

**BACK LANE, CHITTERNE,  
WILTSHIRE**

**NGR: ST 9924 4430**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**BLC99**

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES**

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**SUMMARY**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in August 1999 on land adjoining Back Lane, Chitterne, Wiltshire (NGR: ST 99244430) by Foundations Archaeology. The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of a single trench 24m long by 1.8m wide. A number of undated postholes, post-medieval ditches and postholes, and recent features were identified.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in August 1999 on land adjoining Back Lane, Chitterne, Wiltshire (NGR: ST 99244430), on behalf of Iain Ogilvie Property Consultants.

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in response to a proposal to develop the site, which is presently disused. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a project design prepared by Foundations Archaeology (BLC/99/FA.doc1.ev) on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1999. The project design was based upon a letter provided by Duncan Coe of Wiltshire County Council (DC/MJU/97DC216.br) and was prepared in accordance with IFA *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (1994) and the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (County Archaeological Service 1995). The programme of archaeological works was undertaken in accordance with the principals of Planning Policy Guidance note 16, Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990).

## **2 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

2.1 Although no archaeological remains are known from within the site, the village of Chitterne is likely to be of Anglo-Saxon origin (Chetre in AD 1086). Some Roman material has previously been found in the village, and medieval earthworks survive along the western edge.

## **3 AIMS**

3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn this will allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.

3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;

ii) to attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;

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iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

4.1 A single trench measuring 24m in length by 1.8m in width was excavated within the plots. The trench position is located on Figure 1.

4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through use of a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter the trench was cleaned and all additional excavation was conducted by hand.

## **5 RESULTS**

5.1 The trench was excavated to a depth of between 0.20m at the western end and 0.60m depth at the eastern end (average 94.60m OD). The natural substrate consisted of Chalk.

5.2 The results of the excavation are detailed below; the deposits are fully described in Appendix 1.

5.3 A number of undated postholes ([120], [122], [118], [116], [112], [124], [114]) was located at the east end of the trench forming a linear pattern aligned northwest to southeast. The postholes were filled with an identical fill of mid brown clay silt with chalk and flint, with the exception of [120] which contained a light brown clay silt with chalk and flint. No dating evidence was recovered from these features and they were covered by modern made-up ground. The postholes had presumably been truncated along with the natural ground level at the east end of the trench by a terrace cut [137].

5.4 Four possible undated stakeholes ([128], [139], [126], and [130]) were also identified. Three of these [128], [139] and [126] were situated within the posthole group described above. Stakehole [130] was located three metres to the west and may not have formed part of a group. The stakeholes all measured 50mm in diameter by 0.10m in depth and were filled with a mid brown silt.

5.5 Three post-medieval postholes ([104], [106] and [108]) were identified towards the west end of the trench. These were filled with a mid brown silt with occasional flint which was distinct from the fill of the undated features. Post-medieval glass was recovered from postholes [104] and [106].

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5.6 Two linear ditch cuts ([133] and [135]) were identified and both dated by pottery to the 17<sup>th</sup> –18<sup>th</sup> century. Ditch [133] measured 1.30m in width by 0.35m in depth and was filled with a mid dark brown clay silt with chalk and flecks of brick/tile (134). Ditch [135] measured 2.0m wide by 0.35m in depth and was filled with a light grey brown clay silt with chalk, flint and small fragments of brick/tile (136). Both ditches were cut by the terracing [137].

5.7 A north-south terrace cut [137] cut into the natural ground. The terrace was 0.30m in depth and visible in section for a length of 10m. The fill comprised a dark brown silt clay with flint and brick/tile rubble (138). Two recent pits ([102] and [110]) were also identified. Pit [102] was cut from immediately beneath the tarmac through subsoil layer (132). Pit [110] was cut through the made-up ground. A cut for a service pipe was also present at the west end of the trench.

5.8 Made-up ground composed of bands of rubble, concrete and chalk up to 0.60m thick overlay the deposits described above. The area of the entire trench was covered by tarmac.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

6.1 The evaluation has identified a group of undated postholes that may be of archaeological interest suggesting occupational activity within the development area. The scale of modern sub-surface disturbance present suggests that the archaeological potential of this area is generally low.

## **7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank, Duncan Coe of Wiltshire County Council Archaeology Section and Niall Robertson of Iain Ogilvie for their assistance and co-operation during the course of this project.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### Trench Description

Note: Stratigraphic descriptions are given from the earliest to latest deposits. Cut features are designated by square brackets thus: [000]; all other deposits/layers are in round brackets: (000). Heights OD are based on the Ordnance Survey benchmark located at All Saints Church, Chitterne.

Natural chalk (101) was encountered throughout the trench, 0.20m below present ground level at the western end, and 0.60m below present ground level at the east end.

A layer of subsoil comprising a light grey chalk silt (132) overlying the natural ground was present in the western half of the trench. This layer was cut by terrace [137] and pit [102].

### Undated

A group of undated postholes was located at the east end of the trench. These were covered by modern made ground/fill.

[120]: Semicircular (limit of excavation) in plan, measuring 0.25m diameter by 0.20m in depth with steep sides and a flat base. The fill comprised a light brown clay silt with flint and chalk (121).

[122]: Rectangular in plan, measuring 0.28m by 80mm by 0.10m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base. The fill comprised a mid brown clay silt with small fragments of chalk and flint (123).

[118]: Oval in plan, measuring 0.20m by 0.15m by 0.10m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base. The fill comprised a mid brown clay silt with small fragments of chalk and flint (119).

[116]: Circular in plan, measuring 0.20m in diameter by 0.24m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. The fill comprised a mid brown clay silt with small fragments of chalk and flint (117).

[112]: Sub-circular in plan, measuring 0.35m by 0.30m by 0.20m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. The fill comprised a mid brown clay silt with small fragments of chalk and flint (113).

[124]: Circular in plan, measuring 0.10m in diameter by 90mm in depth with irregular sides and slightly rounded base. Filled with (125), a mid brown clay silt with small fragments of clay and flint.

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[114] : Oval in plan measuring 0.5m by 0.35m and 0.15m in depth. Vertical to near vertical sides and flat base. Filled with (115), a mid brown clay silt with small fragments of chalk and flint.

The following identical features may represent stake holes :

[128] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.05m in diameter and 0.10m deep. Steep sides to a point. Filled with (129), a mid brown silt with occasional chalk.

[139] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.05m in diameter and 0.10m deep. Steep sides to a point. Filled with (140), a mid brown silt with occasional chalk.

[126] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.05m in diameter and 0.10m deep. Steep sides to a point. Filled with (127), a mid brown silt with occasional chalk.

[130] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.05m in diameter and 0.10m deep. Steep sides to a point. Filled with (131), a mid brown silt with occasional chalk.

### *Post Medieval*

Three post holes were located towards the centre of the trench, dated to the post medieval period by glass found in the fill. Although it was not observed it is probable that these features cut through the subsoil layer (132).

[104] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.20m diameter and 0.25m depth. Vertical sides and a flat base. Filled with (105), a mid brown silt with occasional small flint. Glass.

[106] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.25m diameter by 0.22m depth. Vertical sides and a flat base. Filled with (107), a mid brown silt with occasional small flint.

[108] : Circular in plan, measuring 0.18m diameter by 0.08m depth. Vertical sides and a flat base. Filled with (109), a mid brown silt with occasional small flint.

Two north-south linear cuts were identified :

[133] : Linear in plan, measuring 1.30m width by 0.35m depth. Gradually sloping sides and a flat base. Filled with (134), a mid dark brown clay silt with chalk and flecks of brick/tile. Post medieval pottery.

[135] : Linear in plan, measuring 2.0m width by 0.35m depth. Gradually sloping sides and a flat base. Filled with (136), a light grey brown clay silt with chalk, flint, flecks and small fragments of tile/brick. Post medieval pottery.

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Linear features [133] and [135] were cut by [137].

### *Recent*

[137] : North-south linear 'terrace' cut visible in section for a length of 10m. Depth 0.30m. Filled with (138), a dark brown silt clay with flint and brick/tile. Cut linear features [133] and [135].

Two pits were identified :

[102] : Semicircular in plan due to limits of excavation, measuring 1.20m width by 0.20m depth. Filled with (103), a light grey chalk and silt with large flint nodules. Cut from below tarmac through subsoil (132).

[110] : Semicircular in plan due to limits of excavation, measuring 0.70m width by 0.20m depth. Filled with (111), a mid brown silt clay with bands of orange gravel, sand and the occasional flint. Cut through made-up ground.

A cut for a service pipe was also present at the west end of the trench.

Made-up ground composed of bands of rubble, concrete and chalk overlay the deposits described above, in turn sealed by tarmac. Details of this sequence is annotated on Section 1 in the archive.