



Bristol and Region  
Archaeological  
Services

Archaeological Evaluation  
**ODD DOWN RECYCLING CENTRE,  
THE FOSSEWAY, ODD DOWN,  
BATH.**

Simon Roper



Report No. 3082/2014  
OASIS: bristola1-177436





Archaeological Evaluation  
at  
**ODD DOWN RECYCLING CENTRE,  
THE FOSSEWAY, ODD DOWN,  
BATH.**

Centred on NGR ST 7293 6121

Prepared for **Gazelle Properties Ltd**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Greig', with a horizontal line underneath.

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## Abbreviations

AD	<i>Anno Domini</i>	IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	m	Metre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	NGR	National Grid Reference
BC	Before Christ	OASIS	Online Access to Archaeological Investigations
c	<i>Circa</i>	OS	Ordnance Survey
EHA	English Heritage Archives		
HER	Historic Environment Record		

## Adopted Chronology

Prehistoric	Before AD43
Roman	AD43-410
Anglo Saxon/Early Medieval	AD410-1066
Medieval	AD1066-1540
Post-medieval	AD1540-present

## NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable 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.

May, 2014

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## **SUMMARY**

An archaeological field evaluation of land at the Odd Down Recycling Centre at the Fosseyway, Odd Down, was undertaken by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services. No archaeologically significant deposits, finds or features were found within any of the trenches. Recent made ground deposits overlaid the natural deposits within all of the trenches. Material such as plastic tubing and bags was observed within the deepest deposits in all the trenches, indicating that all the made ground deposits date from the second half of the 20th century at least, and some from the 21st century.

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Plate 7 Trench 5, length of trench, looking north-west

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Outline planning permission has been requested for the erection of a residual waste facility at the Odd Down Recycling Centre at the Fosseway, Odd Down, and an EIA Minerals & Waste Application has been made (ref. 14/00839/EMINW). Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by Grassroots Planning Ltd on behalf of Gazelle Properties Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site as requested by Richard Sermon, Senior Archaeological Officer for BANES.
- 1.2 The evaluation was commissioned in order to to inform a planning decision, in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG 2012), Chapter 12: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', and local planning policies. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide data on the date, character, degree of survival, extent, significance, and location of any archaeological features or deposits within the proposed development area, and so appropriate archaeological mitigation could be planned depending on the results. This was done in compliance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA, 2008c) and in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2014) and approved by the Senior Archaeological Officer for BANES.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out on the 29th and 30th April 2014 under the supervision of Simon Roper who also compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with the Roman Baths Museum and Pump Room under the Accession Number BATRM 2014.188 and a copy of the report will be sent to the BANES Historic Environment Record (BHER). The project has been entered in the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) as bristola1-177436. A digital copy will be made available to the English Heritage Archives.

## 2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site is located on the south-east side of the Fosseway (A367), a short distance to the north-east of the main waste processing centre building (**Fig.1**). Proposals are for new structures to the north-east of the present building, including a biogas plant and associated tanks, and for HGV parking and large materials bins to the north and north-west, with planting screening the site from the main A367 road. A number of the new structures and their surrounding areas will be terraced into the sloping site, at depths varying between about 1 and 2.5 metres.
- 2.2 The solid geology comprises Jurassic limestone of the Twinhoe Member (British Geological Survey 2014). No superficial deposits are recorded by the BGS, but Fuller's earth was formerly worked underground on this site and in surrounding areas. The ground level across the site the falls from 177.4m aOD in the north of the site to 175.5m aOD in the south, and the area of the site is approximately 3.2 hectares.

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 A desk-based assessment of the site has been carried out (Etheridge 2013). No previous intrusive archaeological work is recorded for this site, although an archaeological watching brief was undertaken in 2011-12 in the field to the west and south-west of the recycling centre buildings. The Bath World Heritage Site boundary is about 600m away from the current site. It is not located within or in proximity to a conservation area, and there is no evidence for:
- a. Scheduled monuments;
  - b. Important hedgerows;
  - c. Historic battlefields;
  - d. Registered or unregistered parks or gardens.
- 3.2 The present A367 road follows the line of the major Roman road known as the Fosse Way, and it is possible Roman period settlements and/or burials may be located in close proximity to such routes. To the south and east of the study area is evidence of Roman settlement, probably part of a villa complex.
- 3.3 The linear earthwork the Wansdyke is located approximately 600m to the north-east. A semi defensive boundary erected between the late 4th and early 7th centuries AD, it suggests that settlement continued in the area following the end of Roman control (Etheridge 2013, 17).
- 3.4 Fullers earth was worked on the site during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Macmillen and Chapman (2009) suggested that there were early works buildings present in the area of the site to be evaluated. Mining ceased and the works closed in 1980, with the site abandoned until the early 21st century when it began to be used as a waste recycling centre. A substantial core of the works buildings remain on the site, with elements possibly dating back to the late 19th century (Etheridge 2013, 17).

### **4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the Written Schemes of Investigation for both the building recording and the evaluation (BaRAS 2014). The fieldwork complied with the IfA's Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation (IfA, 2008c).
- 4.2 The fieldwork aimed to clarify the following:
- To provide data on the date, character, degree of survival, extent and location of archaeological deposits and features within the site boundaries.
  - To record any evidence of Fullers earth extraction during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including the structures suggested by Macmillen and Chapman.

The research agenda for the evaluation is to add to the historical and archaeological knowledge of the Odd Down area prior to the establishment of the Fullers Earth works, during the lifetime of the workings, and since that time.

- 4.3 The photographic record was created using a conventional SLR camera with monochrome film, supplemented by colour images produced with a digital camera with a resolution of 5 mega-pixels or above. All details of the photographs taken were recorded on a standard BaRAS photographic record sheet. A site plan was produced in AutoCAD format as a single drawing on Ordnance Survey coordinates. Recording of archaeological features was carried out using the single context recording system as contained in the BaRAS site manual. A site diary was kept recording the progress of the work and other relevant information.

## 5. RESULTS

- 5.1 A total of five trenches were excavated across the site, four of them measuring 25m x 2.3m, while trench 1 was shortened to 16m x 2.3m due to the presence of two electrical cables and surrounding spoil heaps. All of the trenches, with the exception of trench 5, had sondages excavated at each end in order to ascertain the depth of natural deposits.

### Trench 1

- 5.2 Trench 1 was the shortest measuring 16 x 2.3 m, and running roughly south-west to north-east, and the closest to the line of the Roman Road. Excavated to a depth of 1.2m no archaeological or undisturbed natural deposits were encountered within the trench. Natural bedrock (104) was encountered at 2.35m depth (175.59m aOD) in sondages excavated at each end. Overlying this were a series of modern made ground deposits (103, 102, 101 and 100), composed of clayey silt, building rubble (brick, Bath stone and concrete) and miscellaneous metal objects in varying proportions.

### Trench 2

- 5.3 Trench 2 measured 25m x 2.3m, ran roughly south-west to north-east and was located towards the north corner of the site. Excavated to a depth of 1.2m no archaeological or undisturbed natural deposits were encountered within the trench. Natural bedrock (206) was encountered at 2.3m depth (175.7m aOD) in the south-west end sondage and at 3.5m depth (175.0m aOD) in the north-east end sondage. Immediately overlying the bedrock was a made ground layer (205) consisting of black sooty silt with lenses of clay and occasional red brick and Bath stone fragments, which was sealed by a redeposited layer of yellow and grey clay (204) of varying consistency. Above these were made ground layers (203, 202, 201 and 200) the same as in Trench 1.

### Trench 3

- 5.4 Trench 3 measured 25m x 2.3m, ran roughly north-west to south-east and was located on the north-east side of the site. Excavated to a depth of 1.2m no archaeological or undisturbed natural deposits were encountered within the trench. Natural bedrock (307) was encountered at 2.8m depth (174.72m aOD) in the south-east end sondage and at 3.25m depth (174.82m aOD) in the north-west end sondage. Overlying the bedrock was a layer (306) of grey/yellow clay with fragments of sandstone, black silt and brick/tile fragments, all poorly mixed, above which was a layer (305) of grey/yellow clay containing fragments of Bath stone. A series of thinner layers, approximately 0.2m thick, sat above the clay layers and consisting of dark brown silt with small fragments of Bath stone (304), a hard layer of crushed concrete (303), demolition rubble containing red bricks, composite stone, concrete and Bath stone (302) and a former surface layer (301) composed of hardcore/scalplings and a black sooty silt. Above all this was a made ground layer composed of clayey silt and building rubble (300) as found across the site.

### Trench 4

- 5.5 Trench 4 measured 25m x 2.3m, ran roughly north-west to south-east and was located on the south-east side of the site. Excavated to a depth of 1.2m no archaeological or undisturbed natural deposits were encountered within the trench. Natural bedrock (406) was encountered at 3m depth (173.18m aOD) in the south-east end sondage and at 1.45m depth (174.75m aOD) in the north-west end sondage. A layer (405) of grey and yellow clay, with pockets of brown silt and fragments of Bath stone within it, overlaid the bedrock. Above the clay layer were a series of made ground layers (404, 403 and 402) consisting of building debris, pockets of clay and mixed silts. Layer 401 contained hardcore mixed with black silt, possibly forming an earlier surface similar to 301 in Trench 3, with the current surface layer of clayey silt and building rubble (400) overlying all.



## Trench 5

- 5.6 Trench 5 measured 25m x 2.3m, ran roughly north-west to south-east and was located on the south-west side of the site. Excavated to undisturbed natural deposits at a depth of 1m (175.26m aOD) at the north-west end of the trench and 0.7m (175.24m aOD) at the south-east end, no archaeological deposits or were encountered within the trench. Unlike in the other trenches excavated on site a natural deposit (507) of orange-brown clayey-silt with occasional small fragments of the underlying bedrock (508) was found within this trench. Overlying this was a layer of grey-green clay (506) and a layer (505) of large fragments of Bath stone. Two layers (504 & 503) of industrial fire residues (soot, cinders, and fragments of fire bricks) were overlaid by a layer (502) of Bath stone fragments and a former surface layer (501) of hardcore/scalplings as seen in trenches 3 and 4. Above all this was a made ground layer composed of clayey silt and building rubble (500) as found across the site.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No archaeologically significant deposits, finds or features were found within any of the trenches. Recent made ground deposits overlay the natural deposits within all of the trenches. Material such as plastic tubing and bags was observed within the deepest deposits in all the trenches, indicating that all the made ground deposits date from the second half of the 20th century at least, and some from the 21st century. The deeper areas of made ground may be the backfilled former Fullers earth workings and no indication of any surviving structures relating to the early works buildings was found in any of the trenches.

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## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## **APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement**

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local-authority policies.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for England published by the UK Government in March 2012 states that the historic environment, which includes designated and non-designated heritage assets, is an irreplaceable resource and, as such, should be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities when considering and determining planning applications. This is taken to form part of a positive strategy set out in the respective Local Plan (i.e. Bristol Core Strategy) to ensure the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The assigned significance of heritage assets will be key factor in terms of their conservation.

Given their irreplaceable nature, any harm to, or loss of, a heritage asset, or heritage assets, should be clearly and convincingly justified as part of a planning application. As part of this, applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. Where a heritage asset, or assets, are to be harmed or lost as the result of a proposal, the applicant will be required to record and advance the understanding of the significance of that asset or assets, to include making the evidence arising publicly accessible, but this will be in proportion to the significance of the asset/assets in question. While the NPPF takes into account the historic environment as a whole, additional protection is afforded to designated heritage assets under current English Law. Any proposal that would result in harm or loss of a designated heritage asset is also required to be justified by the applicant in meeting strict criteria set out in the NPPF.

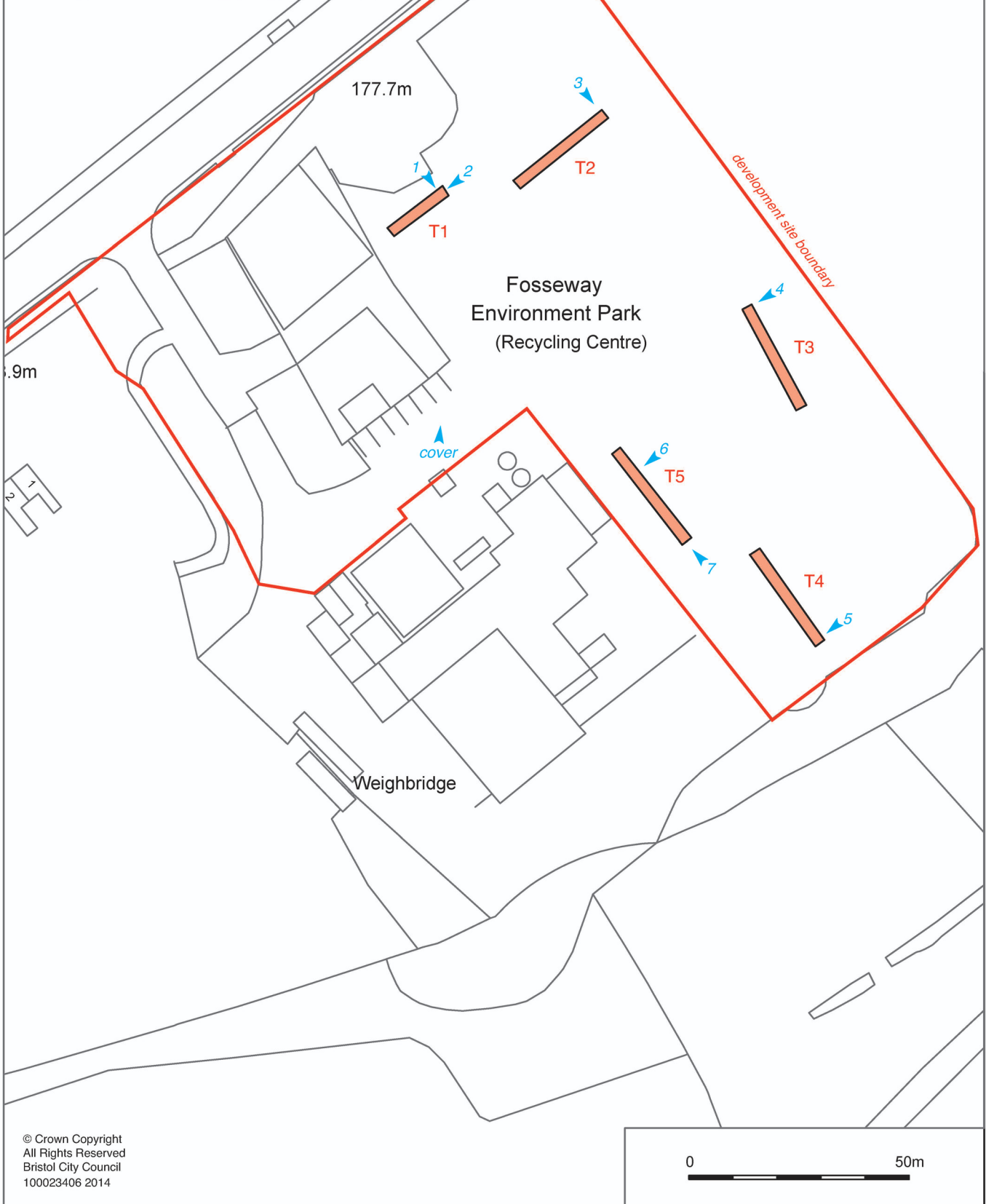
### **LOCAL POLICY**

Bath and North East Somerset Council's Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) Archaeology in Bath and North East Somerset, 2003 and Archaeology in the City of Bath, 2004 state that:

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not;
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desk-top study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

The BANES Core Strategy (2011) retains some policies from the 2007 Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan including for the protection of the historic environment as Policies BH.11, BH.12 and BH.13, which state that development proposals will safeguard or enhance heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including:

- Scheduled ancient monuments
- Historic buildings both nationally and locally listed
- Historic parks and gardens both nationally and locally listed
- Conservation areas
- Archaeological remains



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Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:1250



Plate 1 Trench 1 north-east sondage section, looking south-east



Plate 2 Trench 1, length of trench, looking south-west



Plate 3 Trench 2, north-east sondage section, looking south-east



Plate 4 Trench 3, north-west sondage section, looking south-west



Plate 5 Trench 4, south-east sondage section, looking south-west



Plate 6 Trench 5, mid-trench section, looking south-west



Plate 7 Trench 5, length of trench, looking north-west