WESTERN URBAN VILLAGES STRATEGIC FLOOD SOLUTION - LAND EAST OF RIVER BANWELL, WICK ST LAWRENCE, NORTH SOMSERSET

NGR ST 3677 6425

**Results of Archaeological Investigations** 

North Somerset Council Planning Reference: 14/P/2206/F2 (Condition 17)

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On behalf of: North Somerset Council

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#### Summary

An archaeological trench evaluation and excavation carried out on land comprising part the wider Western Urban Villages Flood Solution scheme to the east of the River Banwell, Wick St Lawrence (ST 3677 6425), was undertaken by AC archaeology during June and July 2015. The site comprised a low-lying pasture plot located adjacent to the River Banwell. A previous geophysical survey had interpreted a concentration of anomalies comprising linear features thought to relate to an enclosure.

Archaeological investigations comprised the machine-excavation of three trenches totalling 70m in length, with each trench 1.6m wide. These were positioned to investigate the series of geophysical anomalies interpreted from the previous survey. Based on the presence of a concentration of archaeological features exposed in one of the trenches, an area measuring 19m by 20m was stripped, with this within an area covered by a proposed flood alleviation pond.

Archaeological investigations exposed evidence for previously-unknown medieval occupation on the site. No structural remains were present within the areas investigated, but a large and varied finds assemblage dating from the 11th to 14th centuries that was recovered from a series of rubbish pits, drainage and boundary ditches and a spread of dumped material, is considered to demonstrate that the activity exposed was related to domestic occupation. Despite the lack of structural features present, recovered daub, imported stone rubble, an iron staple and nails is thought to indicate that a building of some form was likely to have been once close to the area investigated.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- **1.1** This document sets out the results of archaeological investigations comprising advance trench evaluation and excavation ahead of the construction of flood defences as part of the wider Western Urban Villages Strategic Flood Solution, on land south of Ebdon lane, west of Bourton lane, and east of River Banwell between Wick St Lawrence and Wick St Georges, North Somerset (ST 3678 6430 to ST 3756 6348). The work was required by North Somerset Council as condition 17 of planning permission, following consultation with the North Somerset County Archaeologist.
- **1.2** The archaeological works were commissioned by North Somerset Council and were carried out by AC archaeology June and July 2015.
- **1.3** The flood alleviation scheme covered a 1.4km section of the River Banwell on the opposing side to St Georges, with Ebdon Lane to the northwest and Bourton Lane to the southeast (Fig. 1). This section of land on the northeast side of the river comprised low-lying generally level arable and pasture plots divided by an extensive network of ditches and grips at around 5m aOD. The underlying solid geology comprised mudstone and halite-stone of the Mercia Mudstone Group, with this overlain by a superficial deposit of clay and silt tidal flat deposits (British Geological Survey Online Viewer).
- **1.4** Two zones within this application area considered to be of higher archaeological potential had been identified by the North Somerset County Archaeologist, of which this report relates to the area at the northwest end of the scheme adjacent to Ebdon Lane, Wick St Lawrence (ST 3680 6428).

#### 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site had been the subject of a previous Historic Environment Assessment (James and Pink 2014) and a geophysical survey (Dean 2012). The assessment established that the area is known to contain evidence for an extensive late Iron Age/early Roman salt production site and mid-3rd century AD occupation associated with enclosure of the saltmarsh. The area was abandoned sometime before the mid-4th century and it was not until around the 11th century that attempts were made to once again reclaim and re-occupy the area. All of the plots within the application area were connected to the medieval settlements of St Georges, Brimbleworth Farm, Ebdon and Bourton and were likely to have been enclosed between the 15th and 17th centuries (if not earlier). The section of the River Banwell within the scheme was canalised during the early 19th century.
- **2.2** The previous geophysical survey exposed two areas of more concentrated anomalies. One of these was located in the northeast, close to Ebdon Lane, which forms the focus of this report. The second area is located to the south, within a part of the application area subject to a subsequent phase of work. The concentration of anomalies within the plot to the northeast comprised a series of linear features that were thought to represent a possible enclosure and trackway, with further anomalies within the plot considered to represent agricultural drainage features, a paleo-channel and a modern sewer (Fig. 2).

#### 3. AIMS

- **3.1** The aim of the archaeological investigations was to preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits exposed within the trial trenches and the targeted excavation area.
- **3.2** More specific project aims consisted of:
  - Establish the character, function and date of the anomalies identified from the previous geophysical survey through trial trenching;
  - Assess the significance of any exposed features exposed within the trial trenches; and,
  - Identify areas that required further investigation and detailed recording.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

- **4.1** The investigations were undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AC Archaeology (Hughes 2015). It comprised the initial machine-excavation of three trenches (Trenches 1-3) totalling 70m in length, with each trench 1.6m wide (Fig. 2). These were positioned to investigate the anomalies identified from the previous geophysical survey which lay within areas of proposed impact from the development.
- **4.2** Based on the presence of archaeological features exposed in Trench 1, an area measuring 19m by 20m was stripped, with this within an area covered by a proposed flood alleviation pond. Features exposed within a trench extension positioned across the route of a proposed trackway to the southeast were not investigated as they were present at a depth that was lower than the level of proposed impact from the development. The removal of soil overburden within the trenches was undertaken under the control and direction of the site archaeologist.

**4.3** All features and deposits revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's General Site Recording Manual, Version 2 (revised August 2012). Detailed sections and plans were produced at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate.

#### 5. RESULTS

**5.1 Trench 1** (Plan Fig. 3, sections Figs 4-5 and Plates 1-9)

#### 5.1.1 *Introduction*

Trench 1 comprised an approximately square area positioned over the initial trial trench. It was excavated onto a mid brownish-grey alluvial clay (context 102), which was present at a depth of 0.35m below existing levels. This was overlain by a mid greyish-brown silty-clay subsoil (101) and a dark greyish-brown topsoil (100). The alluvial clay was investigated to a depth of 2.8m below existing levels within two machine-excavated sondages. This exposed a sequence of bluish-grey, mid grey, and brownish-grey alluvial clay layers (121, 104 and 103 respectively).

The excavation exposed a series of six ditches (F196, F197, F198, F199, F200 and F202), a short ditch of pit (F201) and one further pit (F193). Features located within the southeast corner of the site were overlain by a dumped layer (131).

Further linear features (184, 185 and 186) and a possible discrete feature (183) were exposed within the trench extension to the southeast. As discussed above, these features were not investigated as they lay outside of the proposed flood alleviation pond and below the level of impact from a proposed trackway. Each of these features were comprised of a dark greyish-brown silty-clays. A total of 23 sherds of medieval pottery, 11 pieces of animal bone and one shall fragment was recovered from the surface of these unexcavated features.

#### **5.1.2** Ditch F196 and Pit F193

Northeast to southwest aligned short ditch F196 measured 5.5m long, 1.1m wide and 0.13m deep with moderately-steep sloping sides and a flat base. It was truncated to the southwest by ditch F200 and to the northeast by pit F193. The ditch contained a light brownish-yellow silty-clay primary fill (195), which was overlain by a mid brown silty-clay accumulation fill (194). A total of 103 sherds of medieval pottery, one piece of animal bone, two shell fragments and an iron fiddle key horseshoe nail was recovered its fills.

Oval pit F193 measured 2.3m long, 1.5m wide and 0.68m deep with moderatelysteep sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a basal fill comprising a mid greyish-brown silty-clay accumulation fill (192). This was overlain by a dumped deposit of dark grey silty-clay with occasional charcoal flecks, which was, in turn, sealed by a dark-grey silty-clay wet-lain accumulation (190). A total of 56 sherds of medieval pottery, one piece of animal bone, two shell fragments and a possible iron U-shaped staple or S-hook fragment was recovered from pit F193.

#### 5.1.3 Ditch F197

Short ditch F197 was positioned parallel and to the northwest of ditch F196. It measured 8.8m long and 0.7m wide with rounded terminals at each end. Four segments were excavated into the feature (143, 146, 154 and 164), which exposed it to be 0.24m deep with moderately-steep to steeply-sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a consistent mid brown silty-clay basal accumulation fill (144, 147, 153 and 163), which was overlain by a mixed dark grey silty-clay with

moderately-common charcoal flecks (145, 148, 152 and 162). Twenty-seven sherds of medieval pottery and a piece of fired clay was recovered from its fills.

#### **5.1.4** Ditches F198, F199 and F200

Ditches F198, F199 and F200 were intercutting, of which ditch F200 was the latest. Ditch F198 was north to south aligned and measured a maximum of 3m wide. Three segments were excavated into the feature (128, 137 and 157), which exposed it to measure 0.9m deep with a steep west side, a moderately-steep east side and a flat base. It contained a mid greyish-brown silty-clay primary fill (129, 141 and 159), which was overlain by a dark brownish-grey silty-clay accumulation (130, 135 and 158). In segment 137, these deposits were separated by a dump of dark greyish-brown silty-clay with common charcoal inclusions (136). A total of 136 sherds of medieval pottery, 36 pieces of animal bone, 3g of clinker, 10 pieces of fired clay and an iron horseshoe fragment was recovered from its fills.

Curving ditch F199 was approximately east to west aligned and measured 2.36m wide. Two segments were excavated into the ditch (125 and 187), which exposed it to be 0.9m deep with moderately-steep sloping sides and a flat base. Its profile was slightly stepped, which may have represented a re-cut. Segment 125 contained mixed grey to greyish brown silty-clay fills (127 and 126). Segment 187 contained a light brown silty-clay primary fill (189). This was overlain by two mid to dark greyish-brown dumped silty-clays (188 and 182), which were overlain by an accumulation of mid brown clayey-loam (181). Finds recovered from ditch F199 consisted of 167 sherds of medieval pottery, 50 pieces of animal bone, four pieces of fired clay, three shells and a piece of iron-working slag. Other finds comprised a stone spindle whorl, an iron nail and two unidentified iron objects.

Ditch F200 measured 1.45m wide and was aligned NNE to SSW. Five segments were excavated through the ditch (107, 124, 134, 151 and 160), which exposed to be 0.33m deep with gradually sloping sides, breaking to moderately-steep sloping sides and a flattish base. It contained a consistent mid brown silty-clay basal fill (123, 133, 159 and 161), which was overlain by a mid brown to dark greyish-brown upper fill (122, 132 and 158); where present. Finds recovered from ditch F200 included three sherds of post-medieval pottery, 37 sherds of medieval pottery, 74 pieces of animal bone and an iron horseshoe fragment. Two residual sherds of Roman pottery were also recovered.

#### 5.1.5 Short ditch or pit F201 and ditch F202

Short ditch or pit F201 measured 8m long, 1.5m wide and was cut at its northeast end by ditch F202. At its southwest end it extended into a stepped terminal suggesting that it may have been re-cut. Three segments were excavated into the feature (111, 169 and 173). In these the depth varied from 0.45 and 0.6m for segments 169 and 174 respectively, to 1.31m deep in segment 111. Segment 169 contained two silty-clay fills (170 and 171). Segment 173 contained a wet-lain light bluish-grey clay basal fill (177). This was overlain by a mixed and rapidly infilled mid greyish-brown to mid reddish-grey silty-loam with lenses of burnt clay and charcoal (176) and was, in turn, sealed by a dump of dark grey silty-clay (175). Deeper segment 111 contained a sequence of eight fills (168, 120, 119, 118, 117, 116, 115, and 114). Basal deposit 168 comprised a mid yellowish-grey clay primary fill that was overlain by 120, which comprised a mid grey clay dump containing common heat affected clay and charcoal inclusions. This was overlain by deposits 119, 118, 117, 115 and 114, which represented silty-clay to clay accumulations that were separated by a second dump of dark grey clay containing moderately common charcoal flecks (116). A total of 129 sherds of medieval

pottery, 38 pieces of animal bone and 841 pieces of fired clay were recovered from ditch F201.

NNW to SSE aligned ditch F202 measured between 0.95m and 1.5m wide. Three segments were excavated across the ditch (138, 165 and 174). Its depth varied between 0.12m and 0.32m and it had gradual to moderately-steep sloping sides and a concave base. The ditch contained a light to mid greyish-brown silty-clay basal fill in segments 138 and 174 (140 and 180). This was overlain by a dark grey silty-clay, which for segments 138 and 165 had moderately-common heat-affected clay and charcoal inclusions (139, 166 and 179). A total of 54 sherds of medieval pottery, four pieces of animal bone and an iron knife blade with tang were recovered from ditch F202.

#### **5.1.6** *Layer 131*

Layer 131 was localised to the southeast portion of the excavation area and overlay ditches F196 and F202 and pit F193. It measured a maximum of 0.16m thick and was comprised of a dark grey silty-clay with moderately-common medium stone rubble inclusions. The layer was overlain by subsoil 101, with which it had a diffuse edge. Numerous finds were recovered from layer 131, which included: 763 sherds of medieval pottery; 91 pieces of animal bone; eight iron objects that consisted of a spur, knife blade, two iron fiddle key horseshoe nails, a horseshoe fragment, two iron nails and an unidentified object.

#### **5.2** Trench 2 (Plan and section Fig. 6 and Plate 10)

Trench 2 measured 20m long and was positioned to investigate a northwest to southeast aligned linear anomaly interpreted from the previous geophysical survey. The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.45m below existing levels into a mid yellowish-grey alluvial clay (context 202). This was overlain by a 0.1m thick mid greyish-brown silty-clay subsoil (201) and a dark greyish-brown clayey-loam topsoil (200). Three sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from subsoil 201. The trench contained a northwest to southeast aligned linear feature (F203), which corresponded with the location of the targeted anomaly.

Probable ditch F203 measured 1.58m wide and 0.39m deep with moderatelysteep sloping sides and a concave base that cut through subsoil 201. It contained a mid greyish-brown clay fill (204). No finds were recovered.

#### 5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 20m long and was positioned across two linear geophysical anomalies that were interpreted as of possible archaeological origin. It was excavated within a machine-excavated sondage to a depth of 3m through a sequence of bluish-grey, grey and greyish-brown alluvial clays. These were overlain by 0.3m of topsoil. The targeted linear anomalies were not encountered.

#### 6. THE FINDS

By Naomi Payne with contributions from John Allan, Charlotte Coles, Mike Ponsford and Roger Taylor

#### 6.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site during the evaluation and excavation were retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. They were then quantified according to material type within each context and the assemblage was scanned to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. The finds are summarised in Appendix 1, Table 1.

#### 6.2 Roman finds

A small quantity of residual Roman material was recovered during the excavation including two sherds (14g) of Roman pottery and a single piece (37g) of tile. The first sherd is a body sherd from context 161, fill of ditch F200. It has an oxidised, micaceous fabric and a dark red slip on the external surface. It is probably Oxfordshire red/brown slipped ware and would therefore date from around 240-400AD. The second sherd is a body sherd of Roman grey ware from context 132, fill of ditch F200. The tegula roof tile fragment is from close to the corner of a tile and was recovered from layer 131. The original depth of the flange, 26mm, is preserved and there is a lower cutaway at the bottom of the flange which would have enabled the tile to slot into the adjacent one (Brodribb 1987, 16). The form of the cut-away is of Warry's Group A, indicating a date in the 1st or early 2nd century AD (Warry 2006, p. 63).

#### 6.3 Medieval pottery by Naomi Payne, John Allan, Mike Ponsford and Roger Taylor

#### Introduction and methodology

1740 sherds of medieval pottery weighing a total of 17157g were recovered from 45 contexts. For this assessment the pottery was sorted by eye into broad fabric groups. Subsequently, Roger Taylor looked at several sherds from each fabric grouping under a binocular microscope in order to make some comments on their composition and likely sources. Mike Ponsford identified the Bristol fabrics and the small number of sherds from further afield.

The bulk of the pottery assemblage consists of hand-made unglazed rounded jars in three main coarse ware fabric groupings:

- 1. Limestone-tempered
- 2. Fine grained sandstone and rounded quartz
- 3. Upper Greensand-derived (UGSD)
- 4. UGSD with some limestone

These are described in more detail below. There are a number of different rim forms present, but there is otherwise little variation in form, with the exception of three sherds from an unglazed late medieval spouted bowl found in the subsoil in evaluation Trench 2. A small collection of certainly non-local fabrics is present including proto-Ham Green, Ham Green A, Ham Green B, Ham Green red coarse ware, Bristol Redcliff glazed, South East Wiltshire and Saintonge.

#### Fabric descriptions

#### Fabric 1

This fabric is characterised by rare to sparse sub-angular to angular limestone inclusions up to 4mm. An ammonite fossil fragment was observed in one sherd indicating the use of a Liassic clay, most likely sourced from the coast to the south-west of Burnham-on-Sea, a few miles to the south-west of the excavation site. Sherds in this fabric grouping are often fired a reduced dark brown/grey/black, although the firing is sometimes patchy.

#### Fabric 2

This fabric grouping contains fine grained greyish sandstone, small rounded quartz grains (indicating a stream sand source) and larger angular vein quartz fragments up to 4mm within a silty sandy matrix. The firing colouration varies. A source using tempering derived from the Quantock Hills or Exmoor is suggested.

#### Fabric 3

UGSD fabrics typically contain rounded and polished quartz, sparse angular chert, soft red pellets and other inclusions which are distinctive of deposits around the Upper Greensand of the Blackdown Hills (Allan, Hughes and Taylor 2011, p. 169). Many of the probable UGSD sherds within the River Banwell assemblage are reasonably fine and micaceous with fawn coloured surfaces and a grey core.

#### Fabric 4

This fabric contains typical UGSD inclusions, but also a little soft light grey limestone. This is suggestive of a source along the northern edge of the Blackdown Hills, where the Upper Greensand rests on the Lias. The production sites around Donyatt constitute one such source.

#### Dating

Pottery re-entered the archaeological record in Somerset in small quantities after *c*. AD930 and had become more widespread by the late 10th century (Gerrard and Aston 2007, p. 254). The overall quantity and reasonably thin-walled nature of the River Banwell sherds suggest that they are not Anglo-Saxon but rather 11th to early 12th century or later. There are comparatively few closely datable forms and fabrics in the assemblage. The single spouted pitcher with combed decoration from context 131 is certainly 11th to early 12th century in date. Other than this, the small quantity of Bristol sherds and the other regional imports, summarised in Appendix 1, Table 2, provides the closest dating evidence. The dating of these fabrics is summarised in Appendix 1, Table 3.

#### Discussion

As can be seen in Appendix 1, Table 3 the Bristol pottery and other regional imports constitute only 106 sherds, 6% of the total sherd count. Mike Ponsford has suggested that the ceramic evidence indicates two distinct phases of occupation at the site, the first at a reasonably low level between c. 1100-1300 and the second, more intensive, in the 14th century. The glazed sherds are few, often abraded and well-scattered across the site, which could indicate that they are in fact residual. The two coarse ware fabrics are by contrast numerous, unabraded, often joining and limited to four fabric groups, which could be a sign of an intense but reasonably brief period of occupation. Being hand-built they should be pre-1250 but they may be a throwback or hand-built for a particular reason.

#### 6.4 Metalwork

Twenty metal objects were recovered from nine contexts. The metal finds are summarised in Appendix 1, Table 4.

#### Dress accessories

There is one item of copper alloy, Object no. 2, a near complete although partly distorted single-loop buckle. This was retrieved from context 101, subsoil layer. The frame of the oval-shaped buckle measures 45mm by at least 28mm. The ornate outside edge of the frame is a distinct long rectangular section which is decorated with an incised chequerboard on one side and a central X which has a perpendicular linear border. The bar was originally offset and slightly narrowed. The pin, which appears to be made from the same alloy as the frame, is wrapped around the frame and tapers to a blunt point. Ornate oval buckles date from *c* 

1150-1400 (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 22) although such a developed example is most likely *c*. 1250-1400.

#### Horse equipment

Object no. 3 is an iron spur which was retrieved context 131. The spur is almost complete. It has curving arms, one of which has been bent out of shape, and simple slightly widened and perforated ends. One of these perforations still contains a rivet, also in iron. The goad is a square-based pyramid shape. A similar example from London dates from *c*. 1160-1220 (Clark 2004, pp. 131-2, no. 321).

Three fiddle-key horseshoe nails were also recovered. Object nos. 13 and 19 were recovered from layer 131, and Object no. 20 was from context 194, fill of short ditch F196. Nails of this type were used with horseshoes with countersunk nail-holes (Goodall 2011, 363-4). They are most often found in 11th to 13th century contexts. The small iron horseshoe fragment, Object no. 11, was from context 159, fill of ditch F198. It cannot be closely dated but it could be medieval. It comprises the end section of one arm, which is slightly narrowed and incurving but not thickened. Object no. 9 is possible central section of horseshoe with a single rivet hole.

#### Knives

Two knives were recovered. The more complete example, Object no. 8, was found in context 140, lower fill of ditch F202. This is a long, narrow whittle tang knife. The blade is complete but only a short section of the tang survives. The knife falls into Goodall's Type F (blade back tapering from shoulder down to cutting edge), a form which has been found in 12th to 15th century contexts (2011, 106-7). The other knife, Object no. 4, is a blade fragment only. It was found in layer 131.

#### Structural ironwork

Object no. 16 is a curving iron rod found in context 192, fill of pit F193. It may be an incomplete U-shaped staple or S-shaped hook. One tip is out-turned and the other is broken. There are also five nails, Object nos. 7, 12, 18, 21 and 22 and a tack, Object no. 22.

#### Miscellaneous and unidentified fragments

There were four further fragments that cannot be easily identified. Object no. 1, from context 109, fill of ditch F199, is a flat triangular piece of iron measuring 60mm by 21mm, with two broken edges and a twist at the narrow end. Object no. 6 is a gently curving square-sectioned iron rod with one flattened expanded end which is possibly incomplete. Object no. 10, from layer 131, is a flat rod of iron, 45mm by 17mm, which is broken at both ends. Object no. 15, from subsoil, is a flat rectangular strap, 85mm by 57mm. One end has been bent at a 45 degree angle and this edge is scalloped. There is a circular perforation 8mm in diameter beside the change in angle. This object is likely to be of relatively recent date.

#### 6.5 Slag

A single piece (290g) of undiagnostic ironworking slag was recovered from context 182, fill of ditch F199. In addition, 3g of fragmentary clinker were recovered from context 129, lower fill of ditch F198.

#### 6.6 Worked stone by Naomi Payne and Roger Taylor

Three worked stone items (203g) were recovered from two contexts. Two hones were recovered from context 131. The first, Object no. 5, is a broadly cuboid-shaped hone of trapezoidal cross-section which is made from a micaceous Devonian sandstone, probably from a source on the Quantocks. Overall it

measures 75mm by 30mm by 19mm. One end is broken and the other is set at an angle of slightly less than 45 degrees. One of the flat sides is incised with three longitudinal sharpening grooves and one lateral side is slightly concave and very smooth. The other surfaces are rougher and more uneven. The second hone, Object no. 23, is broadly cuboid shaped, with a square cross-section and tapering ends. It is made from a sandy, calcareous Liassic mudstone which was probably sourced locally to the site. Overall it measures 93mm by 24mm by 23mm. One end is broken. It is made from a softer stone but it is certainly shaped. There are two diagonally placed sharpening grooves on one side.

A stone spindle whorl, Object no. 14, was recovered from context 182, fill of ditch F199. The spindle whorl is incomplete (*c* 85% surviving) and has been broken into two pieces. It is plano-convex with a maximum diameter of 37mm and a depth of 20mm. It is made from a soft, fine-grained light grey Lias limestone, although its surfaces are a darker grey, probably as a result of becoming discoloured in the ground. In its current state the spindle whorl weighs 22g, so when complete it would have weighed around 25g. This is lighter than the usual weight for spinning wool (30-35g) so this whorl was perhaps used for spinning fine wool or nettle-fibres (Margeson 1993, 184). It is undecorated but there are slight circumferential lines made during the turning process.

#### 6.7 Fired clay

889 pieces (1314g) of fired clay were recovered from 17 contexts. The fired clay is mostly irregular and amorphous, with the exception of the largest fragment from context 139, fill of ditch F202, which has one flat surface and a curving edge. The fabric is fairly uniform, soft and silty. Most of the collection has oxidised buff or light orange surfaces, although a few pieces have some patchy reduction. The largest piece from context 106 has a possible wattle impression on one side. A few other pieces have vegetation impressions suggesting that at least some of this material is burnt daub.

#### 6.8 Animal bone by Charlotte Coles

A total of 325 pieces (2.3kg) of animal bone were recovered from 27 contexts. 86 of the bones were identifiable (28%). The bones were in moderate to good condition with good surface preservation. The species represented are cattle, sheep/goat, pig, dog, chicken and fish. These are summarised in Appendix 1, Table 5.

#### Medieval bone

A total of 216 of the retrieved bones were from medieval contexts. 75 bones were identifiable. Sheep/goat are the most common species, followed by cattle, pig, chicken and dog. There were also 11 ribs from medium or large mammals and an identified bird digit, possibly from a chicken-sized bird.

Sheep/goat remains were most frequent with 34 identifiable bones which represent an MNI (minimum number of individuals) of only one. Eight of these bones were unfused; two of these are 16 months and under. Two mandible wear stages were calculated, one at 12-21 months and the other, mature. Three of the sheep/goat bones display butchery marks including a radius and a vertebrae with knife cuts and a scapula with a chop through the blade. A single withers height was calculated from a metacarpal. This was 55.7cm which is comparable with other sites from this period. One of the bones was burnt this was an unfused proximal calcaneus epiphysis and is slightly blackened.

Nineteen of the medieval bones were cattle, representing an MNI of two. All of the bones were fused. Two mandible wear stages were calculated, one at 1-4 months and one over 50 months. Five of the bones had been butchered including a horncore chopped through the base.

Five of the medieval bones were pig, representing an MNI of one. A proximal scapula was the only unfused pig bone. Two mandible wear stages were calculated, 7-8 months and 17-19 months. A scapula was the only butchered pig bone.

Two dog bones were identified from the medieval assemblage, a vertebrae and a loose tooth.

Three chicken bones were identified from the medieval assemblage, a humerus, femur and tibiotarsus. The femur has a greatest length of 71.3mm. This is comparable with other chickens from this period.

Four of the identified bones from this phase were very small fish vertebrae, it is not possible to identify these to a specific species.

#### Post-medieval bone

A total of 63 of the retrieved bones were from post-medieval contexts. Of these only seven were recordable, including three ribs from a large mammal, two cattle vertebrae, a cattle tibia and one sheep/goat tooth. The cattle vertebrae have unfused bodies and the cattle distal tibia is also unfused, so the animal was younger than 24 months at the time of death. One of the cattle vertebrae has been chopped through horizontally.

#### Undated bone

26 bones were recovered from the subsoil and are therefore undated. They include four identifiable bones, two cattle, one sheep/goat and a chicken femur, with medullary bone present. This is a deposit of bone within the shaft laid down during the laying season to increase the calcium a female bird can pass onto its egg.

#### Discussion

This small collection of animal bone represents the remains of domestic food waste. Sheep/goat is the dominant species based on number of bones for the medieval period, however cattle has a higher MNI. The sheep/goat bones are from older individuals, possibly indicating secondary sources. The presence of chicken bone is not unusual for this period. The assemblage is very small and only a limited amount of information can be concluded.

#### 6.9 Shell

42 shells and shell fragments (150g) were recovered from nine contexts. The shells include five pieces of oyster from contexts 131, 182 and 186. The remaining shells are limpets. With the exception of the topsoil finds all of the shells are from medieval contexts and must represent food waste.

#### 6.10 Additional post-medieval finds

Seven sherds (50g) of post-medieval pottery were recovered from four contexts. This material includes: three sherds of 18th century Bristol/Staffordshire slipware from context 101, subsoil and fills 113 and 132 of post-medieval ditch F200; a small fragment of flower pot and a 17th/18th century North Devon gravel tempered rim sherd, also from subsoil; and two body sherds of South Somerset pottery of

probable 16th century date from context 161. Other post-medieval subsoil finds include a small piece (1g) of burnt clay pipe and two pieces (108g) of post-medieval roof tile comprising a piece of curved tile and a flat tile fragment.

#### 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT by Cressida Whitton

#### 7.1 Introduction

Two environmental bulk samples were recovered from dumped deposits 120 (Sample 1) and 176 (Sample 2) from possible pit F201. The samples were processed using standard flotation/sieving methods in a siraf-type tank. Flots (250 micron) and sieved residues (5.6mm/ 2mm and 500 micron), were dried and finer fractions were sorted for ecofacts under a stereo-binocular microscope (10 -30 x). Some fractions contained abundant ecofacts and were part-sorted (eg Flots 50%). The environmental assessment results are detailed in Appendix 2, Table 1.

#### 7.2 Results

Both the samples recovered from F201 contained frequent charred plant macrofossils, in particular, large amounts of charred grain (wheat/barley type) and occasional legume (pea/lentil type); weed and (possible) berry. Virtually no cereal chaff was found in the samples, suggesting the burnt grain was domestic food or storage waste rather than from agricultural processing.

Charcoal fragments, by contrast were less frequent and mainly comprised eroded pieces of heartwood, too small (i.e. < 1 cm) to be identified to oak/non-oak, however, occasional, larger charcoal fragments appeared to be oak. The burnt grain probably represents domestic refuse, since no *in situ* burning was noted in the features.

#### 8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The results of the archaeological investigations have recorded the presence of medieval activity dating to the 11th to 14th centuries. This activity has been shown to broadly correspond with the concentration of anomalies identified from the previous geophysical survey; with this representing a series of ditches, short possible ditches and pits. These were cut into the top of a sequence of alluvial clays present in this low-lying and flat position close to the River Banwell.
- **8.2** Ditch F200 represented a later feature; it was cut through the subsoil and contained post-medieval finds. The corresponding alignment of this with ditch F203 exposed in Trench 2, which was also cut through the subsoil, suggests that these may have been parts of the same overall probable field drain ditch.
- **8.3** The medieval activity exposed was made up of three ditches (F198, F199 and F202), two short linear features (F196 and F197), a short ditch or pit (F201) and one pit (F193). Given the large quantity of finds and the range of types recovered from these features and overlying layer 131, the activity represented was likely to have been associated with occupation. Evidence for food waste such as the animal bone, shell and cereal grains (with no processing residues) recovered alongside the reasonably large assemblage of pottery and objects such as the spindle whorl, iron knives and hones, or sharpening stones, provide an emphasis that the nature of the occupation was probably domestic. The presence of horseshoe fragments with their associated horse fiddle-key nails, and indeed the

iron spur suggest that the horses were likely to have formed an element in the occupation of the site.

- **8.4** Ditches F198, F199 and F202 probably represented drains as well as functioning as potential boundaries associated with the occupational activity. For short ditches F196 and F197 and short ditch or possible pit F201, the function for these was less clear. The deep profile and stepped base exposed in F201 suggests that it represented an elongated pit. The features contained numerous finds suggesting that they were used for depositing refuse. Layer 131, which overlay the features in the southeast portion of the site contained a large proportion of the finds recovered. This deposit perhaps represented an, albeit diffuse, further dump of refuse. This deposit also contained stone rubble; the lack of which in the underlying alluvial clays suggests that it was brought onto the site.
- **8.5** While the finds assemblage and environmental assessment indicates that the site was almost certainly associated with domestic occupation, this was not clearly reflected in the features exposed. Structural features such as postholes or footings etc. that may have been expected, were not exposed. Nevertheless, the recovery of material such as: fired daub, including an example having a wattle impression; stone rubble within layer 131; and the iron staple and nails, suggests that there was at least some form of structure close to the site. Investigation within the trench extension to the southeast of the side, which exposed further contemporary activity (that lay outside of the proposed impact from the flood alleviation pond), indicates that the activity certainly continued beyond the area investigated.

#### 9. CONCLUSIONS

Investigations on land to the east of the River Banwell have exposed evidence for previously-unknown medieval occupation on the site. Although no structural remains were present within the areas investigated, a large and varied finds assemblage representing food waste, tools, horse equipment and pottery, which were recovered from a series of rubbish pits, drainage and boundary ditches and a spread of dumped material, is considered to demonstrate the presence of domestic occupation. Despite the lack of structural features, recovered daub, imported stone rubble, an iron staple and nails provides some indication that a building of some form was likely to have been close to the area investigated.

Occupation of the site is likely to have extended between the 11th and 14th centuries; an opening date which broadly corresponds with a period of land reclamation and drainage of the area (James and Pink 2014). This is thought to have commenced from around the 10th century in order to recolonise the low-lying land abandoned during the later Roman and post-Roman periods.

#### 10. ARCHIVE

- **10.1** The paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, a 4 Halthaies Workshops, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. This will ultimately be deposited under Museum accession number **WESTM:2015.25** at the Somerset Heritage Centre. The finds will be returned to the landowner.
- **10.2** An online OASIS entry has been completed, using the unique identifier **236754** which includes a digital copy of this report.

#### 11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The archaeological investigations were commissioned by North Somerset County Council. The site works were carried out by Vince Simmonds, Alex Farnell, Lluis Bermudo, Andy West and Laura McArdle, with the illustrations prepared by Elisabeth Patkai. The advice and collaboration of Vince Russett, County Archaeologist and Jason Reading, Engineer, North Somerset Council is duly acknowledged.

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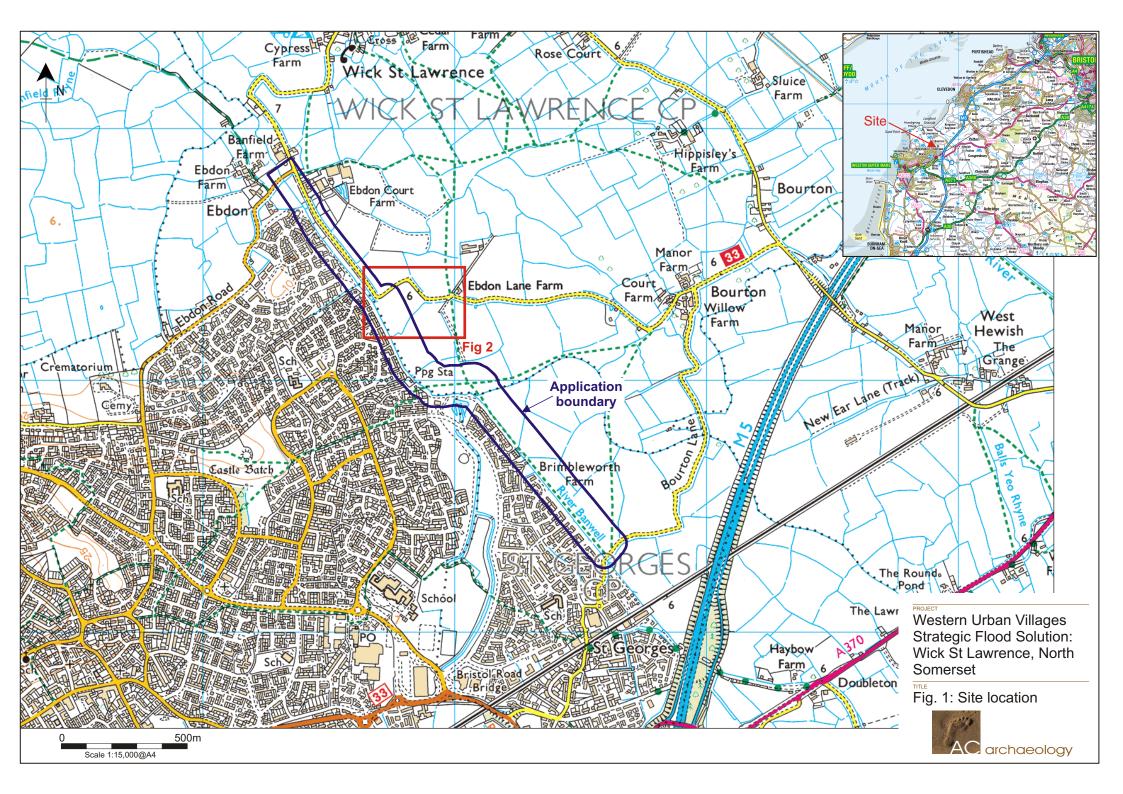
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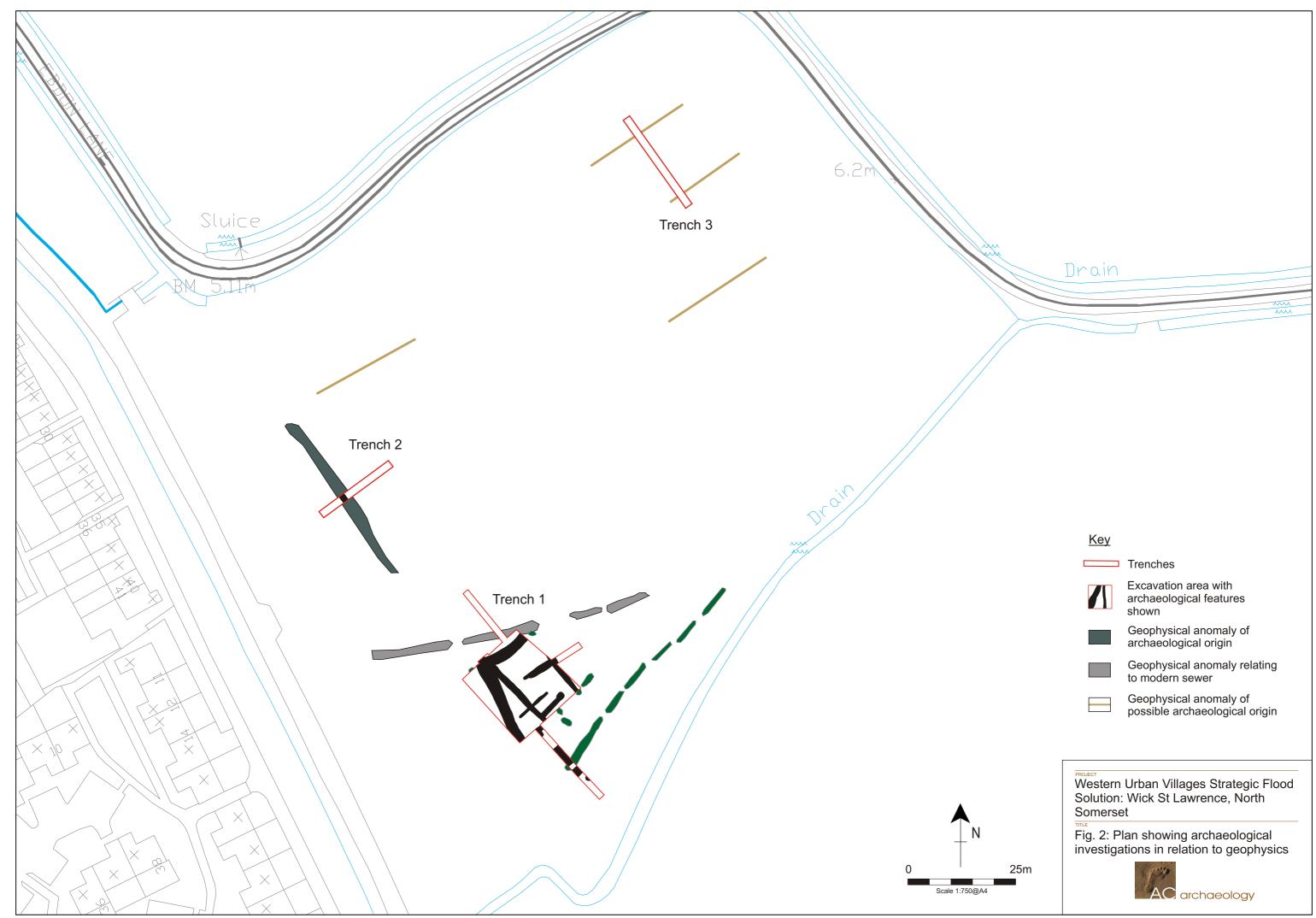
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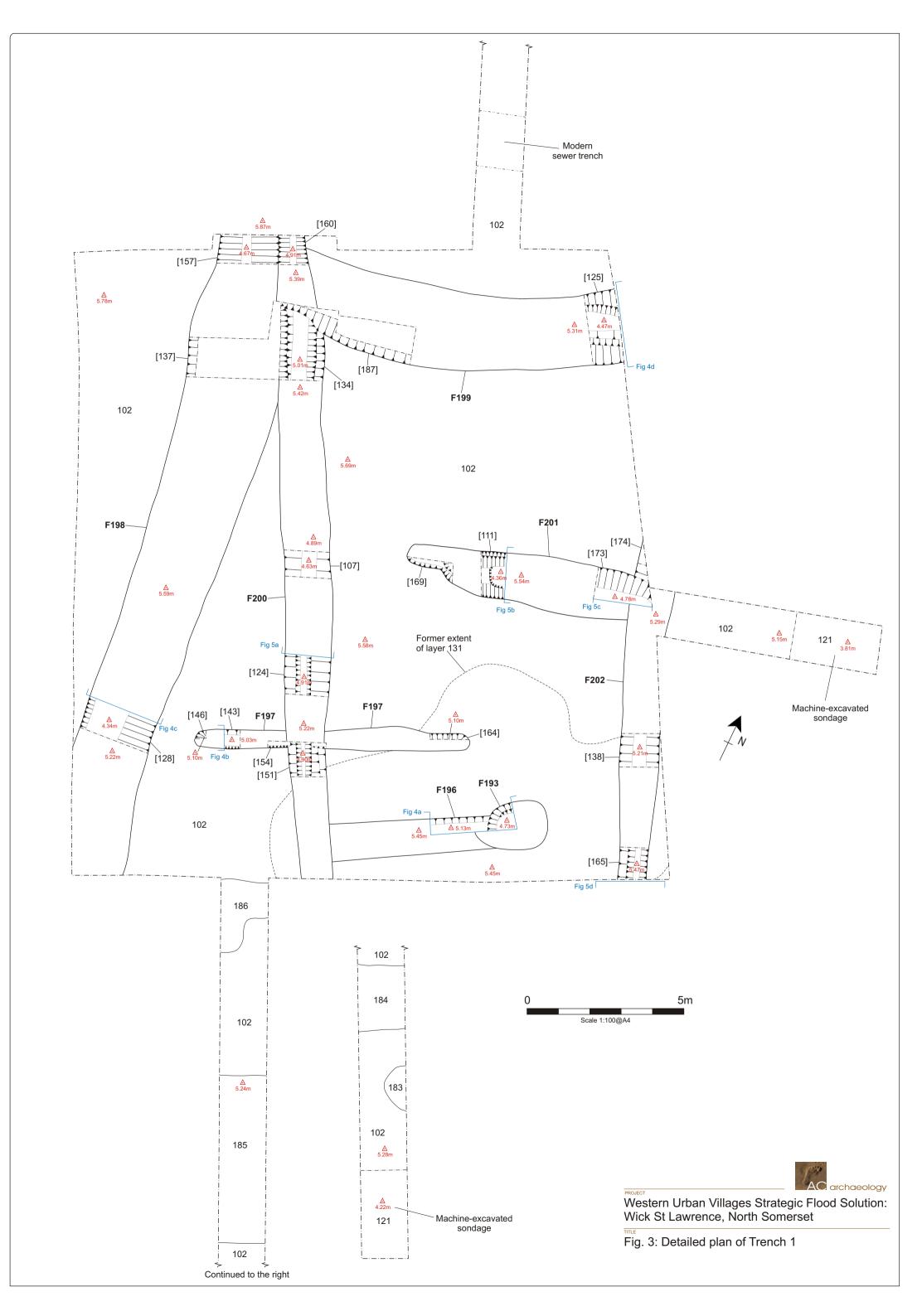
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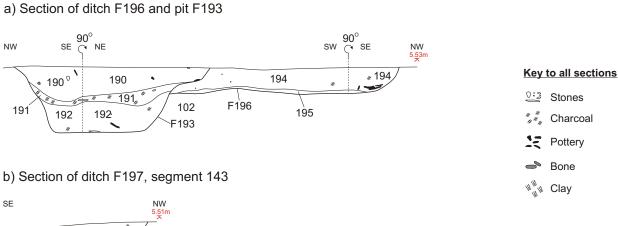
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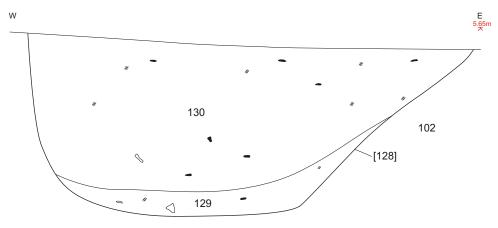




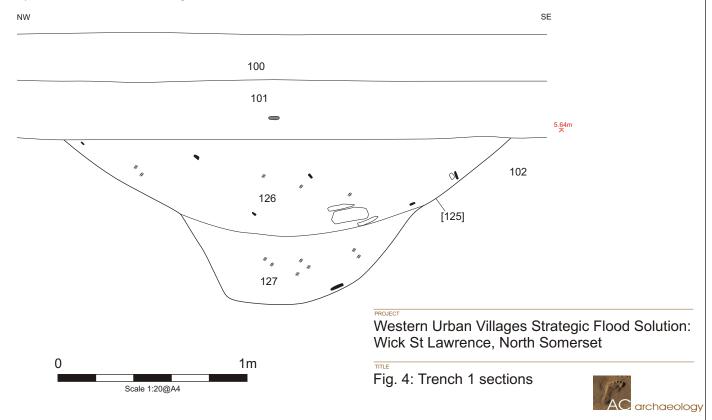


\* \* 145 \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* 144 \* 102

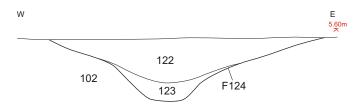
#### c) Section of ditch F198, segment 128



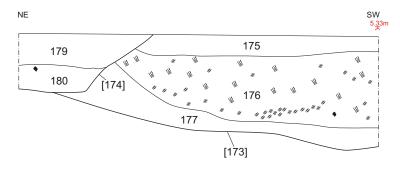
#### d) Section of ditch F199, segment 125



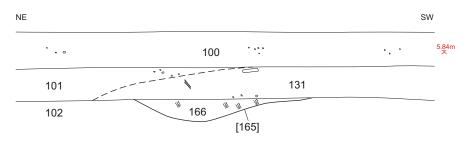




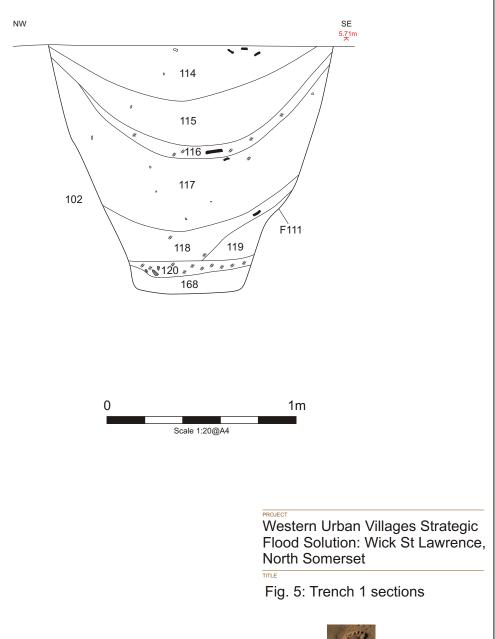
c) Section of possible pit F201, segment 173 and ditch F202, segment 174



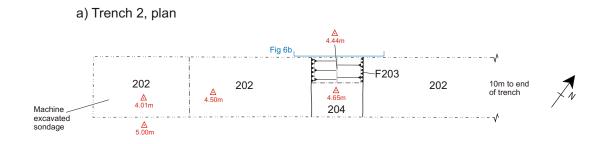




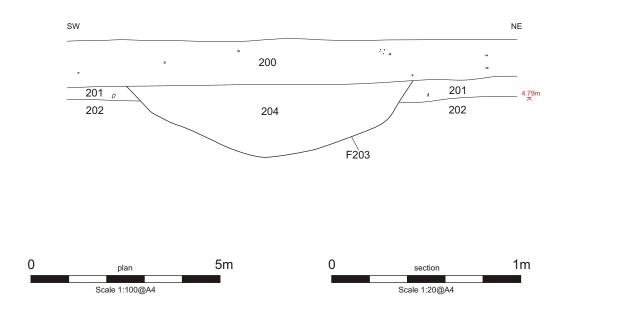
b) Section of possible pit F201, segment 111



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b) Section of F203



Western Urban Villages Strategic Flood Solution: Wick St Lawrence, North Somerset

#### TITLE

Fig. 6: Trench 2, plan and section





Plate 1: Showing general view of Trench 1, looking south



Plate 2: Showing general view of Trench 1, looking west



Plate 3: Trench 1, pit F193 and ditch F196, view to southeast (scale 1m)





Plate 4: Trench 1, ditch F197 from segment 146, view to northeast (scale 0.2m)



Plate 5: Trench 1, ditch F198, segment 128, view to north (scale 1m)



Plate 6: Trench 1, ditch F199, segment 125, view to north (scales 2 x 1m)





Plate 7: Trench 1, ditch F200 from segment 151, view to northwest (scale 0.25m)

Plate 8: Trench 1, showing general view of possible pit F201, looking northeast

Plate 9: Trench 1, possible pit F201, segment 111, view to northeast (scale 1m)

Plate 10: Trench 2, ditch F203, view to northwest (scale 1m)



## Appendix 1 Finds Quantifications and Tables



Context	Context Description	Met wor	al-	Slag clink	and	Clay toba -pip	/ ICCO	СВМ		Wor stor		Fired	l clay	Ron pott		Medie potter		Post- medi potte	eval	Anim bone		She	11
Ŭ		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
100	Topsoil															1	2						
101	Subsoil	5	243			1	1	2	108							163	1143	3	32	26	138	12	14
105	Fill of ditch F202															4	7						
106	Un-stratified											6	491			58	411			2	1		
109	Fill of ditch F199	1	20									4	26			16	51			7	40		
113	Fill of ditch F200, segment 107															1	6	1	3				
114	Fill of ditch F201, segment 111											6	33			32	160			9	31		
115	Fill of ditch F201, segment 111											3	16			31	241			4	26		
116	Fill of ditch F201, segment 111															20	309						
120	Fill of ditch F201, segment 111											121	90			7	27			5	1		
123	Fill of ditch F200, segment 124															1	8						
126	Fill of ditch F199, segment 125															20	156			5	39	1	1
127	Fill of ditch F199, segment 125	2	23													33	615			30	53		

Table 1. Summary of finds by context (weights in grams)

129	Fill of ditch F198,			25	3						1	2			19	173						
	segment 128																					
130	Fill of ditch F198, segment 128										4	9			84	472			12	66		
131	Layer	7	93				1	39	2	181	20	106			763	7996			91	1111	21	36
132	Fill of ditch F200, segment 134	1	3								2	3	1	12	6	34	1	10	1	1		
135	Fill of ditch F198, segment 137										4	12			20	176			15	53		
136	Fill of ditch F198, segment 137										1	15			4	36			3	27		
139	Fill of ditch F202, segment 138										4	34			16	144					2	4
140	Fill of ditch F202, segment 138	1	68												8	93			3	50		
144	Fill of ditch F197, segment 143														4	6						
145	Fill of ditch F197, segment 143										1	2			9	39						
149	Fill of ditchF200, segment 151														6	31			2	2		
152	Fill of ditch F197, segment 154														13	119						
159	Fill of ditch F198, segment 157	1	42												9	149			6	71		

	Fill of ditch	1			1				1												
161	F200,											1	2	12	31	2	5	62	248		
101	segment 160											1	2	12	51	2	5	02	240		
	Fill of ditch				-		 		-												
162	F197,													13	84						
102	F 197,													15	04						
	segment 164 Fill of ditch																				
163														1	<u>_</u>						
105	F197,													1	2						
	segment 164				-																
100	Fill of ditch													~~	450				100		
166	F202,													22	156			1	129		
	segment 165				-		 														
470	Fill of ditch													40	100						
170	F201,									1	2			19	126			1	6		
	segment 169						 														
475	Fill of ditch										100										
175	F201,									9	100			31	366			4	38		
	segment 173						 														
470	Fill of ditch																		_		
176	F201,									700	353			2	17			15	5		
	segment 173						 														
4 7 7	Fill of ditch													•	100				_		
177	F201,									2	20			6	130			1	7		
	segment 173																				
100	Fill of ditch																				
180	F202,													3	55						
	segment 174																				
	Fill of ditch																				
182	F199,			1	290			1	22					98	782			8	65	2	10
	segment 187						 														
	Unexcavated																				
183	discrete													1	11						
	feature						 														
184	Unexcavated													2	17			2	7		
	linear feature													-							
185	Unexcavated													13	158			6	40	1	1
	linear feature																	-			-

186	Unexcavated linear feature															7	175			3	1	1	83
190	Fill of pit F193															18	292						
191	Fill of pit F193															2	13						
192	Fill of pit F193	1	8													36	605						
194	Fill of ditch F196	1	5													103	1371			1	9	2	1
201	Trench 2 subsoil															3	162						
Total		20	505	26	293	1	1	3	147	3	203	889	1314	2	14	1740	17157	7	50	325	2265	42	150

Table 2	<u>. Summary of regional</u>	imports	s with s	spot da	ites					-	
Context	Context Description	Proto Ham Gr	Ham Gr red	Ham Gr A	Ham Gr B	Bristol (Redcliff) glazed	Bristol (Redcliff) glazed	Bristol (Redcliff) glazed	SE Wilts	Saintonge	Pottery spot date
	BPT no.	114	32	26	27	118	120	125	18	156	
101	Subsoil		6		6						c. 1175-1250
105	Fill of ditch F202		1								c. 1120-1250
106	Un-stratified		5								c. 1120-1250
109	Fill of ditch F199						1				c. 1250-1325
113	Fill of ditch F200, segment 107			1							c. 1120-1160
114	Fill of ditch F201, segment 111			1							c. 1120-1160
115	Fill of ditch F201, segment 111		1								c. 1120-1250
126	Fill of ditch F199, segment 125		3								c. 1120-1250
127	Fill of ditch F199, segment 125		1								c. 1120-1250
129	Fill of ditch F198, segment 128		3	1		1					c. 1250-1325
130	Fill of ditch F198, segment 128				5	4					c. 1250-1325
131	Layer		27		4	2					c. 1250-1325
135	Fill of ditch F198, segment 137		1								c. 1120-1250
136	Fill of ditch F198, segment 137							1	1		c. 1120-1250
159	Fill of ditch F198, segment 157					5					c. 1250-1325
161	Fill of ditch F200, segment 160	1	1								c. 1120-1250
175	Fill of ditch F201, segment 173		1								c. 1120-1250
182	Fill of ditch F199, segment 187			4	4						c. 1175-1250
184	Unexcavated linear feature		1								c. 1120-1250
185	Unexcavated linear feature				2						c. 1175-1250
190	Fill of pit F193		1		3						c. 1175-1250
192	Fill of pit F193		3		3					1	c. 1250-1350
Total		1	55	7	27	12	1	1	1	1	

Table 2. Summary of regional imports with spot dates

Table 3. Dates ranges of Bristol sherds and regional imports (taken from McSloy 2013, Ponsford 1998 and Mike Ponsford pers. comm.)

Ware	BPT ref.	Date
Pill-type coarse wares/Proto Ham Green	BPT 114	12th to early 13th century
Ham Green A jugs	BPT 26	c. 1120-1160
Ham Green B jugs	BPT 27	c. 1175-1250 (late jugs to 1275)
Ham Green coarse/redware	BPT 32	c. 1120-1250
Bristol (Redcliff) glazed	BPT 118, BPT 120 and BPT 125	c. 1250-1325 (no later sherds present)
South East Wilts	BPT 18	late 11th to 12th century
Saintonge	BPT 156	c. 1250-1350 but continuing into the 15th century in small amounts

#### Table 4. Summary of metal finds by context

Object no.	Context	Context description	Description
1	109	Fill of ditch F199	Unidentified iron fragment
2	101	Subsoil	Copper alloy buckle
3	131	Layer	Iron spur
4	131	Layer	Iron knife blade
6	131	Layer	Iron nail
7	127	Fill of ditch F199, segment 125	Iron nail
8	140	Fill of ditch F202, segment 138	Iron knife blade and tang
9	131	Layer	Possible iron horse shoe fragment
10	131	Layer	Unidentified iron fragment
11	159	Fill of ditch F198, segment 157	Iron horseshoe fragment
12	131	Layer	Iron nail
13	131	Layer	Iron fiddle key horseshoe nail
15	101	Subsoil	Unidentified iron fragment
16	192	Fill of pit F193	Possible U-shaped staple or S-hook fragment
17	127	Fill of ditch F199, segment 125	Unidentified iron fragment
18	132	Fill of ditch F200, segment 134	Iron nail
19	131	Layer	Iron fiddle key horseshoe nail
20	194	Fill of ditch F196	Iron fiddle key horseshoe nail
21	101	Subsoil	Iron nail
22	101	Subsoil	Iron nail

Table 5. Number of identified animal bone fragments per species

Phase	Cattle	Sheep/Goat	Pig	Dog	Chicken	Fish
Medieval	19	34	5	2	3	4
Post-Medieval	3	1				
Undated	2	1			1	
Total	24	35	5	2	4	

# Appendix 2 Environmental Assessment Summary



Sample/Feature type	Sample no.	Context no.	Sample volume (It) & % of sample	Results xxx Frequent ( 20 - 100 + fragments) xx Moderate (10- 20) x Occasional (< 10)
Fill of ditch F201, segment 111	1	120	6.5 lt (100%)	Charred Grain (all wheat/barley type) xxx (c. 100 +) Other CPM (Charred Plant Macrofossil) x (legume/weed/?berry) Charcoal x Terrestrial Mollusc x
Fill of ditch F201, segment 173	2	176	10 lt (25%)	Charred Grain (all wheat/barley type) xxx ( <i>c</i> . 100 +) Other CPM (Charred Plant Macrofossil) x (legume/weed/?berry) Charcoal x Terrestrial Mollusc x Marine Mollusc x

Table 1: Summary of environmental assessment results

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