Historic England 2022).

Iron Age and Romano-British (800 BC – AD 410)

2.3.6 During the Iron Age, the settlement at Salmondsbury Camp developed into a 23 ha multivallate fortified oppida, which was occupied from the 1st century BC to the 4th century AD. The eastern ramparts of the settlement were located 0.7 km to the north-west of the site (Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust 2006; Historic England 2022). Features inside the oppida comprise roundhouses, pits (some containing burials), palisades, wells, and hearths. Pottery indicates occupation continued into at least the early 2nd century AD before a possible period of abandonment, followed by re-occupation in the 3rd-4th century (Allen et al. 2018a).

2.3.7 The Fosse Way, a Roman road, is situated 2.3 km to the north-west of the site, and Romano-British roadside occupation has been recorded in several locations within Bourton-on-the-Water. Excavations at 38 Rissington Road, 1.2 km to the north-west of the site,

identified a series of ditches, along with two stone features/deposits of unknown function and a small number of shallow pits, all dated 2nd–3rd century AD (Allen et al. 2018b).

- 2.3.8 Excavations within a broad area of interlocking enclosures and ring ditches at Santhill, have identified a further area of Romano-British and possibly Iron Age occupation (GHER 357; NHLE 1003433), 0.4 km to the south of the site.

Anglo-Saxon and medieval (AD 410 – 1500)

- 2.3.9 Although there is no evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation within Salmondsbury Camp, several burials have been found dug into the ramparts and two small cemeteries have also been discovered, one close to the northern rampart and the second close to the south-east corner of the enclosure. It is also clear that the camp retained considerable significance for the local community, as it is recorded as Sulmonnes Burg in a charter of Offa of Mercia dated AD 779, and the courts of the Liberty or Hundred of Salmonsbury traditionally assembled at the northern entrance to the enclosure throughout the medieval period (Historic England 2022a).
- 2.3.10 The Domesday Survey of AD 1086, records Bortune (Bourton-on-the-Water) as a settlement of 26 households held by Evesham Abbey (Williams and Martin 2002, 465). By the 11th century, the parish church of St Lawrence had been constructed at the north-western end of Bourton-on-the-Water, and by the 12th-century, the village had assumed its current orientation alongside the River Windrush (Eldrington 1965).
- 2.3.11 Risendune (Little Rissington) is listed in the Domesday Book as a settlement of ten households, with eight slaves and two mills, all held by the Norman nobleman Robert d'Oilly (Williams and Martin 2002, 465). Rissington Mill (NHLE 1090278), which is located 0.3 km to the north of the site, is probably built on the site of a late Anglo-Saxon/medieval mill (Historic England 2022b). Earthworks of a possible deserted medieval village (GHER 2555) have been noted 0.5 km to the east of the site, close to St Peter's Church. The isolated position of St Peter's Church, and the uneven ground south and south-west of it, suggest that the village of Little Rissington has shifted south.

Post-medieval and Modern (1500–present)

- 2.3.12 By the post-medieval period, Bourton-on-the-Water had developed into a large and prosperous village, and between 1654 and 1911 five bridges were constructed over the Windrush, earning the village the appellation 'Venice of the Cotswolds' (Cotswolds.info 2022).
- 2.3.13 The 1885 OS map (surv. 1881–4) depicts the site as undeveloped agricultural land with field boundaries that are still extant. Since then, the only notable change in the immediate vicinity of the site is the construction of Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works in 1973, and the gradual expansion of Bourton-on-the-Water along the Rissington Road frontage from the mid-20th century onwards.

Undated

- 2.3.14 Archaeological evaluation at the Bourton Vale Sports and Social Club, 0.8 km to the north-west of the site, revealed ten postholes, five pits and a possible ditch terminus, all of which were undated (Cotswold Archaeological Trust 1998, 6–8, fig. 2).
- 2.3.15 A series of cropmarks at Santhill, 0.4 km to the south-west of the site (GHER 357, 4492, 7180; NHLE 1003433), have been interpreted as possible Bronze Age or Romano-British round barrows, or Iron Age/Romano-British roundhouses.



3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The aims of the watching brief, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2022) and as defined in the ClfA *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), were to:

- allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of the development or other works;
- provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and
- guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

3.2 Objectives

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the objectives of the watching brief, also defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2022), were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results of the watching brief.

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methodology set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2022) 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 watching brief monitored the excavation of two Trial Pits, located to the south of Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and to the north of Rissington Road.

4.2.2 The watching archaeologist monitored all mechanical excavations within the specified area. Spoil from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval.



Recording

- 4.2.3 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete record of excavated features and deposits was made, including 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.
- 4.2.4 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 OSTN15 and OSGM15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.5 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 Finds and environmental strategies

- 4.3.1 No finds or environmental samples were recovered during the watching brief.

4.4 Monitoring

- 4.4.1 The Team Leader for Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service monitored the watching brief on behalf of the LPA. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with the client and the Team Leader for Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service Stratigraphic evidence

4.5 Introduction

- 4.5.1 No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief. Rapid groundwater ingress and possible leaking sewage from the exposed pipe occurred within Trial Pit 1 (Fig. 2), filling the Trial Pit. The water was pumped to facilitate rapid recording of the exposed soil sequence, then any further excavation of the Trial Pit was abandoned.

4.6 Soil sequence and natural deposits

- 4.6.1 Within Trial Pit 1 (Figs 2–4), the removal of the dark grey brown silt clay topsoil (0.2 m thick) with well-established turf revealed an alluvial layer of mid-yellow brown silty clay (0.5 m thick). This overlaid a black fibrous and pseudo-fibrous peat within a black silty clay matrix (0.2 m thick), beneath which the natural geology of sub-rounded to rounded river terrace gravels within fine to coarse light grey sand, exposed at a depth of 0.9 m below ground level (bgl). Trial Pit 1 was excavated to expose the current sewage pipe and revealed the associated excavation cut and backfill material overlying the pipe.
- 4.6.2 Within Trial Pit 2 (Figs 5–7), excavation exposed a topsoil of dark grey brown silty clay with fine to coarse sand and rare sub-angular to sub-round gravel (0.1 m thick). Beneath the topsoil lay an alluvial deposit (1.6 m thick) of mottled mid to dark red brown and mid-grey silty clay, which displayed evidence of minimal bioturbation. The natural geology was exposed at 1.7 m bgl and consisted of stiff dark blue grey clay with rare sub-angular to sub-round fine and medium clay stone. This deposit may be an earlier alluvial layer or the weathered surface of the mudstone bedrock but due to the depth and nature of the excavations, it was not possible to investigate further. Trial Pit 2 was also excavated to expose the current sewage pipe and revealed the associated excavation cut and backfill.



5 FINDS EVIDENCE

5.1.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief

6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1.1 No deposits encountered were deemed suitable for environmental assessment, therefore no samples were collected.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1.1 The archaeological watching brief monitored the excavation of two exploratory Trial Pits excavated over previously disturbed deposits. No archaeological features or deposits were exposed during the works. The watching brief was successful in mitigating against the disturbance of any potential archaeological features and in fulfilling the aims and objectives as set out in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2022).

8 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

8.1.1 The archive resulting from the watching brief is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury. Corinium Museum 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.

8.2 Preparation of the archive

Physical archive

8.2.1 The physical archive, which includes paper records and graphics will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Corinium Museum and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Brown 2011; ClfA 2014c; SMA 1995).

8.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the project number, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:

- 1 file/document cases of paper records

Digital archive

8.2.3 The digital archive generated by the project, which comprises born-digital data (e.g., site records, survey data, databases and spreadsheets, photographs and reports), will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, in this instance the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by metadata.

8.3 Selection strategy

8.3.1 It is widely accepted that not all the records and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during the course of an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future



research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving Museum.

8.3.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; Wessex Archaeology's internal selection policy) and follows ClfA's *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists, external specialists, local authority, museum) and fully documented in the project archive.

8.3.3 In this instance, given the relatively low level of finds recovery, the selection process has been deferred until after the fieldwork stage was completed. Project-specific proposals for selection are presented below. These proposals are based on recommendations by Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists and will be updated in line with any further comment by other stakeholders (museum, local authority). The selection strategy will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.3.4 Any material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by Wessex Archaeology.

Documentary records

8.3.5 Paper records comprise site registers (other pro-forma site records are digital), drawings and reports (written scheme of investigation, client report). All will be retained and deposited with the project archive.

Digital data

8.3.6 The digital data comprise site records (tablet-recorded on site) in spreadsheet format; finds records in spreadsheet format; survey data; photographs; reports. All will be deposited, although site photographs will be subject to selection to eliminate poor quality and duplicated images, and any others not considered directly relevant to the archaeology of the site.

8.3.7 Given the very limited results of the fieldwork, it is considered that the site conforms to the definition of a 'sterile project' (i.e., one that produces nothing of evidential value), according to the *ClfA Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives* (archaeological archives from sterile projects). It is therefore recommended that only selected digital data are deposited with ADS, an approach commensurate with the scale and significance of the project. Deposition will involve the uploading of the site report via OASIS only [optional: with selected additional photographs].

8.4 Security copy

8.4.1 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.

8.5 OASIS

8.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (<http://oasis.ac.uk>) has been initiated, with key fields completed (Appendix 1). A.pdf version



of the final report will be submitted following approval by the Team Leader for Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service, on behalf of the LPA. 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 (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

9 COPYRIGHT

9.1 Archive and report copyright

- 9.1.1 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*.
- 9.1.2 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.

9.2 Third party data copyright

- 9.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g., 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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Summary for wessexar1-511589

OASIS ID (UID)	wessexar1-511589
Project Name	Watching Brief at Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire
Sitename	Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	272870
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Statutory requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Wessex Archaeology
Project Dates	29-Nov-2022 - 01-Dec-2022
Location	Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and Rissington Road, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire NGR : SP 18205 19998 LL : 51.8782547591105, -1.73694670024821 12 Fig : 418205,219998
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Gloucestershire District : Cotswold Parish : Little Rissington
Project Methodology	The watching brief monitored the excavation of two trial pits, located to the south of Bourton-on-the-Water Sewage Treatment Works and to the north of Rissington Road.
Project Results	No archaeological features or deposits were exposed during the watching brief. The stratigraphic sequence revealed layers of alluvium beneath the topsoil, with a peat deposit and river terrace gravels exposed within trial pit 1. Blue grey clay was observed in trial pit 2 which was possibly the top of the natural geology or an earlier alluvial deposit.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	City of Gloucester and Gloucestershire HER - noRev - LITE
Person Responsible for work	Rachael, Capps
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Corinium Museum;



Coordinate system: OSGB 1936 British National Grid
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Figure 1: Site location and monitored works





Figure 2: Trial pit 1 from the north



Figure 3: Trial pit 1 from the south, scale: 1 x 1 m



Figure 4: Trial pit 1 from the north, scale: 1 x 1 m



Figure 5: Trial pit 2 from the east, scale: 1 x 1 m



Figure 6: Trial pit 2 from the west, scale: 1 x 1 m



Figure 7: Trial pit 2 from the west, scale: 1 x 1 m



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