

Land Between
Hainbury Farm and B315
Northover
Ilchester
Somerset

Archaeological Monitoring and
Recording report

July 2017



Land Between Hainbury Farm and B3151
Northover
Ilchester
Somerset


for

COAS project code: C1/AMR/17/HNS

Datojem Ltd

REPORT

Prepared by Richard McConnell, Director
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Approved by Cheryl Green, Post-excavation Manager
 Signed 
 Date 12/07/17

Issue 01

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DETAILS

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 Collecting Museum South West Heritage Trust
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Summary

Context One Heritage and Archaeology carried out archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of granting planning permission for the construction of five terrace houses with associated parking and improved access on Land Between Hainbury Farm and B3151, Northover, Ilchester, Somerset in June 2017. The project was commissioned by Datojem Ltd.

The investigation was requested by the Local Planning Authority, South Somerset District Council, on the advice of the county Historic Environment Service, South West Heritage Trust, and follows policy set by Central Government in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Site is immediately adjacent to the Fosse Way Roman Road and several heritage assets are recorded within close proximity, including the remains of two Roman lead coffins which were discovered during a metal detecting survey near Ilchester in 1989. Given the Roman practice of burying remains along roadsides, it is possible that further inhumations exist in this area.

Despite the potential, monitoring of development excavations revealed no archaeological activity and no finds were recovered.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Heritage and Archaeology (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of granting planning permission (planning reference: 16/02507/FUL) for the construction of five terrace houses with provision for parking and carports and improvement to access, on Land Between Hainbury Farm and B3151, Northover, Ilchester, Somerset (the 'Site') (**Figure 1**). The project was commissioned by Datojem Ltd.
- 1.2 The investigation was requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), South Somerset District Council (SSDC) on the advice of the county Historic Environment Service (HES), South West Heritage Trust (SWHT). In a reply to an email consultation request from Mr Lee Walton (Case Officer, SSDC) on 19 July 2016, Mr Steven Membery, Senior Historic Environment Officer, SWHT stated:

"The site lies at the junction of two Roman roads and metal detecting in the surrounding area has revealed two Roman period burials in lead coffins. This implies that burials were taking place along the roads and that there may well be settlement outside of the Roman town. Due to this it is likely that there may well be remains relating to Roman period occupation on this site. For this reason, I recommend that the applicant be required to provide archaeological monitoring of the development and 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."

- 1.3 The programme of archaeological works comprised four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which sets out the project strategy; archaeological monitoring and recording; post-excavation and report production (this document); and archive preparation and deposition.
- 1.4 The requirement follows advice by Central Government as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (DCLG 2012).

2. The Site

- 2.1 The Site (centred on NGR ST 52539 23436) covers 0.26ha and is located on the south-eastern edge of Northover, immediately to the north of Ilchester, near the confluence of the B3151 and Fosse Way (**Figure 1**). The development area occupies a piece of scrub land that lies between Roman Road to the north-west and Hainbury Farm to the south and east. The Site sits on gently sloping ground, which rises from a height of c. 16m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the south-west to around 19m aOD in the north-east. The recorded solid geology for the Site is Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (undifferentiated), Mudstone and Limestone (BGS, 2017). No drift geology is recorded for the Site. The soils for the area are recorded as slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (CSAIS, 2017).
- 2.2 The Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) records several heritage assets within the environs of the Site, not least of which is the Fosse Way Roman Road (now the B3151) (**HER PRN: 55101**), which lies immediately to the north-west. In 1989 two Roman lead coffins were discovered during a metal detector survey near Ilchester, within 500m of the site.

3. Archaeological aims and research objectives

- 3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring were to:
- identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during groundworks;
 - determine the character of the archaeological remains, where present;

- recover environmental information, which may provide further information relating to the local historic environment of the area;
- provide sufficient information to enable further mitigation strategies to be determined, where appropriate

3.2 The research objectives were to:

- determine whether there was any evidence specifically relating to the Fosse Way, including any burial practices that may have taken place along its known route
- determine whether there was any evidence specifically relating to the origin and development of Northover

4. Methodology

- 4.1 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (December 2014) and in accordance with the *Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook* (2011). C1 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. The fieldwork methodology is summarised below.
- 4.2 C1 gave notification of the commencement of the works to the HES, and arrangements were made for a representative to visit the Site and monitor archaeological fieldwork but this was not required.
- 4.3 Prior to the commencement of Site works, the excavation methodology was agreed between those responsible for carrying out the groundworks and C1 to ensure that all parties were aware of the monitoring requirements.
- 4.4 An archaeologist was on Site to monitor all specified groundworks with the aim of identifying and recording any archaeological features/deposits present. All groundworks were carried out with a machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket.
- 4.5 By default, core details of the deposit sequence across the Site were recorded on COAS *pro-forma* profile forms in digital format using iPad mini tablets. The frequency of profiles recorded was based entirely on any variation of the deposit sequence. Spoil was examined for the retrieval of artefacts.
- 4.6 A photographic record of the monitoring and recording was carried out, and involved the sole use of digital images. This included scaled photos of recorded profiles and working shots to illustrate the nature of development operations.

5. Results

- 5.1 Ground reduction across the footprint for all five new buildings took place prior to the excavation of the foundation trenches. This largely involved the machine removal of residual topsoil and subsoil to varying depths up to c. 0.50m to create a series of terraces to serve as level platforms for the individual houses and accommodate a natural slope from north to south (**Plate 1**). No features/deposits were observed during this process. It was noted that very little topsoil was present prior to the reduction work and is likely to have been stripped away in the past.
- 5.2 Standard strip foundation trenches (c. 1.00m wide and up to 1.20m deep) were then excavated by machine to accept concrete footings for all load bearing walls including external walls and selected internal partitions. A service trench was excavated along the western edge of the development area. The deposit sequence was similar across the Site and generally comprised a soft yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay (7-100) up to 0.80m thick, overlying a firm greyish brown (10YR 4/6) natural clay (7-101) which was excavated to a depth of c. 0.20m (**Plate 2 and 3**). No features/deposits were observed in any of the foundation trenches.

6. The finds

- 6.1 No finds were recovered during the course of the monitoring programme.

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 stored on the COAS cloud storage server or discarded.
- 7.2 A copy of this report will be provided to the client/agent and to the HES so that it can be included as part of the county Historic Environment Record.

8. Discussion

- 8.1 Despite the potential for the discovery of heritage assets relating to the Fosse Way Roman Road and possible associated burials from the same period, no evidence for this was encountered during development excavations. Indeed, no archaeological activity was observed and no finds were recovered.

9. Bibliography

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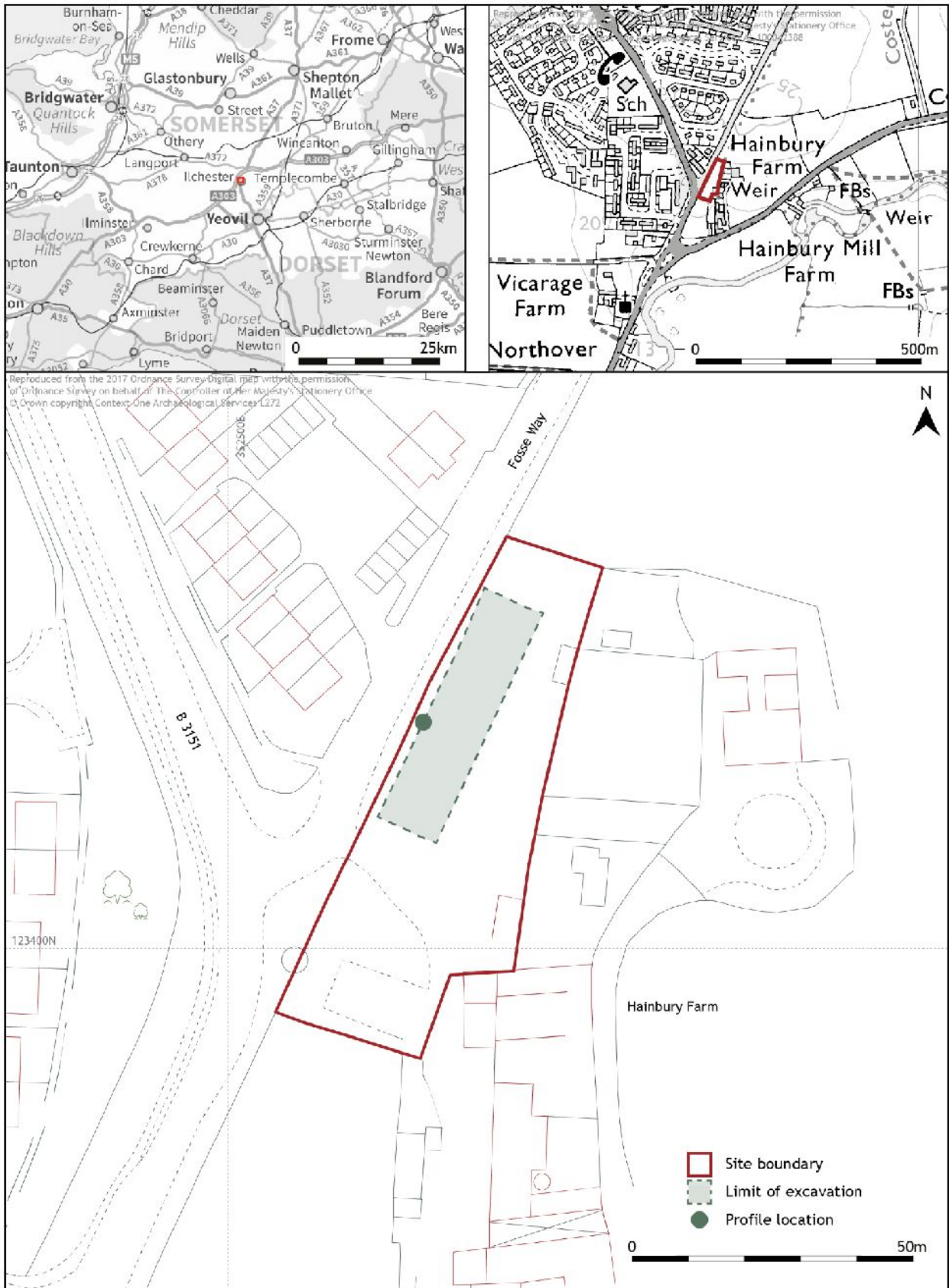


Figure 1. Site setting showing development excavations and profile location



Plate 1. Working shot: excavation of terraces for house platforms (from SSW, no scale)



Plate 2. Working shot: excavation of foundation trenches (from N, no scale)



Plate 3. Profile of foundation trench (from SE, 1m scale)

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