

**115 EXETER STREET, SALISBURY,
WILTSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

Reference 43122

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Prepared for:

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in February 1997 in advance of a planning committee decision on a proposed re-development of the property at 115 Exeter Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire. The site lies on the east side of Exeter Street, 200m to the north of the Ring Road. The evaluation sought to establish the likely archaeological content of the site and to provide information with which to assess the likely impact of proposed development on buried archaeological remains.

A trench measuring 2m x 2m was machine excavated to a depth of 0.5m where archaeological deposits survived intact. These consisted of floors and wall footings of Post-medieval date. Below this in the sequence was a silt containing two sherds of pottery dating from the late 12th to early 14th century sealing a floor of rammed chalk construction, indicating that elements of a Medieval structure survive on the site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned by Richard Green of Richard Green Associates acting on behalf of Dr R.J. Harding and Mr H. Seymour. Acknowledgement is due to Ms Helena Cave-Penny of the Archaeology Section of Wiltshire County Council.

The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Niall Oakey and was directed on site by Andrew Hutcheson with the assistance of Angela Batt. This report was written by Andrew Hutcheson with the illustrations drawn by Karen Nichols.

**115 EXETER STREET, SALISBURY,
WILTSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

1. Introduction

In February 1997 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Richard Green Associates to evaluate the archaeological potential of the street frontage area at 115 Exeter Street, Salisbury (centred on NGR SU 14532938), where new flats are proposed. The results of this evaluation will be used to allow decisions on the archaeological implications of future development of the site to be made on a sound and justifiable basis.

The evaluation was required following the advice of the Wiltshire County Archaeological Officer that buried archaeological remains may be present on the site and that they may be adversely affected by the proposals for redevelopment.

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site in accordance with the normal requirements of the Wiltshire Archaeology Service's - 'Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire'. The design for this project was validated by the County Archaeological Officer. This work is in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 16 (DoE November 1990).

2. Geology and Topography

The site lies on even ground around the 45m OD contour. The underlying drift geology is Alluvium, consisting of loam and marl (British Geological Survey of England and Wales Sheet 298). The site is situated on the east side of Exeter Street, 200m to the north of the Ring Road. The property has been a gap in the building line since the mid 1960s. Until recently it was partly paved with slabs and part used as a garden, with c. 0.3m of soil imported some time after the demolition of last building on the site. At the time of the field evaluation the property was used to store rubble and building material for use in the restoration of the neighbouring property to the north, 113 Exeter Street.

3. Historical Background

Exeter Street was the main artery south towards the crossing of the River Avon at Harnham Bridge and as such has been a major thoroughfare since the bridge was built around 1240 AD. The western side of Exeter Street is completely occupied by the Cathedral Close and the street frontage consists of the stone-built Precinct wall, the stone for which is known to derive from the demolition of the Old Cathedral at Old Sarum. *Dragall Street* or *Drakehallestreet* is an earlier (1339) name for Exeter Street, suggesting the street was named after Drake's Hall, an important or large building situated somewhere along its length (RCHME 1980, xxxvii).

The east side of Exeter Street includes a number of historic houses, none known to be earlier than the 16th century. The house (114 Exeter Street) which existed on this plot until c. 1965 was described by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in England and dated to the mid 18th century. The structure was of two stories with brick and tile hung walls and a tile roof (RCHME 1980, 130).

John Speed's map of Salisbury dating from c. 1600 AD shows a number of buildings on the eastern side of Exeter Street along its northern extent but does not extend far enough south to inform on the property under consideration here. However, William Naish's map of Salisbury in 1716 AD, shows that the site was part of an unbroken building line, demonstrating that a building existed here in the early 18th century, prior to the house described by the RCHME.

4. Archaeological Background

Wessex Archaeology has previously conducted two field evaluations in Exeter Street, both within the Cathedral Precincts. An evaluation took place at Bishop Wordsworth's School in 1994, where a total of six hand dug and five machine dug trenches located a number of wall footings. A north wall and rammed chalk floor of a building probably dating to the medieval period (13th - 16th century AD) was discovered in a machine dug trench just to the north of the School's Stable Block.

To the south of this, an evaluation took place within the Salisbury Cathedral School during 1995. Here the evaluation comprised 16m² of hand dug trenches positioned in a line parallel to, and 50m to the west of, Exeter Street and therefore 65m to the west of the position of the 1997 evaluation trench. Underneath a series of garden soils a timber-revetted, east-west aligned ditch was discovered, possibly of medieval construction.

5. Methodology

The objective of the field evaluation was to determine, as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be affected by the proposed development.

A trench (measuring 2 x 2m) was excavated by a machine with a toothless grading bucket under the constant supervision of a qualified archaeologist. The trench was located as close to the street frontage as services and standing structures allowed.

Machine excavation continued to the top of archaeological horizons.

Archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand. Excavation of archaeological features and deposits followed the methodology laid out in the brief by the County Archaeology Service for Wiltshire.

A unique number site code was allocated prior to the commencement of the project. All archaeological deposits were given individual context numbers and recorded on

Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets. Plans and sections were drawn at appropriate scales (1:20, 1:10). A photographic record in black and white and colour was maintained of all features.

General site levelling was undertaken using a dumpy level from an OS datum point.

All artefacts were retained from excavated contexts, except those undoubtedly of recent or modern date. In these circumstances sufficient artefacts were retained to elucidate the date and function of the feature or deposit.

6. Results

A full description of every deposit revealed during the evaluation can be found in Appendix 1.

6.1. Medieval

Context 10 (Figure 2), a silt deposit, can be dated to the Medieval period on the basis of two unabraded sherds of Laverstock type pottery contained within it, dating from the late 12th - early 14th century. This silt directly overlay a layer of rammed chalk (context 11) thought to be a floor (Figures 2 and 3).

By association with the rest of the sequence of deposits (see Appendix 2) two other contexts are also thought to date from this period. Context 9 (Figure 2), a puddled clay and charcoal layer was cut through by wall 8, and therefore, would seem to better belong to the Medieval period than the later Post-medieval period. The same is true for context 12 (Figure 3), a soil deriving from alluvial silts.

This sequence may represent an interior area to the south, represented by the chalk floor (11), the silt (10) and the puddled clay and charcoal deposit (9); with an exterior area in the north, consisting of the soil deposit (12). These are separated by wall 8, which, although probably dated to the Post-medieval period, may re-use a previously existing foundation established during the Medieval period.

6.2. Post-medieval

The two structural components found within the trench, wall foundations 4 and 8 (Figures 2, 3 and 4), date to this period and probably represent components of the building known to have existed here from the mid 18th century through to the 1960s. In between these structures is a floor layer consisting of laminated deposits of clay and mortar (contexts 5, 6 and 7).

6.3. Finds

Two conjoining base sherds of pottery were recovered from context 10. These are from a sagging based cooking pot or jar with a pronounced heel in a micaceous sandy fabric. This pot can be attributed to the local Laverstock industry situated 1 mile to the south-east of Salisbury and known to have been producing pottery from the late 12th century through to the early 14th century (Musty *et.al.* 1969).

A number of fragments of roof pegtile were recovered from contexts 5, 6, and 7. These are not particularly datable, spanning a period including both the Medieval and Post-medieval periods.

7. Conclusions

The evaluation revealed that there is good archaeological survival on the site. Elements of the 18th century building, known to have existed here until the 1960s were uncovered. More importantly, a floor of Medieval date was discovered, indicating that there are elements of an earlier structure surviving. All this was sealed below a rubble levelling layer capped by a soil, both amounting to a cover of approximately 0.5m sealing and thus protecting the underlying archaeological deposits.

8. Project Archive

The complete project archive was prepared under the Wessex Archaeology Archives Policy and in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991). The archive from the project, including the finds and subject to the wishes of the landowner, will be deposited with the Wiltshire Museum Service in due course.

9. References

Musty JWG, Algar DJ, Ewence, PF, 1969 'The medieval pottery kilns at Laverstock, near Salisbury, Wiltshire, *Archaeologia*, 102, 83-150.

RHMCE, 1980, *City of Salisbury*, Volume 1, HMSO.

Wessex Archaeology, 1994, *Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, unpublished client report.

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Appendix 1: Description of archaeological deposits

Evaluation	Trench, 115	Centre on NGR SU 14568 29380	
Exeter Street, Salisbury		Height (ground surface): 45m OD	
<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Thickness</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Topsoil with mixed building rubble.	0.36m	Modern
2	Layer comprised of building material.	0.31m	Modern
3	Mixed chalk and mortar layer.	0.1m	Post-medieval
4	Brick and tile bonded with clay	0.2m	Post-medieval
5	Thin silt deposit.	0.03m	Post-medieval
6	Layer consisting of mortar and clay mix.	0.03m	Post-medieval
7	Clay layer.	0.05m	Post-medieval
8	Poured grey mortar with a single course of brick surviving only in the extreme east of the trench.	-	Post-medieval
9	Clay and charcoal layer	-	Medieval?
10	Silt layer.	0.05m	Medieval
11	Compacted chalk layer	-	Medieval
12	Soil, derived from alluvial silt.	-	Medieval
13	Foundation cut.	0.2m	Post-medieval

Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrix diagram: Showing the sequence of deposition, with the latest deposit at the top and earliest at the base.

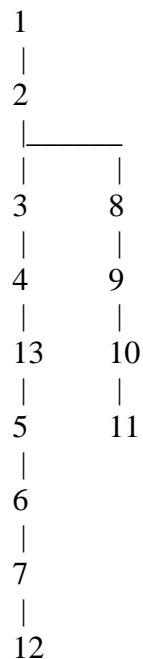


FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4