

**FOODWORKS SW,  
WESTON SUPER MARE,  
NORTH SOMERSET.**

**NGR: ST 3500 6091- centred**

**CONTROLLED ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**



**December 2018**

**Report No. 1275**

**Quality Assurance**

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## **SUMMARY**

Between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief on land for Foodworks SW, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset (NGR ST 3500 6091-centred). The project was commissioned by Alex Farnell of AB Heritage on behalf of Willmot Dixon Construction Ltd.

The controlled watching brief was to comprise the archaeological monitoring of intrusive groundworks, however, during the topsoil strip it became clear that there was a considerable amount of Modern disturbance across the site. Therefore, it was agreed that a number of test pits should be excavated and recorded across the study area. The results of these works showed that the majority of the site had been previously stripped down to at least the top of the natural substrates, which had then been sealed by either imported hardcore material or topsoil. This would have truncated or removed any potential archaeological features or deposits.

Due to the results of this test pit survey, it was agreed that a watching brief would not be required for the rest of the groundworks.

## **GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

### *Archaeology*

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

### *CBM*

Ceramic building material.

### *Medieval*

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* AD 1500.

### *Natural*

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

### *NGR*

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

### *OD*

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

### *OS*

Ordnance Survey.

### *Post-medieval*

The period from c. AD 1500 onwards.

### *Romano-British*

The period traditionally dated between AD 43 and *circa* AD 410.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Between the 16th and 27th November 2018 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief on land for Foodworks SW, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset (NGR ST 3500 6091-centred). The project was commissioned by Alex Farnell of AB Heritage on behalf of Willmot Dixon Construction Ltd.
- 1.2 The project was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by AB Heritage (2018). The works were carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists - CIfA (2014).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological monitoring.

## **2 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Planning permission (17/P/1173/F) has been granted for the erection of two light industrial buildings at the Foodworks SW site.
- 2.2 The site is located to the east of Weston-super-Mare, on land to the north of Whirlwind Road, to the south of the A370, to the west of the A371 and to the east by open fields.
- 2.3 The solid geology of the study area comprised *Mercia Mudstone Group - Mudstone and Halite-stone*, with superficial deposits recorded as *Tidal Flat Deposits - Clay, Silt and Sand* (BGS – online viewer).
- 2.4 The site is within the grounds of the former RAF Weston-super-Mare Airfield and within the site are surviving structures, in particular two extant pill boxes, which relate to it's WWII activities.
- 2.5 A desk based assessment for this site was carried out by AB Heritage in 2015 and should be read in conjunction with this report. The DBA highlighted the possible presence of Prehistoric peat deposits at depths of over 3m. However, there was little direct evidence of Prehistoric or Roman activity. It would appear likely that the site was agricultural land until the development of the airfield in the 1930's.
- 2.6 The site therefore contained the potential for evidence of World War II activity. This did not prejudice the works against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

### **3 AIMS**

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological monitoring 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.
- 3.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to identify, define and record any archaeological deposits 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 within the site;
  - iii) where possible, to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
  - iv) to define any research priorities that may be relevant should further field investigation be required.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 An initial watching brief was carried out during the UXO survey. This was followed by a topsoil strip along the route of the proposed road. From the results of the road strip it was decided to excavate eight test pits across the site area (Figure 2).
- 4.2 All monitored excavation was undertaken by use of a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket, whilst under constant archaeological observation. Where potential archaeological features or deposits were present, they were manually investigated and, if necessary, recorded in accordance with the WSI. Spoil tips were then scanned for unstratified finds. All recovered archaeological artefacts were allocated a context reference number and retained. Modern artefacts were noted and discarded.

### **5 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 A full stratigraphic description of all contexts identified in the course of the project is detailed in Appendix 1 and a summary discussion is given below.

- 5.2 Visibility and preservation conditions were relatively good within the watched area.
- 5.3 The stratigraphy across the monitored areas and test pits indicated that the entire area had previously been stripped down to the natural clays, which would have truncated or removed any potential archaeological evidence. Across the majority of the site, the natural deposits were then sealed by a layer of imported hardcore, which was in turn sealed by imported topsoil. However, in Test pits 3, 6 and 8 the natural substrates were directly sealed by topsoil.
- 5.4 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within any of the monitored areas. Modern pottery, glass and iron objects were identified, noted and then discarded.
- 5.5 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with the appropriate museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

## **6 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

AB Heritage. 2018. *Foodworks SW, Weston-super-Mare, Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished.

CIfA. 2014. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Institute for Archaeologists. Reading.

## **7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Alex Farnell of AB Heritage, the staff at 6 Alpha and the onsite staff for Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd for their assistance during the course of this project.

**APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data**

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				<b>Test Pit 1:</b> 1.5 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.34m (3.81m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light grey blue clay were encountered at 0.89m (4.26m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		
101	1.5+	1.2+	0.23	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	102	n/a
102	1.5+	1.2+	0.66	Modern hardcore layer.	natural	101
				<b>Test Pit 2:</b> 2.2 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.13m (3.86m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light grey brown clay were encountered at 0.19m (4.81m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		
201	2.2+	1.2+	0.19	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	202, natural	n/a
202	0.7+	1.2+	0.2	Modern hardcore layer. Only present in southwest side of test pit.	Natural	201
				<b>Test Pit 3:</b> 2.2 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.14m (3.83m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light grey clay were encountered at 0.22m (4.75m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		

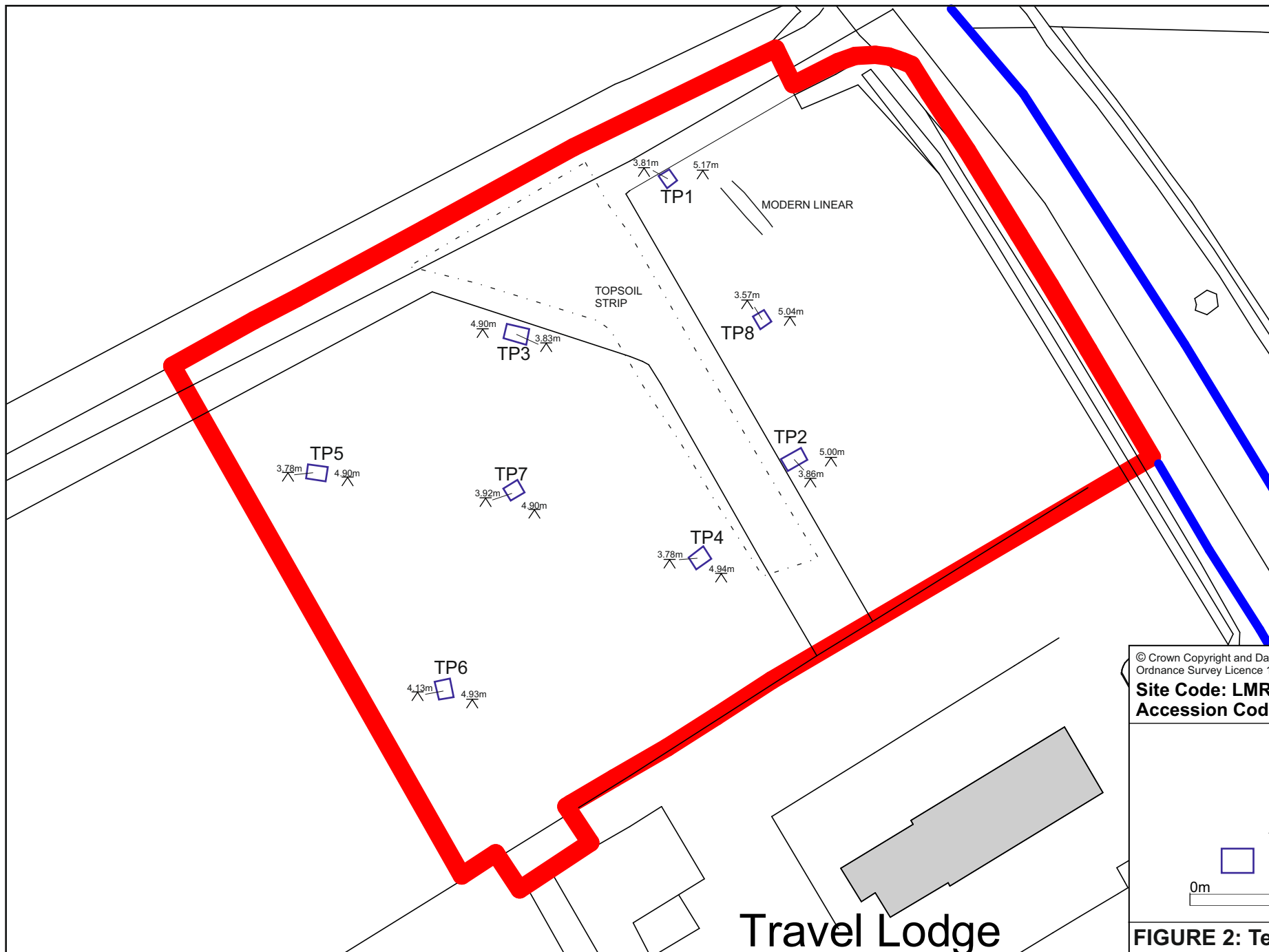


CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
301	2.2+	1.2+	0.22	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	Natural	n/a
				<b>Test Pit 4:</b> 1.7 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.17m (3.78m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light grey clay were encountered at 0.81m (4.14m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		
401	1.7+	1.2+	0.31	Topsoil and demolition mix: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with patches of hardcore and occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	402	n/a
402	1.7+	1.2+	0.5	Modern hardcore layer.	Natural	401
				<b>Test Pit 5:</b> 2 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.06m (3.78m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light blue grey clay were encountered at 0.81m (4.14m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit. Probable Modern cut at northwest edge of section cutting top of hardcore (502) and sealed by topsoil (501).		
501	2+	1.2+	0.24	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	502	n/a
502	2+	1.2+	0.43	Modern hardcore layer.	Natural	501

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/ LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				<b>Test Pit 6:</b> 1.7 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 0.89m (4.13m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light brown grey clay were encountered at 0.29m (4.63m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		
601	1.7+	1.2+	0.29	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	Natural	n/a
				<b>Test Pit 7:</b> 1.6 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.04m (3.92m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light blue grey clay were encountered at 0.29m (4.63m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		
701	1.6+	1.2+	0.12	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	702	n/a
702	1.6+	1.2+	0.1	Redeposited natural clay.	703	701
703	1.6+	1.2+	0.08	Modern hardcore layer.	Natural	n/a
				<b>Test Pit 8:</b> 1.4 by 1.2m. Full excavation depth 1.54m (3.57m AOD) below the Modern ground level. Natural deposits of light blue grey clay, with brown mottles, were encountered at 0.30m (4.74m AOD) below the Modern ground level. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within this test pit.		
801	1.4+	1.2+	0.3	Topsoil: Mid to dark brown firm clay silt, with occasional to frequent sub-circular stone inclusions. No finds or charcoal present.	Natural	n/a

**APPENDIX 2: Daily Site Attendance Log**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>OPERATIVE</b>	<b>ON SITE</b>	<b>OFF SITE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>OBSERVATION</b>
16.11.18	Michael Lavery	0800hrs	1600hrs	Monitoring UXO hand dug pits	No finds or features
19.11.18	Michael Lavery	0800hrs	1600hrs	Monitoring UXO hand dug pits	No finds or features
22.11.18	Michael Lavery	0800hrs	1600hrs	Monitoring UXO machine excavation and start of topsoil strip	No finds or features
27.11.18	Michael Lavery	0800hrs	14.00hrs	Machine excavation of test pits	No finds or features



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**Site Code: LMR18**  
**Accession Code:**

N

Test Pit

0m 40m

**FIGURE 2: Test Pit Locations**



Test Pit 1, Southeast Facing Section



Test Pit 2, Northwest Facing Section



Test Pit 3, Southeast Facing Section



Test Pit 4, South Southwest Facing Section



Test Pit 5, South Southeast Facing Section



Test Pit 6, Northeast Facing Section



Test Pit 7, Southwest Facing Section



Test Pit 8, Southeast Facing Section

Site Code: LMR18

Accession Code:

**FIGURE 3: Test Pit Photographs**