

Land adjacent to Bourne House, Ford, Salisbury, Wiltshire:

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

NGR: SU16229 32684

Prepared by:
Dan Carter &
Royston Clark

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Atlas Planning Group

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AC archaeology

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, consisting of the machine-excavation of three trenches on land adjacent to Bourne House, Ford, Salisbury was carried out by AC archaeology Ltd in February 2021. The investigation was undertaken in relation to a proposed new housing development. With the exception of one linear feature, which is considered to be of recent date, no archaeological features were recorded. Fragments of tile were recovered from a subsoil layer and these are considered to date to the 19th or 20th century. Ground conditions during the fieldwork were very wet due to recent heavy rains with groundwater present in the trenches.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching in relation to a proposed new housing development on land adjacent to Bourne House, Ford, Salisbury, SP4 6DJ. The document has been prepared by AC archaeology Ltd and has been commissioned by the Atlas Planning Group on behalf of the applicant, Mark Kibblewhite.
- 1.2 A previous planning application had been submitted to Wiltshire Council and refused (15/03293/OUT). One reason for refusal was that no archaeological evaluation work had been carried out in support of the application. This document provides the results of the required fieldwork and will be submitted with a revised planning application.
- 1.3 The application area is situated on the north eastern side of Salisbury and 0.5km south east of the main settlement of Ford. The site appears to be an area that may originally have formed part of the grounds to Bourne House. The eastern, southern and western site boundaries contain a number of mature trees, which limit the areas available for trial trenching. The property is on the east side of a lane that links the A338 with a road to the north known as Spire View, which is a Roman road. The River Bourne is located approximately 400m to the west of the site.
- 1.4 The site lies at around 58m OD and the underlying geology comprises Newhaven Chalk Formation a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 72 to 86 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** As part of the initial stages of the project, the Wiltshire Council Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted. It is known that there has been settlement at Ford since at least before the Saxon period (HER SU13SE453). In AD1189, the area was known as *Wiunterburneford*.
- 2.2** Saxon coins were found by a metal detectorist c.400m to the north of the site area (HER SU13SE) and medieval coins were found c.200m east of the site in the area known as the Elms (HER SU13SE470).
- 2.3** Although there is currently no direct evidence for medieval settlement within this area of Ford, there are records for demolished 19th century buildings within close proximity to the application site (HERs MWI70866 and MWI71518).

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1** The investigations were undertaken:
- to ascertain the presence/absence, function, date and chronology of any archaeological deposits present on the site;
 - to enable a description of the significance of any heritage assets present;
 - to enable an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on any heritage asset, and;
 - to enable a mitigation strategy to be produced, as necessary.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The investigations were undertaken in accordance with a Project Design prepared by AC archaeology Ltd (Clark 2020) and approved by the WCACA, adviser to Wiltshire Council, who are the local planning authority.
- 4.2** All spoil removal was undertaken under the control and direction of the site archaeologist. Topsoil and overburden were removed by mechanical excavator, using a toothless bucket, and ceased at the level at which archaeological deposits or natural subsoil were exposed.
- 4.3** Each trench was recorded using the full range of the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system.
- 4.4** The archive has been prepared using the site code ACW1311.

5. RESULTS

Trenches 1 - 3 (Plan Fig. 1; Plates 1 - 4)

- 5.1** The original trenching proposal was to excavate two 20m long trenches. In the event it was not possible to excavate the full length of one of these trenches due to access problems with

the JCB and the presence of surface obstructions. As an alternative, two 10m long trenches were excavated, one in the same general area and alignment and a second to the south. Trench 1 measured 20m in length and Trenches 2 and 3 were 10m in length. Each trench was 1.6m wide.

Trench 1

- 5.2 Trench 1 was positioned in the south western part of the site area. It was aligned approximately north to south and was excavated to a maximum depth of 400mm. The trench revealed one archaeological feature (F104). Recording was restricted due to the rapid ingress of groundwater. The overall depositional sequence for the trench is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Trench 1 depositional sequence

Context	Depth	Description	Interpretation
100	0 - 200mm	Mid greyish black calcareous clay silt. Rare, rounded flint <60mm	Topsoil
101	200-400mm	Mid grey calcareous silt with abundant flint gravel	Alluvium / subsoil
102	400mm +	River gravel with calcareous silt with pockets of flint	Natural gravel

Feature F104

- 5.3 Trench 1 contained one feature, a linear gully that was seen during machining but was rapidly obscured by rising groundwater. The feature was approximately 0.35m wide and was east-southeast to west-northwest aligned and crossed the entire trench width. The fill consisted of a mid grey calcareous clay silt which was briefly observed before the groundwater entered the trench (103). As the composition of the fill was very loose, it is assumed to be of relatively modern in date. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Negative trenches

- 5.4 Trenches 2 and 3 did not contain any archaeological features or deposits of interest and the general layer sequence is given in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Trench depositional sequences of negative trenches

Trench	Depth below ground	Contexts	Description
2	0 - 300mm 300-400mm 400mm +	Topsoil - context 200 Subsoil - context 201 Natural - context 202	Mid greyish black clay silt. Mid brownish clayey silt with rounded flint <80mm Mid reddish brown silt with common pockets of flint gravel
3	0 - 300mm 300-350mm 350-400mm 400mm +	Topsoil - context 300 Re-deposited chalk - context 301 Subsoil - context 302 Natural - context 303	Mid greyish black calcareous silt with rare, rounded flint <100mm Chalk with fragments of 19 - 20 th tile Mid brownish clayey silt Weathered chalk with pockets of mid yellow brown silty clay

6. FINDS

- 6.1** A small quantity of artefacts was recovered during excavation. These consisted of three fragments of tile found in the subsoil layer (101) in Trench 1. The three fragments weighed 147 grams and are considered to date to the 19th or 20th century. As they came from an unstratified context, they have been discarded.

7. COMMENT

- 7.1** The trench evaluation has provided no evidence for any significant sub-surface archaeological features other than a small gully recorded in Trench 1 that is considered to be relatively modern in date. Due to rising groundwater, it was not possible to investigate this feature, although the loose nature of the fill does not suggest an early date for this feature.
- 7.2** The site is considered, therefore, to have no archaeological interest.
- 7.3** It is not proposed to deposit an archive for this project.

8. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey online
[www.bgs.ac.uk/open geoscience](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/open_geoscience)

Clark, R., 2020 '*Land Adjacent to Bourne House, Ford, Salisbury, Wiltshire: Project Design for an archaeological evaluation*' *Unpublished client report Ref ACW1311/1/0*





Plate 1: General view and Trench 1



Plate 2: Trench 1 showing submerged F104



Plate 3: General view of Trench 2



Plate 4: General view of Trench 3

Wiltshire Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Manor Farm Stables
Chicklade
Hindon
Nr Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 5SU

Telephone: 01747 820581
Fax: 01747 820440

Devon Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Unit 4, Halthaies Workshops
Bradninch
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ

Telephone/Fax: 01392 882410

www.acarchaeology.co.uk