

# Land to the rear of 2 Belle Vue Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

## An Archaeological Field Evaluation



**Land to the rear of 2 Belle Vue Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire.**

**A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording**

for

**MQL Developments Ltd.**

by



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## Non-technical summary

*Context One Archaeological Services (COAS) carried out an Archaeological Field Evaluation trial trenching on Land to the rear of 2 Belle Vue Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire (the 'Site'), over 3 days between 2 December and 4 December 2014. The project was commissioned by MQL Developments Ltd.*

*The evaluation was advised by Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS) in support of a planning application for residential development of the Site, which lies within an area of significant archaeological interest. Although the Site does not occupy a 'chequer' of the medieval city, it is within an area encompassed by the medieval defences. Historic Ordnance Survey mapping from the 19<sup>th</sup> century indicates the Site was relatively free from buildings suggesting that any potential earlier remains may have stayed intact.*

*Despite this, there was no visible archaeological evidence for structures or middens. Significant root disturbance was noted throughout Trenches 1, 2 and 3 suggesting that an orchard may have been present. Also, two Victorian garden beds and two garden paths were recorded. A number of finds were collected, dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries onwards, indicating low-level activity from the post-medieval period.*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services (COAS) carried out an Archaeological Field Evaluation comprising trial trenching on Land to the rear of 2 Belle Vue Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire (the 'Site'), over 3 days between 2 December and 4 December 2014. The project was commissioned by MQL Developments Ltd.
- 1.2 The Field Evaluation was advised by Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS) in support of a planning application for residential development of the Site (Wiltshire Council planning application ref. 14/07387/PREAPP). The requirement followed advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 128 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).
- 1.3 In a letter from Mr Simmonds (Area Planning Officer, Wiltshire County Council) to Mr Allen (Allen Planning Ltd) on 18 August 2014, Mr Simmonds outlined the relevant planning considerations for redevelopment of the Site and this included pre-application consultee comments including archaeology, which stated:

*"The site is of archaeological interest. Significant archaeological remains, in the form of medieval buildings and settlement remains, have been discovered directly adjacent to the proposed site. Although the site does not lie in a particular 'chequer' of the medieval city, it is within the medieval defences and the previous finds confirm that it was occupied in this period. The site therefore has the potential to contain significant remains from this and earlier periods. In addition, the historic Ordnance Survey mapping shows the area as relatively open space in the 19th century, suggesting that later buildings will not have had a significant below ground impact upon much of the site".*

*"In this case, I would suggest that a field evaluation is necessary in order to ascertain the existence, location and level of survival of any archaeological features which may be present within the area under discussion. I would suggest that trenched evaluation would be appropriate for the field evaluation stage. I consider this necessary as the site has a high potential for significant heritage assets of archaeological interest..."*

*...At this stage, consideration should not only be given to the proposed buildings, but also other areas within the development site which may contain significant archaeological remains. This would allow all parties to understand the potential impact of any development on the archaeological remains and allow this service to give reasonable and appropriate advice to Development Services."*

- 1.4 The programme of archaeological works comprised four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy; an archaeological evaluation; post-excavation and report production; and archive deposition. The WSI was approved by Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Council) prior to the commencement of any Site works.

## 2. Site location and topography

- 2.1 The Site (centred on NGR SU 14532 30322) covers c. 0.2ha, although the proposed impact area measures c. 0.146ha, and is located immediately north of the historic city centre and to the south of 2 Belle Vue Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire. (**Figure 1**). At the time of the evaluation, the Site occupied an open green area covered by low vegetation and a number of trees (see **Front Cover Image**). It is surrounded on all sides by residential housing with access to a number of properties and their garages.



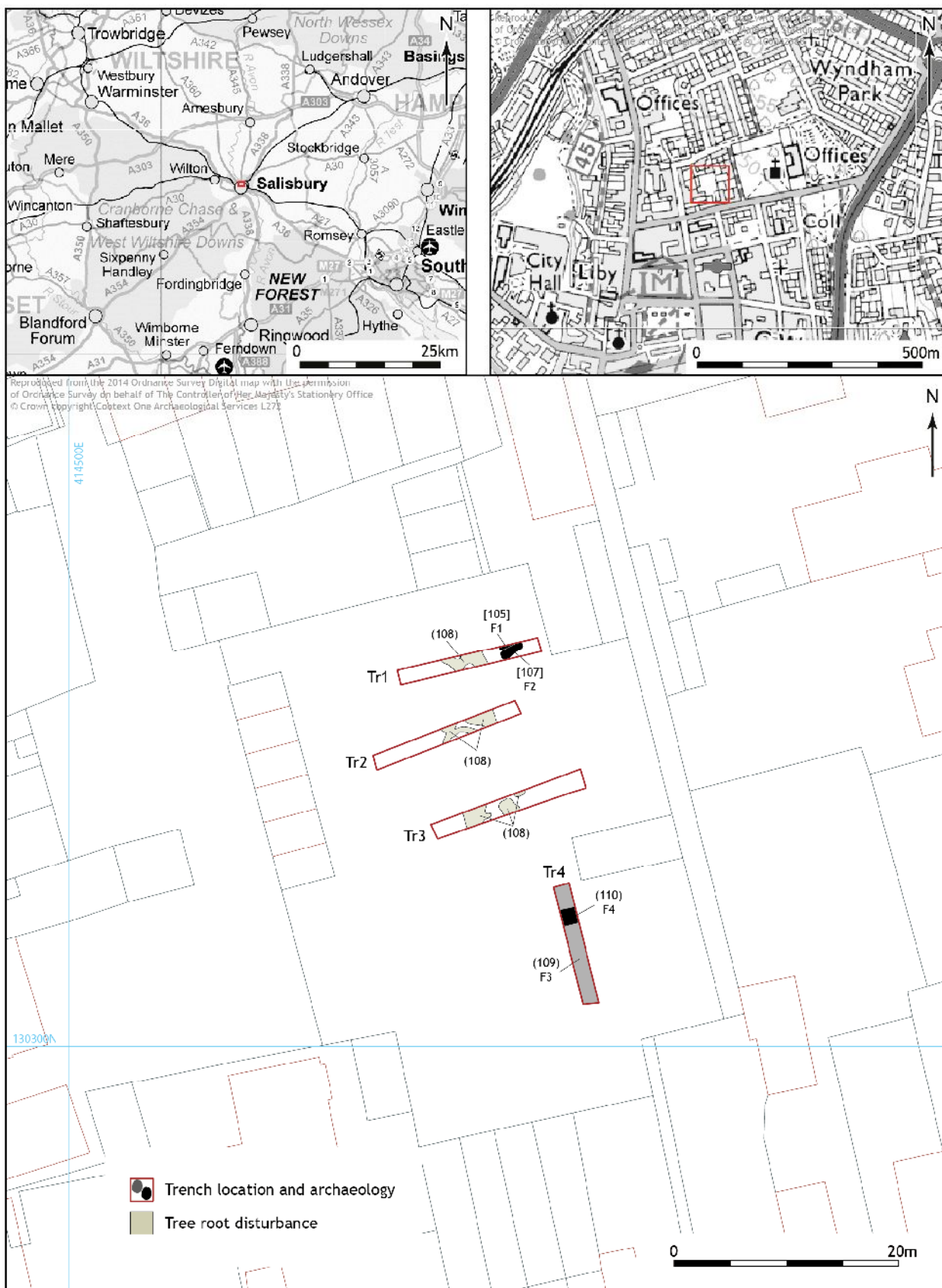


Figure 1. Site setting

### 3. Methodology

- 3.1 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* issued by Wiltshire County Council in 1995, and the codes, standards and guidelines set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, rev. 2012; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2008). Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 3.2 The archaeological evaluation comprised a total of 45m of trial trenching equating to 5% of the proposal development site. This was divided down into 4 trenches; 3 trenches measuring 10m long x 1.6m wide, and 1 trench measuring 15m long x 1.6m wide. The trenches were positioned over each of the 4 proposed residential plots as the remainder of the Site is currently in use as a narrow thoroughfare leading to a number of garages and parking spaces (**Figure 1**). The Location of the Trenches was mapped relative to the National Grid and Ordinance Datum using a TopCon GRS-1 Global Positioning System, producing an accuracy of 1-2cm.
- 3.3 A 360 degree tracked machine equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless (grading) bucket was used to remove topsoil and where necessary subsoil under the supervision of COAS archaeological staff. Once machine work had been completed, all faces of each trench were examined and, where necessary, cleaned using hand tools. A section of one long face of each trench was cleaned by hand to allow an understanding of the Site stratigraphy. Manual excavation then commenced to further investigate the identified possible archaeological features.
- 3.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using standard COAS *pro forma* context recording sheets. All features and deposits were drawn on dimensionally stable media at scales of 1:50 (plans and sections), including full sections and plans of the trenches.
- 3.5 A photographic record of the fieldwork was prepared comprising digital images in .jpg format. The record included photographs of each profile section, each trench plan, the Site setting and development works.
- 3.6 Finds were deemed to be of low archaeological significance but their presence was noted on the context sheets and their significance discussed below.

### 4. Results

- 4.1 The deposits and features encountered during fieldwork are listed and described in Appendix 1. In the text, context numbers for cuts appear in square brackets, e.g. [1004]; layer and fill numbers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (1002).

#### Soil Sequence and geology

- 4.2 The topsoil comprised a well-worked garden soil (101) measuring 0.45m-0.50m deep overlying a subsoil (102) measuring 0.45-0.60m deep and containing fine building debris, with oyster shells and other indicators of occupation (see **Plates 1, 2 & 4**). The building debris may represent demolition debris from the surrounding areas. The subsoil covered the clay natural (103) at a depth of between 0.90m and 1.10m below the ground surface.

#### Archaeological features and deposits

- 4.3 Three types of feature were encountered during the archaeological works. Heavy root disturbance (108) throughout Tr1, Tr2 and Tr3 (see **Figure 1**) was interpreted as evidence of a plot of large trees, possibly an orchard. Finds associated with this area suggest this activity dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Within Trench 2 were two sub-circular features ([105] (104) & [107] (106)) interpreted as Victorian garden beds (see **Plate 3**).
- 4.3 Two linear 'path' type structures, formed of building debris, were recorded in Trench 4 (see **Plate 5**). The more recent of the two (109) was formed of compacted mortar of a grey colour and ran roughly north-south with the orientation of the trench. The earlier of the two (110) was formed of compacted building debris and ran roughly east-west across the garden area.



Plate 1. Trench 1, Profile 1 west end of Trench (from S; 2m scale)



Plate 2. Trench 2, Profile 1 (from S; 2m scale)



Plate 3. Trench 1, Tree root beds [105] and [107] (from E)



Plate 4. Trench 3, Sondage at east end for builders reference showing depth of geology (from W; 2m scale)



Plate 5. Trench 4. North end, showing 'path' type features (from W; 2m scale)



## 5. The finds

- 5.1 A small quantity of pottery (19 sherds), animal bone (4 fragments), ceramic building material (CBM) (2 fragments), clay pipe (2 fragments), glass (5 shards) and shell (7 oyster shells) were recovered from contexts 101, 102, 106 and 108. The assemblage dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and does not require any further analysis or long-term curation.

## 6. Discussion

- 6.1 Despite the potential for discovering significant medieval and early post-medieval occupation on the Site, evaluation trial trenching did not reveal any evidence for structural settlement or midden activity. There was a low level of background post-medieval activity probably stemming from the use of the Site as an orchard and garden from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and from the deposition of local occupation waste from the surrounding area. This is coterminous with the location of the Site outside the medieval chequers, but within an area that was taken into use during the expansion of the city in the post-medieval period.

## 7. Archive

- 7.1 An ordered and integrated site archive has been prepared to comply with guidelines set out in *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 2001) and *Standards in the Museums Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission 1992) / *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991).

- 7.2 The project archive is currently held by COAS and consists of the following:

Item	Number	Format
Context Sheets	10	Paper
Digital images	22	.JP
Photographic Register	2	Paper
Drawings	3	Paper

- 7.3 The paper archive has been scanned as a single file in .PDF format and will form part of the physical Site archive to be deposited with Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum.
- 7.4 Copies of this report will be deposited with the client/agent and included as part of the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record. A digital copy of the report will also be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service, via OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations - <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>). The OASIS entry will also be completed to include details of the archive contents.

## 8. COAS acknowledgements

- 8.1 We would like to thank the following for their contribution to the successful completion of this project:

Martin Quigley, MQL Development Ltd  
Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Council

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Wiltshire County Council Libraries, Museums and Arts

## Appendix 1: Context summary

CONTEXT NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/ DIAMETER	THICKNESS/ DEPTH
101	MODERN	Layer	Topsoil- Garden soil	-	-	102	-	-	45-60cm
102	MODERN	Layer	Subsoil- mixed with rubble	101	-	103	-	-	45-50cm
103	N/A	Layer	Natural Clay	-	-	-	-	-	-
104	VICTORIAN	Fill	Dark Fill of Garden Bed	102	-	105	220cm	60cm	70-110cm
105	VICTORIAN	Cut	Garden Flower Bed	104	-	103	220cm	60cm	70-110cm
106	VICTORIAN	Fill	Dark Fill of Garden Bed (runs under baulk- not excavated)	102	-	107	n/a	n/a	n/a
107	VICTORIAN	Cut	Garden Flower Bed (runs under baulk- not excavated)	106	-	103	n/a	n/a	n/a
108	POST-MED	Fill	Orchard Remains	102	-	103	-	-	-
109	POST-MED	Layer	Grey Mortar and Rubble Layer	101	-	102	-	-	20-40cm
110	POST-MED	Layer	Mixed Rubble - 'Path' type structure	102	-	103	>130cm	150cm	70cm