

Land to the rear of The Burrows
High Street
Sparkford
Yeovil
Somerset

An Archaeological Evaluation

January 2017

Information matrix

SITE DETAILS	
Site address	Land to the rear of The Burrows, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset.
Site postcode	BA22 7JH
Site NGR	Centred on ST 60266 26345
Site area	c. 0.89ha
Site aOD height (min/max.)	c. 50m
Topography	Flat site
Ground conditions	Grass, low vegetation
Site geology (solid)	Langport Member, Blue Lias Formation And Charmouth Mudstone Formation (undifferentiated) - Mudstone
Site geology (drift)	None recorded
PROJECT DETAILS	
Client	Mr & Mrs Tucker
Client project reference	N/A
Development proposal	Residential development of 11 dwellings
Local Planning Authority	South Somerset District Council
Planning reference	14/05052/FUL, Appeal ref. APP/R3325/W/15/3100543
Planning Condition no.	8
INVESTIGATION	
C1 site code	C1/EVA/16/HSY
Investigation type	Field evaluation through trial trenching
Number of trenches	6 no. 20m x 1.6m
Fieldwork dates	15-16 November 2016
Fieldwork team	Peter Fairclough (Senior Field Archaeologist)
Post-excavation team	Dr Cheryl Green (Post-excavation Manager), Tara Fairclough (Project co-ordination, Illustrator), Dr Clare Randall (Project Archaeologist)
Post-excavation specialists	N/A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DETAILS	
Previous events for Site	N/A
Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)	Approved by Mr S Membery (SWHT) on 7 November 2016
Scheduled Monument Consent ref.	N/A
Historic Environment Record reference	36798
Collecting Museum	Museum of Somerset
Museum accession code	TTNCM 108/2016
OASIS reference	contexto1-267946
REPORT	
Draft report date	09/01/17
Final report date	10/01/17
Prepared by	Richard McConnell (Projects Director)
Internal review by	Dr Cheryl Green (Post-excavation Manager)
Checked and approved by	Dr Cheryl Green (Post-excavation Manager)
ARCHIVING	
Site records	C1 cloud storage only
Site images	C1 cloud storage only
Artefacts	None recovered
Present location of artefacts	N/A
Future location of artefacts	N/A
Environmental samples	N/A

Summary

Context One Archaeological Services (COAS) was instructed to carry out an archaeological evaluation through trial trenching on Land to the rear of The Burrows, High Street, Sparkford, Somerset, as a condition of planning consent for 11 residential dwellings.

There are no records of any previous archaeological activity on the Site although a range of multi-period features are recorded in the vicinity. Also, historic aerial photography of the Site has identified former ridge and furrow cultivation whilst historic map regression assessment shows several former field boundaries.

Despite this archaeological potential, the field evaluation did not reveal any evidence for archaeological activity. This included any residual trace of the former field boundaries and ridge and furrow shown on the historic mapping and aerial photographs.

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This report is produced solely for the benefit of an individual client and for the proposed uses stated in the report, and should not be relied upon for other purposes or by other parties unless specifically agreed by us in writing. The different elements of the report are designed to be integral to each other and therefore do not necessarily stand alone. Opinions and information provided in this report are on the basis of C1 using reasonable skill and care, however no investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete or less than fully representative information. This report is limited to the scope and limits agreed with the client under our appointment. Any investigative work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations imposed by such factors as timescales, budgets, seasonal variations and weather conditions.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) was instructed to carry out an Archaeological Field Evaluation through trial trenching as a condition of granting planning permission (on appeal) for the construction of 11 dwellings on Land to the rear of The Burrows, High Street, Sparkford, Somerset (the 'Site') (**Figure 1**). The project was commissioned by Mr Stuart Sinclair (Architect) on behalf of his client, Mr and Mrs Tucker.
- 1.2 The evaluation was requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), South Somerset District Council (SSDC) on the advice of Mr Steven Membery (Senior Historic Environment Officer, South West Heritage Trust (SWHT)). In an initial reply to an email consultation request from Mr Dominic Heath-Colman (Case Officer, SSDC) on 2 December 2014, Mr Membery stated:

"While there are currently no archaeological sites recorded within the boundaries of the application area, investigations to the southwest and along the A303 Sparkford bypass have identified a range of multi-period archaeological features. The black and white 1946 RAF aerial photographs show that the application site was once covered by the earthwork remains of medieval ridge and furrow. Such earthworks can frequently mask evidence of earlier activity. The proposal therefore has the potential to impact upon a heritage asset, however, there is currently insufficient information contained within the application on the nature of any archaeological remains to properly assess their interest. For this reason, I recommend that the applicant be asked to provide further information on any archaeological remains on the site prior to the determination of this application. This should comprise a trial trench evaluation as indicated in paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework."

- 1.3 Following subsequent discussions with the applicant, Mr Membery advised Mr Coleman by email on 23 January 2015 that:

"Following discussions with the applicant I can advise that in this particular case the archaeological issues on this site can be dealt with through the use of a condition. For this reason I recommend that the developer be required to archaeologically investigate the site and provide a report on any discoveries made as indicated in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 141). This should be secured by the use of model condition 55 attached to any permission granted."

"No development hereby approved shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority."

- 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; field evaluation through trial trenching; post-excavation and assessment report production (this document); and archive deposition.
- 1.5 The requirement follows advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). This states:

"Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted."

2. Aims & Objectives

- 2.1 The objective of the evaluation was to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance with *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). This information will enable the LPA, on the advice of South West Heritage Trust, to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset; consider the impact of any proposed development upon it; and to avoid or minimise conflict between the conservation of the heritage asset and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

3. Methodology

- 3.1 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with and *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), 1994, rev. 2001, 2008, 2014) and in accordance with the *Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook* (2011). COAS adhered to the *Code of Conduct* of the CIfA (1985, rev. 2000, 2014), and *Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA, 2014, rev. 2015) at all times during the course of the evaluation. The fieldwork methodology is summarised below.
- 3.2 COAS gave notification of the commencement of the works to the Senior Historic Environment Officer at SWHT. This included the provision of a site visit in the event that significant archaeological remains were discovered.
- 3.3 The archaeological evaluation comprised 6 trenches, each measuring 20m long x 1.6m wide. This equated to a 2% sample of the Site area. The trenches were laid out according to a pre-defined trench plan (see **Figure 1**) using Ordnance Survey (OS) co-ordinates with a TopCon GRS1 GPS unit.
- 3.4 A 360-degree tracked machine equipped with a toothless (grading) bucket was used to remove topsoil/overburden within each trench under the constant supervision of COAS archaeological staff. Machine excavation continued until archaeological features or natural geology was encountered, whichever was the first. Spoil was mounded either side of the trench but no less than 1m from the trench edges.
- 3.5 Once machine work was completed, the trenches were examined and, where necessary, cleaned using hand tools. Core details of each trench were recorded with a COAS digital evaluation trench sheet. This included logging a representative section of the trench to allow an understanding of the stratigraphy. A digital photograph of each trench in plan, and a representative section was taken in .jpg format.
- 3.6 On conclusion of the field evaluation, the trenches were backfilled by machine and the ground firmed.
- 3.7 Due to the absence of archaeological remains in this instance, a site visit by the Senior Historic Environment Officer at SWHT was not required.

4. Results

- 4.1 Where a deposit (context) is discussed, it is displayed within parentheses with the leading number relating to a specific member of the field team. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for full details of the deposit sequence in each trench.
- 4.2 The trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m but no less than 0.40m deep. Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5 broadly revealed a similar horizontal sequence of deposits that comprised a silty clay topsoil (7-100), (7-200), (7-300), (7-500), between 0.20m-0.40m thick above a sand clay subsoil (7-101), (7-201), (7-301), (7-501), between 0.10m-0.20m deep.

A loose humic loam characterised the topsoil in trenches 4 (7-400) and 6 (7-600) reflecting woody vegetation here. In Trench 6, a subsoil could not be distinguished.

The topsoil and subsoil, where present, rested directly onto natural clay with limestone fragments (7-102), (7-202), (7-302), (7-402), (7-502), (7-602) and this was generally excavated to a depth of 0.10m to confirm its integrity as a natural, sterile deposit.
- 4.3 There was no visible evidence to indicate the presence of any archaeological remains/deposits in any of the trenches. A single, modern ceramic field drain was encountered within the clay in Trench 3.

5. The finds

- 5.1 No finds were observed or recovered during the machine excavation of the trenches or through hand cleaning. The excavation spoil was also inspected for finds but none were observed.

6. Discussion

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential indicated by the recorded heritage assets in the environs of the Site and a modest level of potential on the Site itself, there was no evidence of any archaeological activity. This included any residual trace of the former field boundaries and ridge and furrow shown on historic mapping and aerial photographs of the Site.

7. Archive

- 7.1 As no archaeological evidence was encountered, all relevant data has been incorporated into this report. As such, the digital archive will either be held on the COAS cloud storage or destroyed.
- 7.2 Copies of this report will be deposited with the client/agent and included as part of the Somerset 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/>).

8. Bibliography

- | | |
|--|---|
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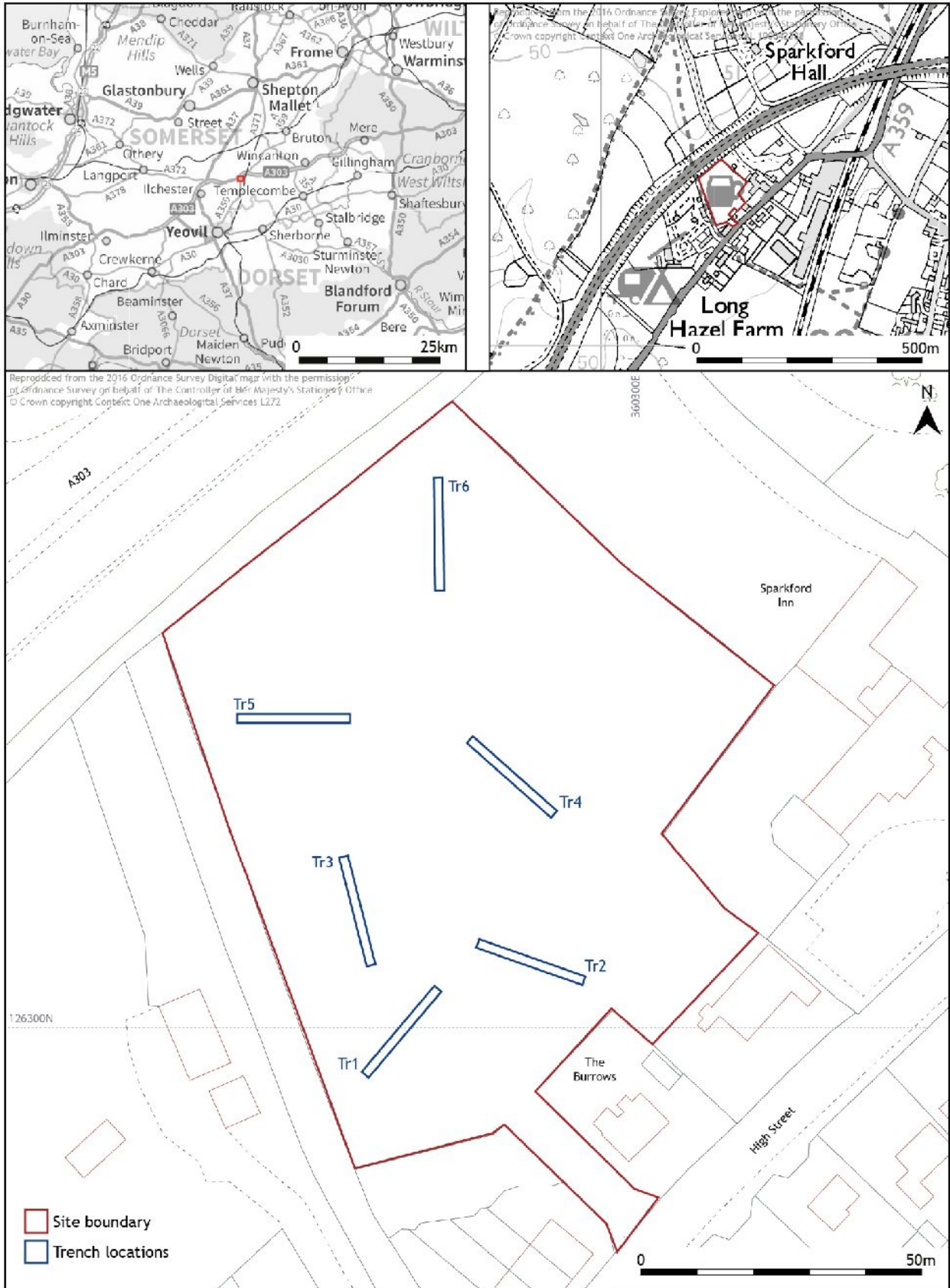


Figure 1. Site setting and evaluation trench locations



Plate 1: Trench 3 from the SSE (2 x 1m scales)



Plate 2: Trench 6 from the S (2 x 1m scales)



Plate 3: Trench 4 during excavation (no scale)

Appendix 1: Context summary

CONTEXT NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS/DEPTH (m)
Trench 1									
7-100	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1) silt clay with moderate angular limestone fragments (<0.10m) and frequent gravels	N/A	-	7-101	>20m	>1.6m	0.20m
7-101	Natural	Layer	Subsoil. Yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) sandy clay with frequent rounded limestone fragments (<0.15m)	7-100	-	7-102	>20m	>1.6m	0.20m
7-102	Natural	Layer	Natural. Yellow (10YR 7/6) clay with very occasional rounded limestone fragments (<0.20m)	7-101	-	N/A	>20m	>1.6m	>0.10m
Trench 2									
7-200	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1) silt clay with frequent angular limestone fragments (<0.10m) and moderate gravel (<0.05m)	N/A	-	7-201	>20m	>1.6m	0.20m
7-201	Natural	Layer	Subsoil. Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay with frequent angular limestone fragments (<0.15m)	7-200	-	7-202	>20m	>1.6m	0.20m
7-202	Natural	Layer	Natural. Yellow (10YR 7/6) clay with occasional rounded limestone fragments (<0.20m)	7-201	-	N/A	>20m	>1.6m	>0.05m
Trench 3									
7-300	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1) silt clay with frequent angular limestone fragments and coarse angular gravel (<0.05m)	N/A	-	7-301	>20m	>1.6m	0.25m
7-301	Natural	Layer	Subsoil. Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sandy clay with moderate angular limestone fragments (<0.15m)	7-300	-	7-302	>20m	>1.6m	0.20m
7-302	Natural	Layer	Natural. Yellow (10YR 7/6) clay with occasional rounded limestone fragments (<0.20m)	7-301	-	N/A	>20m	>1.6m	>0.10m
Trench 4									
7-400	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1) humic loam with frequent modern refuse	N/A	-	7-401	>20m	>1.6m	0.30m
7-401	Modern	Layer	Topsoil/subsoil. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1) silty clay with angular gravel	7-400	-	7-402	>20m	>1.6m	0.15m
7-402	Natural	Layer	Natural. Yellow (10YR 7/6) clay with occasional angular limestone fragments (<0.20m)	7-401	-	N/A	>20m	>1.6m	>0.10m
Trench 5									
7-500	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Very dark grey (10YR 3/1) silt clay with frequent angular gravels (<0.10m)	N/A	-	7-501	>20m	>1.6m	0.20m
7-501	Natural	Layer	Subsoil. Brownish yellow (10YR 6/6) sandy clay with moderate angular limestone fragments (<0.05m)	7-500	-	7-502	>20m	>1.6m	0.10m
7-502	Natural	Layer	Natural. Yellow (10YR 7/8) clay with occasional rounded limestone fragments (<0.20m)	7-501	-	N/A	>20m	>1.6m	>0.10m



Trench 6									
7-600	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6) loose humic loam, heavily rooted	N/A	-	7-601	>20m	>1.6m	0.40m
7-602	Natural	Layer	Natural. Yellow (10YR 7/6) clay with occasional rounded limestone fragments	7-601	-	N/A	>20m	>1.6m	>0.10m

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