



Headlands, Downton, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report





**HEADLANDS
DOWNTON, WILTSHIRE**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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HEADLANDS, DOWNTON, WILTSHIRE

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HEADLANDS, DOWNTON, WILTSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Midsummer Homes Ltd (the Client), to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of development on land at Headlands, Downton, Wiltshire), centred on NGR 417113, 121285 (hereafter 'the Site'). The field evaluation was undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application to Wiltshire Council for the construction of 14 houses on the Site.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches (11m x 1.30m & 10.40 x 1.30m) positioned over the footprint of the proposed buildings.

No archaeological features or deposits were recorded within the trenches and the results have confirmed that the western half of the proposed development area contains very little potential for archaeological remains to be present.

**HEADLANDS,
DOWNTON, WILTSHIRE**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Midsummer Homes Ltd and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Paul Martin of Midsummer Homes in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Clare King of Wiltshire Council, who monitored the project, for her advice during the work.

The fieldwork was directed by Jon Martin with the assistance of Damien Campbell-Bell.

This report was researched and compiled by Jon Martin. The illustrations were prepared by Liz James and the project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

**HEADLANDS,
DOWNTON, WILTSHIRE****Archaeological Evaluation Report****1 INTRODUCTION****1.1 Project background**

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Midsummer Homes Ltd (the Client), to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of development on land at Headlands, Downton, Wiltshire (**Figure 1**), centred on NGR 417113, 121285 (hereafter 'the Site').

1.1.2 The field evaluation was undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application to Wiltshire Council for the construction of 14 houses on the Site.

1.1.3 The County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council had advised that an archaeological evaluation was required ahead of the determination of the application to provide further information on the archaeological potential of the Site. Given difficulties accessing the eastern half of the Site, it was agreed that two trenches positioned over the footprint of the proposed buildings in the western half of the Site would be sufficient to assess the archaeological potential.

1.2 The Site, location and geology

1.2.1 Downton lies approximately midway between Salisbury to the north and Fordingbridge to the south. The Site itself is located within the western half of the village, immediately east of The Headlands road. Two existing houses, Cedar House and Stanbury View, will be demolished as part of the proposal.

1.2.2 Downton lies within the valley of the River Avon, extending across the floodplain along an east-west axis. The geology either side of the valley base is Upper Chalk (Ordnance Survey 1974) with the uplands of Cranborne Chase to the west, and the lesser chalk downs to the east merging with the predominant clays of the Hampshire Basin and New Forest Fringe (Wiltshire County Council, 1986). The village itself lies upon Alluvium and Valley Gravels at a mean elevation of c. 37m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 A brief search for archaeological and historical sites within a 1km radius ('the Study Area') of the Site via the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record website (<http://localview.wiltshire.gov.uk/smr/InTheArea.aspx>) indicates the presence of 25 sites, predominantly of a late medieval and post-medieval date. In addition, the Extensive Urban Survey at Downton (Wiltshire County Council, 2004) has provided a detailed historical and archaeological assessment of the village.

1.3.2 Although evidence of prehistoric activity and Romano-British activity is scarce in the village, a cluster of sites and finds are known from an area to the south of the historic core of the village and east of the Site. Excavations

- to the west of Moot Lane (Rahtz 1961) recorded a settlement site and chipping floor containing quantities of worked and waste flint.
- 1.3.3 An evaluation to the rear of Tannery House (Wessex Archaeology, 1991) recovered an assemblage of worked flint. Individual finds include flint tools from Lode Hill and the Moot, residual worked flint in later contexts from Moot Lane (Wessex Archaeology, 1996) and sherds of Iron Age pottery from Castle Meadow (Rahtz, 1961).
- 1.3.4 Romano-British features have been recorded during excavations at Moot Close (Rahtz, 1961) and Castle Meadow (*ibid.*) where two intersecting Roman roads were discovered, with ditches and postholes. Coins have been found at Lode Hill and to the west of Moot Lane, and black burnished pottery retrieved from the rear of Tannery House.
- 1.3.5 Downton was one of three manors endowed to the church at Winchester in the mid to late 7th century (Crowley 1980, 27); however, the first documentary reference to the place is from the late 8th century, when King Offa confirmed the endowment of 100 *mansae* of land to the church.
- 1.3.6 Excavations in Castle Meadow have revealed a large gravel pit and a series of ditches of Saxon date. A group of three iron axes were discovered during excavations at the former Downton Mills to the south-east of the Site and dated to the 7th to 11th centuries. In addition, a handful of Saxon pottery sherds were recovered at the Tannery House evaluation (Wessex Archaeology, 1991).
- 1.3.7 Several sites and finds of medieval date are recorded in the village. Excavations at the Old Court have identified remains of one or more substantial masonry buildings relating to the Episcopal manor.
- 1.3.8 An earthwork of a type used for motte and bailey castles, now called The Moot, was constructed during the outbreak of hostilities between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda in the 12th century.
- 1.3.9 Excavations within the south-eastern part of Castle Meadow (Rahtz, 1964) recorded a series of ditches and gullies dated to the 11th to 13th centuries.
- 1.3.10 The Site is positioned at the western-most end of the 13th century planned settlement area (Wiltshire County Council, 2004) which comprised a large area of burgage plots and a market place. The market place is today well preserved in plan due largely to its failure to compete with the contemporary market at Salisbury.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The aims of the archaeological field evaluation were to:
- Clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site that may be threatened by development.
 - Identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the Site.
 - Assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.

- Produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the Site's archaeological potential

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The evaluation method comprised the excavation of two approximately 10m x 1.5m trenches, to be positioned over the footprint of the proposed new buildings as indicated on **Figure 1**.

3.2 Health and safety

3.2.1 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

3.3 Service location

3.3.1 Acting on information from the client the trenches were repositioned to avoid underground services. All evaluation trench locations were scanned before and during excavation with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) in order to verify the absence of any live underground services.

3.4 Fieldwork

3.4.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the standards set out within the Specification.

3.4.2 All works were conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (as amended 2008), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

3.4.3 The trenches were laid out using GPS as shown in **Figure 1**. Minor adjustments to the layout were necessary to take account of underground services. A small portion of Trench 1 was left unexcavated in order to avoid a gas/water main. The trench locations were tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

3.4.4 The trial trenches were excavated using a 3-tonne tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket and under constant supervision by Wessex Archaeology. Due to the lack of any archaeological deposits, machine excavation proceeded to the top of the natural deposits.

3.4.5 Following investigation and recording and following approval from the Assistant County Archaeologist the trenches were backfilled using the excavated spoil. Care was taken to ensure the reinstated surface was firmly compacted and levelled. No other reinstatement or surface treatments were undertaken.

3.5 Recording

3.5.1 Trenches were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system. A complete drawn record of trenches and deposits was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for

plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels was calculated and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.

- 3.5.2 A full photographic record was maintained during the evaluation using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image sets.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches (11m x 1.30m & 10.40 x 1.30m) positioned over the footprint of the proposed buildings (**Figure 1**). A small area in the southern half of Trench 1 was left unexcavated in order to avoid underground services detected by CAT scanning. Trench 2 was moved c. 5.00m to the south to avoid a water main.

4.2 Trench descriptions

- 4.2.1 Trench 1 (**Figure 1**) was located in the front garden of Stanbury View and was orientated approximately from north to south. It measured 11.00m long by 1.30m wide with a maximum depth of 0.67m. The topsoil was a mid brown sandy silt loam with flint and chalk inclusions that overlay a greyish brown silty clay subsoil with frequent gravel inclusions. The natural was dark greyish brown silty gravel and was reached at a depth of 0.50m. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded.
- 4.2.2 Trench 2 (**Figure 1**) was positioned in the front garden of Cedar House and was aligned from north to south. It measured 10.40m long by 1.30m wide with a maximum depth of 1.10m. The topsoil comprised mid brown sandy silt loam with flint and chalk inclusions that overlay a deep subsoil layer that comprised greyish brown silty clay with frequent gravel inclusions. The natural was dark greyish brown silty gravel and was reached at a depth of 0.79m. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded.
- 4.2.3 No finds were retrieved in either the topsoil or the subsoil layers.

5 FINDS

- 5.1.1 No artefacts were recovered from the evaluation.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL

- 6.1.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Summary of presence and survival within the Site

- 7.1.1 The results of the evaluation have confirmed that the western half of the proposed development area contains very little potential for archaeological remains to be present.

- 7.1.2 The well developed topsoil and subsoil layers indicate the area has not been heavily disturbed by previous activity/development on the Site. Coupled with the absence of any finds or features in either trench, the results suggest the planned extension at Downton in the 13th century did not extend as far west as previously indicated in the Extensive Urban Survey (Wiltshire County Council, 2004) for the town.

8 ARCHIVE

- 8.1.1 The completed project archive has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990).

9 REFERENCES

Crowley, D.A., 1980 'Downton' pp 19-52 in Downton Hundred, Elstub and Everleigh Hundred (Crowley D.A., Ed) *A History of Wiltshire* Vol. XI, Oxford University Press for the Institute of Historical Research.

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Wessex Archaeology, 2010 *Headlands, Downton Written Scheme of Investigation, Method Statement for an Archaeological Evaluation, Unpublished report, Wessex Archaeology Ref. No. 74490.01*

Wiltshire County Council 2004 *Extensive Urban Survey at Downton*

10 APPENDIX I TRENCH SUMMARY TABLES

Trench 1	Ground Level 36.76m aOD.	Dimensions(m): 11.00 x 1.30 Max. depth(m): 0.67
Context	Description	Depth (m)
101	Turf and topsoil, mid brown sandy silt loam, flint and chalk inclusions	0-0.30m
201	Subsoil, greyish brown silty clay with abundant flint, rare chalk inclusions	0.30-0.50m
301	Natural, dark greyish brown silty gravel natural	0.50m+

Trench 2	Ground Level 37.03m aOD.	Dimensions(m): 10.40 x 1.30 Max. depth(m): 1.10
Context	Description	Depth (m)
201	Turf and topsoil, mid brown sandy silt loam, flint and chalk inclusions	0-0.46m
202	Subsoil, greyish brown silty clay with abundant flint, rare chalk inclusions	0.46-0.79m
203	Natural, dark greyish brown silty gravel natural	0.79m+

11 APPENDIX 2 OASIS RECORD SHEET

OASIS ID: wessexar1-77860

Project details

Project name Headlands, Downton, Wiltshire

Short description of the project Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Midsummer Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of development on land at Headlands, Downton, Wiltshire), centred on NGR 417113, 121285. The field evaluation was undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application to Wiltshire Council for the construction of 14 houses on the Site. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two 10m x 1.5m trenches positioned over the footprint of the proposed buildings. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded within the trenches and the results have confirmed that the western half of the proposed development area contains very little potential for archaeological remains to be present.

Project dates Start: 05-05-2010 End: 05-05-2010

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes 74490 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & 'Targeted Trenches' techniques

Development type Housing estate

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the Pre-application planning process

Project location

Country England
Site location WILTSHIRE SALISBURY DOWNTON Headlands, Downton,
Wiltshire
Study area 15.00 Square metres
Site coordinates SU 417113 121285 50.9065970971 -1.406695743460 50 54 23 N
001 24 24 W Point
Height OD / Depth Min: 37.00m Max: 37.00m

Project creators

Name of Wessex Archaeology
Organisation

Project originator brief Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District
Archaeologist)

Project design Wessex Archaeology
originator

Project director/manager Sue Farr

Project supervisor Jon Martin

Project supervisor Jon Martin

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Midsummer Homes Ltd
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum

recipient

Digital Archive ID 74490

Digital Contents 'other'

Digital available Media 'Spreadsheets','Text','Images raster / digital photography','Database'

Paper Archive recipient Salisbury and South Wilts Museum

Paper Archive ID 74490

Paper Contents 'other'

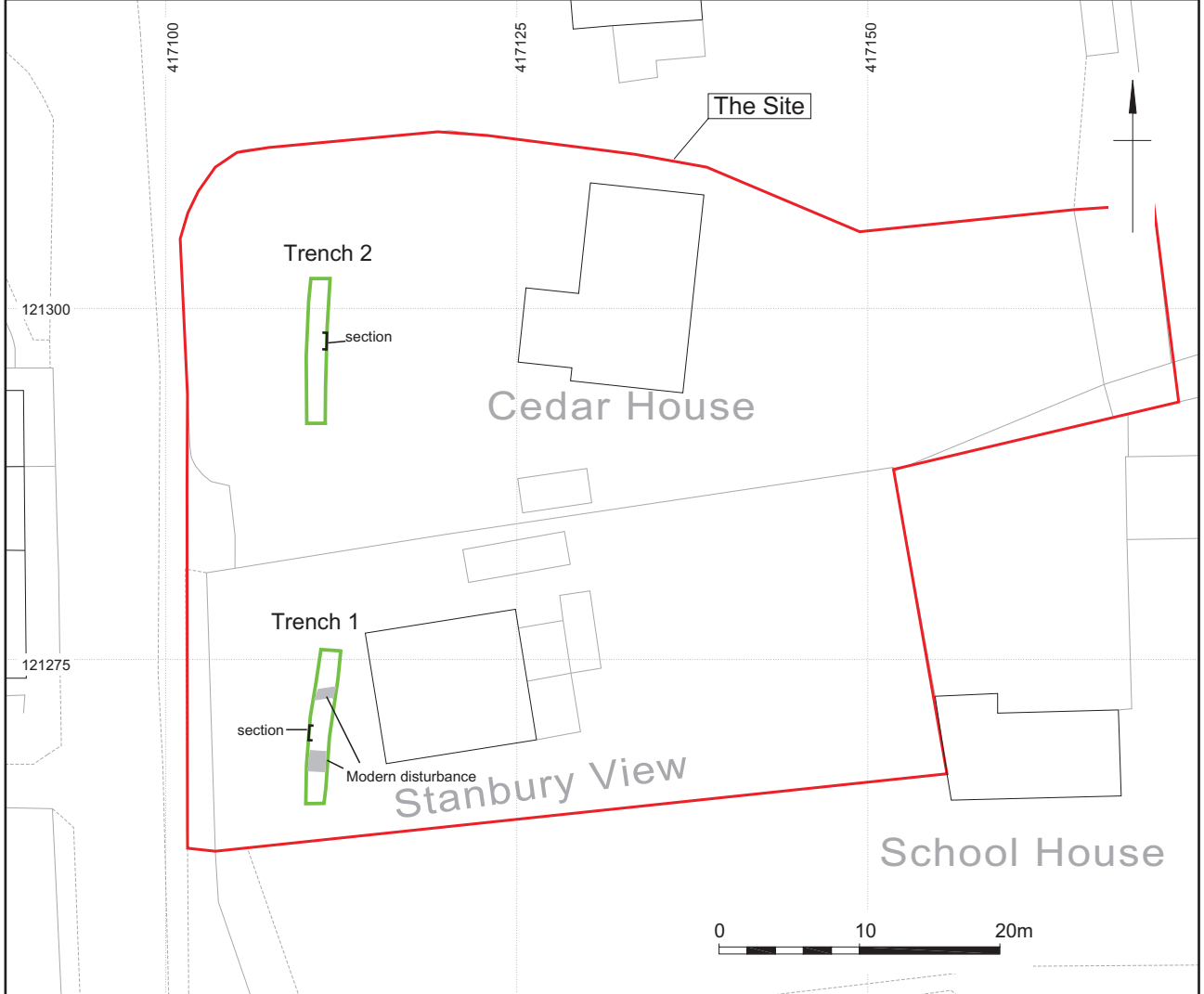
Paper available Media 'Context sheet','Diary','Drawing','Map','Matrices','Microfilm','Notebook Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report' -



Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
 Title Headlands, Downton, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report
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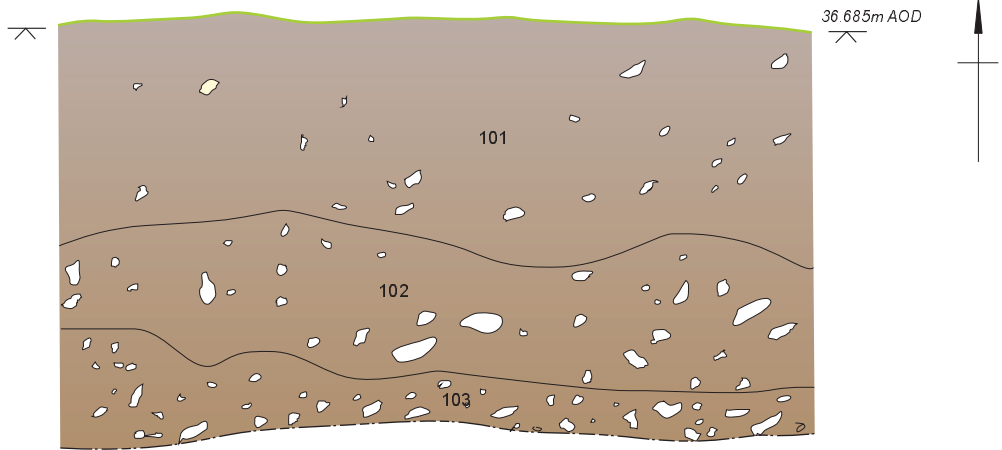


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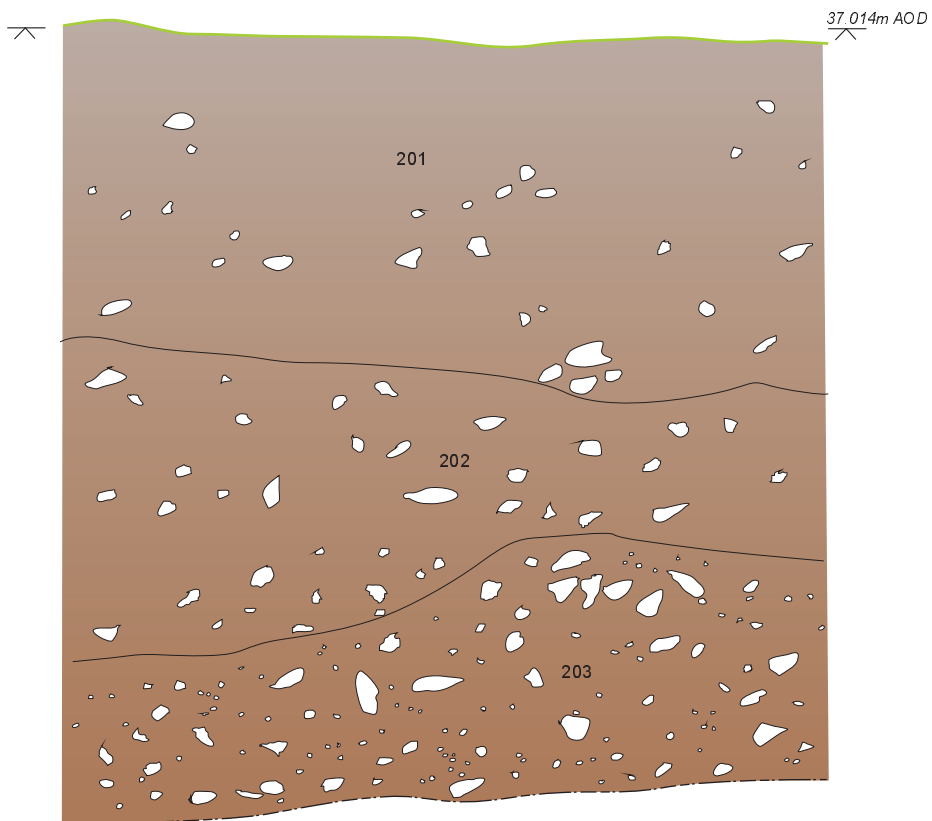
Site and trench location plan

Figure 1

Trench 1



Trench 2



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Trenches 1 and 2 representative sections

Figure 2



Plate 1: Trench 1 representative section



Plate 2: Trench 1 overall view



Plate 3: Trench 2 representative section



Plate 4: Trench 2 overall view



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