



# Bishop Wordsworth's School Salisbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Online archive report scanned from paper copy



Ref: W690 / 37497  
Date: 1994



© Wessex Archaeology Ltd 2020, all rights reserved.

Portway House  
Old Sarum Park  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire  
SP4 6EB

[www.wessexarch.co.uk](http://www.wessexarch.co.uk)

Wessex Archaeology Ltd is a Registered Charity no. 287786 (England & Wales) and SC042630 (Scotland)

#### Disclaimer

The material contained in this report was designed as an integral part of a report to an individual client and was prepared solely for the benefit of that client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and is not intended to nor should it be relied upon by any third party. To the fullest extent permitted by law Wessex Archaeology will not be liable by reason of breach of contract negligence or otherwise for any loss or damage (whether direct indirect or consequential) occasioned to any person acting or omitting to act or refraining from acting in reliance upon the material contained in this report arising from or connected with any error or omission in the material contained in the report. Loss or damage as referred to above shall be deemed to include, but is not limited to, any loss of profits or anticipated profits damage to reputation or goodwill loss of business or anticipated business damages costs expenses incurred or payable to any third party (in all cases whether direct indirect or consequential) or any other direct indirect or consequential loss or damage.

# Trust for Wessex Archaeology Site W88: THE MALTINGS DEVELOPMENT

By J.W. Hawkes

## INTRODUCTION

Preliminary construction work for a new shopping centre on the site of the Town Mill and former maltings was the subject of a watching brief maintained by the Trust for Wessex Archaeology during the winter of 1984/85.

The site lies in Fisherton Anger immediately to the west of Salisbury, and is reputedly the site of the Dominican priory founded c.1280. Previous work by the Wiltshire Library and Museum Service during the construction of a supermarket on and behind the Fisherton Street frontage in 1978 revealed a small cemetery and limited structural evidence of medieval date.

## Observations and Interpretations

Observations of the 1984/5 groundworks revealed no further evidence relating to the priory. Within the main area of the development (fig. 2) the construction of railway sidings associated with the maltings appeared to have involved the removal of any archaeological stratigraphy over almost the entire area, the sidings resting directly on truncated black riverine silts. Wherever these silts were exposed or cut by drains or boreholes no archaeological content was visible. In the extreme south of the development within 15m of the 1978 observations some stratigraphy, including a mortar floor, was noted in section. This floor level overlay bricks, however, and none of the exposed stratigraphy could therefore date to earlier than the ultimate medieval / early post-medieval period.

Within the area between the main Avon river channel and the mill stream a number of trial holes were observed, none of which produced deposits dating to earlier than the 18th century. The town mill was substantially rebuilt in 1757, and it is inferred that the ground level was raised by approximately 2m at this time.

Only one observation was made below this depth, during the removal of an air-raid shelter. At a depth of 45.60m OD (2.3m below pre-construction ground level and at the approximate depth of the present water table) a timber revetment was revealed running parallel to and to the south of the channel linking the Avon and the mill stream. Reconstruction of the form of this structure is necessarily limited, only the very top of the timbers being exposed for a length of some 5m.

The alignment comprised a closely set series of oak planks 4"(102mm) X 1½"(38mm), butted edge to edge. One timber was retrieved, with an overall length of 0.80m as measured to its decayed top, apparently radially sawn with adzed edges and drawn to a point by sawing from each wide face. No jointing of the timbers was noted, nor any other form of bracing.

The revetment was sealed by deposits containing small quantities of undiagnostic post-



medieval pottery (not collected), levels interpreted as relating to the groundworks of 1757. The cutting and treatment of the planks would not support a construction date much earlier than this, and it is concluded that the revetment probably dates to the first half of the 18th century. Excavations at Reading (Fasham and Hawkes in prep) have revealed a stave-built revetment of identical construction fronting the Kennet and Avon Navigation dated to c.1750 and replaced when in poor condition by c.1780.

### **Implications**

Although only a single, late timber alignment was seen, it is likely that some remains of the late medieval and early post-medieval riverfront survive at depths not uncovered by the present development, although piling will now have severely depleted these deposits without record. These observations are a reminder of the sometimes very considerable changes in local topography which may have taken place in comparatively recent times, particularly in the vicinity of rivers and other waterways.



Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB  
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



FS 606559