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# 191 Devizes Road Salisbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Planning Reference: 13/07067/OUT  
Ref: 103640.02  
April 2014



**191 Devizes Road  
Salisbury, Wiltshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report**

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**April 2014**

**Report Ref: 103640.03  
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## Quality Assurance

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<b>Planning Application Ref.</b>	13/07067/OUT	<b>Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)</b>	413313 130815		

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File:					

\* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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# 191 Devizes Road Salisbury, Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

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# 191 Devizes Road Salisbury, Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

### Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by RLM Architects to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 191 Devizes Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire. The works were required in advance of the determination of a planning application which proposes the demolition of the existing house and the subsequent construction of four houses with associated access routes and parking area. The fieldwork was carried out on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

One trench, measuring 7.2m by 2.3m, and one test pit, measuring 2.0m by 2.1m, were machine-excavated within the proposed development area. The site lies within the northern part of an extensive Iron Age settlement identified and partially excavated during the mid-1860s. At this time, a large enclosure ditch, human remains and a number of pits, known as the 'Highfield Pits', were recorded.

During the course of the archaeological evaluation, three pits of Middle Iron Age date were identified in Trench 1, which are likely to be part of the 'Highfield Pits'. Only one of the features was sampled excavated, whilst Victorian backfill material was also noted in the upper fills of one other, likely the result of the previous excavations. No evidence of a large enclosure ditch were noted in the test pit, most likely the result of heavy truncation during the construction of the present dwelling.

The presence of the features confirms that there is a high potential for further archaeological remains on the site.



# 191 Devizes Road Salisbury, Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

### Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Keith Loveless from RLM Architects for commissioning the work, the staff of Wessex Water for their facilitating site access and Kevin Turner for his assistance during the fieldwork. The help and advice of Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist, is also gratefully acknowledged.

The evaluation was carried out by Piotr Orczewski who also wrote this report. The report was edited by Gareth Chaffey, and the illustrations were prepared by Liz James. The finds were assessed by Lorraine Mepham, and the project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andy King.



# 191 Devizes Road Salisbury, Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by RLM Architects ('the Client'), to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the property of 191 Devizes Road, Salisbury, SP2 7LS, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. The Site is centred on national grid reference (NGR) 413313 130815 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The proposed development, which is currently at outline planning stage (Planning Application 13/07067/OUT), will involve the demolition of the existing house on the Site and the subsequent construction of four houses with associated access routes and parking garage area.
- 1.1.3 The Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire, Clare King, requested that a 2% archaeological evaluation by trial trenches should be carried out based on information about the Site held within the County Historic Environment Record. If the results of the evaluation proved positive a further programme of archaeological mitigation works may be required as an appropriate planning condition, to be carried out prior to development.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (WA 2014) setting out the strategy and methodology by which Wessex Archaeology would implement the archaeological trial trench evaluation was submitted to, and approved, by the Assistant County Archaeologist prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.
- 1.1.5 The evaluation was undertaken on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

#### 1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site, approximately 0.06ha, is located to the north-west of the City of Salisbury, on a chalk spur between the rivers Avon to the north-east and Nadder to the south-west. The Site is bounded to the north by the A360 Devizes Road, to the east by Highfield Road, south by the residential property of No. 7 Highfield Road and a covered reservoir and to the west by the Grade II Listed pumping station of Fisherton Waterworks (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.2 The Site lies at a height of approximately 71m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and geological maps indicate that the underlying geology comprises Newhaven chalk Member of the Cretaceous Period (BGS 2005). Superficial deposits are mapped as undifferentiated Terrace Deposits upslope to the north with River Terrace Deposits (formerly Brickearth) and Fourth River Terrace deposits downslope to the south. Much of the site has also been disturbed for construction of a later 20<sup>th</sup> century dwelling.





## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The Site lies within the northern part of an extensive Iron Age settlement, which continued in use into the Romano-British period, discovered and partially excavated in the mid-1860s. The findings of these antiquarian explorations included the line of an enclosure ditch, human remains and numerous pits, some over 2m in depth. The Victorian records were written up and formally published in 1934, with contemporary interpretations applied (Stevens 1934).
- 2.1.2 The 'Highfield Pits', as they came to be known, were compared at the time with similar sites in Wiltshire at All Cannings Cross, Fifield Bavant and Swallowcliffe. These days, the pits are no longer considered to be 'dwellings'. The human remains appear to have been disarticulated bones and skulls, whose provenance is uncertain, unless discrete burials were either not identified or recorded by the excavators.
- 2.1.3 During redevelopment of the former Highbury and Fisherton Manor School, several archaeological investigation programmes have taken place since 1998 to the south of the Site. These have included research, evaluation and monitoring and have recorded part of the southern extent of the Iron Age and Romano-British settlement as well as deposits of Palaeolithic date (WA 1998; CA 2010; CgMs 2011; WA 2011).
- 2.1.4 Construction of the Fisherton Waterworks Company pumping house (now a Grade II Listed building) and excavations for a covered reservoir, on the adjoining plot to the north-west exposed more of the pits.

## 3 AIMS AND METHODS

### 3.1 General aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 With due regard to the IfA Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation (IfA 2008), the generic aim of the project was:
- *To locate, identify and to investigate and record the presence/absence of archaeological features or deposits;*
  - *The evaluation, where possible, will confirm the extent, date, character, relationship, condition and significance of archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the area impacted, and to inform the scope and nature of any requirements for any potential further fieldwork (whether additional watching brief, excavation or post-excavation work;*
  - *To enable the preservation by record of any archaeological features or deposits uncovered;*
  - *To place any identified archaeological remains within their historical context, particularly with reference to the known prehistoric features found in the immediate and wider area.*

### 3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI (WA 2014). All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008).



- 3.2.2 The fieldwork consisted of the excavation of one trench, measuring 7m x 2m, located to the rear of the existing building, and one test pit, measuring 2m x 2m positioned in front of the building (**Figure 1**).
- 3.2.3 Prior to machining, the trench locations were scanned by WA using a cable tracing device. The trenches were machined under constant archaeological supervision using a tracked mechanical excavator employing a toothless grading bucket. All overburden was carefully removed in spits to the top of the uppermost significant archaeological horizon or solid geological deposits (Upper Chalk and/or Terrace Gravels), whichever was encountered first. All spoil was scanned for artefacts.
- 3.2.4 All potential features and deposits of possible archaeological origin were partially excavated to ascertain their nature and function and were fully recorded using WA's *pro forma* record sheets.
- 3.2.5 The trenches were laid out using a Leica Viva series GNSS unit using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below in general accordance with the pattern given in **Figure 1**. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.
- 3.2.6 Once trenches were completed and recorded they were backfilled using the excavated material in the approximate order in which it was excavated and left level on completion. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following summary details the results of the archaeological evaluation (**Figure 1**). Summaries of the excavated sequences can be found in **Appendix 1**.

### 4.2 Natural deposits and soil sequences

- 4.2.1 The natural geology varied slightly between and within the trenches and was recorded at a depth of 0.1m in Trench 1 (**Plate 1**) and 0.35m in Test Pit 1 (**Plate 2**) below ground level. The natural geology in Trench 1 consisted of Terrace Gravels overlying natural chalk. In Test Pit 1, a similar natural chalk was exposed.
- 4.2.2 Excavation of Trench 1 started at its eastern end and immediately under the topsoil, modern deposits were encountered. Excavation continued to determine the depth of these deposits. An area of natural chalk was exposed at a depth of 0.9m. As modern deposits were thinning out the level was brought up and the natural gravel was recorded directly under the topsoil.
- 4.2.3 Immediately overlying the natural in Test Pit 1 were modern made-ground deposits consisting of thin layers of gravel overlying a tarpaulin membrane and black made-ground.

### 4.3 Archaeological features and deposits

#### *Trench 1*

- 4.3.1 The excavation of Trench 1 revealed the backfill of the previous excavations on the Site in the 1860s. Layer **102** contained typical Victorian finds assemblage (bricks, pottery) mixed with burnt flint. Truncation was heaviest towards the southern end of the trench, with the natural chalk exposed at a depth of 0.9m below the current ground surface.



- 4.3.2 Pit **109** (**Figure 2, Plate 3**) was located to the north of Trench 1, measured 1.5m in diameter and was partially excavated to a depth of 0.41m. The pit contained sherds of Middle Iron Age pottery, animal bone fragments and burnt flint and was identified under the topsoil and cut the natural gravel. The base of the feature was not reached due to time restrictions.
- 4.3.3 Pit **105** was located in the southern end of Trench 1, and measured 1.3m in diameter. The feature appeared to pre-date large, disturbed pit **107** (**Plate 4**) which appeared to represent one of the previously excavated pits. Pit **107**, at the surviving level, was 3.6m wide and contained fragments of post-medieval pottery, ceramic building material and burnt flint. Pit **105** did not appear to have been previously excavated, and was not sample excavated during the course of this evaluation.

#### *Test Pit 1*

- 4.3.4 Test Pit 1 contained no archaeological features or deposits due to modern disturbance.

## **5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE**

### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 The evaluation produced a very small quantity of finds, comprising animal bone, worked flint and pottery, deriving from three pit fills in Trench 1: quantities are given in Table 1.
- 5.1.2 The pottery provides the primary dating evidence, and all 23 sherds recovered can be dated as Middle Iron Age, on the grounds of fabric and form. All sherds are in relatively fine sandy fabrics, some with rare fine flint inclusions. The sherds from the lower fill (**111**) of pit **109** include a large rim sherd from a gently convex vessel and short upright rim, while most of the sherds from the upper fill of the same pit (**110**) probably represent the lower part of a single vessel, externally burnished. The single sherd from pit **105** (fill **106**) is undiagnostic.
- 5.1.3 Other finds comprise two small fragments of long bone, and a worked flint waste flake.

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

<b>Context</b>	<b>Animal Bone</b>	<b>Flint</b>	<b>Pottery</b>
106			1/6
110			18/471
111	2/10	1/43	4/211
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2/10</b>	<b>1/43</b>	<b>23/688</b>

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

- 6.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the course of the fieldwork.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

- 7.1.1 The evaluation positively identified pits dating to the Iron Age, as well as one of the 'Highfield Pits' excavated during the 1860s, and interpreted as 'dwellings' (Stevens 1934). However, no further evidence of the enclosure ditch was found.

7.1.2 The absence of subsoil in both trenches suggested that the Site has been heavily graded, possibly for the construction of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century dwelling. However, the presence of surviving archaeological features, cut into the chalk within Trench 1, indicates that any site stripping and levelling in this area is likely to have stopped at the top of the natural deposits.

7.1.3 The potential for surviving archaeological remains, especially to the rear of the existing house, is very high. However, other areas of site, especially in the area occupied by the existing dwelling, have been reduced significantly and the condition of possible archaeological features is uncertain.

## **8 STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **8.1 Museum**

8.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

### **8.2 Preparation of archive**

8.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.2.2 Details of the archaeological evaluation will also be entered into the online "OASIS" database maintained by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). A copy of the OASIS entry has been included in this report (**Appendix 2**).

8.2.3 All archive elements will be marked with the site **103640**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- *1 cardboard box of artefacts & ecofacts, ordered by material type*
- *1 files/document cases of paper records & A3/A4 graphics*

### **8.3 Discard Policy**

8.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002).

### **8.4 Security Copy**

8.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.



## 9 REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

bgl = below ground level

<b>TRENCH 1</b>			<b>Type:</b>	Machine excavated
<b>Dimensions:</b> 7.20x2.00m		<b>Max. depth:</b> 0.96m	<b>Ground level:</b> 73.00m aOD	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>	
101	Layer	Top soil: dark-brown clay loam with grass root bioturbation.	0.00-0.16	
102	Layer	Mixed layers of loose chalk and dark red brown soil lenses. Part of backfill of [107], contained Victorian finds.	0.16-0.92	
103	layer	Natural compact upper chalk geology.	0.92+	
104	Layer	Natural terrace gravel with red-brown sandy clay	0.10+	
105	Cut	Cut of pit. 1.3m wide pit uncovered after removal of pit [107].	0.90	
106	Fill	Fill of pit. Dark-brown grey sandy clay with common stone and chalk frags (1-5cm). Deliberate backfill.		
107	Cut	Cut of pit. Large, 3.6m wide pit. Excavated and backfilled previously, most likely during the 1860s.	0.20	
108	Fill	Fill of pit. Victorian backfill, mixed deposits of loose chalk and gravel soils. Contained Victorian finds assembly – bricks, pottery mixed with burnt flint.		
109	Cut	Cut of pit. Pit cutting natural gravel, recorded directly under topsoil. 1.5m in diameter, very similar to [105]. Contained diagnostic pottery, dated to Iron Age.	0.10	
110	Fill	Deliberate backfill of pit. Dark-brown grey, sandy clay. Upper fill of Iron Age pit, contained diagnostic pottery, burnt flint and animal bone.		
111	Fill	Deliberate backfill of pit. Mid grey-brown sandy clay, lower fill if Iron Age pit.		

<b>TRENCH 2</b>			<b>Type:</b>	Machine excavated
<b>Dimensions:</b> 2.00x2.20m		<b>Max. depth:</b> 0.36m	<b>Ground level:</b> 73.00m aOD	
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth bgl (m)</b>	
201	Layer	Topsoil. Dark-grey clay loam, grass root bioturbation.	0.00-0.10	
202	layer	Gravel hardcore.	0.10-0.14	
203	Tarp	Tarp	0.14	
204	Layer	Made ground. Dark-grey clay loam.	0.14-0.35	
205	Layer	Natural chalk geology. Very compact and clean.	0.35+	



## APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

**OASIS ID: wessexar1-177301**

### Project details

Project name	191 Devizes Road, Salisbury
Short description of the project	<p>Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by RLM Architects to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 191 Devizes Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire. The works were required in advance of the determination of a planning application which proposes the demolition of the existing house and the subsequent construction of four houses with associated access routes and parking area. The fieldwork was carried out on the 8th April 2014. One trench, measuring 7.2m by 2.3m, and one test pit, measuring 2.0m by 2.1m, were machine-excavated within the proposed development area. The site lies within the northern part of an extensive Iron Age settlement identified and partially excavated during the mid-1860s. At this time, a large enclosure ditch, human remains and a number of pits, known as the 'Highfield Pits', were recorded. During the course of the archaeological evaluation, three pits of Middle Iron Age date were identified in Trench 1, which are likely to be part of the 'Highfield Pits'. Only one of the features was sampled excavated, whilst Victorian backfill material was also noted in the upper fills of one other, likely the result of the previous excavations. No evidence of a large enclosure ditch were noted in the test pit, most likely the result of heavy truncation during the construction of the present dwelling. The presence of the features confirms that there is a high potential for further archaeological remains on the site.</p>
Project dates	Start: 08-04-2014 End: 08-04-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	103640 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	PIT Middle Iron Age
Monument type	PIT Middle Iron Age
Monument type	PIT Middle Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Middle Iron Age
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches", "Test Pits"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Pre-application





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### Project location

Country	England
Site location	WILTSHIRE SALISBURY SALISBURY 191 Devizes Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire
Postcode	SP2 7LY
Study area	0.06 Hectares
Site coordinates	SU 413336 130851 50.9151963482 -1.41195986595 50 54 54 N 001 24 43 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 73.00m Max: 74.00m

---

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	RLM Architects
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Andy King
Project supervisor	Piotr Orczewski
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	RLM Architects

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### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Physical Archive ID	103640
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Digital Archive ID	103640
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive	Wiltshire Heritage Museum





recipient

Paper Archive ID 103640

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Diary", "Drawing", "Photograph", "Report", "Context sheet"

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**Project  
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title 191 Devizes Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire

Author(s)/Editor(s) Orczewski, P

Other bibliographic details 103640.03

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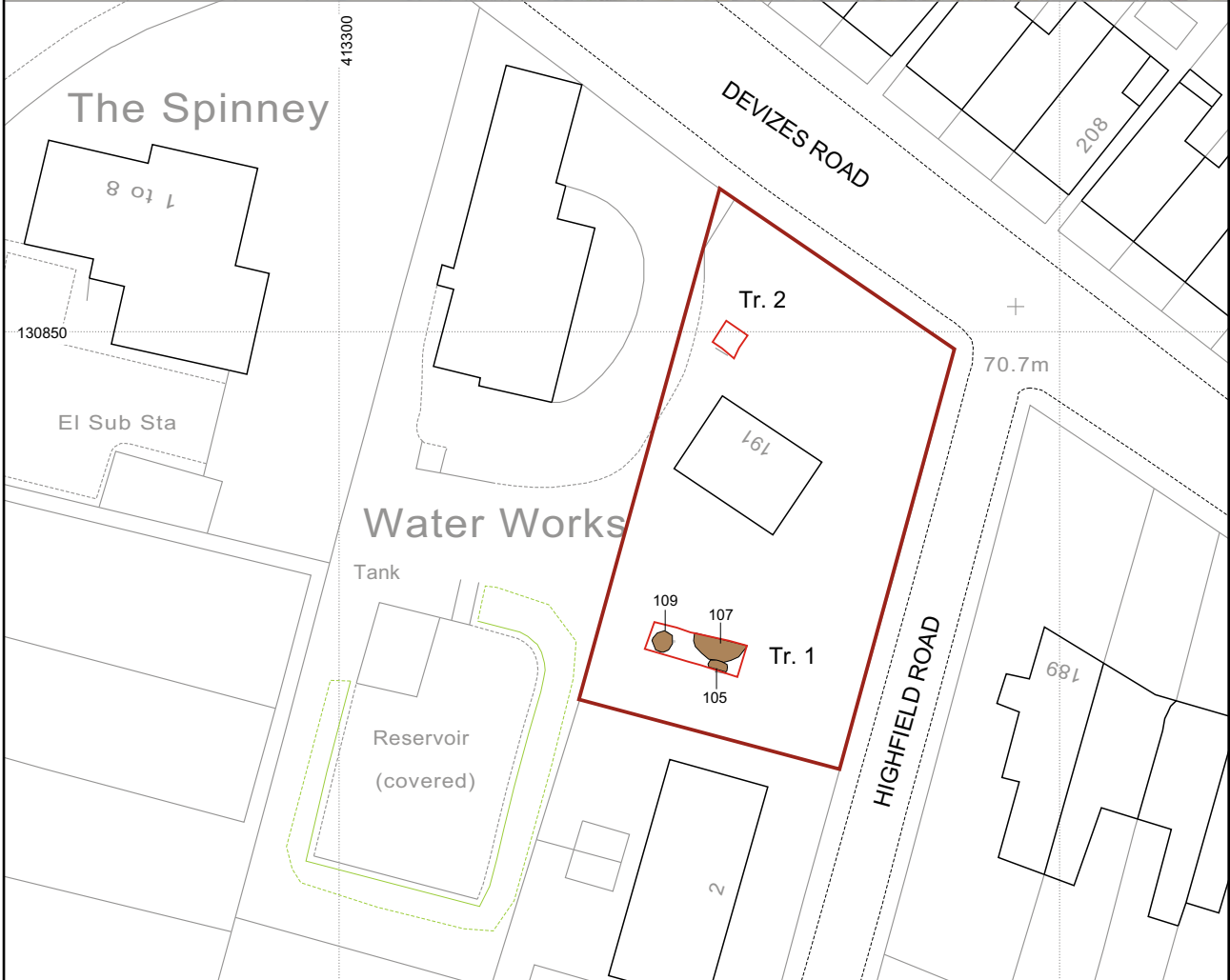
Description A4 bound client report with colour figures

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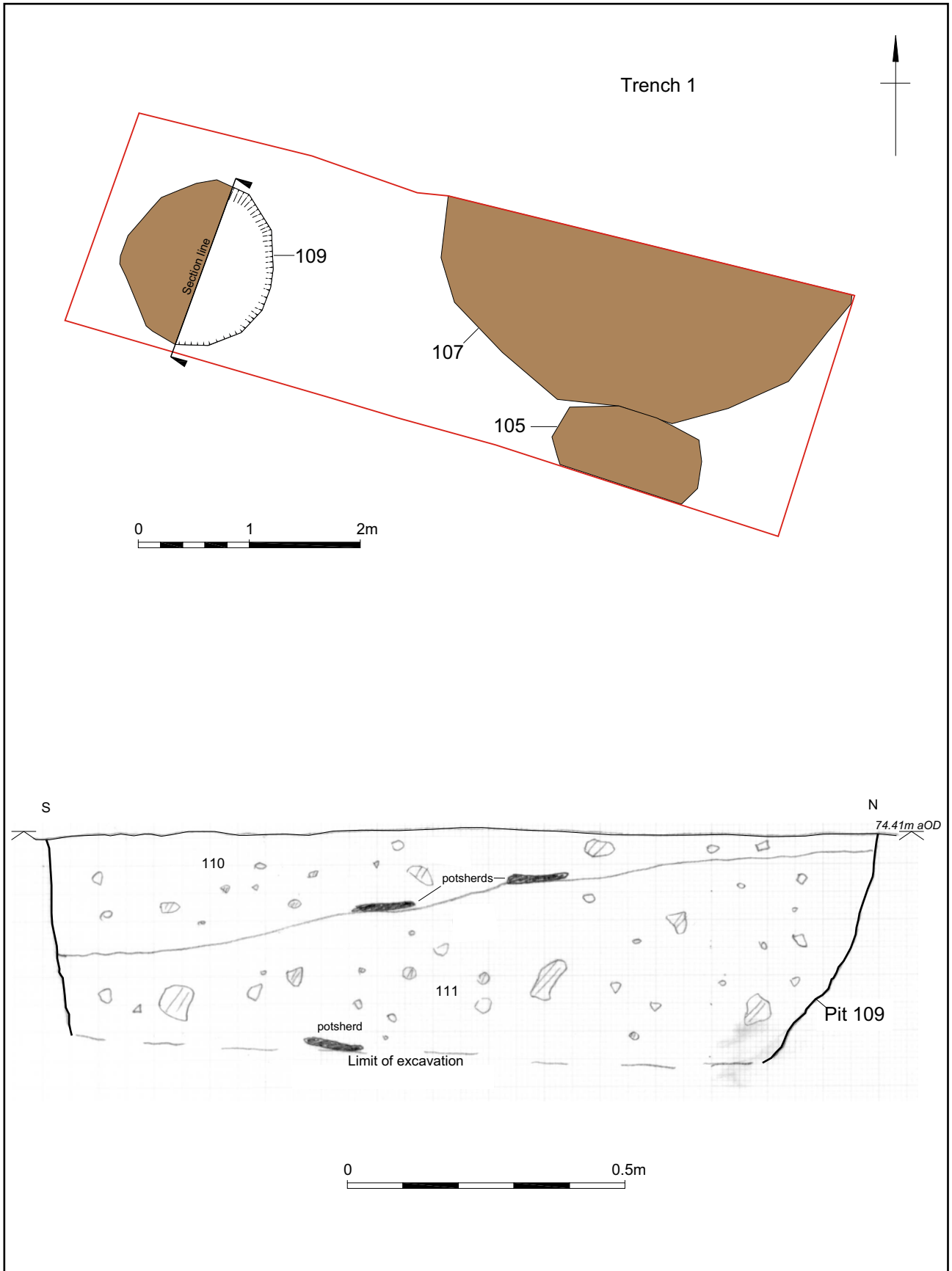
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Site and trench location

Figure 1



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Trench 1 plan and section through pit 109

Figure 2





Plate 1: Trench 1, view from west



Plate 2: Trench 2 view from south


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Plate 3: East facing section of pit 109 (scale 1m)



Plate 4: Pit 107, view from south (scale 1m)

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	Scale:	N/A	Illustrator:	SEJ
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