

THE STONE MASONS YARD, 10 TOLLGATE ROAD, SALISBURY
WILTSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Prepared on behalf of:

N H Developments Limited
327 Wallisdown Road
Bournemouth
Dorset
BH12 5BU

By:

Wessex Archaeology
Portway House
Old Sarum Park
SALISBURY
SP4 6EB

W A REF: 57100

OCTOBER 2004

Contents

Summary	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Planning Background	1
1.2. The Site	1
1.3. Geology	1
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	1
2.1.1 Prehistoric	1
2.1.4 Medieval.....	2
3. METHODOLOGY	2
3.1. Aims and Objectives	2
3.2. Method	2
4. RESULTS	2
4.1. Introduction	3
4.3. General Stratigraphic Sequence	3
5. DISCUSSION.....	3
6. REFERENCES	4

APPENDIX 1: Trench Summaries

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Test Pit Location

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by N. H. Developments Ltd., to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of four geotechnical Test Pits in respect of planning application no. S/2002/1414. A development proposal for new housing on land known as the Stone Masons Yard, located to the rear of the Tollgate Inn, 10 Tollgate Road, Salisbury (hereafter the Site).

A programme of works was agreed with Helena Cave-Penny of Wiltshire County Council's Libraries and Heritage Service which required that an archaeological watching brief of groundwork associated with the construction of three houses be undertaken. This watching brief followed W.C.C.L.H.S.'s normal requirements for archaeological fieldwork as set out in their *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation* in Wiltshire, published in May 1995.

A series of modern deposits were recorded in four Test Pits. No Archaeological finds or deposits were recorded.

Acknowledgements

The watching brief was commissioned by N H Developments Ltd. Acting in respect of planning application no. S/2002/1414 and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Nick Atkins in this regard. The assistance of Wiltshire County Council's Libraries and Heritage Services Officer, Helena Cave-Penny is also acknowledged.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Catherine McHarg. This report was compiled by Catherine McHarg with illustrations by Linda Coleman. The project was managed by Nick Truckle.

**THE STONE MASONS YARD
10 TOLLGATE ROAD
SALISBURY
WILTSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
REPORT**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Background

- 1.1.1 Wiltshire County Council requires that as a condition of being granted planning permission the developer should employ a suitably qualified archaeological contractor to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of four geotechnical Test Pits associated with the construction of three new housing units. The Archaeological Watching Brief has allowed for preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered during the geotechnical programme (in line with Planning Policy Guidance 16: archaeology and planning (November 1990)).

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site (National Grid Reference 414973 129694) comprises an irregular shaped plot of land approximately 635m² in area (**Figure 1**). The land is currently derelict.

1.3 Geology

- 1.3.1 The underlying geology is Upper Chalk. The underlying drift geology of the Site is the Higher Terrace Gravel of the Avon valley, lying above Upper Chalk of the Cretaceous Period (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 298). The soils within Salisbury are Calcareous Alluvial Gley Soils (Frome) and the surrounding countryside is composed of Brown Rendzina (Andover 1) and bands of Typical Brown Calcareous Earths (Coombe 1) (Soil Survey of England and Wales Sheet 6).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric (500,000-100,000)

- 2.1.1 A large number of Palaeolithic hand-axes have been found in the vicinity of the Site. There are nine separate findspots and, with the exception of two, all are located to the north of the Site. Some of the finds have contained multiple numbers of hand-axes, although it is likely that these represent artefacts from individual findspots, which became amalgamated at a later date. In the locale of Elm Grove Road 33 hand-axes have been retrieved, while 25 hand-axes

have been recovered from the vicinity of Kelsey Road. Other notable examples include nine axes from a pit near Manor Road and eight hand-axes from a gravel pit in Elm Grove.

- 2.1.2 These finds are related to the River Terraces and Gravels. Although these Terrace Gravels are rich in Palaeolithic artefacts, they also contain chalk rubble, large blocks of sandstone, gravel and clay. This mixture of material accords better with a head or solifluction deposit than a river gravel (The Southern Rivers Palaeolithic Project 1991-92, 112). These artefacts were not therefore recovered from their original area of deposition, which would have been on higher ground. Their deposition (as discovered) was as a result of hillwash.

Medieval

- 2.1.3 During the construction of the ring road in Salisbury in the 1970s, medieval buildings were discovered below and beyond the medieval ramparts. It is possible that remains of medieval buildings maybe encountered within the Site. It is also possible that the Post-medieval tollgate, the memory of which the Tollgate Public House still celebrates, was sited on or in close proximity to an earlier gateway into the City of Salisbury, the remains of such may lie within the Site.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to establish within the constraints of the sampling strategy, the presence or absence, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains within the Site.

3.2 Method

- 3.2.1 The watching brief comprised the machine excavation of four test pits, each 3m long and 0.6m wide, distributed across the Site as illustrated in **Figure 2**. This provided a representative sample across the site.
- 3.2.2 Test pits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system. Where no archaeological features were discovered, the test pits were photographed and planned, and a representative 1m long section drawn.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 All context descriptions are presented in tabulated form in **Appendix 1**; test pit locations are illustrated in **Figure 2**.

4.2 General Stratigraphic Sequence

- 4.2.1 The Test Pits revealed a series of mixed layers of clay silts that contained quantities of modern brick and rubble. The sequences of this material varied from test pit to test pit (see Appendix 1) but three main layers could be identified. The upper deposit consisted of black clay silt with common modern ceramic building material and small mixed stone inclusions. The average depth of this deposit was 0.95m.
- 4.2.2 This layer was underlain by a mid-light brown sandy gravel with very small stones/grit inclusions. The thickness of the deposit varied between 0.8-1.6m. This deposit contained few inclusions but it was underlain in three of the Test Pits by a black clay silt very similar to the upper stratigraphic layer and also containing fragments of modern brick rubble.
- 4.2.3 Natural sandy silts with large flint nodules were generally encountered at around 2.4m below the ground surface.
- 4.2.4 No archaeological features or deposits were recorded in any of the test pits.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence observed in all of the excavated Test Pits appears to indicate episodes of dumping and ground consolidation across the Site. Whilst there were local variations within these layers, with small more discreet episodes of dumping, it would appear from the nature of the modern brick and rubble observed within them, that these deposits represent a period of ground consolidation following severe truncation of the original ground surface.
- 5.1.2 As documented in the Archaeological and Historical Background (above), the Site is located within an area of known activity in the Prehistoric (Lower Palaeolithic) and medieval periods. Although no features were recorded this is most likely the result of intensive modern intrusion, demonstrated by the presence of modern dumped deposits in all the observed trenches, rather than a lack of activity within the area.

REFERENCES

Wessex Archaeology, 2004 Project Design for an Archaeological Watching Brief, The Stone Masons Yard, 10 Tollgate Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire. Unpublished Written Scheme of Investigation ref. T8487