



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

THE WILDERNESS, CHURCH LANE,

BOX, WILTSHIRE SN13 8NR

NGR ST 82331 68561

JANUARY 2021

REPORT PREPARED BY Stephanie N. Duensing

ILLUSTRATION BY Iwona Brodzka

EDITED BY John Moore

AUTHORISED BY John Moore

FIELDWORK 23rd & 24th November 2020

REPORT ISSUED 28th January 2021

ENQUIRES TO John Moore Heritage Services
Pasture Farmhouse
Boarstall
Aylesbury
HP18 9UR

Tel: 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

JMHS Project No: 4343
OASIS No: **johnmoor1-409819**
Site Code: **BXCL 20**
Archive Location: The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Museum with accession number DZSWS:40-2020



CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------------|
| <i>SUMMARY</i> | <i>1</i> |
| 1 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Site Location | 1 |
| 1.2 Planning Background | 1 |
| 1.3 Archaeological Background | 1 |
| 2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION | 1 |
| 3 STRATEGY | 3 |
| 3.1 Research Design | 3 |
| 3.2 Methodology | 3 |
| 4 RESULTS | 3 |
| 4.1 Southeast of the wall, The Wilderness | 3 |
| 4.2 Northwest of the wall, No. 1 Valens Terrace | 6 |
| 5 FINDS | 10 |
| 5.1 Pottery | 10 |
| 5.2 Ceramic Building Material | 11 |
| 5.3 Faunal Remains | 12 |
| 5.4 Stone | 13 |
| 5.5 Metalwork | 14 |
| 5.6 Miscellaneous | 14 |
| 6 DISCUSSION | 16 |
| 7 ARCHIVE | 17 |
| 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY | 17 |
| Table 1. Levels of tops of natural and Romano British deposits | 10 |
| FIGURES AND PLATES | |
| Figure 1. Site location | 2 |
| Figure 2. Trial Pit locations | 9 |
| Plate 1. Trial Pit 1 | 4 |
| Plate 2. Trial Pit 2 | 5 |
| Plate 3. Trial Pit 5 | 6 |
| Plate 4. Trial Pit 3 | 7 |
| Plate 5. Trial Pit 4 | 8 |
| APPENDICES | |
| Appendix 1. OASIS Report Form | 18 |
| Appendix 2. Context Inventory | 21 |

Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at The Wilderness, Church Lane, Box, Wiltshire (NGR ST 82331 68561). The five evaluation trial pits were hand dug to establish the depth of intact archaeological deposits known to survive below the raised garden level. The depth of the Roman archaeological horizon was at approximately 1-1.3m below the current ground level on the SE side of the wall. The ground level was lower on the NW side, where fewer archaeological deposits appeared to have survived.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located on the west side of Box on the north side of Church Lane (centred NGR ST 82331 68561). The site is currently residential and it lies at approximately 45m OD.

1.2 Planning Background

A section of a garden boundary wall between The Wilderness and the rear garden of No. 1 Valens Terrace has collapsed and needs to be rebuilt. The site of this collapsed section of wall lies partly within the scheduled area of Roman villa 500m south east of Hill House Farm (List Entry No. 1019189) which is more commonly known as Box Roman villa. The villa survives as a series of buried deposits and a standing wall, situated on an east to west terrace on the south side of a valley overlooking Box Brook. John Moore Heritage Services was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation to fully inform the construction of the rebuilding and any archaeological measures required during the work.

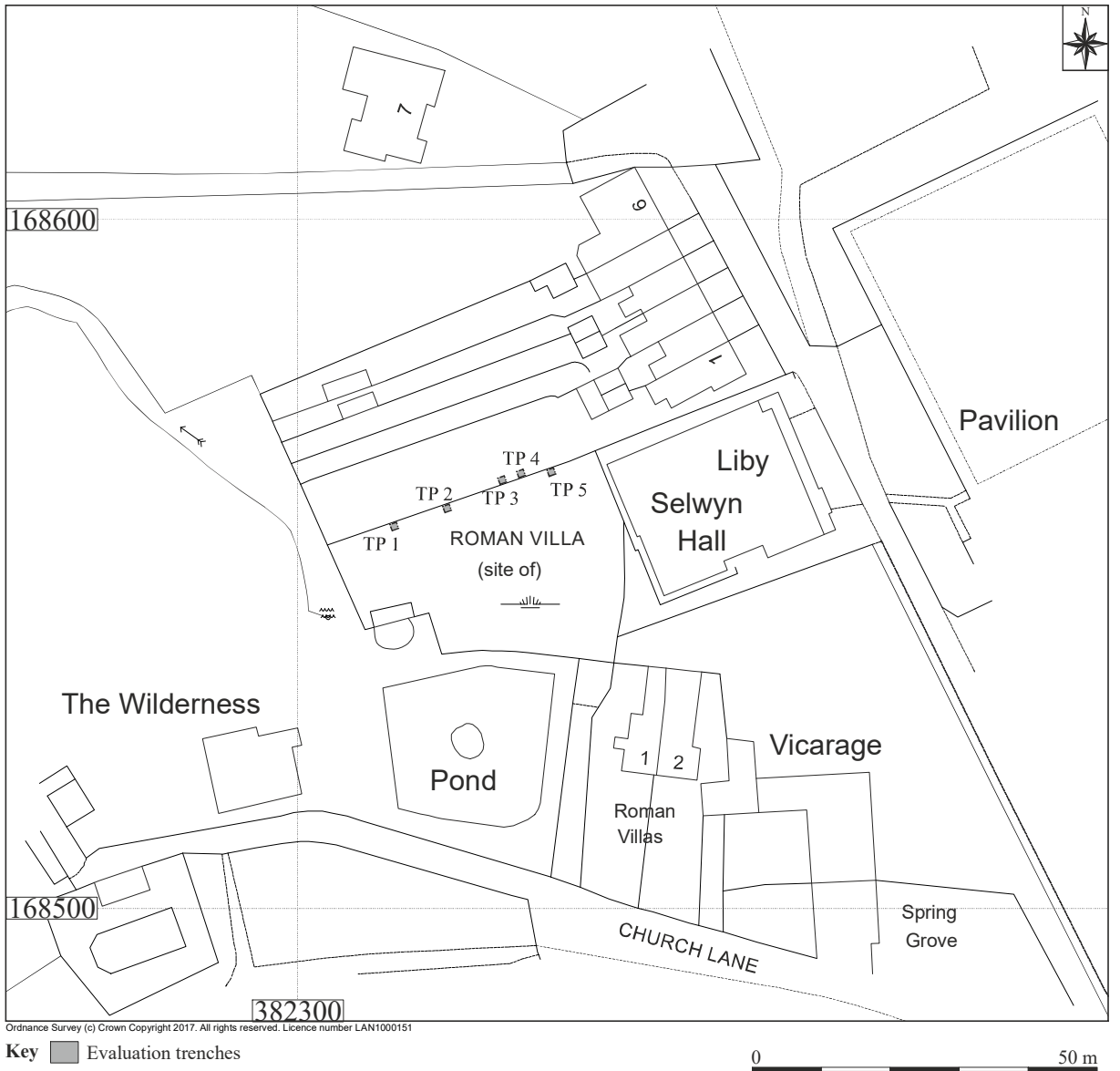
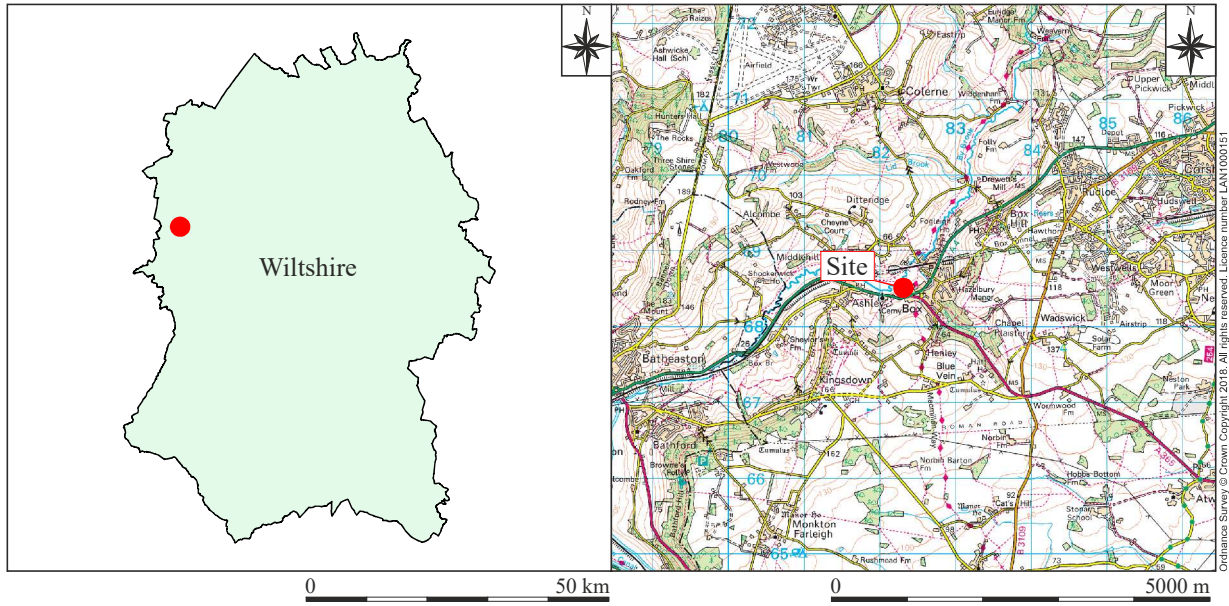
1.3 Archaeological Background

Two partial excavation and a series of smaller archaeological evaluations have revealed three sides of a courtyard type villa showing evidence of occupation between the second and third centuries AD. The last phase of rebuilding took place in the later third or early fourth century AD. An imported marble wall tile and 20 mosaic floors dating from the second to fourth centuries AD identified within the main complex demonstrate the high status of the villa throughout its use.

A series of wall foundations, a drain and a boundary ditch towards the western end of Church Lane and within the grounds of 'The Wilderness' and 'Box House' relate directly to the main villa building and suggest either a further wing or ancillary structures associated with an outer courtyard located on the western side of the complex.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:



Key  Evaluation trenches

Figure 1: Site location

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains beneath the collapsed wall and the height of the uppermost archaeological horizon.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To determine the impact of the proposed rebuilding on any remains present.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Historic England.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020).

3.2 Methodology

Five hand-dug evaluation Trial Pits (TP), each 1m long by 1m wide, were excavated across the site of the wall collapse. Some pits were moved slightly due to limitations of access and health and safety, where the collapsed or damaged wall posed a potential threat to further collapse. This was most notable in the placement for TP2 which had initially been placed on the north side of the wall near the buttress, but was moved to the south side of the wall due to safety concerns and limited access (see Fig. 1).

During excavation works, the current occupant of No.1 Valens Terrace mentioned that the previous owner of The Wilderness had gone to great expense to add garden soils and build up the area to the SE of the wall. This was largely confirmed during the trial pit excavations placed within The Wilderness side of the wall, detailed below.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was also produced.

4 RESULTS (Figure 2; Plates 1-5)

4.1 Southeast of the wall, The Wilderness

Trial Pit 1

TP1 was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.13m. The lowest deposit encountered was a level of archaeologically intact material (1/06), a mid-light-yellowish brown clayey sand with very frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks, and was only excavated to a depth of 0.11m. It was within what appeared to be a cut 1/08 into the natural (1/09), a mid-yellowish brown silty gravel.

Three layers (1/03), (1/04), and (1/05) were recorded; these represented soil variations within a single made-ground deposit overlying the archaeological deposit (1/06).

Deposit (1/05) was friable dark-mid greyish brown silty clay. This is likely to have been a cultivation soil up to 0.42m thick. Above this was deposit (1/04), a yellowish light brown sandy silt only 0.08m thick beneath 0.20m thick layer 1/03) which was a brownish grey sandy silt with a significant amount of rubble with it.

Above this were a more modern garden soil (1/02) and present topsoil (1/01); dark-mid greyish brown sandy, clayey, silt (loam), with an increase in the frequency of inclusions of gravels in the lower layer; these deposits measured 0.22m in total thickness.

The base of the wall, **1/07**, appeared to be level with base of (1/05) founded on the natural.



Plate 1. Trial Pit 1, S.1.01.

Trial Pit 2

TP2 was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.03m. The lowest deposit encountered was an archaeologically intact possible occupation layer (2/04). It was a mid-light-yellowish brown clayey sand with very frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks, and was excavated to a depth of 0.2m.

Above this was a cultivation deposit (2/03) which was friable dark-mid greyish brown silty clay with frequent stone/gravel, measuring 0.3m in thickness. The base of it is marked as 2/06 and the profile appears to show deeper cultivation after the construction of the boundary wall **2/05**.

There was a possible build-up deposit (2/02), with fewer larger stones and more gravel than 2/03 measuring 0.13m in thickness. Above this was garden soil (2/01), a dark-mid greyish brown sandy, clayey silt (loam), which was observed to be 0.4m in thickness.

The base of the wall, **2/05**, appeared to rest on top of (2/04).



Plate 2. Trial Pit 2, S.2.01.

Trial Pit 5

TP5 was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.3m. The lowest level encountered was a possible occupation layer (5/04), a level of archaeologically intact material. It was a mid-light-yellowish brown clayey sand with very frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks, and was only excavated to a depth of 0.08m.

Above this was deposit (5/03), a friable dark-mid greyish brown silty clay with frequent large stones up to 0.18m in diameter. This deposit measured 0.18m in total thickness and was likely to be present when garden wall was constructed. There was a levelling deposit (5/02) measuring 0.38m in thickness. This was a mid-dark greyish brown, clayey silt with occasional stone up to 3cm diameter. Above this was the garden soil (5/01); this was a dark-mid greyish brown sandy, clayey silt (loam), which was seen to extend 0.6m in thickness.

The base of the wall **5/07**, was reached at approximately 0.85m below the current ground level, set on top of deposit (5/04).

Below these deposits, stratigraphically, was an earlier cut, 5/05, likely to be derived from earlier (possibly cultivation) activities in the area. It was filled by deposit (5/04) and truncated layer (5/06), a mid-yellowish brown silty gravel deposit. This material

was the same colour and consistency as the natural seen in TP3; as this material only visible in the very furthest 6cm of TP5, it was not possible to determine if it was sterile natural or if it was merely redeposited.



Plate 3. Trial Pit 5, S.5.01

4.2 Northwest of the wall, No. 1 Valens Terrace

Trial Pit 3

TP3, excavated to a maximum depth of 0.68m, was located on the north-western boundary of the wall. It appeared to contain the remains of a construction cut 3/05 for the wall 3/06, cut into natural and filled with a redeposited natural and rubble mixture. Further to the north-west limit of the trial pit, and cutting this earlier builder's cut, there was another linear cut 3/03, possibly related to more recent planting activities, which was filled by a friable mid-greyish brown gravelly silt, extending to a maximum depth of 0.21m and a width of over 0.38m across the full extent of the trial pit.

No Roman deposits were evident in this trial pit, although numerous Roman artefacts were recovered from it.



Plate 4. Trial Pit 3, S.3.01.

Trial Pit 4

TP4 was located east of TP3, on the north-western boundary of the wall; it was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m. The lowest archaeologically intact deposit encountered was (4/06), a mid-light-yellowish brown clayey sand with very frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks, very similar to (5/04), recorded on the opposite side of the wall. Above this sat deposit (4/05), composed mainly of rubble and measuring 0.36m in thickness, which appeared to fill a pit or irregular builder's trench, 4/03. During the excavation, it was difficult to determine if this was associated with a repair to the boundary wall **4/04** due to measures taken to prevent undermining the extant wall. However, upon review, it appears most likely to be the remains of an act of disturbance to the earlier Roman wall known to extend to the NW in this location. Complete or partially extant Roman walls and deposits were expected to be present; however, it appears that in this location the Roman wall was dismantled and the rubble redeposited. Above pit/trench 4/03 was a levelling deposit (4/02) and topsoil (4/01), both of a friable, dark greyish brown clayey silt, with only a higher frequency of stone and gravel inclusions present in the lower to distinguish them from each other.



Plate 5a-b. Trial pit 4, S.4.01 and S.4.02

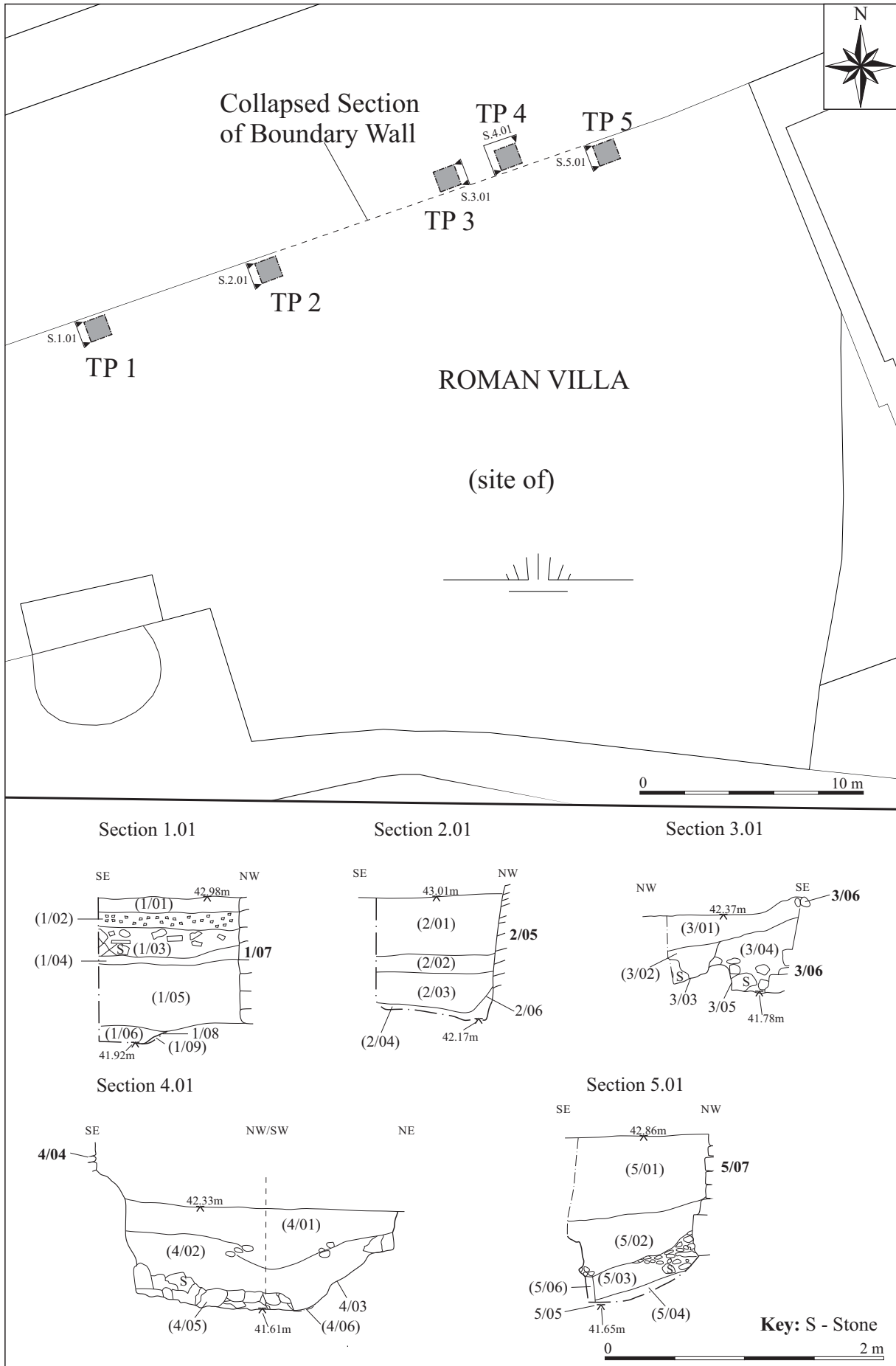


Figure 2: Plan and Sections

Table 1. Levels of tops of natural and Romano British deposits

| TP | Natural | | Romano British Deposit | | | | |
|-----|----------|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| | | | Context No. | Lowest Point (Top) | | Highest Point | |
| | OD | Depth (m) | | OD | Depth (m) | OD | Depth (m) |
| TP1 | 42.11m | 0.87m | 1/06 | | | 42.03m | 0.91m |
| TP2 | Not seen | | 2/04 | 42.21m | 0.80m | 42.35m | 0.66m |
| TP3 | 42.00m | 0.37m | None | | | | |
| TP4 | Not seen | | 4/06 | | | 41.61m | 0.72m |
| TP5 | Not seen | | 5/04 | 41.70m | 1.16m | 41.89m | 0.97m |

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery

Roman Pottery by Jane Timby

A number of pottery and ceramic building material fragments, recovered from the upper garden soil deposits, had the potential to be earlier Severn Valley wares. However, the results are:

These were 41 sherds pottery weighing 653.5 g and 53 pieces of ceramic building material weighing 4158 g, dating to the Roman and post-medieval/modern periods. This pottery was recovered from nine defined horizons distributed across the five test-pits; largely comprising topsoil and garden soil levels.

The sherds are in variable condition with some larger, well-preserved pieces alongside more fragmented sherds. Surface preservation is generally good. For the purposes of the assessment the assemblage was scanned to assess the likely chronology and quantified by count and weight for each recorded context. The resulting data is catalogued in Table 1.

Pottery

The pottery includes a single sherd of Roman date from Tr 1/05 mixed with post-medieval wares. The sherd is a piece of Dorset black burnished ware from the Poole Harbour kilns which were distributing products from the 2nd to 4th centuries.

The remaining 40 sherds of pottery are all of post-medieval /modern date and include red earthenware flowerpot, English stoneware, glazed red earthenware and industrial white 'china'.

Ceramic building material (CBM)

Some 53 pieces of CBM were recovered of which 51 are probably of Roman date and two modern.

The Roman CBM includes several pieces of box-flue, including half box-flue, with roller stamped or incised lattice surfaces for keying plaster. There are two pieces of probably imbrex (roofing tile) from Trench 5 and one smaller shaped piece from 2/01, possibly from flooring. Fragments too small to determine the original forms are

labelled brick or fragment for smaller pieces. Most of the tile recovered comes from a hypocaust system for heating a well-appointed structure.

Modern CBM fragments were recovered from 5/1 and 1/3.

Further work and retention

4This is a very small assemblage comprising pottery and CBM. The latter, mainly of Roman date is probably associated with the Roman villa already documented at Box (Hurst *et al.* 1987). The pottery is mainly of post-medieval date with just a single Roman sherd.

No further ceramic work is recommended at this stage. Most of the material could be discarded although a sample of the combed box-flue could be retained as reference material.

Post-Roman Pottery by Stephanie N. Duensing

The pottery assemblage from post-medieval deposits consisted of 44 sherds, with a total weight of 182g. It comprised a mixture of medieval and post-medieval material. The following fabric types (Vince 1984) were noted:

GRE: Ashton Keynes-type Earthenware, 17th – 18th century. 3 sherds, 18g.

OOL: Saxo-Norman Oolitic limestone Ware, 11th – 12th century. 1 sherd, 11g.

TGW: English tin-glazed ware, 16th – 18th century. 1 sherd, 3g.

LPMLOC: Flower-pot, 17th – 20th century. 20 sherds, 256g.

REFW: Modern refined white earthenwares, 18th – 19th century. 13 sherds, 72g.

ENGS: English stonewares, 17th – 19th century. 5 sherds, 311g.

SWSG: White Salt-glazed stoneware, 18th century. 1 sherd, 3g.

The pottery fragments occurrence per context by fabric type, number and weight is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem* (TPQ).

The range of post-Roman fabric types is typical of sites in the region. Most of the medieval pottery is abraded to some degree, suggesting it is residual. The post-medieval sherds are generally in better condition. However, considering the known use of the area as a gardening plot for some time, it is most likely that all fragments are residual.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence per context by fabric type

| Tr | Cntxt | GRE | | OOL | | LPMLOC | | REFW | | TGW | | ENGS | | SWSG | | Date (TPQ) |
|----|--------------|----------|------------|----------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| | | No | Wt (g) | No | Wt (g) | No | Wt (g) | No | Wt (g) | No | Wt (g) | No | Wt (g) | No | Wt (g) | |
| 1 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 11 | 3 | 24 | 6 | 21 | | | 1 | 3 | | | 19c > |
| 2 | 1 | | | | | 5 | 23 | | | 1 | 3 | | | 1 | 3 | 18c > |
| 2 | 3 | | | | | 5 | 40 | 2 | 6 | | | | | | | 19c > |
| 4 | 1 | | | | | 2 | 27 | 4 | 41 | | | 4 | 308 | | | 19c > |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | 8 | | | 3 | 109 | 1 | 4 | | | | | | | 18c > |
| 5 | 2 | | | | | 2 | 33 | | | | | | | | | 17c > |
| | Total | 3 | 18g | 1 | 11g | 20 | 256g | 13 | 72g | 1 | 3g | 5 | 311g | 1 | 3g | |

5.2 Ceramic Building Material by Simona Denis

A limited assemblage of 43 ceramic building material fragments, of a total weight of 4264g, were recovered during the excavation. The material was well preserved, although fragmentary. 17 of items, representing almost 40% of the group, were positively identified as Roman, and included several well-known types.

Table 2: Ceramic Building Material occurrence per context by type

| Context | Type | No. of Items | Weight (g) | Date Range |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1/03 | Undetermined | 1 | 32 | |
| | Brick | 1 | 158 | Undetermined |
| 1/04 | <i>Parietalis</i> | 5 | 484 | Roman |
| | ?Floor tile | 2 | 298 | ?Roman |
| | Undetermined | 1 | 14 | |
| 1/05 | <i>Parietalis</i> | 1 | 414 | Roman |
| | Undetermined | 6 | 284 | |
| 2/01 | Undetermined | 1 | 34 | |
| 2/03 | Undetermined | 2 | 18 | |
| 2/04 | Undetermined | 1 | 18 | |
| 3/01 | ? <i>Parietalis</i> | 1 | 72 | Roman |
| 3/04 | <i>Tegula</i> /Flue Tile | 2 | 490 | Roman |
| | ? <i>Parietalis</i> | 1 | 12 | Roman |
| 4/01 | ?Floor tile | 1 | 50 | Undetermined |
| | Undetermined | 1 | 44 | |
| 5/01 | <i>Tegula</i> | 1 | 508 | Roman |
| | ?Flue tile | 2 | 214 | Roman |
| | Undetermined | 6 | 296 | |
| | ? <i>Imbrex</i> | 2 | 194 | Roman |
| | ?Brick | 4 | 504 | Undetermined |
| | ?Floor tile | 1 | 126 | Undetermined |
| Totals | | 43 | 4264 | |

The presence of extensive keying on one face on eight of the items suggested these were to be identified as *parietalis*, although none of the fragments preserved the diagnostic holes or notches in the sides. These tiles were hung on the walls, and the keying was produced to aid the adhesion of wall plaster.

Three items were identified as *tegulae*, a type of roof tile with flanges on the upper face, along each of the longer sides.

Two additional fragment were tentatively identified as *imbrices* based on their curved profile; however, the fragments were too incomplete to allow for a positive identification. Two fragments of possible flue tiles were also recorded.

The remaining items were too fragmentary for the type or date to be identified with any certainty.

5.3 Faunal Remains

Animal Bone

A small collection of 14 animal bone fragments, of a combined weight of 151g, was recovered from six deposits. The state of preservation of the material was generally fair, although extremely fragmentary; only 2 of the items recovered were complete.

Table 3: Faunal remains per context by species and type

| Context | Identification | Type | No. of Items | Weight (g) | Comments |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1/04 | Small mammal | Rib | 1 | 4 | Chop/slice mark |
| | ?Pig | Lumbar vertebra | 1 | 38 | Saw mark |
| | Hare | Humerus | 1 | <1 | |
| 1/05 | Small mammal | Long bone diaphysis | 1 | 28 | Chop marks |
| | | Distal femur epiphysis | 1 | 2 | |
| | ?Sheep/Goat | Proximal femur epiphysis | 1 | 20 | Chop and slice marks. Unfused |
| | | Phalanx | 1 | 4 | Complete |
| 2/03 | ?Pig | Metacarpus | 2 | 4 | Unfused. Single individual |
| | ?Sheep/Goat | Distal humerus epiphysis | 1 | 10 | Chop mark |
| | Small bird | Femur | 1 | <1 | Complete |
| 3/02 | ?Sheep/Goat | Proximal ulna epiphysis | 1 | 14 | Chop marks |
| 4/01 | Small mammal | Rib | 1 | <1 | |
| 5/01 | Small mammal | Long bone diaphysis | 1 | 24 | Chop and ?blade insertion marks |
| Total | | | 14 | 151 | |

Eight of the remains, representing over 57% of the assemblage, were identified on the basis of the observation of *Genus*-specific characteristics. The remaining 6 examples were attributed to ‘small mammal’ (sheep/goat, pig, roe deer) or ‘small bird’ of undetermined species (O’Connor 2003) exclusively on the basis of the size range of the fragments. Due to the variable sizes and robustness of animal bones taphonomic factors may favour preservation of certain species, resulting in the under-representation of other, smaller animals (Kasumally 2002).

Sheep/Goat was the most represented *taxa*, with 4 items; 3 of the recovered bones were identified as pig, while a single example was positively identified as hare. One item belonged to a small bird of unidentified species.

Butchering marks including chops, slices and a possible blade insertion marks were observed on half of the assemblage.

It is not recommended to retain the animal bone due to its very limited potential for further analysis.

Oyster Shell

Two oyster shells, of a combined weight of 32g, were recovered from deposit 1/05. The items were positively identified as right valves of British Native Oyster or European Flat Oyster (Winder 2011).

It is not recommended to retain the oyster shell fragments due to their small quantity and very limited potential for further analysis.

5.4 Stone

Tile

A small group of 8 fragments of stone objects, weighing 3652g in total, was found in two deposits, (3/02) and (5/01). The items are largely fragmentary and did not

preserve any diagnostic feature; however, their general aspect suggests the items possibly originated from tiles.

Slate

A single fragment of slate, weighing 12g and measuring 61mm in length, was found in deposit (3/01). The item, although extremely fragmentary, was in a fair state of preservation.

The object, while incomplete and lacking diagnostic features, is likely to have originated from a roofing tile. The use of slate tiles as roofing material, though known since at least the Roman period, became common in the Post-Medieval period, and particularly the 19th century. The item found at Box remains undated.

It is not recommended to retain the slate tile fragment, due to its very limited potential for further analysis.

5.5 Metalwork

Iron

A single iron object was recovered from deposit (1/05). The item weighed 24g; its original function remains undetermined due to its extreme oxidation, which obliterated any diagnostic feature.

The iron object is not recommended for retention due to its unstable conditions and extremely limited potential for further analysis.

Copper Alloy

Deposit (1/05) contained one fragmentary copper alloy flat strip, weighing 2g and measuring 55mm in length, 22mm in width and less than 1mm in thickness. No decoration was observed. The function and dating of the object remain undetermined.

It is not recommended to retain the copper alloy object due to its limited potential for further analysis.

5.6 Miscellaneous

Tesserae

A group of nine mosaic tesserae, of a combined weight of 36g, was collected from two different deposits. Seven of the objects were made of dark grey stone; one was made of reddish stone, while a single example was cut from a flat tile of a light orange fabric. All of the items preserved traces of mortar.

Five of the stone examples collected from deposit (3/02) were virtually identical, cubical, with all sides measuring 10mm; these objects were probably used in a monochrome floor design or, considering the exceptionally small dimensions of the pieces, in an *opus vermiculatum*. The remaining items were less regular, measuring between 13 and 20mm in length and made of different types of material.

A single example of the larger tesserae was found in deposit (2/04), a possible occupation layer, while the vast majority of the items was collected from deposit (3/02), the fill of a cut possibly connected recent gardening activities.

Wall Plaster

Eight fragments of wall plaster were collected during the excavation of Trial Pit 3. One additional example was found in possible occupation layer (2/04). The objects were very likely to date to the Roman period.

Six of the items presented coloured paint on the surface, preserved to various degrees. One of the examples from deposit (3/04) showed a possible banded or geometric, red/white decorative pattern. Among the items recovered from deposit (3/02), one presented a textured surface consisting in thin, parallel comb lines.

Table 4: Plaster fragments occurrence per context by type

| Context | Dimensions/thickness (mm) | Weight (g) | Description |
|--------------|---------------------------|------------|---|
| 2/04 | 52x44/18 | 42 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with a relatively smooth outer surface painted a dark red colour |
| 3/01 | 35x30/12 | 20 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with occasional inclusions. Roughly flattened outer surface. No traces of paint |
| | 47x35/18 | 26 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with smoothed outer surface. No traces of paint |
| 3/02 | 38x30/14 | 12 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with smoothed outer surface with degraded dark red paint |
| | 21x13/14 | 2 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with smoothed outer surface with degraded dark red paint |
| | 55x45/13 | 32 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with frequent small inclusions. Smoothed, off-white outer surface with thin, parallel comb lines |
| 3/04 | 60x55/40 | 106 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with very frequent small inclusions. Smooth outer surface painted a dark red colour |
| | 58x45/27 | 68 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with very frequent small inclusions. Smooth outer surface painted off-white colour with a dark red band |
| | 42x34/19 | 22 | Coarse textured, light coloured plaster with occasional small inclusions. Smooth outer surface painted a light pink colour |
| Total | | 330 | |

Glass

18 fragments of glass, of a combined weight of 124g, were recovered during the excavation. The material, fairly preserved although largely fragmentary, included examples of bottle, drinking glass, vessel, and window pane, dating between the Victorian and the Modern period.

Table 5: Glass occurrence by number and weight (g) of shards per context by vessel

| Context | Type | Colour | No. of Items | Weight (g) | Date Range | Comments |
|---------|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1/04 | Vessel | Light aqua | 1 | 44 | Modern | Part of base preserved |
| | ? Drinking glass | Clear | 1 | 2 | ?Victorian to Modern | Rim preserved |
| 1/05 | Window glass | Clear | 4 | 12 | Modern | |
| | Bottle | Amber | 2 | 28 | Modern | Conjoining |
| | ?Drinking | Clear | 1 | <1 | ?Victorian to | Geometric |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-------|----|-----|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | glass | | | | Modern | etched decoration. Rim preserved |
| 2/01 | Vessel | Clear | 1 | 2 | Modern | |
| 2/03 | Window glass | Clear | 1 | 6 | Modern | |
| | Fire polished bottle finish | Clear | 1 | 10 | Victorian to Modern | |
| | ?Plate | Clear | 1 | <1 | ?Victorian to Modern | |
| 5/01 | Window glass | Clear | 5 | 28 | Modern | |
| Total | | | 18 | 124 | | |

It is not recommended to retain the glass fragments due to their incompleteness and very limited potential for further analysis.

Clay Tobacco Pipe

Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem, weighing 6g in total, were collected from two different deposits. The example found in deposit (1/05) measured 40mm in length, while the item recovered from deposit (2/03) measured 60mm and presented traces of burning. No decorations or marks were observed, and the mouthpieces were not preserved; furthermore, the fragmentary state of the objects precludes any attempt to reconstruct the original overall length or attempt a dating.

Unmarked stem fragments without diagnostic features or decorations have very little dating value, and can only generally be assigned to the Post-Medieval period.

The clay tobacco pipe stem is not recommended for retention, due to its extremely limited potential for further analysis.

Coke

One fragment of coke, weighing 50g, was hand-collected from made ground/levelling deposit (2/03). Derived from coal, coke is a fuel with high carbon content, used in Britain from the Late Medieval period.

The coke fragment is not recommended for retention due to its very limited potential for further analysis.

6 DISCUSSION

Trial pits TP1, TP2 and TP5, excavated within the garden of The Wilderness, revealed thick layers of garden soil and levelling deposits approximately 1m in total depth, built up against the south-eastern side of the wall. (1/01 - 1/04), (2/01 - 2/02) and (5/01 - 5/02) are most likely to be the imported material by the previous owner of The Wilderness. (1/05), (2/03) and (5/03) were garden deposits at the time of the boundary wall construction. This additional material increasing weight on one side of the wall has probably resulted in the partial collapse of the wall.

Intact archaeological deposits were encountered below the garden soil and levelling deposits at depths of 1.03 to 1.24m below ground level. Within TP1, TP2 and TP5, the archaeological horizon comprised a sandy bedding surface, perhaps associated with a previously removed floor. No structural features were recorded. The base of the boundary wall footing was encountered at 1 to 1.1m below present ground level

and was seen to have been constructed directly on or just above the underlying Roman deposits.

On the north-west side of the wall, within the garden of 1 Valens Terrace, were trial pits TP3 and TP4. In TP3 a compact rubble deposit was encountered immediately below the boundary wall footing. In TP4 a dump of loose rubble was encountered; this appeared to sit within a cut, perhaps associated with the known buttress walling in this area, suggesting that the Roman wall has been robbed for its stone. In both trenches the base of the boundary wall footing was located at or just below current ground level.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site record

Physical record

Finds

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Museum with accession number DZSWS:40-2020.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, B J and Crabtree, P J, 2008 *Comparative Skeletal Anatomy. A Photographic Atlas for Medical Examiners, Coroners, Forensic Anthropologists, and Archaeologists*. Humana Press, Totowa, NJ.

Aultman J, Galle J 2014, *DAACS Cataloging Manual: Faunal* (<http://www.daacs.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/faunal1.pdf> accessed 24/07/2015)

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*.

Hurst, H R, Dartnall, D L and Fisher, C, 1987, Excavations at Box Roman villa, 1967-8, *Wiltshire Archaeol Nat Hist Mag* 81, 19-51

Kausmally T, Western A G, 2002 *Excavation of Faunal Skeletal Remains from Archaeological Sites*. BAJR Practical Guide 4.

Lindsey, B., 2020 *Historic Glass Bottle Identification & Information Website* (<http://www.sha.org/bottle/index.htm>, accessed 02/12/2020)

O'Connor, T P 2003 *The Analysis of Urban Animal Bone Assemblages: A Handbook for the Archaeologists*. The Archaeology of York Volume 19: Principles and Methods

Seetah K, 2009 *The importance of cut placement and implement signatures to butchery interpretation* (<http://www2.arch.cam.ac.uk/~ks354/conferences.html> accessed 17/07/2015)

Vince, A G, 1984 Late Saxon and medieval pottery in Gloucestershire, in A Saville (ed.) *Archaeology in Gloucestershire. From the Earliest Hunters to the Industrial Age*, 248-75

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

Printable version

OASIS ID: johnmoor1-409819

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | The Wilderness, Box, Corsham, Wiltshire |
| Short description of the project | John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at The Wilderness, Church Lane, Box, Wiltshire (NGR ST 82331 68561). The five evaluation test pits were hand dug to a depth that would establish the depth of intact archaeological deposits known to survive below the raised garden level. The depth of the Roman archaeological horizon was seen to begin approximately 1-1.3m below the current ground level on the SE side of the wall. The ground level was lower on the NW side and there appeared to be fewer archaeological deposits surviving. |
| Project dates | Start: 23-11-2020 End: 24-11-2020 |
| Previous/future work | Yes / Not known |
| Any associated project reference codes | 1019189 - SM No. |
| Any associated project reference codes | BXCL 20 - Sitecode |
| Any associated project reference codes | 4343 - Contracting Unit No. |
| Any associated project reference codes | DZSWS:40-2020 - Museum accession ID |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | Scheduled Monument (SM) |
| Current Land use | Residential 1 - General Residential |
| Monument type | ROMAN VILLA Roman |
| Significant Finds | TESSERAE Roman |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Medieval |
| Significant Finds | POTTERY Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | TILE Roman |
| Methods & techniques | ""Test Pits"" |
| Development type | Estate management (i.e. maintenance of existing structures and landscape by capital works and on-going maintenance) |
| Prompt | National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF |

Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country England
 Site location WILTSHIRE NORTH WILTSHIRE BOX The Wilderness, Box
 Postcode SN13 8NR
 Study area 30 Square metres
 Site coordinates ST 82331 68561 51.415297700979 -2.254103683595 51 24 55 N 002 15 14 W Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 44m Max: 45m

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Moore Heritage Services
 Project brief originator Client
 Project design originator JMHS
 Project director/manager John Moore
 Project supervisor Tom Rose-Jones
 Project supervisor Stephanie Duensing
 Type of sponsor/funding body client
 Name of sponsor/funding body Client

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Wiltshire Museum
 Physical Archive ID DZSWS:40-2020
 Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","other"
 Digital Archive recipient Wiltshire Museum
 Digital Archive ID DZSWS:40-2020
 Digital Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal","Stratigraphic","other"
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Text"
 Paper Archive recipient Wiltshire Museum
 Paper Archive ID DZSWS:40-2020
 Paper Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal","Stratigraphic","other"
 Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT THE WILDERNESS, CHURCH LANE
BOX, WILTSHIRE SN13 8NR

Author(s)/Editor(s) Duensing, S.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Denis, S.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Rose-Jones, T.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Moore, J.

Other bibliographic details JMHS report no.4343

Date 2020

Issuer or publisher John Moore Heritage Services

Place of issue or publication Wheatley

Description A4 pdf

Entered by Simona Denis (simonadenis@hotmail.it)

Entered on 4 December 2020

OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

© ADS 1996-2012 Created by [Jo Gilham](#) and [Jen Mitcham](#), email Last modified Wednesday 9 May 2012

Cite only: <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm> for this page

[Cookies](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Context | Type | Description | Depth | Width | Length | Finds | Interpretation | Date |
|--------------------|---------|---|--------|-------|--------|-------------------|--|----------|
| TRIAL PIT 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 1/01 | Deposit | Blackish brown sandy silt (loam), no inclusions | 0.1m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Topsoil | Mod |
| 1/02 | Deposit | Blackish brown clayey silt (loam), frequent rectangular gravel, <0.02m diameter | 0.12m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Garden soil - likely the same as (1/03) | Mod |
| 1/03 | Deposit | Greyish brown clayey silt (loam), frequent rectangular small stones, <0.02m diameter. | 0.2m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Garden soil - likely the same as (1/02) | Mod |
| 1/04 | Deposit | Light yellowish brown friable, sandy silt with common inclusions of small stones, <0.02m diameter. | 0.08m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Levelling/made ground possibly associated with previous excavations. | Mod |
| 1/05 | Deposit | Dark greyish brown sandy silt with frequent inclusions of charcoal and small stones, <0.02m diameter. | 0.42m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Levelling/made ground possibly associated with previous excavations. | Mod |
| 1/06 | Deposit | Light yellowish brown friable, sandy silt with common inclusions of small stones, <0.02m diameter. | >0.11m | >1m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Archaeological horizon | RB? |
| 1/07 | Masonry | Garden wall | - | 0.52m | - | n/a | Boundary wall | Post-med |
| 1/08 | Cut | Linear cut | >0.11m | >1m | >1m | n/a | Cut for archaeological horizon 1/06 | RB? |
| 1/09 | Deposit | Mid-yellowish brown silty gravel | - | | | n/a | Natural | n/a |
| TRIAL PIT 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 2/01 | Deposit | Dark brown sandy silt (loam), frequent inclusions of small stones/gravels. | 0.40m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Topsoil | Mod |
| 2/02 | Deposit | Dark-mid greyish brown clayey silt (loam), frequent inclusions of gravels. | 0.13m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Garden soil | Mod |
| 2/03 | Deposit | Friable dark-mid greyish brown silty clay, frequent stone/gravel. | 0.3m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Levelling/made ground | Mod |
| 2/04 | Deposit | Light-yellowish brown clayey sand with very frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks | 0.2m | >1m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Intact archaeological horizon | RB? |
| 2/05 | Masonry | Garden wall | - | 0.52m | - | n/a | Boundary wall | Post-med |
| 2/06 | Cut | Linear cut | - | 0.52m | - | n/a | ?Builder's cut for wall 2/05 | Post-med |

| TRIAL PIT 3 | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|---|-------|--------|-----|-------------------|--|-----------------|
| 3/01 | Deposit | Friable dark greyish brown clayey silt, rare stone up to >0.02m diameter | 0.24m | >1m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Topsoil | Mod |
| 3/02 | Deposit | Friable mid-greyish brown gravelly silt, up to >0.02m diameter | 0.21m | 0.38m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Fill of 3/03 | Mod |
| 3/03 | Cut | Linear, parallel to boundary wall on N | 0.21m | 0.38m | >1m | n/a | Repair trench? for wall or planting | Mod |
| 3/04 | Deposit | Mid-yellowish brown gravelly silt with frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks | 0.44m | >0.56m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Fill of builder's trench 3/05, redeposited natural | Post-med |
| 3/05 | Cut | Linear, parallel to boundary wall on N | 0.44m | >0.56m | >1m | n/a | Builders trench for wall | Post-med |
| 3/06 | Masonry | Garden wall | - | 0.52m | - | n/a | Boundary wall | Post-med |
| TRIAL PIT 4 | | | | | | | | |
| 4/01 | Deposit | Friable dark greyish brown clayey silt, occasional stone up to >0.03m diameter | 0.42m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Topsoil/levelling/garden soil | Mod |
| 4/02 | Deposit | Friable dark greyish brown clayey silt, rare stone 0.02-0.08m diameter | 0.38m | >1m | >1m | Glass, metal, CBM | Fill of 4/03 | Mod |
| 4/03 | Cut | Poss. Sub-rounded pit or wide cut, irregular in plan, unclear. | 0.6m | >1m | >1m | n/a | Possible repair trench or pit for wall | Mod |
| 4/04 | Masonry | Garden wall | - | 0.52m | - | n/a | Boundary wall | Post-med |
| 4/05 | Deposit | Rubble, cut masonry from wall 4/04 | 0.36m | >1m | >1m | n/a | Rubble, base of 4/03 | Mod |
| 4/06 | Deposit | Mid-yellowish brown gravelly silt with frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks | 0.03m | >0.3m | >1m | n/a | Possible occupation layer or construction layer associated with wall | unk |
| TRIAL PIT 5 | | | | | | | | |
| 5/01 | Deposit | Dark greyish brown, sandy silt (loam) rare stone up to 2cm diameter | 0.6m | >1m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Topsoil | Mod |
| 5/02 | Deposit | Mid-dark greyish brown, clayey silt occasional stone up to 3cm diameter | 0.38m | >1m | >1m | Pottery/CBM | Garden soil | Mod |
| 5/03 | Deposit | Mid-greyish brown, clayey silt very common to frequent rubble up to 18cm diameter | 0.18m | 0.76m | >1m | n/a | Rubble | Mod |
| 5/04 | Deposit | Mid-yellowish brown gravelly silt with frequent small gravel inclusions and charcoal flecks | 0.24m | 0.7m | >1m | Pottery/CBM/ bone | Intact archaeological horizon | RB? |
| 5/05 | Cut | Linear, parallel to boundary wall on S | 0.24m | 0.7m | >1m | n/a | Cut of previous archaeological work or repair trench for wall | Mod to Post-med |
| 5/06 | Deposit | Mid-yellowish brown silty gravel | 0.21m | >0.06m | >1m | n/a | Natural or redeposited natural | |
| 5/07 | Masonry | Garden wall | - | 0.52m | - | n/a | Boundary wall | Post-med |