

Results of archaeological recording of groundworks at Willstock Village (Phase 2), Bridgwater, Somerset

NGR ST292351

Somerset County Council Historic Environment Service
PRN 30210

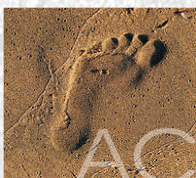
Prepared by:
Tina Tapply

With contribution by:
Emma Firth

On behalf of:
Bloor Homes

Document No: ACD199/1/1

Date: October 2010



archaeology

RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING OF GROUNDWORKS AT WILLSTOCK VILLAGE (PHASE 2), BRIDGWATER, SOMERSET (CENTRED ON ST292351)

Somerset County Council Historic Environment Service PRN 30210

CONTENTS

	Summary	1
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Archaeological background	1
3.	Aim	1
4.	Methodology	2
5.	Results	2
6.	The finds	2
7.	Comments	3
8.	Archive and OASIS	4
9.	References	4

List of figures

Fig. 1: Location of site

Fig. 2: Areas of archaeological recording

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by AC archaeology in August and September 2010, during groundworks associated with a residential development and associated infrastructure works on land at Willstock Village (Phase 2), Bridgwater, Somerset (ST292351). Previous archaeological work in the area has shown that settlement generally only occurs on higher ground. Therefore the main focus of the monitoring was in those areas of the development which lie on higher ground. However, the site Archaeologist did carry out rapid recording in other areas where topsoil stripping was being undertaken.

No evidence for in situ archaeological remains was identified during the work, with only a small quantity of medieval and post-medieval finds recovered from overlying layers. This material was probably a result of manuring practices and plough movement.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This report sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out during groundworks associated with a residential development and associated infrastructure works on land at Willstock Village, Bridgwater, Somerset (ST292351). The watching brief was carried out by AC archaeology intermittently during August and September 2010 and was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Bloor Homes.
- 1.2** The site is located to the south of Bridgwater (Fig. 1), in an area which is generally low-lying, although there is an area of higher ground in the southwest part. The underlying solid geology for the site is Mercia Mudstone, overlain in most of the site by alluvial soils.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** While there are no known archaeological sites within the proposed development area, it is located within a landscape where probable prehistoric or Romano-British enclosures are recorded to the south and southwest. A recent trench evaluation at Stockmoor, identified evidence for later Iron Age settlement, as well as medieval features (AC archaeology in prep.).
- 2.2** As part of the Phase 1 development area, located immediately to the east, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken, which revealed evidence for post-medieval and modern archaeological activity only (Smalley 2010, 5).

3. AIM

- 3.1** The aim of the watching brief was to preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during groundworks associated with development, with particular reference to any buried remains relating to prehistoric or Romano-British settlement on the higher ground in the southwest corner of the site.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a specification prepared by CgMs Consulting (Smalley 2010) submitted to and approved by the Somerset Archaeology Officer prior to commencement on site. Attendance was when groundworks were being carried out towards the southwestern extent of Phase 2 (Fig. 1), although while on site the Site Archaeologist carried out rapid recording of other areas where topsoil was being removed.

4.2 The site was recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*.

5. RESULTS

5.1 The watching brief was carried out during the initial topsoil stripping and, within the agreed area, where this was not to a sufficient depth to clarify the presence/absence of archaeological features, also during the excavation of strip footings. The areas where recording was undertaken are shown on Fig. 1. A small quantity of finds was recovered during topsoil stripping (see section 6 below), but no evidence for *in situ* archaeological remains was identified. The recorded layer sequence across the site was generally consistent and is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Context descriptions

Context	Depth below ground level	Description	Interpretation
100	0-0.2m	Mid to dark brown silty clay	Topsoil
101	0.2-0.5m	Light brown firm silty clay	Colluvial subsoil
102	0.5m+	Orange-brown, silty clay, with occasional manganese staining	Natural subsoil
103	n/a	Context allocated for surface finds	Surface finds

6. THE FINDS By Emma Firth

6.1 Summary

A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the course of the watching brief, all from context 103, surface exposed material. The assemblage comprises a small number of medieval sherds, from two vessels with a date of the 12th to 13th century, a small number of 17th-18th century post-medieval pottery sherds and several 19th century finds.

6.2 Introduction and Methodology

All finds recovered on site have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. Finds were then quantified according to material type within each context. The assemblage was then scanned by context to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. This information is briefly discussed below. The finds are discussed by material type, summarising the nature, date, range and condition of the artefacts.

6.3 The clay pipe

A single fragment of clay pipe (2g) was recovered from context 103. This fragment includes a small spur with the initials "P/R" on either side of the spur. This spur is dated from the mid 19th century, though the maker has not been identified.

6.4 The clay object

This is a curious object (8g) made of china clay (kaolin) and with the same finish as a clay pipe. The object has three, square sectioned "arms", though only one complete arm survives and this is 50mm in length, the other two are broken. The surviving arm is flattened at the end. The function of this object is unknown but given the material is the same as that of the clay pipe, it is possibly associated with clay pipes – whether as part of a small stand or an implement for cleaning the bowl.

6.5 The slag

A single piece of tap slag (63g) was recovered and is of unknown date.

6.6 The slate object

A fragment of slate pencil (<1g) was recovered from the topsoil and is of 19th century date.

6.7 The pottery

A total of 21 sherds (439g) of pottery was recovered, comprising 14 sherds (43g) of medieval pottery and seven sherds (396g) of post-medieval pottery.

The small group of medieval sherds, all coarsewares of 12th to 13th century date, were recovered as surface finds. Thirteen are thought to derive from the same vessel and are all in a quartz-tempered fabric. A single sandy coarseware rim sherd (hammerhead) is the only diagnostic sherd. All the sherds are thought to derive locally. Documentary sources provide evidence of medieval pottery production at Nether Stowey and Milverton (Allen 2004, 47) some 8km to the west of Bridgwater.

The post-medieval pottery includes South Somerset (Donyatt) type pottery of 17th to 18th century date. Forms include a possible chamber pot, with thumbing around rim and olive internal glaze and comparable to Allan (1984, fig 99:2218). A second sherd, with similar thumbing and also thought to be from a chamber pot, was also found. Other sherds include a base from an unknown vessel in a North Devon Coarseware and a small base of jar, possibly a Bristol/Staffordshire type with a brown glaze.

7. COMMENTS

7.1 The watching brief has established that across most of the site the ground is too low-lying and therefore an unfavourable location for early settlement. The small quantity of finds recovered date from the medieval through to the modern period and all were recovered from overlying layers. No evidence for *in situ* archaeological activity was recorded.

7.2 The western part of the higher ground in the southwest portion of the site was under a large spoil mound at the time of the work so was not subjected to any groundworks.

Based on the results from elsewhere, it is considered unlikely that this area will contain evidence for archaeological activity.

8. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

8.1 The paper and digital archive and finds are currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. They will be deposited at Somerset County Museum, Taunton, under the accession number TTNCM 102/2010.

8.2 The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 83503.

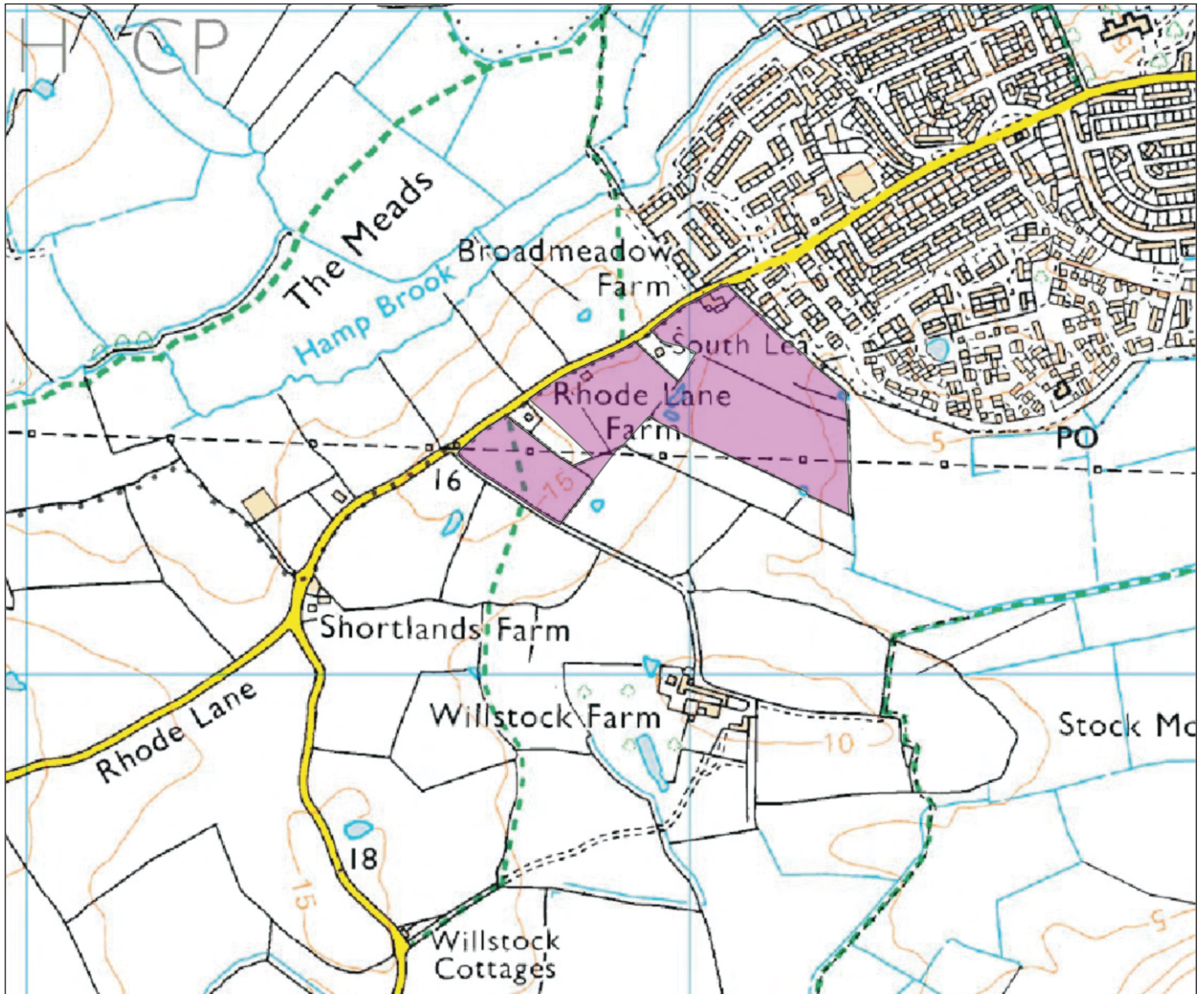
9. REFERENCES

AC archaeology, in prep., *Area 1 and Area 6, Phase 2, Stockmoor Village, Bridgwater, Somerset (ST30373486): Results of an archaeological trench evaluation*

Allan, J., 1984, *Medieval and Post Medieval Finds From Exeter 1971-1980*, Exeter Archaeological Reports: Vol. 3

Allan, J., 2004, 'Cleeve Abbey: The Pottery' in SANH 142, 41-73

Smalley, H., 2010, *Specification for archaeological watching brief. Phase 2, Willstock, Bridgwater*. CgMs Consulting document, ref. HS/9206



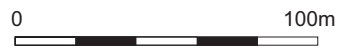
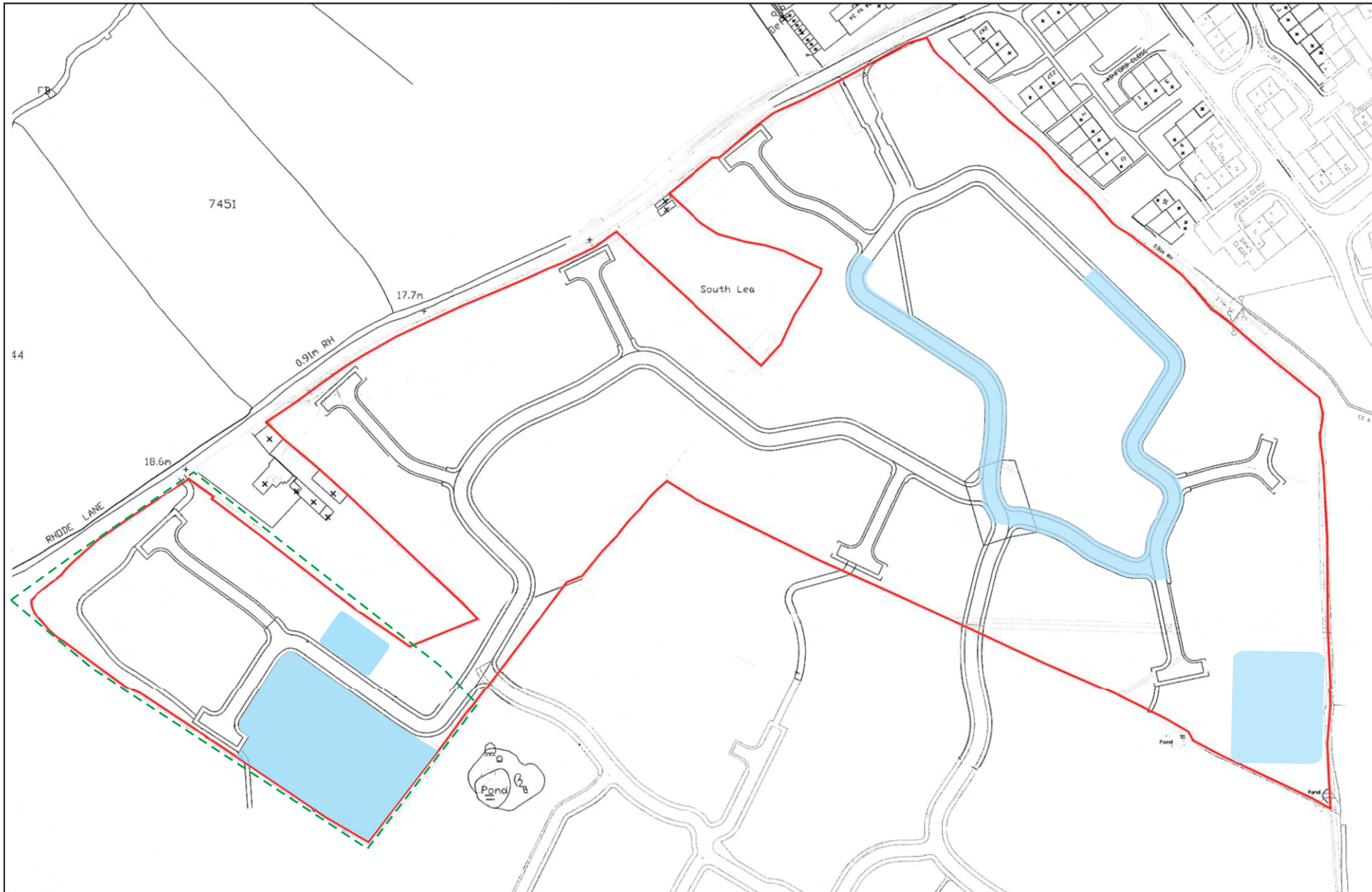
- Site location
- Phase 2 development area

PROJECT

Willstock, Bridgewater

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site



- Areas of archaeological recording
- Agreed watching brief area

PROJECT
Willstock, Bridgwater

TITLE
Fig. 2: Areas of archaeological recording

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