



Land at Station Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire

Report on an Archaeological Strip and Record





**TESCO, STATION ROAD,
TIDWORTH,
WILTSHIRE**

Archaeological Strip and Record

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**TESCO, STATION ROAD,
TIDWORTH,
WILTSHIRE****Archaeological Strip and Record****Contents**

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**TESCO, STATION ROAD,
TIDWORTH,
WILTSHIRE****Archaeological Strip and Record****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology (London) was commissioned by Paul Keywood of Burnett Planning and Development Limited (Client Agent) on behalf of Tesco Stores/Santon Group (the Client), to undertake a programme of archaeological works in fulfilment of an archaeological condition placed on planning consent for the archaeological stripping and recording of an area of land at Station Road, Tidworth (The Site).

The Site, located to the south of Station Road, is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 423729 148332.

The excavation was undertaken following an archaeological evaluation in 2005 and in advance of proposed development of the site as a Tesco supermarket. Following the excavation, a watching brief was undertaken during the topsoil strip of the remainder of the site during the initial groundworks phase of the site development. This report details the results of both phases of the works.

The strip and record exercise focused on two areas (Areas 1 and 2) that had been identified as having potential for archaeological deposits following the results of the evaluation undertaken in 2005 (Wessex Archaeology reference 60470). Subsequent areas, not numbered individually, were stripped as a result of the discoveries made in these areas.

At the completion of the works a total of twenty seven undated postholes were discovered on the Site, of which ten were located in Area 1, and nine in Area 2, whilst the remainder were scattered across the Site, several tree-throws were also noted.

Within Area 2 the archaeological investigation excavated and recorded the terminus of a ditch dated by its pottery assemblage to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, an undated animal (cow) burial and a crouched human burial. Although undated by its association with the surrounding features and its nature of disposition it is though the child burial dates to the prehistoric period.

A very small collection of worked flint and unworked burnt flint was recovered from across the Site and this density and type of assemblage is consistent with a background of widespread prehistoric activity on Salisbury Plain.

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Archaeological Strip and Record

Acknowledgements

The programme of archaeological works and this report was commissioned by Paul Keywood of Burnett Planning and Development Limited (Client Agent) on behalf of Tesco Stores/Santon Group (the Client) Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Paul for his support during the fieldwork.

Wessex Archaeology would also like to acknowledge the co-operation and assistance of the site staff from Costain, in particular Kevin Lyons, who carried out the machine-stripping and associated ground works at the Site.

We would also like to thank Ms Sue Farr (Wiltshire County Archaeological Service) for monitoring the works.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Peter Reeves. The fieldwork was directed by Steve George with the assistance of Sian Reynolds, Dave Murdie, Dave Parry and Emiliano Trufino. Ruth Panes surveyed the Site.

The plant remains were assessed by Dr Chris J. Stevens. The finds were analysed by Lorraine Mephram with specialist contributions for the animal bones by Jessica M. Grimm and the human bones by Jacqueline McKinley.

This report was compiled by Peter Reeves with the assistance of Steve George. The illustrations were produced by Elizabeth James.

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Archaeological Strip and Record

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Paul Keywood of Burnett Planning and Development Limited (Client Agent) on behalf of Tesco Stores/Santon Group (the Client) to undertake archaeological investigation on land located to the south of Station Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 423729 148332 (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 This report collates the results of the strip and record exercise and subsequent watching brief.
- 1.1.3 These phases of fieldwork were the second stage of archaeological works on the Site and followed on from an archaeological evaluation carried out in 2005 (Wessex Archaeology, Reference 60470).

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 An Outline Planning Application was lodged with and approved by Kennet District Council for the development of a Tesco food store (K/52550/0). Wiltshire Libraries & Heritage Service advised that, due to the archaeological potential of this site, as revealed in a previous archaeological evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2005) an archaeological strip, map and record exercise should be undertaken between two of the previous trenches (Trenches 6 and 8). The archaeological work was stipulated as a condition of planning consent.
- 1.2.2 The disturbance of archaeological deposits during the development is a material consideration within the planning process. PPG16, paragraph 18 states:
- Developers and local authorities should take into account archaeological considerations and deal with them from the beginning of the development control process.*
- 1.2.3 The works were carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Wessex Archaeology (Reference 60471.01) which was approved by Wiltshire County Council Archaeology Service prior to commencement of the work.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The Site is centred on NGR 423729 148332, and is defined to the north by Station Road. To the east and west the site is bounded by properties fronting Ashdown

Terrace and Park Road respectively. Throughout the duration of the fieldwork the Site was fenced and secure from public intrusion (**Figure 1**).

- 2.1.2 The Site is presently occupied by open grassed parkland. A number of semi-mature trees surround an electrical sub-station near the Site's centre.

2.2 Topography and Geology

- 2.2.1 The southern part of the site is relatively level however the northern part has a deceptively gentle slope from east to west, the ground actually drops from c120 m aOD in the east to c112m aOD in the west.

- 2.2.2 The underlying geology is mapped as Cretaceous Upper Chalk, however the previous evaluation (Reference 60470) showed that the Site is actually underlain by a mantle of periglacially striped soliflucted Coombe Deposit of unknown thickness. Deposits dating from the beginning of the Pleistocene to Recent, consisting of Clay-with-Flints cap Warren Hill some 500 m to the east of the Site and similarly dated river gravels occupy the valley of the River Bourne c110m to the west (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1975).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The site lies within an area of archaeological interest. A bowl barrow has been recorded east of the site, and prehistoric pottery was recovered in adjacent fields amidst an undated (but probably prehistoric) field-system (S.Farr, pers.comm). Extant earthwork features have been noted in woodland to the east and the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record (WSMR) records the discovery of a medieval equal-armed cross within the Site itself.

- 3.1.2 An archaeological trial trenching evaluation was undertaken on the Site in the summer of 2005 (Wessex Archaeology Ref. 60470).

- 3.1.3 The evaluation revealed only slight evidence for previous human activity. Two groups of postholes found in trenches 6 and 8 indicated potential for structural remains to survive. The burnt flint and struck flint flakes found in association with these features suggest these may have been of archaeological significance, and were possibly of prehistoric origin. Within the constraints of the trial-trenching programme, however, neither the date, the relationship of the features to colluvial subsoil, nor the wider context of the remains could be established with any certainty.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The principal aims of the strip, map and record were to:

- Characterise the nature, date, extent and state of preservation of underlying archaeological deposits.
- Determine whether the groups of postholes discovered during the previous evaluation extended beyond the limits of trenches 6 and 8.
- To determine whether the two groups of postholes were linked and whether they were associated with any other structures that have not previously been recorded.

- 4.1.2 The results of the strip, map and record were used to inform decisions regarding any possible further requirement for mitigation during or in advance of further construction. The results obtained in the designated strip areas were used to justify the requirement for a watching brief in other areas of the Site where similar deposits were to be removed as part of the development.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1.1 A broad summary of the methods employed are described below as well as any significant variation or clarification of the agreed methodology.
- 5.1.2 The Site was stripped using a mechanical tracked excavator with a toothless bucket under continual archaeological supervision. The machining was discontinued at the level of archaeological deposits and features or the natural geology, whichever was encountered sooner.
- 5.1.3 All features and deposits were surveyed using GPS survey equipment with all features located with 12-figure Ordnance Survey coordinates and heights (m aOD) to 3 decimal places.
- 5.1.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system.
- 5.1.5 All site plans were drawn at a minimum scale of 1:100, detail plans at 1:20, and sections were drawn at 1:10.
- 5.1.6 A full photographic record was maintained using colour transparencies, black and white negatives (on 35mm film) and digital format. The photographic record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features, finds excavated, and the Site as a whole.
- 5.1.7 Monitoring by Sue Farr, Archaeological Officer, Wiltshire County Council Archaeological Services determined that due to the results observed in the two target areas further areas required investigation which, in line with the Aims and Objectives of the project (paragraph 4.1.2 above) resulted in a Watching Brief covering the rest of the ground works being requested.

5.2 Finds Collection and Retention

- 5.2.1 All Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2001), the UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines *Conservation Guideline No 2* and the Museums and Galleries Commission's *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (1991), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 5.2.2 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date. No finds were, however, discarded without the prior approval of the BCAS. In such circumstances, sufficient artefacts were retained in order to elucidate the date and/or function of the feature or deposit.
- 5.2.3 All retained artefacts were, as a minimum, washed, weighed, counted and identified. Any artefacts requiring conservation or specific storage conditions were dealt with immediately in line with *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neal, 1998).
- 5.2.4 Wiltshire County Council Archaeological Services have been consulted concerning conditions and arrangement for the deposition of finds and the archive.

5.3 Environmental Sampling

- 5.3.1 A strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits was developed in consultation with Wessex Archaeology's environmental Department and was set out in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology, 2006).

5.4 The Archive

- 5.4.1 The project archive, covering all phases of archaeological work, is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology (London) under the Wessex Archaeology project code WA 60471.
- 5.4.2 The project archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (UKIC 1990).
- 5.4.3 The resulting archive will be put onto microfiche to the standards accepted by the National Monuments Record (NMR).
- 5.4.4 Following the conclusion of the project and with the permission of the landowner the archive will be prepared for deposition with the Salisbury Museum.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The text below summarises the results of the archaeological investigation. The results are presented by area followed by a narrative of the Watching Brief. The first section contains information relating to the natural deposits encountered across the Site.
- 6.1.2 All identified features, excavated or not, are illustrated on **Figure 2**, the human burial is illustrated in **Figure 3** and the animal burial in **Figure 4**.
- 6.1.3 Detailed summaries of the archaeological features and deposits are presented in **Appendix 1** and full details are available in the project archive.
- 6.1.4 The finds assemblage from the evaluation is discussed in **Section 7** and the palaeo-environmental assessment is contained within **Section 8** of this report.
- 6.1.5 In the following sections context numbers are given in bold.

6.2 Natural deposits and soil sequence

- 6.2.1 A thin topsoil (**01**) of uniform depth, c. 0.2 to 0.25m, was observed across all areas of the Site. The layer was characterised by a mid brown, heavy, loam with occasional sub-rounded and sub angular chalk fragments (<40mm). Inclusions included very occasional fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material (cbm), as well as charcoal flecks, clinker and post-medieval/modern ceramics. The eastern area of the Site contained modern debris relating to the dismantling of Second World War era air raid shelters that had been buried.
- 6.2.2 The B horizon "sub soil" (**02**)/(**04**) (ca. 0.2 -0.3m thick) across all areas comprised firm, moderately stony light brown calcareous silt, becoming increasingly mixed and flecked with chalk and small nodules of flint toward its base. This layer represents gradual accumulation of colluvial hillwash deposits and gradually thickened from east to west across the Site, conforming to the natural topography.
- 6.2.3 In all areas of the Site, observed either during the targeted stripping or throughout the course of the Watching Brief, were underlain by late Pleistocene soliflucted Coombe Deposit. This typically comprised rubbly and fragmentary chalk and flint

nodules (often thermally cracked) in a variable matrix of pale brown calcareous clay-silt. The thermal cracking is most likely due to agricultural burning or is a result of previous grassfires as no evidence was found indicating direct human interaction with the affected flint.

- 6.2.4 The upper weathered surface of the Coombe Deposit was commonly marked by irregular periglacial stripes of buff silty loam. Coombe deposits can achieve a depth of many metres and therefore no attempt was made to determine the depth of material before the underlying surface of the solid (unaffected) Chalk was reached.

6.3 Archaeological features

- 6.3.1 The archaeological strip and record was focused around undated features of unknown function revealed in the previous archaeological evaluation (Wessex Archaeology Reference 60470). As a result of the findings made on the stripped areas, and following a monitoring visit by Sue Farr, a Watching Brief was imposed upon the Site. The results obtained from these two distinct phases of work are described below.

6.4 Area 1

- 6.4.1 Area 1 was positioned over the eastern end of Trench 8 excavated in the previous evaluation. Two postholes of potential prehistoric date had previously been identified and had the potential to be part of either a land boundary or a structure.
- 6.4.2 The opening of an area around the previous investigation was requested with a view to determining whether these two postholes did in fact form part of a structure. The new intervention also aimed to determine whether dateable material could be found in association with either the known features or any new features/deposits that might be exposed.
- 6.4.3 An irregular square shaped area, measuring approximately 20 x 20m, was stripped under constant archaeological supervision with a JCB using a toothless ditching, or grading, bucket. A strip, measuring 5m in width, running north east to south west was retained to protect an underlying high voltage power cable (**Figure 2**).
- 6.4.4 In total nine postholes of varying size were recorded within this area. All the postholes were sub-oval in shape with vertical sides and survived as cuts with a depth of 0.15m below the surface of the Coombe deposit.
- 6.4.5 Four of the postholes ([**103**], [**105**], [**107**], [**109**]) located in the southwest corner of the site appear to form a rectangular structure of uncertain function measuring approximately 4 x 2m. Postholes (**103**) and (**105**) correspond to postholes (**805**) and (**803**), respectively, which were found in the previous evaluation. A single flake of worked flint of un-diagnostic date was retrieved from (**109**).
- 6.4.6 Two fragments of burnt flint were retrieved from postholes [**106**] and [**117**].
- 6.4.7 No datable finds were recovered from any of the overlying deposits in this area.

6.5 Area 2

- 6.5.1 Area 2 was located over the south east end of Trench 6, excavated in the previous evaluation. The request for further intervention was based on the same aims set out for Area 1.

- 6.5.2 It had also been noted from the previous fieldwork that this area lay immediately adjacent to a change in slope. To the north of the area to be investigated, the ground surface was fairly level whereas to the south the level fell quite sharply forming a south facing slope.
- 6.5.3 The previous evaluation recorded three postholes, 603, 605 and 607, in a cluster at the end of the trench.
- 6.5.4 Under constant archaeological supervision an area measuring approximately 20 x 20m was stripped using a JCB and toothless ditching bucket. A 5m wide corridor was retained in the north east corner of the square to protect a high voltage cable running beneath the Site.
- 6.5.5 As a result of the features observed following the initial stripping and recording of the area an extension to the south, to the break of slope, was requested. The additional area retained the original 20m in width (east to west) and was extended 10 m to the south. All the features recorded are described below and illustrated on **Figure 2**.
- 6.5.6 In total seventeen postholes were recorded in this area, all were oval or sub-oval in plan and of similar profile and depth.
- 6.5.7 Three groups of cut features excavated in this area, a row of post holes (Group **173**), a ditch (**175**) and a grave (**170**) containing a crouched human burial (**171**) appear to be spatially related to each other, however no dating material was retrieved from the site to either support or refute this supposition. Specifically the ditch and row of postholes run parallel to each other and although assumed to be contemporary no dating evidence was retrieved to support this assumption. Several tree throws were also uncovered in this area. These features are illustrated at a larger scale on the left of **Figure 2**.
- 6.5.8 Group **173**, interpreted as a fence line, consists of ten equally spaced postholes aligned north to south and running parallel to a ditch [**175**] located approximately 5 metres to the east. The two postholes at the northern end of this row [**135**] and [**138**] clearly showed in section the remains of a post-pipe surrounded with deliberate backfill. This would appear to indicate that the posts occupying these holes were allowed to decay in situ. One un-diagnostic flake of worked flint was recovered from the backfill (**136**) of post hole [**135**], no other datable material was recovered from this group of postholes.
- 6.5.9 The Ditch [**175**] aligned north to south was recorded over a distance of 20 metres. The northern end finished in a rounded terminus, the presence of a high voltage cable located to the south of the area prevented further investigation. Archaeological intervention beyond the southern margin of area 2 was not required as this part of the site was to be land raised.
- 6.5.10 The terminus and two sections were excavated across the ditch. The feature, U shaped and flat bottomed in profile, had a fairly uniform depth of c. 0.35m, a surviving surface width of c. 0.8m narrowing to a c. 0.4m wide base. The ditch contained a single fill (**134**) which, with the absence of distinct tip lines and the uniformity of the soil matrix, suggests that the feature was allowed to gradually silt up.
- 6.5.11 The artefact assemblage recovered from the excavations within the ditch consisted of animal bone, burnt flint and worked flint. Three sherds of sandy/flint tempered pottery recovered from within the ditch fill have a probable date of Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age.

- 6.5.12 A Grave (171) was located close to the northern end of the line of postholes, Group [173], 1.2 metres to the south of posthole [135]. The grave cut was only identified after archaeological cleaning of the area following mechanical stripping.
- 6.5.13 The grave (170) was extremely shallow, only 0.13 metres deep, and ovoid in plan 0.95 metres long and 0.70 metres wide (**Figures 2 and 3**). The edges of the cut and the base are very irregular and, combined with the shallow depth, suggests that it was excavated quickly.
- 6.5.14 The cut contained a single, badly truncated, tightly flexed burial of an adult (171) over 35 years of age, and possibly female. The body was laid on its left side facing north, with the knees drawn up close to the chest. The arms were positioned with the elbows at the sides, with the right hand resting upon the knee.
- 6.5.15 A search of the material stripped from above the grave cut yielded two pieces of human bone. Due to the diligence of the archaeologist watching the stripping, the thorough search of the removed material, and the 'weathered' nature of the breaks on the bones within the feature, it is considered that elements of the skeleton that are absent were lost in antiquity.
- 6.5.16 Despite 100% excavation of the fill and samples of the soil above, below and around the skeleton no grave goods were found in association with the burial. Although no dateable material was retrieved through either excavation or processing of the environmental samples the method of burial and its positioning intimates at a prehistoric date, possibly Bronze Age.

6.6 Area 2 Extension

- 6.6.1 Following a Site monitoring visit a request was made to extend Area 2 to the south. The objective and the aims set for the extended area were,
- To determine whether the line of postholes (Group 173) continued beyond the line of features exposed in the completed area.
 - To determine whether the ditch (175) continued to the south beyond the edge of the completed area.
 - To ascertain whether additional burials that might be associated with the excavated inhumation (171) were present.
 - Due to the lack of any cut relationships between the three sets of features in the excavated area it was hoped that such a direct relationship that might put the features in a phased sequence could be established in the extended area.
 - Due to the lack of any reliable dating material in the features already excavated it was hoped that features in the extended area might provide artefacts that could be firmly assigned to a chronological period.
 - To place the features in context with one another, that is, were they linked in a set layout within the landscape or had 'chance' resulted in their spatial location and apparent association with one another.
- 6.6.2 Due to the discovery of the human inhumation in Area 2 the extension to the area was watched with greater scrutiny. However, no further human burials were observed although the line of postholes and the ditch were observed to continue south to the edge of excavation. The limit of excavation continued to the edge of development that would have an impact on any underlying deposits and therefore archaeological intervention was discontinued.

- 6.6.3 In addition to the continuation of the postholes and ditch another grave cut (**157**) was observed (**Figures 2** and **4**). The cut contained an almost complete cattle burial (**158**).
- 6.6.4 The animal burial (**158**) was located in the southwest corner of the extension to area 2. The cut (**157**) consisted of a sub-circular pit with its long north-south axis measuring 1.63 m at its maximum length, and its east-west axis measuring at its maximum 1.10m. The grave or pit maintained an average depth of 0.26 m and was filled with a single deposit (**156**).
- 6.6.5 The burial has been identified as the skeleton of a male cow, possibly an oxen aged between 3.5 to 9 years. The animal was placed in the pit with the hind legs curled up either side of the body, the front legs contracted. The head and neck were bent backwards over the body with the skull facing the tail.
- 6.6.6 Analysis in the laboratory found no evidence of butchery marks suggesting that the animal most probably died of natural causes.
- 6.6.7 No grave goods were found in association with the animal skeleton neither was dateable material recovered from the pit fill.
- 6.6.8 Due to the lack of dateable material and the absence of any cut relationships it is uncertain if the animal burial is contemporary with the postholes (located to the east), the ditch (also located to the east) and the human inhumation located to the north.

6.7 Watching Brief

- 6.7.1 Due to the discovery of the features found in Areas 1 and 2, a Watching Brief, to be maintained for the remainder of the topsoil strip, was requested by Wiltshire County Council Archaeology Service. Targeted areas, outlined in blue on **Figures 1** and **2**, were monitored under constant archaeological supervision. As no features of antiquity were found in these areas they were not allocated separate numbers.
- 6.7.2 An intermittent Watching Brief was maintained across the north east corner of the Site within the footprint of the proposed Tesco store (not illustrated). No archaeological features were observed in this area.
- 6.7.3 The Watching Brief noted numerous drainage features dating to the mid twentieth century and later. These features are most probably associated with the nearby housing to the east (Ashdown Terrace) or north (Station Road) of the site. Some of the services may also relate to temporary structures erected during the war when this open area was used as a marshalling yard by the U.S. Army prior to the D-Day Landings at the end of World War II.
- 6.7.4 Within the two areas to the west, near to Park Road, tree throws were noted, a similar pattern was observed in evaluation trenches excavated in this area in the previous year.

6.8 Undated

- 6.8.1 None of the tree throws were archaeologically excavated (**Figure 2**). The tree throws become more dominant to the west of the break of slope. Although not conclusively dated it is noted that the line of postholes (Group **173**) would appear to respect a line of tree throws.

7 FINDS

7.1.1 This section considers the finds recovered from all stages of fieldwork on the Site (Areas 1 and 2, and surface collections from the watching Brief Areas and spoil tips containing the stripped topsoil). The combined assemblage is of small size, and consists largely of animal bone and burnt flint, with other material types sparsely represented. The majority of the assemblage is of either later prehistoric date or undated material. However material dating to the Romano-British and Saxon periods is present. Condition of artefacts varies from fair to poor and the pottery sherds are generally small and abraded in nature.

7.1.2 The assemblage included two skeletons from *in situ* burials, one animal (**158**) and one human (**171**), neither of which was accompanied by datable finds. Other finds recovered include material of prehistoric, Romano-British and Saxon date.

7.1.3 All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and this information is presented in **Table 1**.

7.2 Pottery

7.2.1 Pottery provides the primary dating evidence for the Site. The condition of the pottery is noticeably poor – sherds have in general suffered a high level of surface and edge abrasion; this has in some instances hampered dating, and some identifications are less confidently given.

7.2.2 Of the sherds recovered none are diagnostic, which has hampered dating. Three sherds, one retrieved from context **132** and two from **134** have sandy/flint-tempered fabrics and are probably of later prehistoric date (Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age).

7.2.3 One greyware sherd from context **166** is certainly of Romano-British date; the other four sherds from the same context are in handmade sandy fabrics, some containing organic inclusions. The latter sherds are not chronologically distinctive – the fabric type could be of Saxon date, and this is supported by the presence in the same context of fragments of annular loomweight (see below), but the possibility that they could be of Early/Middle Iron Age date cannot be entirely ruled out.

7.2.4 A tiny sherd from context **130**, also in a sandy fabric, is either of Saxon or Iron Age date.

7.3 Fired Clay

7.3.1 Fragments of fired clay were retrieved from two contexts on site (**166** and **132**).

7.3.2 All of the fragments of fired clay retrieved from context **166** derive from an annular loomweight of Saxon date.

7.3.3 The fired clay fragments retrieved from context **132** are of unknown date and origin.

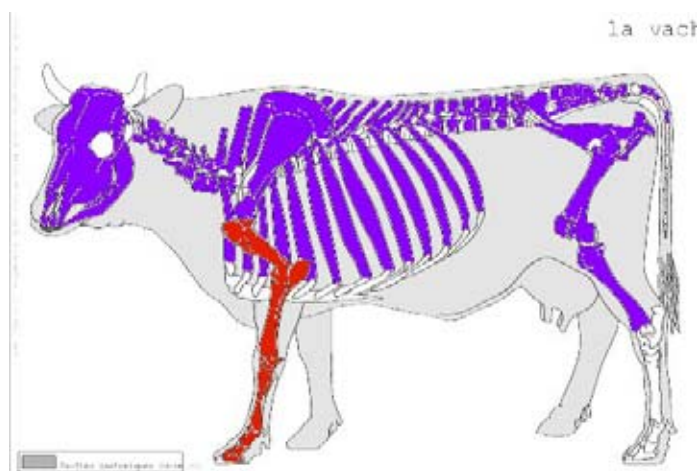
7.4 Worked and Burnt Flint

7.4.1 The flint assemblage was retrieved from all areas across the Site. The condition of the flint varied from pieces carrying relatively fresh fractures (machine derived) to others demonstrating slight edge damage. Most of the pieces are at least slightly patinated.

- 7.4.2 The worked flint assemblage consists almost entirely of waste flakes, with one fairly crudely made scraper. None of the material is closely datable, but flake morphology and technology (broad, squat flakes struck using a hard hammer technique) is suggestive of a Neolithic or Bronze Age date.
- 7.4.3 The burnt, unworked flint is even less susceptible to dating. This material type is frequently associated with prehistoric activity, and this may be the case here, since it generally occurred in the same contexts as the worked flint.
- 7.4.4 It should also be noted that natural grassland or agricultural burning may also cause localised reddening and cracking of flint beneath the ground surface.

7.5 Animal Bones

- 7.5.1 A very small assemblage of 22 hand collected bones and a cattle skeleton was found. The overall condition of the bone is poor with root etching deeply penetrating the bone.
- 7.5.2 Approximately half of the bone assemblage retrieved from the Site could be identified to species. Other than the cattle burial, of the 22 retrieved bones, six bones could be assigned to cattle and four to sheep/goat. Of the latter four one bone definitely belonged to sheep.
- 7.5.3 Context **157** contained the burial of an almost complete cattle skeleton (**158**). The animal was placed in a pit with its hind legs curled up on each side of the body, the front leg(s) contracted and the head bend backwards facing its tail.



Preservation of the cattle skeleton from context 158 (purple both sides, red right side)

- 7.5.4 Although not all parts of the animal are preserved (refer to the reference drawing above and to **Figure 4**), it is unlikely that the absent parts were removed prior to burial. The poor preservation of the skeleton suggests that these parts simply did not survive. The retrieved bone assemblage does not exhibit evidence of butchery marks suggesting the animal may have died of natural causes.
- 7.5.5 Analysis of skeleton suggests that the shape of the pelvis indicates a male animal. The permanent teeth have all erupted and the wear on the enamel is indicative an animal well over three-and-a-half years. The amount of wear observed on the incisors is suggestive of an even older animal of between six and nine years old. However, the epiphyses of the vertebrae as well as the proximal

epiphyses of ulna and tibia had clearly just fused. This would indicate an age of c 42-48 months (*ibid.*). The fact that epiphyses fuse later in castrated animals might indicate that the skeleton represents an ox. Alternatively, the animal ate very abrasive food making its teeth appear 'old'. The total length of the femur allowed for the calculation of an estimated height at the withers of 111 cm.

7.6 Human Bone

- 7.6.1 Unburnt human bone was recovered from two contexts including the remains of a crouched inhumation burial (171). The deposits are undated, but the grave (170) is likely to be prehistoric. The burial is illustrated in **Figure 3**.
- 7.6.2 The surface of the bone is heavily eroded as a result of root action; a common observation in bone retrieved from calcareous/chalk burial environments. The grave (170) survived only to a very shallow depth (0.09m) which probably largely explains the relatively low level of skeletal recovery (**Table 2**). Although some degree of disturbance was suffered during machine stripping of the site this would not explain the loss of some of the right, uppermost side of skeleton from the grave. An extensive search of the spoil removed from above the grave was undertaken and only two fragments of bone, with fresh fractures, were retrieved.
- 7.6.3 Laboratory analysis indicates that a minimum of one individual is represented. Some of the bone recovered from the search of the removed overlying subsoil (101) may have derived from the grave cut (170), however this is subject to speculation as neither of the breaks on the two bones retrieved from the subsoil join to breaks on the burial.
- 7.6.4 The poor condition and fragmentary nature of the bone affected the amount of metric data which can be recorded. The only observed pathological lesions were dental caries.
- 7.6.5 Currently the burial appears to represent a singleton, despite the extension of Area 2, where the burial was found, and the archaeological supervision of the adjacent areas no further burials were found.
- 7.6.6 Due to the lack of grave goods the date of the burial is currently unknown, the lack of a chronology for interment is compounded by the lack of dateable features in association with or having a direct stratigraphical relationship with the grave cut.
- 7.6.7 Although usually it is recommended that a radiocarbon date is obtained from the bone, when no other dateable material is available, for this example we would not promote such a procedure. The skeletal remains are in isolation with no evidence for the presence of a nearby settlement.

Table 1: All finds by context (number / weight in grammes)

Context	Animal Bone	Burnt Flint	Fired Clay	Worked Flint	Human Bone	Pottery
101					2/27	
106		1/59				
110				1/8		
118		1/20				
130						1/1
132	2/8	5/114	2/10	3/36		1/1
134	4/6	1/3		2/7		2/3
136				1/76		
154		5/82		6/82		
158	771/6861	1/20		2/49		
162	3/1					
163				1/3		
166	20/303	1/6	6/105	2/14		5/50
171					1 individual	
TOTALS	800/7179	15/304	8/115	18/275	1 indiv. + 2/27	9/55

Table 2: Summary of results from human bone assessment scan

context	cut	quantification	age/sex	pathology	condition
101		2 frags. (humerus & vault)	adult >18 yr.		heavily root eroded (4). Fresh breaks with no joins
171	170	c. 55%	adult >35 yr. ?female	caries	heavily root (4); some fresh breaks no joins (esp. right side).

8 PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

8.1 Aims

8.1.1 The Written scheme of investigation stated that in general deposits likely to contain information relating to diet, economy, environmental regime, site formation processes and/or dating evidence samples would be taken.

8.2 Palaeo-environmental Summary

8.2.1 There was no evidence for settlement in the form of charred cereal or other charred food remains in the sample taken from the animal burial.

8.3 Introduction and Environmental Samples Taken

8.3.1 Due to the lack of features containing suitable material bulk samples were only taken from the fill (156) of the cattle burial (158). These were taken to indicate the level of preservation and potential of the charred and charcoal remains and to assist in providing information upon the nature and levels of activity on Site during different periods of activity.

8.4 Assessment Results; Methods and Data

Charred Plant Remains and Charcoals

8.4.1 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997).

8.4.2 The flots was quite small and very rooty, reflecting the shallow nature of the deposit from which the sample was taken (0-0.25cm). The high numbers of roots and modern seeds can be taken as indicative of stratigraphic movement and possibly contamination of the deposit by later intrusive elements. The charred material was generally poorly preserved.

Charred plant remains

8.4.3 Charred plant remains were very sparse in the deposit and included one grain of barley (*Hordeum vulgare* sl), four unidentified cereal grains and one seed of probable bedstraw (*Galium* sp.). The cereal remains were very poorly preserved and given the amount of rooting could be reworked or intrusive.

8.4.4 None of the remains provide any indication as to the potential date of the deposit.

Charcoal

8.4.5 Little to no wood charcoal was noted in the flot and is recorded in.

8.5 Land and Fresh/Brackish Water Molluscs

8.5.1 During the processing of bulk soil samples for the recovery of charred remains, snails were noted, and recorded, in the flots following the nomenclature of Kerney (1999). The presence of these shells may aid in broadly characterising the nature of the wider landscape.

8.5.2 The sample contained large numbers of mollusc shells from varying habitats. From open country; *Helicella itala*, *Pupilla muscorum* *Vallonia* spp., *Vertigo* sp., and introduced Helicellids; from shaded habitats *Oxychilus* sp. *Ena obscura* *Carychium* sp., *Aegopinella* sp., and *Vitrea* sp.; and intermediate species *Trichia hispida* *Cochlicopa* spp. and *Cepaea* spp.

8.5.3 Introduced Helicellids are only usually recovered from Romano-British or later periods, although given the amount of roots in the sample and the depth of the deposit such snails may be intrusive. It might also be noted that shells of the burrowing snail *Ceciloides acicula* were high in number and further indicate some potential surface to below ground movement.

8.6 Potential

Charred Plant Remains

8.6.1 The charred plant remains have no further potential.

Land snails

8.6.2 Given the degree of rooting and that the date of the deposit is unknown the molluscan remains have no further potential.

9 DISCUSSION

- 9.1.1 This report details the results of two areas of strip and record and an archaeologically monitored Watching Brief.
- 9.1.2 The archaeological recording produced a very small finds assemblage the date range of which was prehistoric to modern, with an emphasis on the “later prehistoric” period (Late Bronze Age - Romano British) and one fragment of Saxon pottery and fragments of a Saxon loomweight.
- 9.1.3 The recording produced only remains of an undated animal burial and an undated human burial, although the position of the latter would suggest a prehistoric date.
- 9.1.4 The small quantity of worked flint not identifiable as belonging to any particular period almost certainly reflects the usual low density artefact scatters, indicating ‘background’ prehistoric settlement activity, present in many areas of the present landscape of Britain and especially typical of Salisbury Plain.
- 9.1.5 Across the Site the predominant features were postholes, none of which are dateable and none that form convincing structural elements, other than the line observed in area 2.
- 9.1.6 A density of features in Area 2 was observed, however none of these features can be linked to one another chronologically neither can they be linked to one another through direct stratigraphic relationships.
- 9.1.7 The ditch (**175**) and the line of postholes (**173**), potentially millennia apart in date, may be performing the same function within the natural/man-made landscape. Both features occur on the edge of a significant break in slope, overall the Site drops over a height of 8m from east to west, however the steepest gradient is noted at this point. Area stripping has also revealed significant numbers of tree throws to the west of the break in slope whereas very few are observed to the east.
- 9.1.8 It is therefore possible that the ditch (**175**) may have been placed to mark the boundary between open land which, due to the lack of evidence of artefacts and environmental suggesting nearby settlement and or farming, may have been used for grazing and to the west and at the base of the slope a wooded area.
- 9.1.9 The line of postholes (**173**) may be no more than a significantly later (post-medieval), reaffirmation of the landscape boundary, the occupier wishing to separate an open area used either for grazing or as parkland from the wooded area to the west.
- 9.1.10 The location of the human burial (**171**) is a chance discovery as no evidence for further burials, nor evidence for a settlement was retrieved from anywhere within the Site, that the individual might have been associated with.
- 9.1.11 In terms of prehistoric burial locations the inhumation is placed on the edge of a break in slope but would not stand out in the landscape due to the rise of slope behind. The burials location beyond the ditch separating the two landscape types suggests that the land to the east was used for some purpose, most probably grazing, whereas that to the west was not used, and therefore the burial was placed ‘out of harms way’.
- 9.1.12 The animal burial (**158**), undated, may be regarded in similar fashion. Analysis in the laboratory concludes an absence of butchery marks leading to the conclusion that the animal died naturally and until recent health and safety restrictions it was

the norm that livestock were buried near to where they fell. If the animal died within the open area it would be a simple matter to drag it beyond the fence line and inter it in a shallow grave in the wooded area. On **Figure 2** a gap appears in the fence line (**173**) due east of the burial, it is possible that either a gate was located at this point or that a post was removed and never replaced.

- 9.1.13 The presence of Saxon pottery on the Site is a bit of an enigma with no evidence for features or structures dating to this period recorded. Similar scant evidence of Saxon activity was recovered by Wessex Archaeology from Matthew Estate, Tidworth in 1999 (Wessex Archaeology 2002).
- 9.1.14 The Site exhibited no evidence of medieval activity in any of the areas recorded or monitored.
- 9.1.15 The conclusion of the report is that the Site covers an area of agrarian activity attached to the precursor settlement to what is now known as Taplow. The 'chance' concentration of features within Area 2 coincides with a change in slope and may mark the transition from open land used for grazing and a wooded area.
- 9.1.16 The diversification of land use and the separation of the different areas may have commenced in the late prehistoric period (Ditch **175**) with the burial being placed at a later date beyond the useful or prized land.
- 9.1.17 The diversification was reaffirmed at a later date with a fence line (**173**) and the animal burial was again placed beyond the boundary marking the utilised landscape.
- 9.1.18 Evidence from the Site suggests that the fence posts were allowed to decay in situ and this, combined with the eventual removal of the trees to the west, led to the creation of the public open space present at the time of the archaeological investigation.

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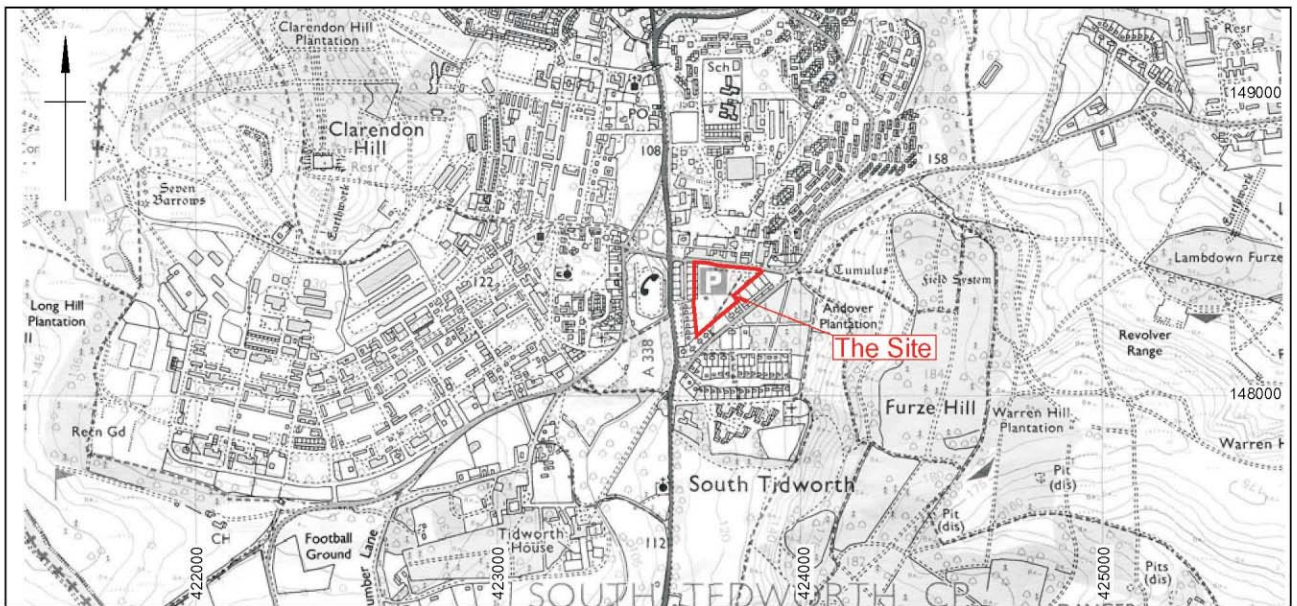
Wessex Archaeology 2007 A Written Scheme of Investigation for Strip and Record for Land at Station Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire, Report Ref. 60471.01



11 APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLE
12 APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLE

Context	Type	Description	Keyword
100	Layer	Mid brown, silty clay	Topsoil
101	Layer	Dark yellowish brown, silty clay	Natural Horizon/Subsoil
102	Layer	Yellowish brown, silty clay. Cryoturbated chalk	Natural Geology
103	Cut	Sub-circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 104	Posthole
104	Fill	Light brown, clayey silt. Abundant small chalk fragments.	Deliberate backfill
105	Cut	Sub-circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 106	Posthole
106	Fill	Light brown, clayey silt. Abundant small chalk fragments. One piece of burnt flint	Deliberate backfill
107	Cut	Subcircular. sides; irregular, base; irregular. Filled with 108	Posthole
108	Fill	Light grey brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
109	Cut	Subcircular. sides; steep, base; irregular. Filled with 110	Posthole
110	Fill	Light grey brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
111	Cut	Subcircular. sides; steep, base; irregular. Filled with 112	Posthole
112	Fill	Light grey brown with mottled light yellow brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
113	Cut	Subcircular. sides; steep, base; irregular. Filled with 114	Posthole
114	Fill	Light grey brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
115	Cut	Subcircular. sides; moderate, base; concave. Filled with 116	Posthole
116	Fill	Light grey brown with mottled light yellow brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
117	Cut	Subcircular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 118	Posthole
118	Fill	Light grey brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
119	Cut	Irregular. Sides and base irregular	Tree Hollow
120	Fill	Light yellowish brown, clayey silt, abundant chalk fragments	Secondary fill of Tree Hollow
121	Cut	Circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 122	Posthole
122	Fill	Light brown, clayey silt. Frequent subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Posthole
123	Cut	Irregular. Sides and base irregular	Tree Hollow
124	Fill	Light brown, clayey silt, Frequent chalk fragments	Secondary fill of Tree Hollow
125	Cut	Subcircular. sides; steep, base;	Posthole

		concave. Filled with 126	
126	Fill	Light brown , silt. Occasional subangular chalk fragments	Secondary Fill of Posthole
127	Cut	Subcircular. sides; steep, base; Concave. Filled with 128	Posthole
128	Fill	Light grey brown , clayey silt. Occasional subangular chalk fragments	Secondary Fill of Posthole
129	Cut	Irregular. sides; irregular, base; irregular. Filled with 130	Tree Hollow
130	Fill	Light brown , clayey silt. Frequent subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Tree Hollow
131	Cut	Linear. sides; concave, steep, base; irregular. Filled with 132	Ditch. Possibly for stock control
132	Fill	Light yellowish brown , silt. Frequent subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Ditch
133	Cut	Linear. sides; concave, steep, base; irregular. Filled with 134	Ditch. Possibly for stock control
134	Fill	Light yellowish brown , silt. Frequent subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Ditch
135	Cut	Circular. sides; vertical, base; concave. Filled with 136, 137	Posthole
136	Fill	Dark yellowish brown , silt. Frequent subangular chalk fragments	Deliberate backfill of Posthole
137	Fill	Grey brown, silt. Occasional chalk fragments.	Postpipe
138	Cut	Circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 139, 140	Posthole
139	Fill	Dark yellowish brown , silt. Frequent chalk fragments subangular chalk fragments	Deliberate backfill of Posthole
140	Fill	Light greyish brown, silt. Occasional chalk fragments	Postpipe
141	Cut	Circular. sides; moderate, base; concave. Filled with 142, 143	Posthole
142	Fill	Dark yellowish brown , silt. Frequent chalk fragments subangular chalk fragments	Deliberate backfill of Posthole
143	Fill	Greyish brown, silt. Occasional chalk fragments	Postpipe
144	Cut	Circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 145	Posthole
145	Fill	Dark yellowish brown, clayey silt. Occasional chalk fragments	Secondary Fill of Posthole
146	Cut	Sub-circular. Sides; moderate, base; concave. Filled with 147	Tree Hollow
147	Fill	Mid grey brown, clayey silt. Rare subangular flint	Secondary Fill of Tree Hollow
148	Cut	Sub-circular. Sides; irregular, base; irregular. Filled with 149	Tree Hollow
149	Fill	Yellowish brown, clayey silt. Abundant chalk fragments	Secondary Fill of Tree Hollow
150	Cut	Circular. sides; moderate, base; concave. Filled with 151	Posthole
151	Fill	Light brown, silt. Frequent chalk fragments	Secondary Fill of Posthole
152	Cut	Sub-circular. Sides; irregular, base;	Tree Hollow

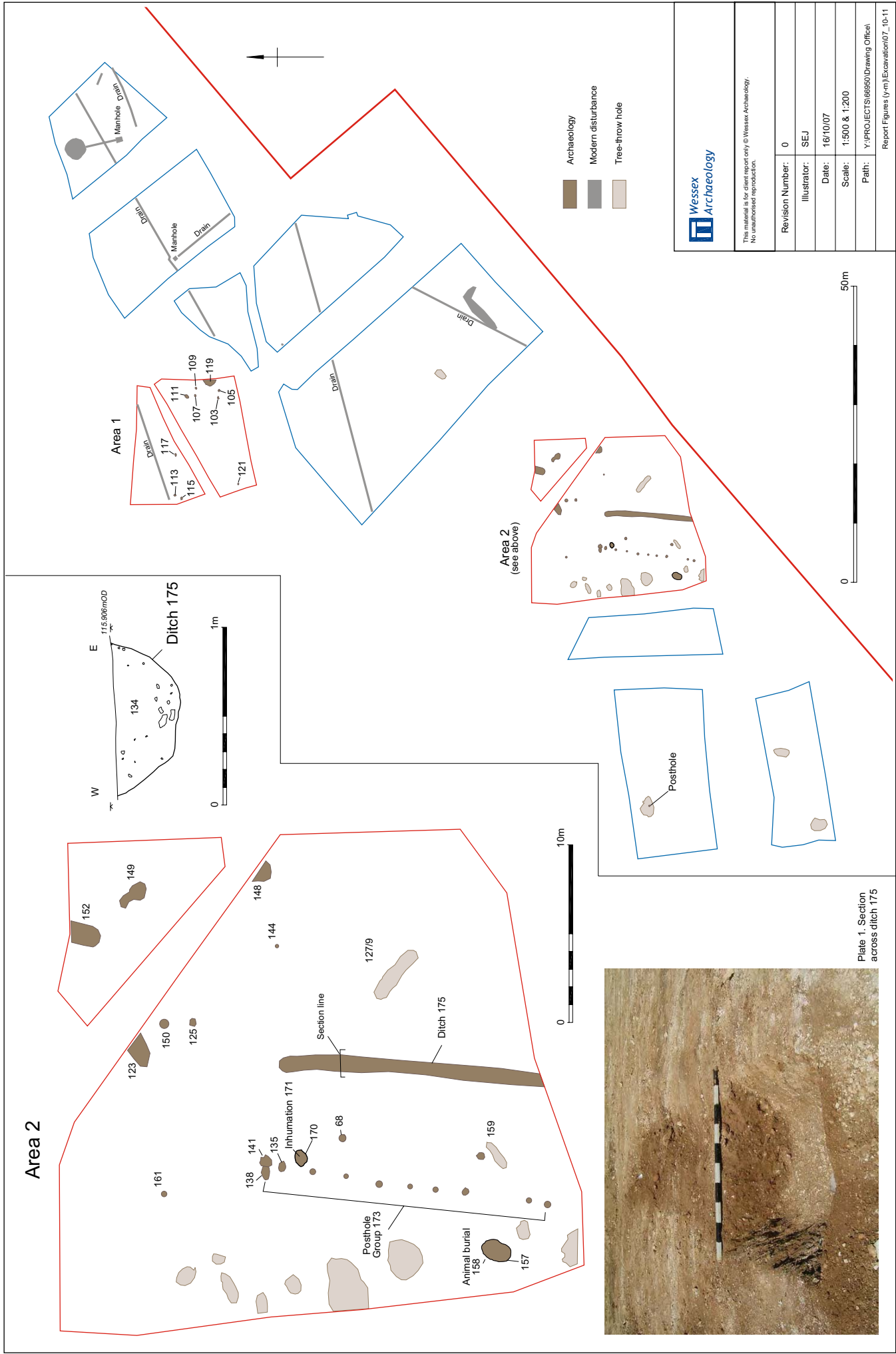
		concave. Filled with 153	
153	Fill	Light brown, silt. Occasional chalk fragments	Secondary Fill of Tree Hollow
154	Cut	Linear north-south sides; straight, moderate slope, Base; flat	Ditch. Boundary/Drainage.
155	Fill	Dark yellowish brown, silt. Frequent chalk fragments. Struck flint	Secondary Fill of Ditch. Use/Disuse
156	Cut	Pit. Sides; concave, base; concave	Pit Cut for animal burial
157	Fill	Dark yellowish brown, silt. Occasional chalk/pea gravel	Deliberate backfill of animal burial
158	Deposit	Articulated burial of cow	Animal Burial
159	Cut	Circular. sides; vertical, base; concave. Filled with 160	Posthole
160	Fill	Grayish brown, silt. Frequent chalk Fragments. Burnt flint	Deliberate backfill of Posthole
161	Cut	Circular. sides; vertical, base; flat. Filled with 162, 163	Posthole
162	Fill	Mid brown, silt. Sparse chalk fragments	Postpipe
163	Fill	Pale brown, silt. Frequent chalk fragments	Deliberate backfill of posthole
164	Cut	Circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 165	Posthole
165	Fill	Greyish yellow brown, silt. Frequent angular flint	Deliberate backfill of posthole
166	Layer	Mid greyish brown, silty clay, frequent chalk fragments, animal bone, struck and burnt flint	Fill of Tree Hollow
167	Cut	Irregular. sides; irregular, base; irregular. Filled with 166	Tree Hollow
168	Cut	Circular. sides; steep, base; concave. Filled with 151	Posthole
169	Fill	Dark yellowish brown, silt. Frequent chalk fragments	Deliberate backfill of Posthole
170	Cut	Sub-circular. Sides; concave, base; flat. Filled with 171, 172	Grave Cut
171	Fill	Inhumation. Crouched burial, lying on left side facing north	Inhumation
172	Fill	Dark yellowish brown, silt. Frequent chalk fragments/pea gravel	Deliberate backfill of Grave Cut
173	Group	Line of postholes running north-south parallel to ditch 175	Postholes
174	Group	Fill of posthole Group 173	Fill of postholes
175	Group	Cut of ditch running north-south	Ditch
176	Group	Fill of ditch Group 175	Secondary Fill of Ditch. Use/Disuse



 Area of strip and record  Area of watching brief	Reproduced from the 1998 Ordnance survey 1:25,000 Explorer® map with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright, Wessex Archaeology, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire. SP4 6EB. Licence Number:AL 100006861. Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright (2005) All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100020449. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
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Site and trench location

Figure 1



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Areas 1 and 2 with watching brief areas Figure 2

Inhumation 171

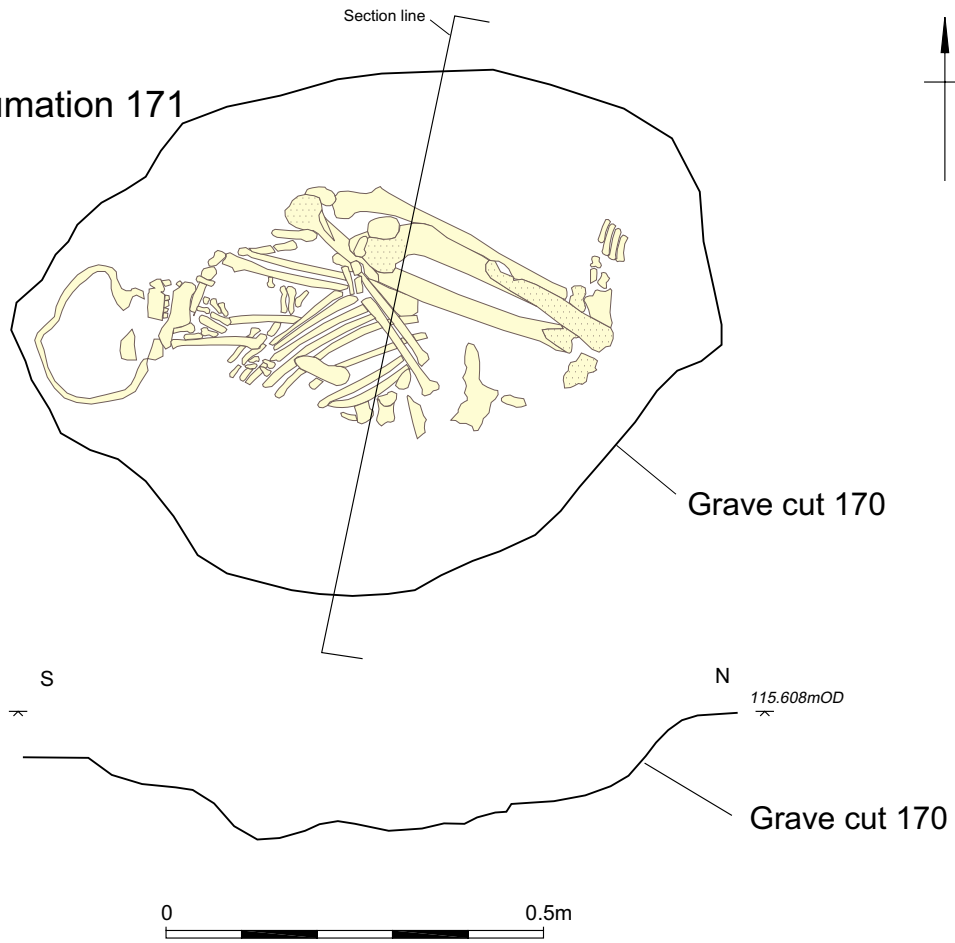


Plate 2. Inhumation 171

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Animal burial 158

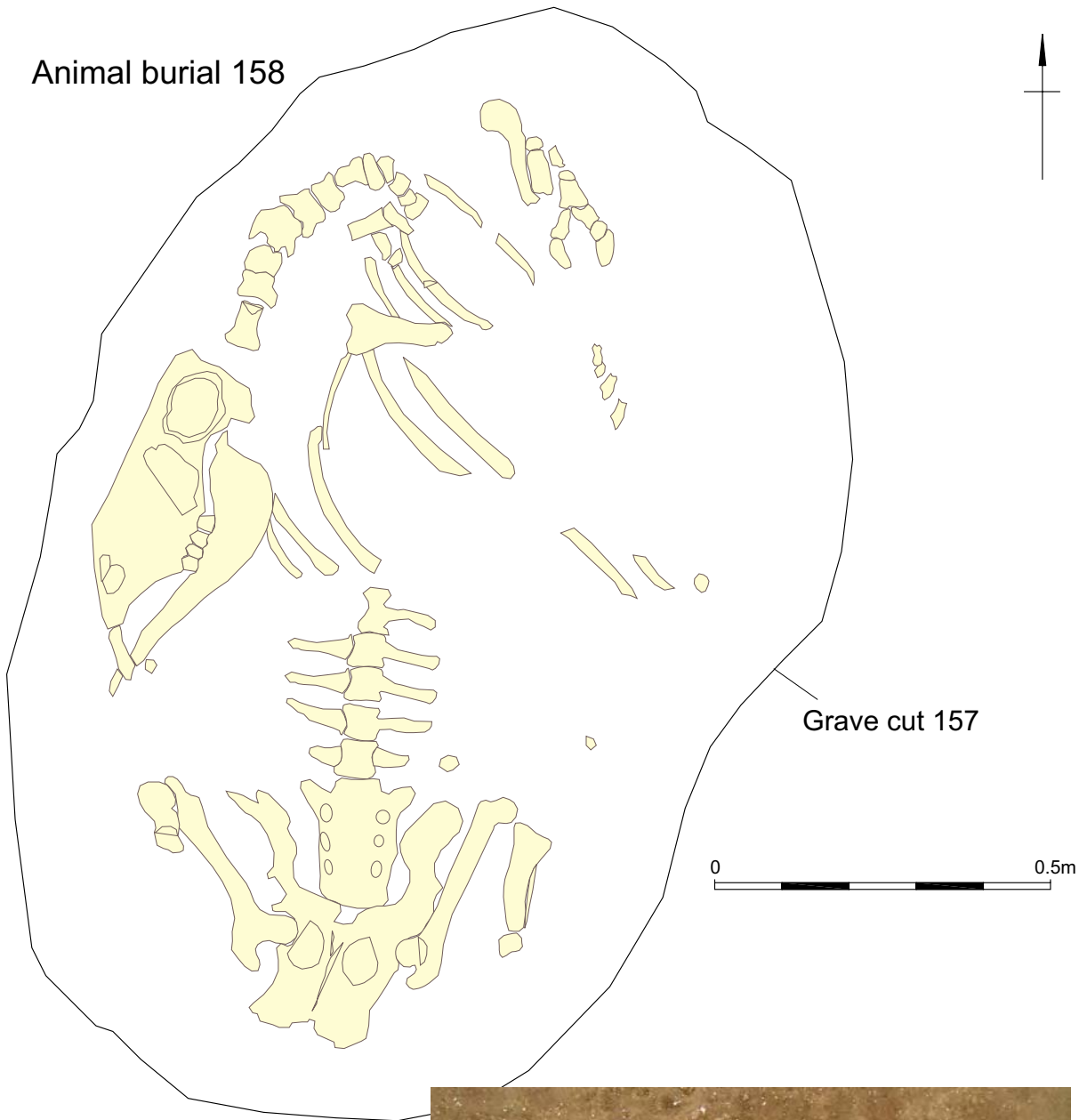


Plate 3. Animal (cow) burial 158

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