

**Written Scheme of Investigation
to assess archaeological potential**

at

59-61 Southampton Street,

Reading

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Table of Contents

1. Written Scheme of Investigation.....	4
1. Introduction.....	4
1.1 Instruction.....	4
1.2 Site.....	4
1.3 Purpose.....	4
1.4 Methodology.....	4
2. Baseline evidence.....	8
2.1 Determining the baseline evidence for buried Heritage Assets.....	8
2.2 Evidence for pre-Medieval activities within the Study Area.....	8
2.3 Evidence for Saxon and Medieval activities within the Study Area.....	8
2.4 Evidence for Post-medieval, Industrial and Contemporary Activities.....	10
2.5 The Site and its immediate context.....	11
2.6 Site conditions, past and present.....	12
3. Specification for coordination of archaeological works.....	13
3.1 Standards.....	13
3.2 Watching brief of the excavation to the depth where archaeological deposits are expected.....	14
3.3 Highly significant archaeological remains.....	16
3.4 Recording.....	17
3.5 Post-excavation assessment.....	17
3.6 Post-excavation analysis.....	18
3.7 Reporting, publication and dissemination.....	18
3.8 Archive preparation and deposition.....	19
3.9 Oasis and the Archaeology Data Service.....	19
3.10 Monitoring and sign-off.....	19
4. Research Framework.....	20
4.1 Solent-Thames Research Framework.....	20
4.2 Site-specific research questions.....	21
5. Sources.....	22

Executive summary

The steps needed to discharge a planning condition for a watching brief are provided below.

1. A method statement, or a Written Scheme of Investigation, explains how the work will be undertaken. The planning process for this work is to forward a draft Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to the Archaeology Officer for points of clarification and minor amendments, make the required amendments and submit it as part of an application to discharge conditions.
2. Once the formal approval of the details submitted has been received, 5 working days' notice is required before the start of the groundwork.
3. Groundworks can then commence at the notified date, with an archaeologist present to record any archaeological features and finds disturbed by the groundworks.
4. Limited recording will be required where no archaeological features and finds are identified and detailed recording will be necessary where archaeological features and finds are located. If human remains or other highly significant archaeology are uncovered, the Archaeology Officer will be notified and may wish to visit the site during work.
5. A draft report of the findings is provided to the client for comment and finalised upon receipt of comments.
6. An archive of findings is submitted to a suitable repository and confirmation of this together with the final report is then submitted to the planning authority, through the Archaeology Data Service, for approval.

1. Written Scheme of Investigation

1. Introduction

1.1 Instruction

- 1.1.1 The client (Imran Hussain) instructed Archway Heritage to produce a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) in response to Condition 22 of planning permission 191049. Planning permission has been granted for a change of use from A1 and 2 x C3 apartments to 7 x C1 units and 2 x C3 apartments (2 x 2 beds) with 2.5-storey rear extensions, rear dormers and basement light wells (amended).

1.2 Site

- 1.2.1 The Site, defined by the red line boundary drawing approved as part of that planning permission, is occupied by the Numbers 59-61 Southampton Street, Reading RG1 2QP; SU 71676 72869.
- 1.2.2 The solid geology on the Site is recorded as the Lambeth Group - Clay, silt and sand. The superficial geology is Taplow Gravel Member (Geology of Britain Viewer).

1.3 Purpose

- 1.3.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation is the first stage of the investigation to mitigate the impacts of groundwork at the Site. The process is outlined in the executive summary.

1.4 Methodology

- 1.4.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation addresses the requirements in Condition 22 of the planning

permission.

- 1.4.2 The Site Supervisor will be present at the Site during the contractor's working hours and may be assisted by additional staff, as required. The project will be directed by the Site Supervisor who has experience in performing, monitoring and managing fieldwork projects of different periods throughout Britain and Ireland.
- 1.4.3 Berkshire Archaeology will be given a minimum of 5 working days' notice of commencement of works.
- 1.4.4 Specialists to be approached, as appropriate to the findings on Site, are Matilda Holmes BSc, MSc, PhD and Gaynor Western BA(Hons), MSc, MCIIfA (faunal remains and human bone), Rebekah Pressler (pottery) and Dr. Lynne Bevan BA MPhil PhD MCIIfA (small finds, glass and metalwork). Should specialist input be required, an additional outlay will be agreed between the specialist and the client.
- 1.4.5 Horizontal survey control of the Site will use a coordinate grid of metric measurements, relative to the buildings on Site, which can be tied into the National Grid to record the location of significant archaeological features. Vertical survey control will be tied to the Ordnance Survey datum using GPS, on-loan from the building contractor on Site.

Drawings

- 1.4.6 All archaeological deposits will be planned, with a notation of the spot height, at an appropriate measured scale and cross-referenced to a locational plan recorded at a suitable scale.
- 1.4.7 All sections will be recorded using a measured drawing at an appropriate scale, usually 1:20. The height of a datum on the drawing will be calculated and recorded. The locations of cross sections will be recorded on the site plan. Cut features will be recorded in profile, planned at an appropriate scale and their location accurately identified.
- 1.4.8 All drawn records will be marked with a unique site number and will be individually identified.

The scale of the plan will be recorded. All drawings will be drawn on dimensionally stable media. All plans will be drawn relative to the site grid and at least two grid references will be marked on each plan.

Written descriptions

- 1.4.9 Each archaeological context will be recorded separately using a written description. The stratigraphic relationships of each context will be recorded. Pro forma record sheets will be used throughout. An index will be kept of all record types.

Photographic record

- 1.4.10 A digital photographic record of excavated features will be compiled. Each excavation context will be recorded photographically before removal. All photographs will feature an appropriately sized scale.

Monitoring

- 1.4.11 The Site Supervisor will contact Berkshire Archaeology when on Site. An appropriate level of monitoring will be undertaken by Berkshire Archaeology.

Health and safety

- 1.4.12 The watching brief will comply with all relevant Health and Safety Legislation. Risk assessments and welfare provisions will comply with The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992) which will be tied to the specific constraints and proposed methodologies for each area of the works. Welfare provision will allow the Site Supervisor to take off-site breaks of no less than two 20 minute and one 40 minute break, during which time no machining will be undertaken.

Insurance

- 1.4.13 Archway Heritage carries appropriate levels of Professional Indemnity Insurance. Copies of the

certificates are available at the client's request.

Scope

- 1.4.14 All works will be undertaken by a suitably experienced archaeologist. The scope of the work comprises:
- a continual watching brief of the excavation will continue until a depth beyond expected archaeological horizons is reached;
 - if archaeological remains are identified, these will be characterised, and recorded;
 - on-site recording of archaeological remains will be followed by off-site analysis, reporting and archiving; and
 - the dissemination and publication of the results will be appropriate to the significance levels outlined in the Solent-Thames Research Framework

2. Baseline evidence

2.1 Determining the baseline evidence for buried Heritage Assets

- 2.1.1 The baseline consists of a description of the Heritage Assets within the Study Area and Potential near and within the Site.

2.2 Evidence for pre-Medieval activities within the Study Area

Prehistoric (500,000 BC- 43 AD)

- 2.2.1 The gravel terraces within the Thames Valley are known to have potential for the sourcing and working of stone tools, as well as prehistoric settlement activity. Worked flint assemblages, ranging from the Paleolithic to the Late Iron Age, were identified as evidence of human activity within 500m of the Site. For example, during an archaeological watching brief at Bridge Street, Reading, twelve prehistoric struck flints were recovered.

Romano-British (43 AD - 410 AD)

- 2.2.2 There is also evidence of Romano-British settlement within Reading's suburban areas, such as Coley and Katesgrove. For example, residual Romano-British pottery sherds were recorded during archaeological investigations at 32-38 Silver Street.

2.3 Evidence for Saxon and Medieval activities within the Study Area

Saxon (410 AD - 1066 AD)

- 2.3.1 Reading is documented as a Vill (smallest administrative unit) in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 870-71 AD, consisting of houses and adjacent lands. Limited archaeological evidence, such as a

few burials at Forbury Gardens, a single structure at Forbury House, and a late 9th-century inhumation with Saxon pennies at Street Mary's Minster graveyard, hint at the possibility of future discoveries. By the 11th century, Reading had attained elements of 'borough' status, with a degree of self-government granted by Edward the Confessor, indicating its importance as a trading centre.

- 2.3.2 The first mention of Reading dates back to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which indicates a Saxon settlement that was sacked, though it is unclear if there was continuous occupation. Further raids on the area are recorded in 1006 and continued sporadically, possibly related to the decline of a nunnery recorded in Reading around 979. The late Saxon Borough was likely focused around Street Mary's Butts, where two main trading routes crossed. There is no evidence of Saxon activities near the Site.

Medieval (1066 AD -1550 AD)

- 2.3.3 After the Norman conquest in 1066, William I commissioned the Domesday Book survey, which recorded Reading as a sizable commercial settlement with resources like fisheries, meadows and woodlands. It also noted lodgings associated with royal visits. In 1121, Henry I founded the influential Reading Abbey near the river, which assumed control over the market, tolls and fines. The building of Street Giles church in the late 12th century indicates a growing population beyond the original Street Mary's Minster. The link between Southampton and London Streets (Church Street) provided convenient trade route access.
- 2.3.4 Excavations have uncovered evidence of Medieval activities like 12th and 13th-century pits containing pottery, animal bones and flint, a 13th-15th century tilery with floors, rubbish pits on Silver Street, other Medieval finds on Silver Street and a 15th-century brick-lined ditch behind Southampton Street. The archaeological record points to Reading's growth as a commercial centre with industries like pottery and tile making during the Medieval period after the Norman

conquest.

2.4 Evidence for Post-medieval, Industrial and Contemporary Activities

Post-Medieval (1550 AD - 1799 AD)

- 2.4.1 There was a decline in traditional industries during this time. Though John Speed's 1610 map shows Reading still had open countryside, the cloth and leather industries that were key to its economy began declining from the 1640s onwards. Trade remained important, but also brought risks like the bubonic plague outbreaks in 1625, 1637 and 1640 which impacted the cloth trade.
- 2.4.2 The Civil War disrupted economic prosperity and growth. Reading suffered destruction from alternating military occupation during the English Civil War from 1642-1644. Charles I ordered Reading's defences demolished in 1644, a portion lies approximately 170 m to the south of the Site. This period saw continuous political divisions, disrupted trade, and economic difficulties from the 1600s, and hastened the decline of the traditional cloth and leather industries over the next century as Reading's economy reoriented.
- 2.4.3 Archaeological excavations have uncovered evidence of Post-Medieval activities like a canal section and industrial buildings and wharves near Katesgrove Lane, cesspits, soakaways, quarry pits on Silver Street and Crown St, Civil War defence ditches on a site at Silver Street and Jubilee Square, 16th-18th century pits and ditches with pottery, tiles, bones on Silver St, and 17th-century pits and gullies with artefacts on London St. Finds that evidence activity beyond those excavated sites include a 17th century Bellarmine jugs found at the Quaker Meeting House, a 19th century well on Letcombe Street and a medieval pottery shard at Mill Lane and Southampton Street.
- 2.4.4 The archaeological record points to Reading's economic reorientation after the Civil War disrupted its traditional industries, with new activities like quarrying and civil defence

construction in this period.

18th - 20th Centuries (Modern)

- 2.4.5 This period saw economic growth and improvements. Long-established industries like tanning, brick and tile making, and brewing underwent significant growth, aided by the new transport links. Reading became famous for bricks, brewing, biscuits and bulbs, facilitated by the canal's new trade connections.
- 2.4.6 Though little outward growth occurred by 1800, Reading continued as an agricultural trading centre with a growing population. Corn processing, malting and river trade to London allowed Reading's economy to flourish again in this period. Improvements like straightening the Kennet River, new canal extensions westward, and better roads with coach services supported Reading's industrial and economic expansion when other towns declined. The arrival of the railway in 1840 was a major boost.
- 2.4.7 Excavations uncovered evidence of 18th-20th century activities like 18th-19th century pits, wells, ceramics on London Street, 18th-19th century cesspits, postholes on Silver Street, 19th-20th century cellars on Crown Street and Street Giles Close, 19th-20th century Quaker burial ground on Church Street and the Reading Tin Works factory on London Street. Cellars were uncovered at The Crown Inn building from 1877 on Crown Street.
- 2.4.8 The archaeological findings reflect Reading's growth into an industrial centre for bricks, brewing, metalworks and more during the 18th-20th centuries after transport improvements.

2.5 The Site and its immediate context

- 2.5.1 Southampton Street formed part of the trading route into the Saxon core or Reading's St Marys Butts market. However, the Site is illustrated as green space on Speeds map 1611. Structures and gardens occupied site frontage, similar in plot length to the current, as shown on Coates map of

1802. The garden was separate from the tin works to the rear of the Site. A series of Ordnance Survey maps evidence no changes on the Site.

2.6 Site conditions, past and present

2.6.1 The current basement will be extended.

3. Specification for coordination of archaeological works

3.1 Standards

- 3.1.1 All archaeological works will be carried out in line with the ethical and methodological standards required by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and Management of Archaeological Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Morphe) applied as appropriate to the level of significance found during fieldwork (see 5. References). If archaeological findings of low significance are found during fieldwork, then a short PDF of the report will be emailed to the Historic Environment Record (HER). If significant archaeology is exposed during fieldwork then requirements set out in the aforementioned guidance documents will be adhered to by all parties involved through this WSI, including the client and Archway Heritage.
- 3.1.2 The principal construction contractor and the Site Supervisor will agree to the provision, accommodation and use of suitable plant and machinery before work commences. All mechanical excavation will be undertaken by the appointed groundwork contractors under archaeological monitoring and utilising **a toothless bucket** (i.e. ditching bucket).
- 3.1.3 Should substantial non-archaeologically significant obstructions be encountered, a toothed bucket may be employed on the understanding that it will be replaced again once the obstacle has been removed. When requested by the monitoring archaeologist, overburden will be deposited in appropriate spoil heaps to be visually scanned for finds before being removed from the Site.
- 3.1.4 In addition, the principal construction contractor will provide the Site Supervisor with accurate coordinates to allow the Site Supervisor to survey the locations of archaeological deposits. Those locations will be accurately set out, surveyed as excavated and tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Data. Any control points that locate deposits relative to base

mapping and/or absolute positions will be located at a survey grade accuracy of +/-0.01m.

- 3.1.5 Archaeological deposits will be excavated by hand unless the depth and nature of deposits preclude this. It may be unnecessary to hand excavate all features. Homogenous deposits, for example, may be excavated in the following way. Archaeological monitoring of machine excavation in splits of 200mm will be sufficient to recover details about depths, profile of cuts and recover deposits for sampling and artefact retrieval. Spoil will be scanned and a metal detector may be used under archaeological supervision to recover metallic finds, if appropriate.

3.2 Watching brief of the excavation to the depth where archaeological deposits are expected

- 3.2.1 A watching brief is defined as “a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive” (ClfA 2020, P4).
- 3.2.2 The purpose of a watching brief is:
- a. “allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works; and
 - b. provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.
 - c. a watching brief is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.”

3.2.3 The removal of overburden to construction level or significant archaeological horizon, whichever is higher, will be undertaken with a **bladed/toothless ditching bucket** under close archaeological supervision at all times. Should substantial non-archaeologically significant obstructions be encountered, a toothed bucket may be employed on the understanding that it will be replaced again once the obstacle has been removed. When requested by the monitoring archaeologist, overburden will be deposited in appropriate spoil heaps to be visually scanned for finds before being removed from the Site. Aims:

- to allow the monitoring archaeologist to signal that potentially significant archaeology has been identified during ground reduction; and
- to assess those deposits to enable them to decide whether recording is needed; and
- whether the significance and complexity of deposits are sufficient to fence that area and exclude all activities until archaeological excavation is completed.

3.2.4 The on-site archaeological investigations will establish what survives of the evidence and report on the results. The report or reports about the results will be produced by the Site Supervisor and submitted to the Archaeology Officer for review, once they have been agreed with the client.

Archaeological excavation of areas of deep or complex archaeological deposits

3.2.5 Complex in this context refers to deposits requiring on-site specialist input or consultation with Historic England, particularly environmental or finds analysis that may require discrete area excavation. An archaeological excavation is defined as a programme of “controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives, which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or underwater. The records made and objects gathered during fieldwork are studied and the results of that study are published in detail appropriate to the project design” (ClfA 2020, P4).

3.2.6 The purpose of archaeological excavation is:

“The purpose of the excavation is to examine the archaeological resource within a given area or

site within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource, to analyse and interpret the results, and disseminate them.”

- 3.2.7 As described in paragraph 4.3.1, areas requiring archaeological excavation and recording will be identified on-site. The depth of each area will be defined locally, based on the identified archaeological horizons rather than the depth of construction impact to enable sufficient recovery of evidence, unless otherwise agreed with the Archaeology Officer, the Client and Archway Heritage. If physical obstacles or other factors prevent excavation and recording, a resolution will be reached with the principal construction contractor in consultation with the client. The solution will be monitored and signed off by the Archaeology Officer.

3.3 Highly significant archaeological remains

- 3.3.1 Should highly significant archaeological remains be encountered, the following procedures should be followed. Highly significant archaeological remains are deemed to comprise human remains, archaeological deposits of schedulable quality and remains that would fall under the Treasure Act.

Human remains

- 3.3.2 The Site Supervisor will inform the principal contractor, the client team, the Police and the Coroner immediately upon the discovery. Archway Heritage will inform the Archaeology Officer. The process outlined in ClfA guidance will be followed in advising the Ministry of Justice and obtaining a burial licence by the Burial Act 1857, as appropriate.
- 3.3.3 Once the correct authorisation has been obtained, the excavation of the remains will follow the provisions of the licence and under the supervision of the Site Supervisor's appointed human osteologist. The complete burial context will be excavated and may be bulk-lifted to be excavated

off-site, if appropriate. Samples will be taken from the surrounding soil for further analysis.

Archaeological deposits of schedulable quality

- 3.3.4 Historic England will be consulted about the approach to protection and recording, in consultation with the Archaeology Officer and the client.

Treasure

- 3.3.5 The Secretary of State has the power to designate any object over two hundred years old that they consider to be of outstanding historical, cultural or archaeological importance. Treasure will be reported to the Archaeology Officer and the Finds Liaison Officer and will be protected from disturbance until provisions for their removal can be made. Adequate 24-hour security will be provided to protect the Treasure from theft or damage. Once the correct consultations have been undertaken, the excavation will follow the provisions of the legislative requirements and professional standards.

3.4 Recording

- 3.4.1 The Site Supervisor will obtain Historic Environment Record event numbers and Reading Museum numbers and discuss archive requirements, as appropriate (<https://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/collections-enquiry>). The Site Supervisor will also provide details of their proposed: written, drawn and photographic recording; finds recording; environmental sampling; and scientific dating within their detailed methodology statement, in line with paragraph 3.1.1. Analysis of the findings, reporting and dissemination may take place concurrently with construction.

3.5 Post-excavation assessment

- 3.5.1 The Site Supervisor will consult with the Archaeology Officer and client about specific details of the post-excavation assessment, in line with Paragraph 3.1.1. For example, detailed method

statements may be required by the Archaeology Officer or Historic England where complex archaeological deposits are found if the monitoring Archaeology Officer formally requests it. Equally, an assessment shall be made of the necessary scope of post-excavation analysis required, in line with Paragraph 3.1.1.

- 3.5.2 The Site Supervisor will consult with the Archaeology Officer (and Historic England, as appropriate) to establish any additional research objectives that have emerged through the archaeological investigation, in line with Paragraph 3.1.1 and provide details of the post-excavation assessment in the detailed method statement.

3.6 Post-excavation analysis

- 3.6.1 Post-excavation analysis will be informed by the post-excavation assessment, as described above. It will be appropriate to the nature, scale and significance of findings recovered through fieldwork, in line with Paragraph 3.1.1.

3.7 Reporting, publication and dissemination

- 3.7.1 Reporting, publication and dissemination will be carried out in line with Paragraph 3.1.1.
- 3.7.2 In line with Paragraph 3.1.1, the Site Supervisor will consult with the Archaeology Officer regarding the dates for interim reports. This will be specified in the detailed method statement, once the Archaeology Officer has provided their requests in writing for client agreement. Once the post-excavation analysis is completed, the Site Supervisor will produce a final report integrating the results of the post-excavation assessment and the Solent-Thames Research Framework, about the fieldwork results.
- 3.7.3 Through consultation between the Site Supervisor and the client, the Archaeology Officer will specify in writing the form of the report, and the number of hard and digital copies required which will be outlined by the Site Supervisor in the detailed method statement for client agreement.

The Archaeology Officer may guide dissemination through archaeological journals, public events, lectures and online materials as appropriate to the significance of the findings. This will result in additional costs to the client and is unlikely to be required on a Site of this scale.

3.8 Archive preparation and deposition

- 3.8.1 Archway Heritage will deposit project archives once all outstanding invoices have been paid in full. Archive deposition can take a minimum of 30 working days from the date of the completion of the project report.
- 3.8.2 The material archive (finds, samples and digital, written, drawn and photographic records) will be deposited in an appropriate archive in agreement with the Archaeology Officer and Reading Museum, in line with Paragraph 3.1.1. Both parties will be invited to contribute and advise on the collection, analysis and storage of the archive.

3.9 Oasis and the Archaeology Data Service

- 3.9.1 A digital record will be uploaded into the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations Project (Oasis) and to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The client is advised that the more detailed the findings, the higher the fees for deposition at the ADS.

3.10 Monitoring and sign-off

- 3.10.1 Access must be provided to Archway Heritage, the Archaeology Officer and Historic England for on-site and archival monitoring, as appropriate. Liaison between all parties will be initiated by the Site Supervisor. Arranging access for monitoring visits and public communications, such as the discovery of significant archaeology, will be handled by the client team.

4. Research Framework

4.1 Solent-Thames Research Framework

- 4.1.1 A key part of archaeological recording is the contribution made to research frameworks created for this region to coordinate and focus research that fills knowledge gaps. The Research Framework categorises evidence into archaeological periods and evidence types or themes. As the known Site activities relate to Pre-Victorian inner suburban growth, currently, the most relevant archaeological periods for this Site are Post-medieval and Contemporary.

Medieval

- 4.1.2 The Site was green space when Speed's map was drawn up. The Research Framework acknowledges that the relationship between the hinterland and settlement needs further study. However, a site of this size is unlikely to provide substantial evidence for understanding that relationship, so any such findings would only be of local significance with low research potential. Evidence relating to manufacturing activities like the medieval tilery would have medium research potential and contribute to regional objectives.

Post-Medieval Period

- 4.1.3 The Civil War defences were located at a distance, so the potential for finding civil war defence remains on this Site is low. There is potential for uncovering evidence of gravel or clay quarrying, cesspit use and drainage features from this period on the Site. The Framework indicates that differentiating Post-medieval from Modern-period evidence would be helpful, though the extent of that potential is unclear.

Modern Period

- 4.1.4 The Research Framework emphasises that evidence providing a greater understanding the changes that have occurred within urban morphology, due to changing prosperity and backyard

activities within terraced housing areas like those on this Site, which may be of interest and relevant to the regional research objectives.

4.2 Site-specific research questions

4.2.1 Research questions will be refined where appropriate, as informed by the evidence recovered and may incorporate the following.

- To what extent are transitions between Post-medieval and Modern-periods in evidence?
- Is there any evidence of manufacturing or other Medieval activities on the Site?
- Is there any evidence for pre-Medieval activities on the Site?

5. Sources

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