

Land off Long Barrow Road, Calne, Wiltshire.

Archaeological Recording Exercise



on behalf of

GreenSquare Group Limited

Lynn Hume M.A

Avon Archaeological Unit Limited

Bristol: August 2011

Archaeological Recording at
Land off Long Barrow Road,
Calne, Wiltshire

Centred at NGR ST 82810 60850



General view of Well S.1, viewed from the east,
scale 1m

on behalf of

The GreenSquare Group Limited

report prepared by

Avon Archaeological Unit Limited

Bristol: August 2011

Summary

The following report details the results of an archaeological recording exercise (Watching Brief) undertaken by Avon Archaeological Unit Limited on behalf of the GreenSquare Group Ltd and carried out at intervals between 11th July and the 26th of July, 2011, in accordance with a Planning Condition issued by the Archaeological Officer for Wiltshire Council. The archaeological project was undertaken in an area of open grassland, located adjacent to Long Barrow Road, Calne, Wiltshire (NGR ST 82810 60850). The work was carried out to satisfy a condition attached to planning permission [Reference No. 09/01791/FUL] during groundwork stages associated with the development of the site, which will ultimately comprise 29 dwellings.

The development area is located to the west of the modern town of Calne, just south of the A4 and immediately south of Long Barrow Road and the residential properties it serves. The study area covers c. 0.9 hectares (2.2 acres) and lies at approximately 73m OD. The underlying geology of the site comprises lower calcareous grits of the Stanford Formation (Upper Jurassic age). A high pressure Government Pipeline and Storage System (GPSS) crosses the western part of the site and this area was not monitored by archaeological means. Excavations as part of the preliminary groundworks consisted of a site-wide topsoil strip and the construction of a new development access road, associated services and house footings.

The primary aim of the archaeological project was to identify and record all significant archaeological deposits or finds revealed during the course of the groundwork prior to their destruction.

With the exception of a single post-medieval well, a number of post-medieval land drains and a modern backfilled feature, possibly a pond, no other features, structures or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the programme of archaeological recording and observation. A very simple stratigraphic sequence was observed across the majority of the site that comprised topsoil and made-ground, up to a depth of 800mm in places, which sealed the undisturbed natural substrate.

On the basis of the evidence gathered during the project, it is concluded that no significant buried archaeological deposits or structures of pre-19th century origin were damaged or destroyed during the course of the preliminary redevelopment groundwork and that previous human activity on the site prior to the post-medieval period has been very limited indeed; a conclusion that is supported by the absence of any 18th century or earlier ceramics or finds from unstratified contexts.

In view of the largely negative evidence located within the study area during the preliminary groundworks, service and new foundation excavations, the programme of archaeological monitoring was terminated, with the approval of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Archaeological Officer for Wiltshire Council, on the 26th of July, 2011.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Avon Archaeological Unit Limited wishes to thank Mark Smart, Project Manager of GreenSquare Group Ltd, GreenSquare Group Ltd for funding the project and Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Archaeological Officer for Wiltshire Council for her help and advice throughout the project. Special thanks are extended to the ground staff of P.O.C Contractors, Swindon.

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PROJECT HEALTH & SAFETY STATEMENT

In all matters pertaining to this fieldwork and research project Health and Safety has taken priority over all archaeological matters.

All archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM 2002, *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology*) and also the relevant requirements set out in Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994 (Health & Safety Commission; 1994).

NOTE

Whereas Avon Archaeological Unit Limited have taken all care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

1 Introduction

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (Watching Brief) was undertaken on behalf of GreenSquare Group Limited during the initial stages of development ground work at a site located off Long Barrow Road, Calne, Wiltshire, centred at NGR 399040E 171080N (**Figures 1 and 2**).

Planning permission [Reference no: 09/01791/FUL] has been granted to develop land located off Long Barrow Road, Calne for new residential properties. The development area is located to the west of the modern town of Calne, just south of the A4 and immediately south of Long Barrow Road and the residential properties it serves. The study area covers c. 0.9 hectares (2.2 acres) and lies at approximately 73m OD. It is bounded by open land to the south and west that declines south to the valley of the river Marden, which flows northwest towards Chippenham. A high pressure Government Pipeline and Storage System (GPSS) crosses the western part of the site (**Figure 2**). This area was not monitored by archaeological means.

The site is situated adjacent and to the southwest of residential properties off the south side of Long Barrow Road and west of Keevil Avenue and is currently open grassland bounded by an unmarked footpath to the south and east with open land beyond to the south. No archaeological events or finds are recorded for the study site although significant finds are recorded in the wider local environs, a substantial proportion of which reflect Romano-British and medieval settlement related activity. These and other Historic Environment Records (HER) for Calne indicate some potential for the preservation of buried archaeological deposits on the site. The redevelopment will ultimately comprise 29 dwellings including 2 storey houses, flats, bungalows and associated services and car parking facilities.

The programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording during ground disturbance was requested by the Archaeological Officer of Wiltshire Council as a condition of Planning Permission and in accordance with the guidelines set out in the document PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment, 2010). The archaeological monitoring was designed to identify and record all unforeseen archaeological deposits revealed during ground work associated with the redevelopment of the site and to ensure all such remains are preserved by record prior to their destruction.

The project was undertaken at intervals, and as required between 11th July and the 26th of July, 2011 and was followed by the preparation of the project archive, analysis of data and the preparation of this report. All records compiled during the project, currently stored at the premises of Avon Archaeological Unit Limited, will ultimately be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes for long-term curation and storage.

The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by Lynn Hume of Avon Archaeological Unit Limited, under the direction of Principal Archaeologist, Andrew Young.

2 Methodology

2.1 *Development Methodology*

The preliminary development ground works involved a site wide topsoil strip and reduced level excavation for a main access road, associated services and house footings, dug to a depth of between 450mm and 1.10m below the existing ground levels (bgl). Deeper excavations in order to construct a large diameter replacement foul pipe was also undertaken along the length of the new access road. This cutting, dug to a depth of 2.20m bgl, exposed the natural underlying substrate (see **Figure 2**).

All groundworks were undertaken using a 360° slew tracked excavator equipped with standard sized toothless grading buckets.

2.2 *Archaeological Methodology*

All excavation and preliminary groundworks were monitored by the writer and provision made so that the supervising archaeologist had the authority to temporarily suspend construction work for a minimum time in order to enable an accurate and sufficient record to be compiled of all significant archaeological deposits or structures where identified. Once exposed, deposits and features of potential archaeological significance were examined by hand and recorded via written notes and digital photography. Artefacts were also bagged and marked with the site identifier plus unique context number (beginning at 100 onwards) and retained for identification and specialist or in-house assessment as appropriate. Only stratified ceramics and other artefact assemblages have been retained in the site archive, unstratified material being discarded after initial identification, cataloguing and reporting.

A hand-held laser distance meter with a measuring range of 0.05m up to 200m (0.16 up to 650 ft) and typical of accuracy $\pm 1.5\text{mm}$ ($\pm 0.06\text{ in}$) was used throughout the fieldwork in order to locate

archaeologically significant features and structures by means of offsets and ties. In addition, and where possible, structures were also recorded, by tape, in relation to the position of existing buildings and/or building foundations where still in-situ (see **Figure 2**). A hand held GPS Etrex with a theoretical accuracy of 3m, was also used to record the co-ordinates of structures as exposed. Ordnance Datum heights were taken in the standard fashion. The resulting composite data was then plotted onto a scaled PDF paper plan of the site provided by GreenSquare Group Limited.

The following descriptions in **Section 4** of this report are set out broadly in the chronological order in which they were recorded.

3 Historical and Archaeological Background

The following extract is taken from The Archaeology of Wiltshire's Towns, *An Extensive Urban Survey* (McMahon, 2004)

The town of Calne lies in the district of North Wiltshire, part way between Chippenham and Marlborough, with which it is linked by the A4 trunk road, a historic east-west route that bisects the historic core of the town. To the east, c. 6km away, lies the Avebury World Heritage Site and the Marlborough Downs, both areas of international archaeological importance, while some 2km to the south-west is the Romano-British town of *Verlucio*.

The historic core of the town lies on Coral rag, a sandy Jurassic limestone bordered on the north and east by Kimmeridge Clay, on the south by Gault Clay, and on the west by lower calcareous grit (Haslam 1976). The modern town is bisected by the River Marden, whose course has formed a peninsular on which the early settlement was founded. The Marden is joined from the north-east by the Abberd Brook, and these drain away to the west to meet the Bristol Avon (British Geological Survey 1974). The elevation of the town varies between c. 60m OD at the crossing of the River Marden, up to c. 76m OD on the higher ground to north and south.

The first mention of Calne is in the will of King Eadred, who died in 955 AD. In that will Calne is described as a hamlet belonging to the crown. Wulfstan, the chronicler of the life of St. Swithun (d. 862 AD), writing in c.1000 informs us that Calne, in the mid 9th century, although still a small settlement was the home of the king's representative or chief magistrate for the Hundred, with a '*villa regia*' or royal residence within which this functionary would have resided.

Marianus Scotus, writing in the 11th century describes the Witan, or supreme council, meeting in Calne in 978 and 997 AD, presumably at the '*villa regia*', which must have been of large proportions. The meeting of 978 was notable for the catastrophic collapse of the upper floor of the building within which it took place, causing the death or injury of many of the Witan members.

The first reliable description of the town however comes from the Domesday Survey of 1086, where seventy burgesses are listed, and the settlement described as a borough ('*in burgo Caune*') with the obligation to provide the 'farm of one night', that is to provide accommodation and provisions for the king's retinue on one night per year. Within the borough were nine mills, two of which were held by Calne church, of which Domesday is the first reference. The large ecclesiastical estate listed in Domesday may imply that the church was an important foundation, possibly a minster.

The possible presence of a castle at Calne is suggested by William of Malmesbury, who writing in the 12th century describes the taking of the castle at '*Cerne*' during the progress of King Stephen through Wiltshire in 1139 AD. Although there are no obvious castle remains visible today, local tradition strongly supports this report. Certainly by the time of the Civil War no castle or other stronghold existed, as Calne is known to have escaped the privations suffered by fortified towns such as Devizes and Malmesbury.

The first mention of a market and fair in Calne is from 1217 AD, when the lay manor was granted to William of Cantilupe. An assessment of the manor rights at the time shows a thriving market to have been in existence. It is probable that the market grant dates from the reign of King John (1199-1216). The market is later mentioned in a document of 1299 AD, and again in 1302 AD, when a second grant is recorded. Although there is no record of an early charter for the town, 16th century documentary evidence suggests that there was a borough corporation existing prior to the 1569 AD charter granted by Elizabeth I.

The town suffered a major fire in 1341 AD, when an *Inquisitio Nonarum* reported that 'the greater part of the best houses have been destroyed by fire'. This appears not to have been an isolated occurrence, as the Church Registers frequently record fires within the town over subsequent centuries.

From Medieval times Calne was a centre for cloth making, and for five centuries the woollen industry was a major component of the local economy. At the height of the industry's success in the mid 18th century there were some twenty cloth factories and mills in and around the town, in addition to the ongoing, pre-industrial cottage industry. By 1806, however, the industry was suffering, and in 1835 the visiting Municipal Commission reported that only one large and two small factories remained. By the middle of the 19th century the industry was practically dead.

Calne was a town in decline by the 1840s, with the cloth industry all but gone and diminishing market returns. Its fortunes were revived by the establishment of industrial-scale bacon curing in the town by the Harris family. This industry was to dominate the town's economy for over 150 years, and made Calne's name synonymous with bacon.

The success of the bacon industry was, in its early days, dependent upon the communications made possible by the Calne Branch of the Wilts & Berks canal (Dalby 1986), which opened in 1802, followed by a railway link to Chippenham in 1863.

The area surrounding the site has undergone significant development since 1886. At this time, the majority of the land surrounding the site comprised woodland and farmland, whilst the majority of the town of Calne was based along the High Street 600m to the east. The non-conformist Mortuary Chapel, located 250m to the north east of the site is shown on this map. The 1889 map shows several quarries and limekilns were shown in the surrounding area, the closest shown some 500m to the north east of the site. The Calne Union Workhouse is shown 400m to the north east, whilst a gas works was located 1.1km to the south east. By 1900, a hospital for infectious diseases (detailed as a school after 1960) was shown 500m to the north east of the site. By 1936, the quarry located 500m to the north east had been backfilled and had been developed into a playing field with a tennis court by 1970. The lime kiln at this site is still shown as disused to the present day. It is around the 1970s that the woodland and farmland surrounding the site was developed for medium density residential properties. Several factories and depots, located 800m to the south east of the site, are first detailed on the Ordnance Survey map of 1983.

Archaeological Background

No archaeological desk-based assessment has been undertaken for the study area, but the Wiltshire HER records the following within the wider environs of the site:

A burial of probable Bronze Age date with a wristguard of chloritic slate, found during quarrying in 1844-5 (**SMR ST97SE150**, Goddard 1913), and a Trinovantian gold stater recovered from a garden in Page Close (**SMR SU07SW202**).

Only one find of Romano-British date is recorded some distance east of the study area, and comprises three tesserae recovered in 2004, NE of The Brake (**SMR ST97SE315**).

The present St. Mary's Church dates in part to the 12th century, although a church is listed in Domesday, of at least later Saxon origin and it is likely that this lay on the same site as the later, Medieval church. To the south-west of St. Mary's, to the rear of Church Street, an archaeological evaluation (**SMR ST97SE468**, Cotswold Archaeological Trust 1996) recovered sherds of early Saxon pottery thought to be associated with the contemporary clearance of the site prior to the construction of a building (of which no evidence survived). Unspecified sherds of 'early Medieval coarse pottery' were also recovered during a watching brief within the grounds of Castle House (Wiltshire Archaeological Service 1972).

There is documentary evidence suggesting a castle in the town by the Anarchy period. Local tradition and place-name evidence may indicate that the site of this lies within the immediate vicinity of the present Castle House (**SMR ST97SE462**). Successive episodes of fieldwork, including topographical survey (Ordnance Survey 1968) and geophysical survey (GSB Prospection 2000) have, however, produced negative results. A watching brief during construction groundworks (Wiltshire Archaeological Service 1972, **SMR ST97SE551**) at Castle House did record substantial undated wall footings on the south side of the house, which appeared to be excessively large for the building now standing on the site. Earlier, 19th century observations during construction work encountered 'vaults too large for a modern private house', and a 'stone-walled chamber' was found close under the boundary wall of Castle House Lawn (exact location unknown), indicating if not a castle then the former presence of a building of some substance.

4 The Watching Brief – Site Observations

Figure 2, Plates A - D

Archaeological monitoring within the study area comprised observation of a site-wide topsoil strip, the main development access route and associated foul water pipe and boundary wall and house footings (see **Figure 2**).

Well Structure (S.1), located at NGR ST 39040 71093. The well was 3.6m deep and had an internal diameter of 860mm (**Figure 2**). The main body of the structure was constructed primarily from local limestone bonded with pale grey lime-based mortar and the shaft contained two metal pipes, the largest of which was located c. 1.46m below the modern ground level. The structure was topped with a modern manhole cover (**Frontispiece**).

Site-wide Topsoil Strip. The depth of topsoil (Context 100) varied greatly across the site; ranging from 250mm in the northwest portion of the site, adjacent to the oil pipeline, lessening to 190mm in the central part of the site and increasing significantly (up to 480mm) near to properties fronting Keevil Avenue in the east. Topsoil depths across the southern end of the site became increasingly thin, in parts less than 50mm, the removal of which exposed large areas of modern dumped material comprising brick, roof tile, concrete and plastic sheeting, presumably the result of modern fly-tipping. Finds recovered from the topsoil strip were few and largely restricted to a handful of late post-medieval and modern pottery sherds, late 19th century tobacco pipe stems and modern glass, all of which were discarded after initial identification.

The Main Access Road (adopted Highway). A number of narrow (c. 400mm wide) land drains (Contexts 107-113 and 115) constructed from pitched limestone were exposed directly below the topsoil (Context 100) and cut into the top of the undisturbed natural substrate (Context 117). Each drain was aligned roughly northeast to southwest and lay at fairly regular intervals along the route of the road. A single sherd of Blue-Transfer Printed Ware of late 19th century date was recovered Drain 108.

It is thought likely that a large concave cut [Cut/Fill 116], located at c. NGR ST 99065 71072], in-filled with a quantity of modern debris, including brick, soft drink containers, concrete and car tyres, represented the location of a former pond of recent date (**Figure 2, Plate B**).

Boundary Wall and House Footings. The wall footings were excavated to a maximum depth and width of 800mm and revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence that consisted of 200mm of made-ground above archaeologically sterile natural yellowish-brown clay substrate [Context 117, **Plate C**]. A similar sequence was revealed in the adjacent house footings, which were excavated to a maximum depth of 1m through 140mm of made-ground exposing the undisturbed whitish-brown natural sandy clay substrate [Context 119,], **Plate D**.

Foul water pipe. This pipe trench was excavated to a maximum depth of c. 2.20m below the existing ground level along the centre of the main access road (**Figure 2**) and revealed the undisturbed natural substrate comprising stiff strong brown sandy clay over stiff blue-grey clay (Contexts 117 and 118, **Plate A**).

5 The Finds

A handful of entirely unremarkable of finds was recovered from unstratified and/or redeposited mixed deposits during the course of the archaeological fieldwork. The collection which consisted primarily of pottery, comprising Blue Transfer printed wares were all of late 19th century date. The assemblage also contained a single stem fragment from a late 19th century clay tobacco pipe and a modern glass marmalade jar.

No finds of medieval or earlier date were identified.

None of the finds identified during the fieldwork were of sufficient quality or interest to warrant further specialist assessment and reporting and the entire assemblage was discarded after initial identification.

6 Summary and General Conclusions

The preliminary groundworks for the residential development located off Barrow Lane, Calne has been monitored archaeologically by means of a watching brief, conducted at intervals between 11th July and the 26th of July, 2011, in accordance with a Planning Condition issued by the Archaeological Officer for Wiltshire Council.

The archaeological site work was designed to monitor preliminary ground work undertaken on behalf of the GreenSquare Group Ltd. The primary aim of the archaeological project was to identify and record all significant archaeological deposits or finds revealed during the course of the groundwork prior to their destruction.

No important archaeological deposits, structures or finds were located during the course of the archaeological monitoring and those present were restricted to a small number of later post-medieval and modern structures, including a well, several stone-built land drains and an in-filled feature, probably a pond of recent origin. Elsewhere a very simple stratigraphic sequence comprising topsoil and made-ground, up to a depth of 800mm, sealed the undisturbed natural substrate.

On the basis of the evidence gathered during the project, it is concluded that no significant buried archaeological deposits or structures of pre-19th century origin were damaged or destroyed during the course of the preliminary redevelopment groundwork and that previous human activity on the site prior to the post-medieval period has been very limited indeed; a conclusion that is supported by the absence of any 18th century or earlier ceramics or finds.

In view of the largely negative evidence located within the study area during the preliminary groundworks, service and new foundation excavations, the programme of archaeological work (Watching Brief) was terminated, with the approval of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Archaeological Officer for Wiltshire Council, on the 26th of July, 2011.

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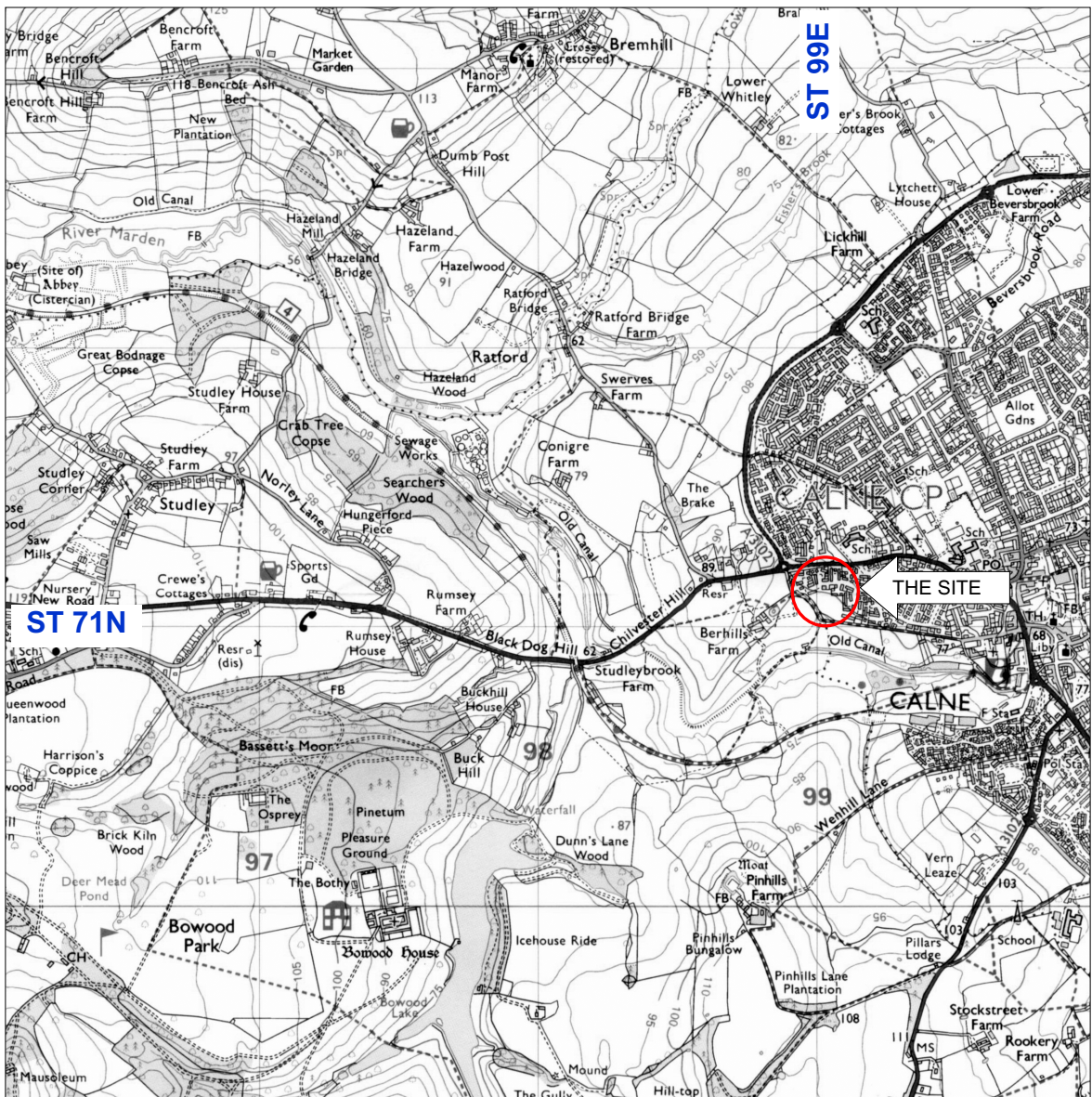
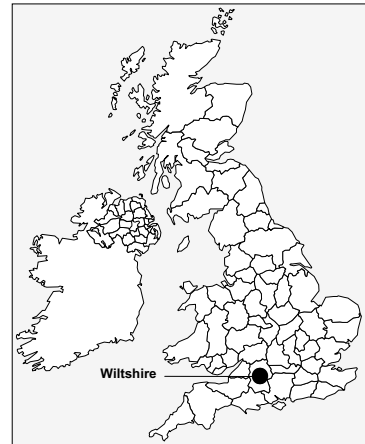
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Archaeological Monitoring & Recording during redevelopment of land off Long Barrow Road, Calne, Wiltshire. Scheme of Work for Archaeological Watching Brief. Avon Archaeological Unit Limited

Figure 1

Location of the Site 

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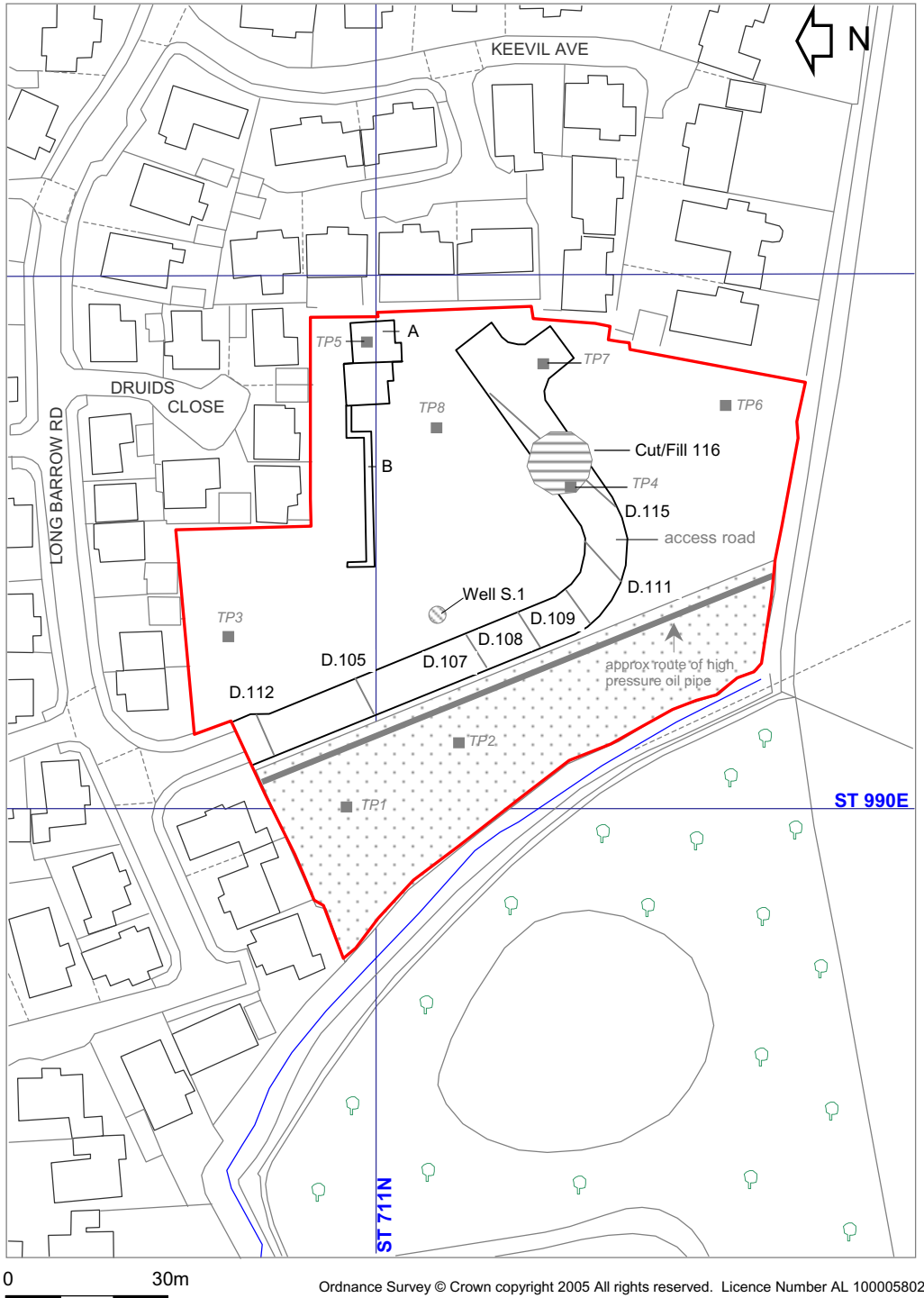


Scale 1:25,000



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Figure 2

Approximate Boundary of the Study Area, outlined in red, and the location of archaeological features



KEY

- | | | | |
|---|--|----|-----------------------------|
|  | Area not monitored archaeologically | A | House Footings, see Plate D |
|  | Location of Test Pits [TP1-TP8]
Hydrock Consultants Ltd | B | Wall Footings, see Plate C |
| | | D. | Land drains |

Plates



A) Detail of the access road during the excavation of the replacement foul water pipe, showing the undisturbed natural substrate. Viewed from the south.



B) Southern end of the access road during excavation, Manhole 4 in the foreground Cut 116 in the background. Viewed from the southwest.



C) Detail of the car park boundary wall during excavation. Viewed from the southeast.



D) Detail of house foundations during excavation. Viewed from the east.