

**Halswell Park, Goathurst Somerset
The Deer Park Ha Ha (Areas 1 & 2)**



The Results of an Archaeological Evaluation

**Halswell Park
GOATHURST, SOMERSET**

Project Ref	GHH 26
Planning Ref	-
NGR	ST 2530 3394 ST 2551 3392

Authorised for distribution	
------------------------------------	--

Prepared by James Brigers of Prospect Archaeology August 2026

Client: Edward Strachan

**Contractor: Prospect Archaeology
Xavier
Nethermoor Road
Middlezoy
Somerset**

© James L. Brigers 2026 all rights reserved

PA

PROSPECT ARCHAEOLOGY

CONTENTS

Page

1.....	Summary
	1.0 Introduction
	1.1 Project Background & Acknowledgements
2.....	1.2 Location & Geology
3.....	1.3 Historical & Archaeological Context
	2.0 The Archaeology
	2.2 Methodology
5.....	2.3 Results & Description
	<i>Overview</i>
	<i>Area 1</i>
9.....	<i>Area 2</i>
16.....	3.0 Material Evidence
	3.1 Overview
17.....	4.0 Discussion & Conclusion
19.....	5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations
	Appendix

PA

PROSPECT ARCHAEOLOGY

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 (p. 2): Trench location overlaid on c1880 OS mapping

Fig. 2 (p. 6): Trench 1 final plan

Fig. 3 (p. 6): Area 1 trench long sections

Fig. 4 (p. 10): Area 2 trench long sections

PLATES

Front cover: General view from north east showing the location of Trench 3

Pl. 1 (p. 4): Commencement of excavation in Area 1

Pl. 2 (p. 7): North facing section through ditch [107] (Area 1 south)

Pl. 3 (p. 7): Detail of elevation of wall (106) (Area 1 south)

Pl. 4 (p. 8): North facing section through ditch [107] (Area 1 north)

Pl. 5 (p. 8): Detail of elevation of wall (106) (Area 1 north)

Pl. 6 (p. 9): General view of Trench 1 at close of excavation

Pl. 7 (p. 11): Trench 3 south facing section

Pl. 8 (p. 11): Detail elevation of wall (304)

Pl. 9 (p. 13): Trench 4 south facing section

Pl. 10 (p. 13): Detail elevation of wall (405)/(406)

Pl. 11 (p. 14): Trench 5 west facing section

Pl. 12 (p. 14): Detail elevation of wall (503)

Pl. 13 (p. 15): Northern part of Trench 5 showing wall (503) & early soil horizon (505)

Pl. 14 (p. 16): West facing section Trench 6

APPENDIX

i) List of excavated contexts

ii) Finds by material

iii) Written Scheme of Investigation

**THE DEER PARK HA HA, HALSWELL PARK, GOATHURST, SOMERSET. THE RESULTS OF AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

James Brigers, BA August 2026 on behalf of Edward Strachan

NGR: ST 2530 3394; 2551 3392 & 2569 3402 (between)

Soms Museums acc. no. 37/2026

OASIS ref: prospect1-544942

Soms HER PRN: 58437

SUMMARY

During May and July 2026 a series of six trenches were excavated within the historic park to the north of Halswell House along the line of two lengths of a boundary ditch shown as a prominent feature on early mapping and known to have been designed as a ha ha. At all but one location the retaining wall to the outside of the feature was found to have largely survived and in places displayed evidence of having been repaired during the life of the feature. Structural details and types of stone employed within the wall suggested that the excavated features represented the results of more than one phase of construction but accurate dating has proved problematic. Deposits within the ditch suggested that this had gradually silted into the 19th and 20th centuries prior to deliberate partial in-filling with predominantly quarry waste and demolition material and finally by dumps of re-deposited natural clay and gravel. There was no indication of the presence of a feature obviously pre-dating the formation of the post medieval boundary feature.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background & Acknowledgements

1.1.1 The current owner of Halswell House (Mr Edward Strachan) has recently secured the purchase of areas of former parkland to the north and east of the house, effectively re-uniting them with the Halswell Estate. The newly acquired land contains the remains of historic fishponds, once incorporated as elements of the 18th century landscape, but possibly of earlier origin and the locations of two lengths of now in-filled ha ha, also components of the 18th century landscape that once marked the boundary of the medieval and later deer park. As part of the ongoing restoration of the house, gardens and surrounding it is proposed to reinstate the ha ha deer park boundary and reincorporate it as a functional element within the restored parkland. In order to establish the form and state of preservation of the feature an evaluation of a number of sample lengths was deemed appropriate and the resulting archaeological programme was devised and directed by James Brigers of Prospect Archaeology in the spring and summer of 2026 with funding provided by

Edward Strachan. Thanks are due to Ann Manders (Halswell Park project manager) for the provision of preliminary information and to Simon Bowditch for his expert handling of the machine.

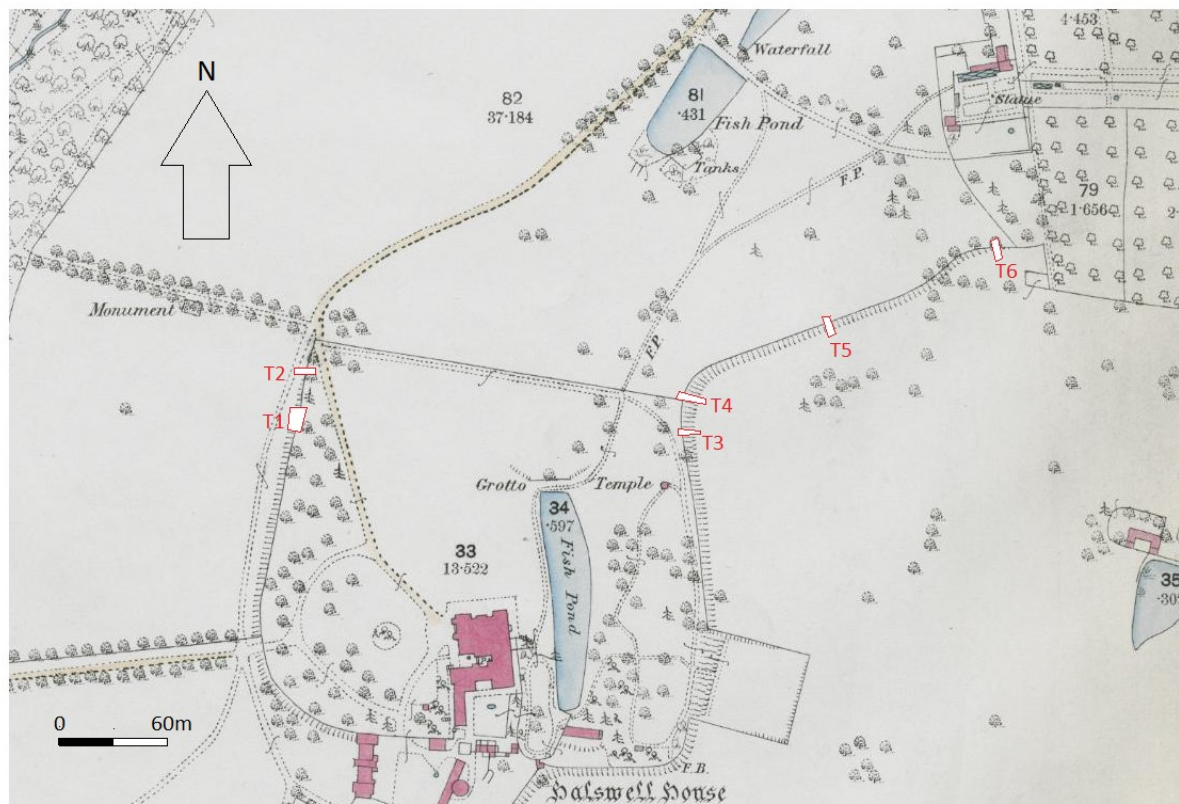


Fig. 1: Halswell Deer Park Ha Ha. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition showing the ha ha as extant with the 2026 trench positions overlaid.

1.2 Location & Geology (fig. 1)

1.2.1 The investigation two lengths of prominent boundaries to the west and east of the house shown on historic mapping. The western line remains partially extant and runs from a point to the south west of the house and turns north to terminate close to the main north drive. The eastern length extends east from the south of the house before turning to the north and then running east through the park to terminate at a spinney approximately 1km S of Goathurst village.

1.2.2 Investigation Area 1 was located in an area of grass recently planted with saplings approaching the northern terminus of the western length and centred at ST 2530 3394. Area 2 extended from the north western corner of the eastern length in an area of grass and scrub at ST 2551 3392 through open arable field to the known eastern terminus of the boundary at ST 2569 3402. The underlying geology in the area of Halswell House consists of slate of the Morte Slates Formation¹.

¹ British Geological Survey, digital map data

1.3 Historical & Archaeological Context

1.3.1 The deer park at Halswell has probable medieval origins but became part of a designed naturalistic landscape when the ownership of the estate passed into the hands of Sir Charles Kemys Tynte in the mid 18th century. The ha ha is likely to have originated as a component of this landscape and is shown on an estate map of 1771, although there are suggestions that, in part at least, it followed the line of an earlier boundary that may have been marked by a wall. The feature was designed as a stock control boundary that would not be intrusive in any of the intended views from the house or contemporary viewpoints within the garden or park and would have borne characteristics similar to surviving examples within the Halswell Estate and in parks and within gardens of the period throughout the country.

2.0 THE ARCHAEOLOGY

2.1 Methodology (fig. 1; pl. 1; appendix iii)

2.1.1 The principal aim of this programme of works was to establish the precise location of the remains of the historic boundary feature and to achieve a sufficient excavated sample at several locations on its length to provide information on its character, period of origin, chronological development and state of preservation, the latter with a view to establishing the viability of a programme of restoration moving forward.

2.1.2 Trenches were positioned through the use of the historic mapping and recent aerial photographs and located through ground survey using existing fixed points within two broad areas; Area 1 to the west and Area 2 within the agricultural land to the east. Initially three positions were selected within Area 1 to include two trenches across the line of the known feature and a third to the north in order to establish if the feature once extended further than previously mapped. The two southern trenches were eventually amalgamated to form a single trench (Trench 1) to allow the examination of a greater length of the structural element of the feature. Four further trenches were excavated in Area 2 to provide information on the character of the remains at the north western corner of this length, the centre and eastern terminus.

2.1.3 The trenches were initially opened through the use of a machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision with the process being occasionally halted or paused to allow the collection of artefacts and the examination of exposed deposits. The process of excavation was completed through manual effort and all exposed surfaces were cleaned prior to a photographic record being compiled to include detailed and wide shots of significant features, at least one trench long section and trench location. At the completion of the excavation at least one long section of each trench was drawn at a scale of 1:50 and annotated to record the characteristics and stratigraphic relationships of each context. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50 if deemed appropriate and the trench locations recorded on a final overall plan at a scale of 1:2500.



Pl. 1: Commencement of excavation in Trench 1 to the west of the site (view from E)

2.1.4 2.2.4 Artefacts encountered during the process were recovered and packaged in bags marked with their context and the sites unique code (GHH 26-37/2026) and retained for further examination. All work on site was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation produced by the author in June 2026 as approved by SWHT², ClfA guidelines³ and best practice for archaeological work in the county of Somerset⁴.

2.2.5 All original written, drawn and photographic material generated during the fieldwork will comprise the 'site archive' which will be deposited with the Somerset Heritage Centre with the retained finds and accompanied by a copy of this report to allow entry of the results on the County Historic Environment Record (HER). Further copies of the report will be sent to Edward Strachan (as Sponsor). Further copies will be available from the author upon request. A summary of the results will be published in the Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological Society in 2027.

² Brigers, JL 2026 'Proposed Archaeological Mitigation during Proposed Restoration Works within the Park to the North of Halswell House, Goathurst, Somerset', unpub doc in SWHT archives.

³ ClfA, 'Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief', pub. 2014; updated 2020

⁴ South West Heritage Trust, 2017. 'Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook'.

2.3 Results & Description (figs. 1-3; pl. 2-14; appendix iii)

Overview

2.3.1 The trench location policy proved to be successful and remains of the target feature were available for examination in every intervention, with the exception of Trench 2 which proved negative, but this was anticipated based on the historical mapping evidence. At this location undisturbed natural substrate (201) observed at a depth of 0.40m and was immediately sealed by homogenous recent cultivation soil (200)

2.3.2 Evidence for activity pre-dating the construction of the ha ha was absent, although a buried soil horizon (505) exposed in Trench 5 may represent the truncated remains of a ground surface of medieval or possibly earlier date.

Area 1

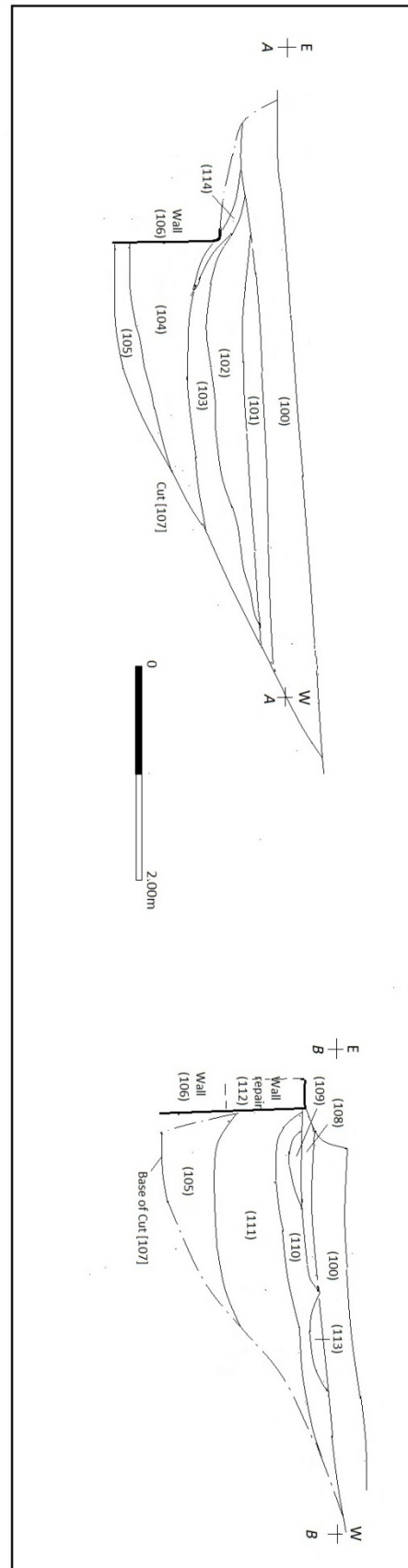
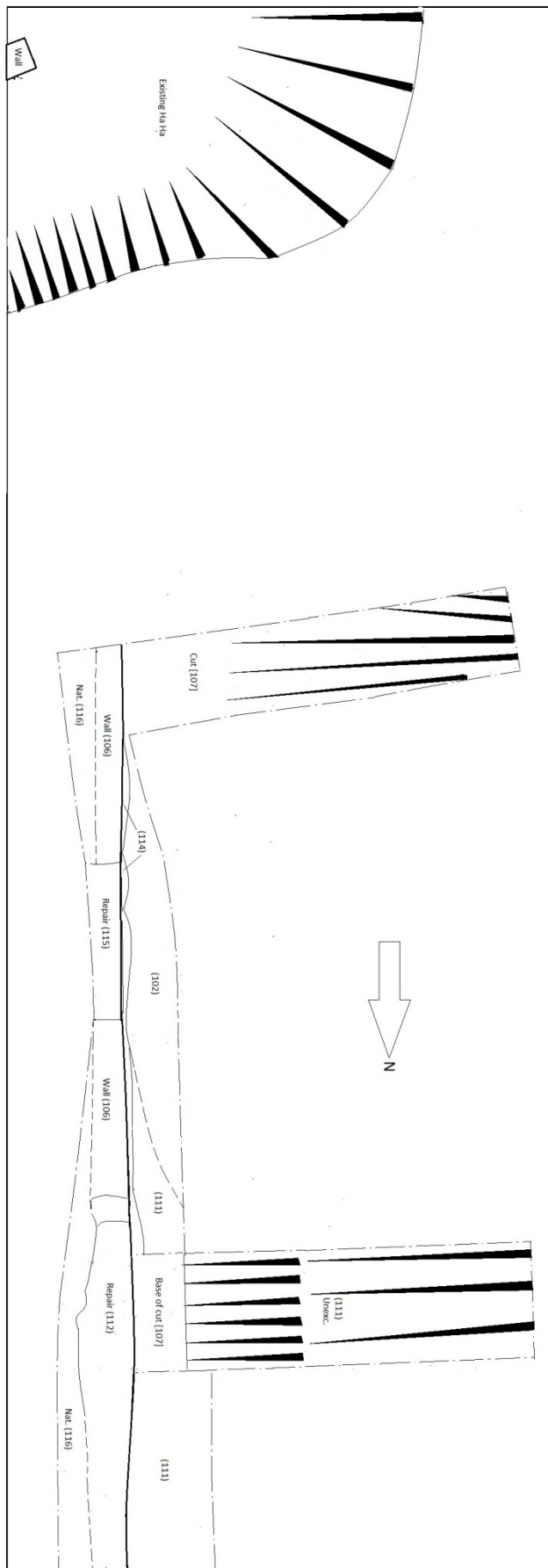
2.3.3 Two 1.00m wide sections of the feature were excavated here in the form of broad ditch [107], 5.00m in width and up to 1.70m in depth with a moderately-sloping west falling to a gentle break at a flat base (figs. 2 & 3; pl. 2 & 4). The east side of the feature was vertical and faced in both excavated locations by a wall (106), 0.40m in thickness and built from the base of the ditch and which survived to maximum height of 1.30m, although the upper courses may have been lost (pl. 3; 5 & 6).

2.3.4 Evidence at both locations suggested that the original wall (106) had been constructed of flat-laid Morte Slate rubble bonded by red-brown sandy lime mortar, although the upper surviving courses to the south included a brick header course which may represent a later repair. Further short lengths of probable repairs, all including brick headers and stretchers, were noted in the centre of the excavated length in the form of (112) & (115), with the former being coincident with a slight deviation in the overall line of the wall, suggestive of a partial failure.

2.3.5 The primary fill of the ditch consisted of dark red-brown clay-silt (105) which contained fragments of Morte Slate rubble, brick charcoal flecks and red-brown mortar suggesting that the deposit was formed through natural silting while the feature lay open and had incorporated components derived from the weathering of wall (106). Deposit (105) also contained a fragment of wine bottle dating from the later 18th or early 19th century.

2.3.6 The primary fill was sealed by a sequence of deliberately dumped in-fill deposits consisting of individual tips predominantly of slate roof tiles (104) & (110) and highly compacted re-deposited natural clay and gravel (102) & (111), possibly representing more than a single phase of concerted attempts at infilling. To the south the final in-fill (102) appears to have slumped to form a shallow depression which became filled with friable grey-brown clay-loam (101) before the entire area was sealed to the level of the modern ground surface by cultivation soil build-up (100).

Fig. 2 (below left) Trench 1 Final Plan; Fig. 3 (below right): Area 1 North Facing Section through ditch [107]





Pl. 2: North facing section through ditch [107]; Area 1 south (view from N; scale=2m)



Pl. 3: Detail exposed elevation of retaining wall (106); Area 1 south (view from W; scale=1m)



Fig. 4: North facing section through ditch [107]; Area 1 central (view from N; scale=2m)



Fig. 5: Detail exposed elevation of retaining wall (106) & repair (112); Area 1 central (view from W; scale=1.50m)



Pl. 6: General view of Area 1 at close of excavation showing exposed length of wall (106) (view from N; scale=2m)

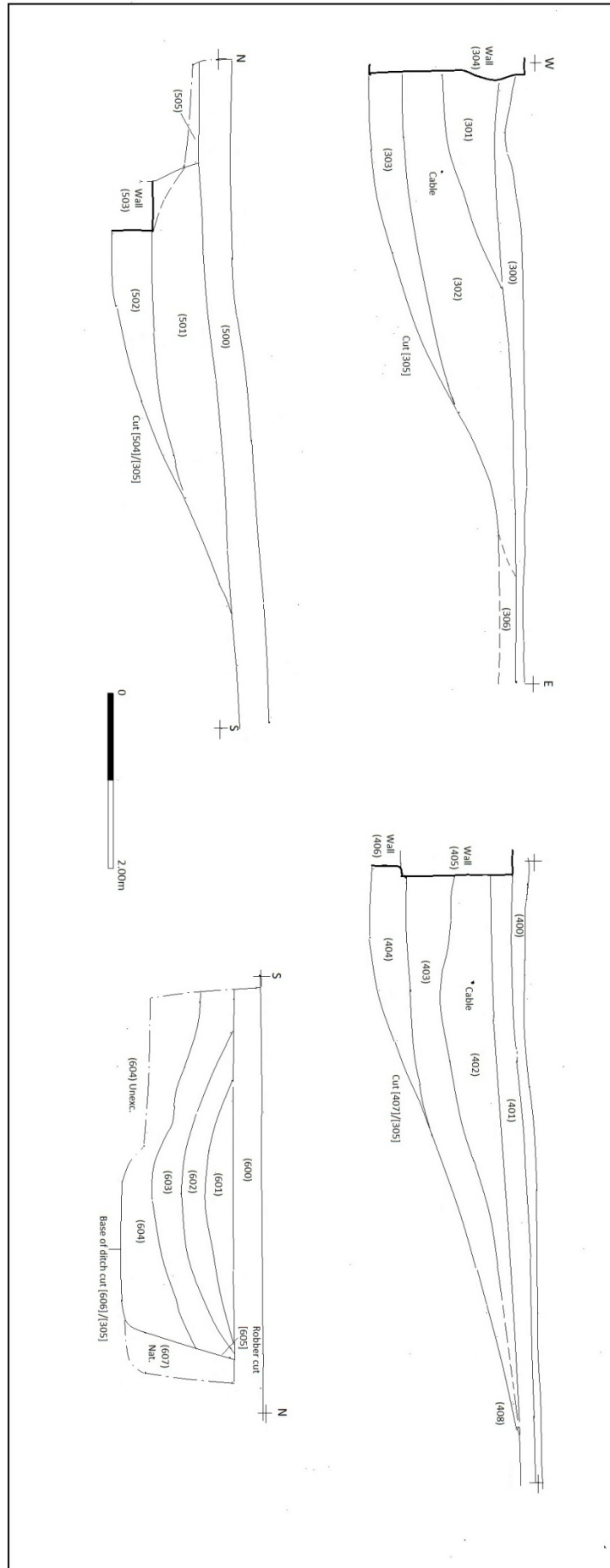
Area 2

2.3.7 Three complete profiles through the ditch [305] were obtained within the four trenches opened over the eastern length of the feature and a partial profile was exposed within Trench 6, at the eastern terminus which proved to be the only location where the retaining wall was absent (fig. 4).

2.3.8 Within Trenches 3 & 4 to the west, Ditch [305] was found to be up to 6.00m in width and 1.80m in depth with a moderately-sloping eastern side falling to a gentle break at a flat base (fig. 4; pl. 7 & 9). In Trench 3 the assumed vertical western edge was faced by wall (305), consisting predominantly of un-coursed red sandstone rubble from which the red-brown lime mortar bonding had been largely washed-out from the upper courses. The central part of the exposed elevation at this point was formed of small to medium sized slabby Morte Slate, quite haphazardly laid and pointed bonded by pale red-brown lime mortar with little finesse (pl. 8). The character of the Morte Slate courses here does not match the quality of the workmanship observed elsewhere and it may be suggested that this represents a later repair to what may have been wall entirely constructed of red sandstone rubble.

**Fig. 4 (facing
Excavated ditch**

**page): Area 2
sections**





Pl. 7: General view of south facing section in Trench 2 (view from ESE; scales=1m)



Pl. 8: East facing elevation of wall (304) in Trench 3 (view from E; scale=2m)

2.3.9 The wall elevation as exposed in Trench 4 also bore indications of two phases of work. Here the lower part (406) was constructed of red sandstone rubble with occasional components of Morte Slate and bonded by hard dark red lime mortar (pl. 9). The upper and principal part of the elevation (405) was offset from (406) to the east by 0.20m and constructed of Morte Slate rubble with occasional brick, capped by two courses of brick headers, followed by blue lias slabs and finally by large Morte Slate rubble all bonded by pale red-brown lime mortar. This section of wall also contained a ceramic pipe, deliberately built into the structure and running out of the feature to the west.

2.3.10 The primary fill of the ditch in Trench 4 consisted of compact dark grey-brown gritty silt (404) likely to be the product of prolonged silting which included quantities of red-brown mortar fragments, some grey mortar along with small red sandstone and Morte Slate, pan tile fragments and bottle glass of mid to late 19th century date. It is worth noting here that (404) only sealed the retaining wall to the level of lower part (406) and it may be suggested that this material was already deposited when the later phase of the structure (405) was built, which would possibly explain the significant offset.

2.3.11 The eventual in-filling of the ditch at the location of Trench 4 continued with the deposition of clean red-brown clay-loam (403) which does not appear to be deliberate and may represent an accumulation of material washed off the adjacent field when this was returned to arable use. This was finally sealed by deliberate backfill of compact clay and gravel (402) with all being overlain to level of the existing surface by recent cultivation horizon (401) and top soil and turf (400).

2.3.12 Where located within the centre of the field in Trench 5, ditch [305] was found directly cut a build-up of clean red-brown clay-loam (505), possibly representing the truncated remains of a former cultivation horizon (pl. 13). Here the ditch was less substantial than elsewhere, being 4.75m in width and only 0.90m in depth with a slightly convex and moderately-sloping south side (fig. 4; pl. 11). The retaining wall to the north (503) was found to be severely truncated to a height of 0.40m constructed predominantly of brick with occasional Morte Slate rubble and re-used large square floor tiles of mid 18th century date bonded by red-brown lime mortar (pl. 12).

2.3.13 Very little evidence for primary silting was present in Trench 5 and the earliest fill within the ditch consisted of deliberate in-fill of loose Morte Slate rubble and fragmented lime mortar (502) including clay floor tiles and bottle glass and ceramic of the later 18th or early 19th century. This was sealed by a further deliberate dump of compact coarse gravel and clay (501) and finally by modern cultivation horizon (500) to the level of the existing ground surface.



Pl. 9: South facing section in Trench 4 (view from SE; scale=1m)



Pl. 10: East facing elevation of retaining wall (405)/(406) in Trench 4 (view from E; scale=1.50m)



Pl. 11: West facing section in Trench 5 (view from SW; scales=1m)



Pl. 12: South facing elevation of remains of wall (503) in Trench 5 (view from S; scale in 0.50m divisions)



Pl. 13: Southern edge of ditch cut [305]/[504] in Trench 5 showing earlier cultivation horizon (505) (left) and remains of wall (503) (centre) (view from W; scale=1m)

2.3.14 Within the area investigated by Trench 6, towards the eastern terminus of the feature, ditch [305] was found to survive to a depth of 1.25m in a slightly altered form but its full extent to the south was not determined. No evidence was found for a retaining wall to the north here and it is possible that it had been entirely robbed prior to the backfilling of the ditch (fig. 4; pl. 14).

2.3.15 The remaining feature here was initially filled by loose lias rubble and red-brown lime mortar (604) which included occasional brick. This was sealed by three further episodes of deliberate infill (601); (602); (603) consisting of compacted red-brown clay and gravel and clay-loam of which the upper, (601), contained a glass bottle of the later 19th century. These deposits were finally sealed to the level of the modern ground surface by recent cultivation horizon (600).



Pl. 14: West facing section as excavated in Trench 6 (view from SW; scale=2m)

3.0 MATERIAL EVIDENCE

3.1 Overview (appendix ii)

3.1.1 The investigations produced 27 artefacts weighing a total of 1,120g from six secure contexts and including the material recovered through the use of a metal detector in Area 2 which cannot be allocated a context (Table 1).

Context	Pottery	Glass	Tile	Metal	Total
105	-	2/172	-	-	2/172
303	-	4/63	1/54	-	5/117
404	-	7/146	1/370	-	8/516
502	1/7	1/97	-	-	2/104
601	-	1/103	-	-	1/103
Unstrat. (A2)	-	-	-	9/108	9/108
Total	1/7	15/581	2/424	9/108	27/1,120g

Table 1: Halswell Park Ha Ha. Retained Artefacts by Material (Q/W)

3.1.2 The material from secure contexts was mostly recovered from primary ditch deposits and for the most part represents items of domestic function that were discarded into the feature during its period of use. These included glass bottle fragments from (105), (303), (404) & (502) of which the earliest examples were from free blown wine bottles of the later 18th or early 19th centuries from (105) & (502) but examples of later forms were also present extending into the later 19th century.

3.1.3 A chronological outlier was a sherd of glazed medieval tile from primary fill (303) which clearly predates the likely construction date of the feature by several centuries and most likely weathered out of adjacent deposits. The tile is of further interest as it is clearly kiln waste and its presence strongly suggests that tile production was being practiced somewhere in Halswell Park in the 14th or 15th centuries.

3.1.4 The metal items recovered during the metal detector sweep of spoil from the trenches is an eclectic collection that consists of small items discarded, lost or used in the park during the post medieval period. Present are fragments of harness and other items with agricultural associations along with a coin and a lead musket ball of large bore that was suitable for use during the pursuit of large prey such as deer (or humans).

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 The feature consisted of two principal components, being the broad ditch with one moderately sloping side and a vertical edge retained by a masonry wall on what would have been intended to be the internal side. In the majority of the excavated locations the original form of the ditch was found to be well preserved or to a level to allow the original proportions to be estimated. The wall was found to present in all locations with the exception of Trench 6 to the east and here it seems likely that such a structure was likely to have been present but was entirely robbed at abandonment of the feature.

4.2 Some variation in the scale of the ditch could be noted across the site with the feature being generally wider a deeper in trenches 3 & 4 to the west of Area 2 than the excavated sections in Area 1 with the depth and width diminishing noticeably to the east through Trenches 5 & 6. Although at these two latter locations some of the discrepancy is likely to attributable to many years of mechanical cultivation which would have caused some truncation.

4.3 The wall was found to have been repaired, or even replaced at several locations in both areas of investigation (see below). Sufficient remained of the original fabric within each trench to allow the assessment that three differing combinations of components were originally employed across Area 1, the western part of Area 2 and within Trench 5 to the east. At both exposed locations in Trench the wall was constructed predominantly of Morte

Slate rubble incorporating some brick, while in Trenches 3 & 4 the equivalent structure was almost certainly originally constructed entirely of red sandstone, probably Otter Sandstone, rubble. This significant difference between the character of the wall on the two lengths of the feature along with the slight variation in the size of the ditch strongly suggests that the boundary to the west of the house and the north-south aligned section of that to the east may not be contemporary, possibly with the latter being the earlier.

4.4 The third form of construction was noted in the exposed section in Trench 5 where the remaining section of wall was found to be constructed predominantly of brick with some re-used floor tile. These are components typical of the mid to late 18th century and this length may be later than that immediately to the west but broadly contemporary with the feature examined in Area 1.

4.5 During the period of use of the feature it would have seasonally contained standing water as evidenced by the deposits of silt encountered in the base of the ditch at most excavated locations. This material contained some discarded material, mostly wine bottle fragments, dating from the later 18th century to the late 19th, but nothing of later date which may suggest a change in the use of the park by the start 20th century perhaps with a decline in use of the area as a pleasure ground. There is evidence that the retaining wall required repairs at various points and the exposed length in Trench 1 contained a section that had started to subside. Within Trench 4, at the north western corner of the eastern section, an entire length of the earlier sandstone wall was replaced, leaving only the lowest courses intact. The replacement at this location included a ceramic pipe, the purpose of which was possibly an attempt to drain the ditch at a point where it would have been particularly susceptible to run-off from the adjacent field. The date of this latter alteration is uncertain but likely to be later in the 19th, or possibly into the 20th century.

4.6 As the feature fell out of use and became redundant in the landscape during changes of use of the surrounding land, most likely during the first quarter and mid 20th century, it became regarded as a suitable location for the dumping of waste and demolition rubble from elsewhere on the estate. Examples of this include large quantities of roofing slate rubble making up (104) & (110) and other building rubble forming (502) & (604). The material within (502) contained only 18th or early 19th century material including ceramic, glass, floor tiles and brick suggesting that this represented some of the remains of a structure of that period that was demolished at the time of backfilling, a likely candidate being the orangery which stood to the south west which disappears from the record at some point between 1904 and 1946. At all locations what remained of the feature were finally in-filled in deliberate act of levelling, possibly as late as the 1960s or 70s.

5.0 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Although the investigation only provided opportunity to examine a small percentage of what are two extensive boundaries, the results allow an initial assessment that the features in their final form were likely to be the result of more than one phase of activity culminating during the 18th century but with later repairs and alterations extending into the 19th or possibly the early 20th centuries. It is possible that the primary phase of the eastern length was commenced earlier than the principal period of landscaping of the mid 18th century.

5.2 Both the ditch and wall were found to be extant and in a good state of preservation at the majority of locations, although within the area to the east of Area 2 both components were truncated and an unknown length of the wall completely lost. It is worth noting that the frail lime mortar bonding material throughout significant lengths of the wall, particularly the upper courses, is likely to be severely degraded causing potential instability should further exposure be attempted.

5.3 If the eventual intention is to restore lengths of the ha ha or its entirety, this may be considered desirable within the wider aims of the restoration of Halswell House, its surrounding gardens and parkland as the feature would have been an important component in the designed landscape at its zenith in the mid to late 18th century. The results of this investigation strongly suggest that ultimate form of the eastern length of the boundary feature was the result of two or probable phases of construction but the chronology and extent of each phase remains only partly understood. In consideration of this evidence it is recommended that any further programme of excavation of the feature should be subject to limited archaeological monitoring, focussing on the areas likely to maximise information on the development of the feature.

Halswell Park, Goathurst GHH 26-37/2026
Appendix i) List of Excavated Contexts

Context No.	Type	Interp. Type	Description	Period	Same as/Part of	Strat. Above	Strat. Below
AREA 1: Western Ha Ha							
Trench 1							
100	Layer	Build-up	Compact mid-dark red-brown gravelly, clay-loam. Occ: small quartz; pebble; coal ash		200	101; 108; 113	--
101	Fill	Backfill	Compact mid grey-brown clay-loam. Moderate: coarse Morte Slate gravel. Occ: charcoal fleck		-	102	100
102	Fill	Backfill	Very compact, clean mid red-brown coarse MS gravel in matrix of mid red-brown silty-clay		-	103	101
103	Fill	Backfill	Compact dark grey-brown clay-silt. Occ: small MS; charcoal fleck; coal ash		-	114	102
104	Fill	Backfill	Loose slate roof tile fragments (max. 0.20m), many with trimmed edges and piercing for fixings. Occ: red-brown lime mortar; grey lime mortar; small MS		-	105	114
105	Fill	Backfill/Ditch Fill	Friable mid-dark red-brown clay-silt. Occ: small MS; tile fragment; coal ash. Finds: C18-19 bottle glass		-	106; 112	104; 111
106	Structure	Wall	N-S aligned retaining wall of MS slabby flat-laid rubble under upper course of brick headers to N & stretcher to S; ?capping of single course of large MS rubble; all bonded by hard mid red-brown lime mortar		-	107	112; 115
107	Cut	Ditch	Broad N-S aligned linear; W side moderate to steep and straight falling to gentle break at flat base; E side vertical and straight		-	116	106
108	Fill	Backfill	Compact mid-dark red-brown clay-loam. Frequent: coarse MS gravel		-	109	100
109	Fill	Backfill	Compact dark grey-brown clay-silt. Moderate: coarse MS gravel		-	110	108
110	Fill	Backfill	Loose roof tile fragments in compact matrix of dark red-brown silty-loam. Occ: coal ash; red-brown mortar	-	-	111	109; 113
111	Fill	Backfill	Very compact, clean coarse MS gravel in matrix of compact mid red-brown silty-clay		-	105	110
112	Structure	Wall Repair	Up to 4 courses of brick headers with some MS rubble bonded by hard red-brown lime mortar inserted in top of wall (106)		-	106	105
113	Fill	Backfill	Coarse MS gravel in matrix of dark grey-brown sandy-clay. Occ: coal ash		-	110; 115	100
114	Fill	Backfill	Friable very dark grey-brown silt. Frequent: charcoal fleck		-	104	103
115	Structure	Wall Repair	Limited area of brick stretchers bonded by red-brown lime mortar in top of wall (106); not fully excavated		-	106	113

Halswell Park, Goathurst GHH 26-37/2026
Appendix i) List of Excavated Contexts

Context No.	Type	Interp. Type	Description	Period	Same as/Part of	Strat. Above	Strat. Below
116	Layer	Natural	Very compact dark red to red-brown clay with occasional weathered small to medium MS; sealed by weathered material of red-brown silty-clay with moderate sub-angular MS		201	-	107
Trench 2							
200	Layer	Build-up	Compact mid-dark red-brown gravelly, clay-loam. Occ: small quartz; pebble; coal ash		100	201	-
201	Layer	Natural	Compact red to red-brown clean clay with lenses of clean coarse MS gravel		116	-	200
AREA 2: Eastern Ha Ha							
Trench 3							
300	Layer	Build-up	Friable dark red-brown slightly humic silty-loam. Occ: small MS; coal ash		-	301	-
301	Fill	Backfill	Compact mid red-brown clay-loam. Moderate small MS/coarse gravel; quartz; pebble		-	302	300
302	Fill	Backfill	Dense coarse MS gravel in compact matrix of mid red-brown silty-clay; includes-S aligned telecoms cable (relationship uncertain)		-	303	301
303	Fill	Backfill/Ditch Fill	Compact dark grey brown slightly gritty silty-loam. Occ: large MS (0.60m); small-medium angular MS; coal ash; sub-angular chalk; coal; fragments red-brown lime mortar. Finds: C19 bottle glass		?404	304	302
304	Structure	Wall	N-S aligned; 4-5 courses of Otter Sandstone cobbles to base sealed by 6 further courses of slabby MS rubble under further 5 courses of Otter Sandstone rubble all bonded by hard red-brown lime mortar		406	305	303
305	Cut	Ditch	N-S aligned; E side moderate to steep and slightly convex falling to gentle break at base; W side vertical and straight, obscured by existing wall (304)		407	306	304
306	Layer	Build-up/Natural	Compact mid red-brown silty-clay. Frequent: small sMS/coarse gravel. Occ: small quartz; possible base of former cultivation soil or surface of weathered natural		-	307	305
307	Layer	Natural	Compact red-brown clay over weathered MS bedrock		408	-	306
Trench 4							
400	Layer	Build-up	Friable dark grey-brown slightly humic silty-loam. Occ: small slate; coal ash		-	401	-
401	Layer	Build-up	Compact mid to pale red-brown silty-clay/clay-loam. Moderate: small MS/coarse gravel		500	402	400
402	Fill	Backfill	Dense, coarse MS gravel in matrix of mid red-brown silty-clay. Includes N-S aligned communications cable (relationship unknown)		-	403	401
403	Fill	Backfill/Ditch Fill	Compact mid red-brown clay-loam. Moderate: small MS/coarse gravel		-	405	402

Context No.	Type	Interp. Type	Description	Period	Same as/Part of	Strat. Above	Strat. Below
404	Fill	Backfill/Ditch Fill	Compact very dark grey-brown slightly-gritty/sandy-silt. Occ: fragment red-brown lime mortar; small-medium MS; small Otter Sandstone; coal; coal ash; grey lime mortar. Finds: C19 bottle glass; pan tile		-	406	405
405	Structure	Wall	NNE-SSW aligned; 5 courses of MS rubble lower sealed by mixed brick and MS rubble including deliberately set E-W aligned ceramic drain pipe; sealed by 2 further courses of brick headers sealed by single course of lias slabs under large lias rubble; all bonded by hard red-brown lime mortar with evidence of repair/pointing of mid grey lime mortar		-	404; 406	403
406	Structure	Wall	NNE-SSW aligned; predominantly constructed of sub-angular Otter Sandstone rubble with some MS components, bonded by hard red-brown lime mortar; offset to W of (405) by 0.25m		304	407	404; 405
407	Cut	Ditch	NNE-SSW aligned; E side moderate and slightly convex falling to gentle break at flat base; W side vertical and straight obscured by walls (405) & (406)	-	305	408	406
408	Layer	Natural	Compact red-brown silty-clay with lenses of coarse MS gravel		307	-	407
Trench 5							
500	Layer	Build-up	Compact mid red-brown gravelly clay-loam	-	401; 600	501	-
501	Fill	Backfill	Compact mid red-brown clay-loam. Moderate: small MS/coarse gravel	-	-	502	500
502	Fill	Backfill	Loose medium to large to very large MS rubble in sparse matrix of loose dark grey silty-loam and crushed re-brown lime mortar. Occ: large ceramic square floor tiles; brick; tile; roof slate fragments. Find: C18-19 bottle glass; C18-19 ICW	-	-	503	501
503	Structure	Wall	E-W aligned; 4 courses of brick stretchers sealed by two courses of re-used ceramic floor tiles with single visible MS component; all bonded by hard red-brown lime mortar; truncated	-	304; 306	504	502
504	Cut	Ditch	E-W aligned; S side moderate and slightly concave falling to gentle break at base; N side steep to vertical and straight	-	305; 407	505	503
505	Layer	Build-up	Compact red-brown clay-loam. Occ: small MS	-	-	506	504
506	Layer	Natural	Compact red-brown silty-clay with lenses of coarse MS gravel	-	307; 408	-	505
Trench 6							
600	Layer	Build-up	Compact mid red-brown gravelly clay-loam	-	401; 500	601	-
601	Fill	Backfill	Compact mid-dark red-brown silty-loam. Occ: small-medium MS; charcoal fleck. Finds: C19 bottle	-	-	602	600
602	Fill	Backfill	Dense MS coarse gravel in matrix of mid red-brown silty-clay	-	-	603	601
603	Fill	Backfill	Friable dark grey-brown silty-loam. Moderate: small-medium MS		-	604	602

Halswell Park, Goathurst GHH 26-37/2026
Appendix i) List of Excavated Contexts

Context No.	Type	Interp. Type	Description	Period	Same as/Part of	Strat. Above	Strat. Below
604	Fill	Backfill	Loose medium-large MS rubble in matrix of dark grey-brown silty-loam. Moderate: red-brown lime mortar. Occ: brick	-	-	605; 606	603
605	Cut	Robber	Full extent not determined; probably E-W aligned linear; N side very steep and straight breaking to moderate and straight before falling to moderate break at flat base ?coincident with that of ditch cut [606]	-	-	??	604
606	Cut	Ditch	E-W aligned; base only survives later intrusion and this flat; S side not exposed	-	305; 407; 504	607	??
607	Layer	Natural	Compact red-brown silty-clay with lenses of coarse MS gravel	-	307; 408; 506	-	606

Halswell Deer Park Ha Ha: GHH 26-37/2026
Appendix ii) The Finds

POTTERY							
Context	Illus.	Q	W (g)	SF	Description	Date	Condition
502	-	1	7	-	Industrial creamware. Plain off-white glaze. Part large dish, Staffs	C18-EC19	V Good

TILE							
Context	Illus.	Q	W (g)	SF	Description	Date	Condition
303	-	1	54	-	Roof tile; very coarse fabric; green glaze; distorted and broken edges all overglazed. Kiln waste	C14-15	V Good
404	-	1	370	-	Pan tile fragment	C19	V Good

GLASS							
Context	Illus.	Q	W (g)	SF	Description	Date	Condition
105	-	2	172	-	Dark green glass; part base and sides of free-blown wine bottle of cylinder form	LC18-EC19	V Good
303	-	3	59	-	Pale blue-green glass; part base and side of moulded bottle	LC19	Fire damaged; Good; stable
303	-	1	4	-	Mid green glass; part sidewall of wine bottle	LC19	V Good
404	-	7	146	-	Dark green glass; neck, shoulder and part sidewall of moulded wine bottle with applied lip; 3 piece 'Ricketts' mould.	Mid C19	V Good
502	-	1	97	-	Dark green glass; part base and sidewall of freeblown wine bottle; cylinder form	LC18-EC19	Good; some surface oxidisation
601	-	1	103	-	Clear glass; perfume or lotion bottle; plain shouldered cylindrical form; moulded to lip	Mid to Late C!	Good

METAL							
Context	Illus.	Q	W (g)	SF	Description	Date	Condition
U/S	-	1	17	-	Copper alloy belt buckle; plain rectangular form 35mm x 32mm	?C19	Good; stable
U/S	-	1	4	-	Copper alloy plate; semi-circular with circular piercing . ?Part horse harness	?C19	Good
U/S	-	1	27	-	Copper alloy; length of pipe	?C20	Distorted; good; stable
U/S	-	1	3	-	Aluminium; makers plate. STANHAY (Ashford) retractable wheel strakes	C20	Good
U/S	-	1	8	-	Copper alloy; head of Yale type key	C20	Good
U/S	-	1	8	-	Lead; sheet fragment	?	Good

Halswell Deer Park Ha Ha: GHH 26-37/2026
Appendix ii) The Finds

METAL							
Context	Illus.	Q	W (g)	SF	Description	Date	Condition
U/S	-	1	31	-	Lead. Large musket ball; slightly impacted; diam: 18mm	PM	Good
U/S	-	1	5	-	Lead. Irregular disc; possible bag seal	PM	Good
U/S	-	1	4	-	Copper alloy. Distorted and illegible coin; similar size to halfpenny	PM	Fair

Proposed Archaeological Mitigation during Proposed Restoration Works within The Park to the North of Halswell House, Goathurst, Somerset

-

Planning ref:		Soms Museums acc no. TTNCM 37/2026
Site Code:	GHH 26-37/2026	OASIS ref: prospect1-544942
NGR:	(Centre) ST 6521 4572	Soms HER: 58437

Version 2, prepared by James Brigers of Prospect Archaeology June 2026

Version 2, August 2026

Client:	Edward Strachan
Contractor:	Prospect Archaeology
	Xavier
	Nethermoor Road
	Middlezoy
	Somerset

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction.....	3
1.1 Context of the Project.....	3
2.0 Background.....	5
2.1 Location, Geology, Topography & Current Land Use.....	5
2.2 General Archaeological Context.....	5
3.0 Objectives.....	7
3.1 Overview.....	7
3.2 Research Design.....	7
4.0 Method Statement.....	7
4.1 Standards.....	7
4.2 Background Research.....	8
4.3 Event Number & Site Code.....	8
4.4 Works: Pre-Commencement.....	8
4.5 Proposed Works & Mitigation.....	8
4.6 Monitoring: General Process & Methodology.....	10
4.7 Artefact Selection, Recovery & Treatment Strategy.....	12
4.8 Environmental Sampling Strategy.....	13
4.9 Post Works Assessment & Dissemination.....	14
4.10 OASIS.....	14
4.11 Archive deposition.....	14
4.12 Public Engagement.....	15
5.0 Resources & Programming.....	15
5.1 Staffing.....	15
5.2 Timetable.....	15
5.3 Health & Safety.....	15
5.4 Budget.....	16
5.5 External Monitoring.....	16
5.6 Insurance.....	17
5.7 Copyright & Title.....	17
6.0 Appendix.....	18

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 (p. 4): Location of the site

Fig. 2 (p. 4): Plan of the site showing locations of proposed works

APPENDIX

i) Data Management Plan

Written Scheme of Investigation to Cover an Archaeological Mitigation during Proposed Works within the Park to the North of Halswell House, Goathurst, Somerset

James Brigers, BA June 2026 on behalf of Edward Strachan revised as version 2 August 2026

NGR: ST 252 339

Planning ref:

Soms Museums acc. no. 37/2026

OASIS ref: prospect1-544942

Soms HER PRN: 58437

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the Project

1.1.1 The current owner of Halswell House (Mr Edward Strachan) has recently secured the purchase of areas of former parkland to the north and east of the house, effectively re-uniting them with the Halswell Estate. The newly acquired land contains the remains of historic fishponds, once incorporated as elements of the 18th century landscape, but possibly of earlier origin and the locations of two lengths of now in-filled ha ha, also components of the 18th century landscape that once marked the boundary of the medieval and later deer park.

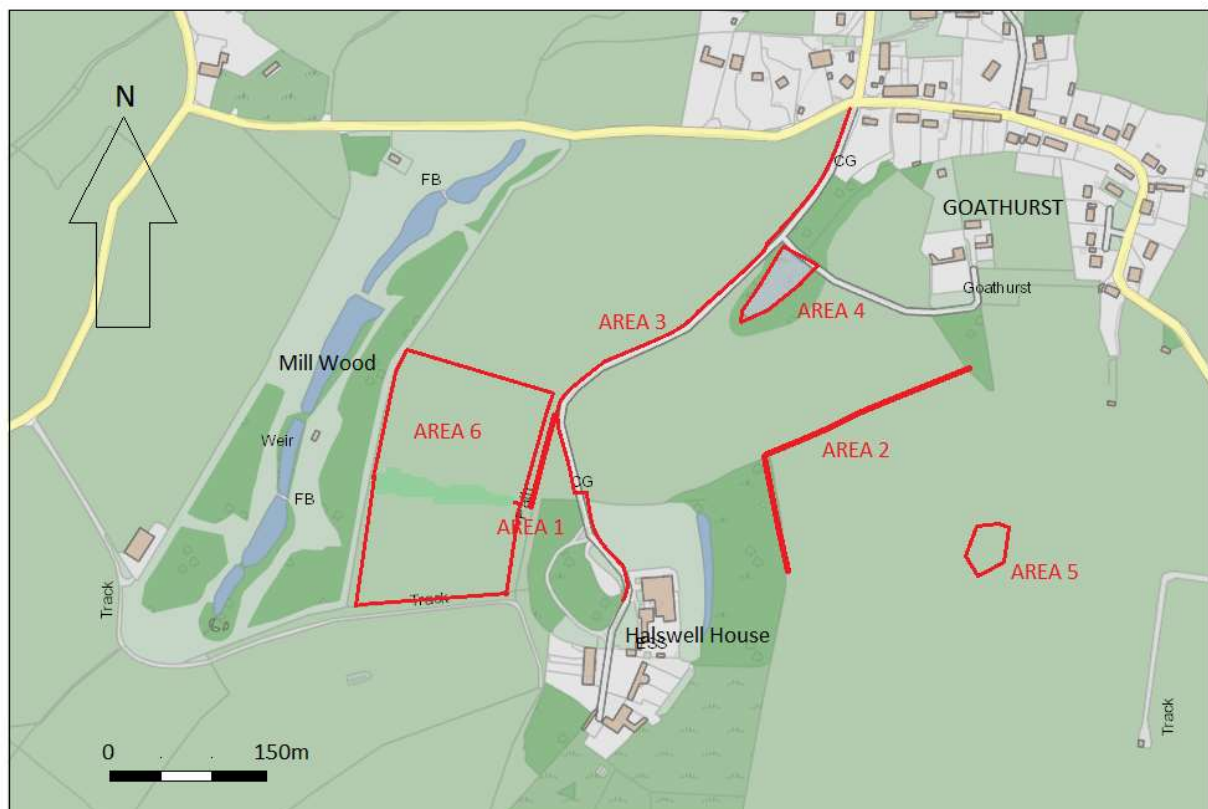
1.1.2 It is proposed that the pond at the entrance to the park (at ST2558 3419) and that to east (Kennel Pond; ST 2578 3383) be opened and restored. Also it is proposed to investigate at points on the line of the former ha ha boundary features (centred at ST 2529 3392 & 2552 3395) in order to establish their condition with a view to their reinstatement in as close to original form as possible.

1.1.3 In addition, planning permission is being sought to allow the installation of a new mains water supply from the northern entrance to the park at ST2559 3426 to a point to the west of the house at ST 2536 2381 and the installation of a ground source heating matrix centred at ST 2524 3400.



Fig. 1 (above): Halswell Deer Park, Goathurst. Location of the Site

Fig. 2 (below): The Site showing Locations of Proposed Works



1.1.4 This Written Scheme of Investigation is designed to satisfy the requirements of the planning consent and conforms to the requirements of *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (2015, Historic England) and details the proposed monitoring, post excavation and dissemination methodology in accordance with guidance outlined in:-

- *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct* (2022, ClfA).
- *Somerset Archaeological Handbook* (South West Heritage Trust, 2017)
- *Preserving Archaeological Remains: Decision-taking for Sites under Development* (2016, Historic England)
- *Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation*, 2nd ed. (2011, Historic England)
- *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring & Recording* (2023, ClfA)

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, Geology, Topography & Current Land Use (figs. 1 & 2)

1.2.1 Halswell House stands on a gently sloping, north-facing slope at an elevation of 83m above Ordinance Datum at the above grid reference towards the western boundary of the Parish of Goathurst in West Somerset. To the south west the land rises steeply from the 80m contour in the region of the site to the summit of the ridge that forms the south eastern spur of the Quantock Hills at 228m close to Bolts Cross in Broomfield. To the north the slope continues to fall towards Goathurst village where it meets the broad undulating valley that extends westwards from the town of Bridgwater. The underlying geology in the area of Halswell House consists of slate of the Morte Slate Formation¹.

1.2.2 The majority of the land within the areas containing the proposed works is currently under arable agricultural land use. This is fringed by small areas of coppice to the north and within this lies the location of the northern pond (Area 4).

2.2 General Archaeological & Historical Context

1.3.1 The Manor of Halswell is mentioned as a holding separate from that of Goathurst in 1086 and descended as a holding in its own right until its sale and dispersal in the 1950s. Halswell Court is mentioned in 1318 and the whole was largely rebuilt in the early 17th century to form north, south and east wings around a central courtyard. The imposing north wing as it exists today was constructed in 1689 which relegated to remaining early 17th century elements to the south to predominantly ancillary function. The west front of the north range was re-modelled in neo-classical style in c1754 probably to designs by Francis Cartwright of Blandford.

¹ British Geological Survey, digital map data

1.3.2 Extensive landscaping of the grounds to the north and east of the house is known to have been carried out at about the same time as the reconstruction of the north wing and a terraced parterre and lake were created to the north and east of the house². From the mid 18th century the immediate grounds and surrounding park were incorporated into an extensive designed landscape by Sir Charles Kemys Tynte incorporating Mill Wood to the north west with garden buildings including a rock wall grotto and classical rotunda in the immediate grounds and walled gardens were added to the south at two stages during the 19th century.

1.3.3 In 1934 the estate descended to Charles J.H. Kemeys-Tynte who vested it in Hoares Bank and in 1950 it was sold and broken up, the house being converted into flats. In 2003 the house and immediate grounds were purchased by Dunster Holdings Ltd with the aim of converting it into a conference centre and wedding venue. At this time a programme of archaeological work was commenced which involved the excavation of trenches in the Riding House Garden to the south of the house³, the Victorian Garden to the south east and along the banks of the lake to the east of the north lawn⁴; further trenching was opened to the north west on the suspected route of the 18th century circular drive⁵.

1.3.4 The rump of the estate, including the house, its immediate grounds and the properties to the south were purchased by the current owner and to this was added the former landscape garden of Mill Wood to the west. Soon afterwards an extensive programme of restoration, reconstruction and infrastructure upgrades was commenced throughout the house and immediate grounds and a programme of recording and initial archaeological evaluation was undertaken in Mill Wood to determine the locations and state of preservation of the various features and structures associated with the former pleasure ground here⁶. The works within in and in the immediate vicinity of the house and Tudor House to the south were accompanied by geophysical survey, monitoring and building recording⁷. Restoration of the pond and Rock Wall Grotto in the garden to the east of the house from 2014 and 2024 were preceded by an initial evaluation of both areas followed by intensive monitoring⁸. No formal archaeological investigations have been undertaken to date within the area of the proposed restoration works.

² Information derived from entry in VCH Somerset, vol. 6 1992; p. 49

³ SHER 19435

⁴ SHER 28172

⁵ SHER 13787

⁶ SHER 32801

⁷ SHER 39220; 48994; 48998; 37584

⁸ SHER 32685; 4918

3.0 OBJECTIVES

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The proposed works will take place within an area of high archaeological potential and within the boundary of a Grade II listed park and garden, consequently archaeological remains evidencing the development of the park and previous occupation and land-use are likely to exist that will be adversely impacted by intrusive elements of the activities. The proposed monitoring will be designed to mitigate such impacts by enabling the preservation by record of all archaeological remains encountered and, in the event of particularly significant discoveries, the formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy moving forward. The programme of monitoring will aim to satisfy any condition of planning consent imposed by Somerset Council to permit the works and will be in accordance with paragraph 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.1.2 Where the stated aims of the works are to initiate the restoration of known features in the case of the ponds and ha has (Areas 1,2,4 & 5) the monitoring will allow the recovery of information relating to their form, date and chronological development which may be employed at the design stage to allow an eventual faithful reconstruction.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 The objectives for this investigation will be to: 1. Ascertain the presence/absence, function, date and chronology of archaeological deposits; 2. To assess the remains in a context of local, regional and national significance; 3. To recover environmental information likely to provide information on the economy and local environment of the area; 4. In the case of the discovery of significant remains, to allow an informed mitigation strategy to be formulated (within areas not specifically covered by formal detailed excavation).

3.2.2 Dependent on the presence/absence of archaeological remains, the works may specifically contribute to the understanding of the extent and character of the medieval and later park and enhance the currently scant knowledge of earlier activity within the area which may lead to a increased understanding of the origins and chronological development of the Halswell Estate.

4.0 METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 Standards

4.1.1 The work will be carried out in accordance with the standards guidelines set out in paragraph 1.1.4.

4.2 Background Research

4.2.1 A full assessment has been made of known data relating to the site including reports of previous archaeological work in the area, historical records and maps.

4.2.2 The material will be incorporated into the introductory section of the final report and set the results in their geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context. It will also inform the design and conduct of the fieldwork.

4.3 Event Number and Site Code

4.3.1 An event number and museum accession number have been obtained from South West Heritage Trust to locate the area of work on the county Historic Environment Record (PRN 58437; acc no: TTNM 37/2026) and permit the deposition of the investigation archive and artefacts at the Somerset Heritage Centre. The accession number will be combined with the contractor's site code (GHH 26) and will appear on all aspects of the archive generated by the investigation.

4.4 Works: Pre-Commencement

4.4.1 A desk based assessment will be prepared with specific attention to Area 6, the ground source heating matrix, to provide information to allow the formulation of a suitable mitigation strategy in this high impact area (see 4.5.7).

4.4.1 Appropriate communications will be undertaken with stakeholders prior to works commencing. SWHT as monitors will be informed prior to the commencement of each phase of the works.

4.4.2 The contractor's role will be to provide an experienced team of archaeologists to supervise the initial trench opening and subsequently undertake a controlled excavation of the exposed deposits.

4.5 Proposed Works & Mitigation (fig. 2)

4.5.1 **The Ha Ha Boundary Features (Areas 1 & 2):** It is proposed to reinstate the historic deer park boundaries as shown on fig. 2, the position and extent of which are traceable on historic mapping.

4.5.2 Initially the features will be investigated through the excavation of trial trenches at three locations in Area 1 and a further three in Area 2, each to be c8.00m in length and 1.20m in width. These will be initially opened through the use of a machine fitted with a toothless bucket to remove modern, archaeologically sterile overburden and fills. Each trench will then be manually cleaned and recorded as appropriate.

4.5.3 The results of the initial trial trenching will be employed to inform on the precise location, form, phasing and state of preservation of the features with a view to eventual reinstatement in their original form.

4.5.3 **The Water Main (Area 3):** It is proposed to install a new mains water supply to run from the main street at the northern entrance to the park, along the main drive for a distance of approximately 630m to a distribution point to the west of the house.

4.5.4 The main will be laid within a trench no less than 0.75m in depth which will be excavated by a machine fitted with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

4.5.5 **Northern & Kennel Ponds (Areas 4 & 5).** Both ponds likely functioned as features within the 18th century landscape scheme and were possibly incorporated into this from an earlier landscape. It is proposed to restore these to their earlier form and repair associated water management features.

4.5.6 The excavation at both locations will be accomplished through the use of a machine fitted with a toothless bucket and will be limited to the extraction of modern backfill and silt deposits to the level of the original basal lining. Archaeological monitoring will be conducted intermittently during this process with particular attention being paid to the form and constructional phases of dams, feeder culverts and any structures exposed during the clearance of banks.

4.5.7 **Ground Source Heating Matrix (Area 6).** The new infrastructure here will cover a wide area of current agricultural land between the main drive and the eastern boundary of Mill Wood.

4.5.8 The precise design and extent of the installation is yet to be determined by will involve the excavation of numerous trenches up to 1.50m in depth to form a grid. Due to the likely great extent and complexity it is currently proposed that the installation will be achieved by 'slit trenching' and such a methodology will impede archaeological observation resulting in a situation where archaeological deposits or features, if present, would be adversely impacted without the possibility of assessment or record.

4.5.9 It is therefore proposed that the works at this location be preceded by a preliminary heritage assessment in order to determine a requirement for further preliminary investigation which may involve geophysical survey and/or field evaluation. If either or both are deemed necessary, the proposed detailed methodologies will be provided as an addendum to this document at a later date.

4.6 Monitoring: General Procedures & Methodology

4.6.1 The archaeological contractor will provide the relevant officer from South West Heritage Trust with adequate notice of work commencing on the site. Provision will be made to safely accommodate monitoring of the project by personnel from that body.

4.6.2 Only suitably qualified, trained and experienced persons will monitor all groundworks associated with the development.

4.6.3 Where areas of the site are to be stripped of modern surfaces or overburden the archaeologist will monitor the excavations and provide direction regarding the exposure of archaeological deposits.

4.6.4 The archaeologist will monitor all excavations and these will be accomplished through the use of a machine fitted with a toothless bucket; If possible archaeological remains are encountered machine excavation will be paused to allow further investigation.

4.6.5 The archaeologist will inspect the surfaces revealed. Any archaeological structures or features revealed will be recorded in plan and section as appropriate. In areas of low stratigraphic complexity the written and photographic record of each context will be supplemented by a measured sketch. Where a more detailed record is required a detailed drawing will be produced at an appropriate scale (usually 1:10 or 1:20) and the location of each drawing will be accurately marked on the overall site plan at a scale of 1:200 or 1:500. The main contractor will allow the archaeologist reasonable time and resources to undertake any inspection or recording required.

4.6.6 In the event of particularly significant discoveries SWHT will be informed and a site meeting be arranged between the consultant, SWHT officers and the applicant to determine the appropriate mitigation.

4.6.7 Artefacts will be collected as work progresses. Where possible these will be assigned to particular contexts and bagged and labelled accordingly with the site's unique code. . The retention strategy for artefacts will be devised through agreement between all stakeholders (landowner, specialists, and collections curators) Provision will be made for the conservation and safe storage of all artefacts.

4.6.8 Faunal remains (animal bone), given the context of the site, will provide important information on the diet of populations of all periods and, in some cases, certain types of industrial activity being practised in the locality. All such material will be collected from stratigraphically secure excavated contexts, stabilised on site as required and packaged and stored with reference to accepted HE best practice⁹ and guidance for archaeological work in Somerset¹⁰. If particularly significant assemblages are found to be present during the

⁹ Baker, P & Worley, F 'Animal Bones in Archaeology' Historic England, 2019

¹⁰ South West Heritage Trust, 2017 'Somerset Archaeology Handbook'

evaluation phase advice from HE and the appointed project specialist will be sought in the formulation of a detailed recovery and analysis strategy.

As a minimum the following will be considered:

- Quantification by species
- Minimum number of individuals
- Butchery
- Frequency of species and parts of the skeleton represented
- Evidence for disease and trauma

4.6.9 'Small finds' not derived from closed feature contexts will be given a unique number and their location recorded to three dimensions.

4.6.10 Should any finds identified as treasure or potential treasure, including precious metals, groups of coins or any 'significant object' be exposed as designated in The Treasure (Designation) (Amendment) Order, 2023 this will immediately be reported to the relevant Finds Liaison Officer. Any such finds that cannot be removed to the PAS on the same day as discovery will be stored for safety in the secure storage facility of the contractor until such a time as they can be transferred.

4.6.11 In the unlikely event of the discovery of human remains, these will be carefully excavated, recorded and removed at the soonest opportunity to allow their protection and safe storage. In order for this to be accomplished within the terms of a MoJ archaeological excavation licence which will be obtained prior to work commencing. On discovery the project human osteologist will be contacted in the first instance and a programme of post excavation treatment and analysis will be determined following HE¹¹ and ClfA¹² guidance. Locations of burials will be recorded on the overall site plan and through the use of a hand-held GPS device. All disarticulated remains, including those unstratified, are to be recovered, retained and assessed by the human osteologist.

4.6.12 Provision within the project budget will be made for the sampling of the fills of cut features impacted by works associated with the proposal. Such samples may be for the purpose of scientific dating or, if for general environmental analysis, larger quantities of material may be retained (between 40 & 60 litres) for processing and analysis by suitably equipped and qualified specialists. The sampling strategy will be conducted in accordance with Historic England guidance¹³ and refined through consultation with a qualified specialist to be provided by Geoflo Ltd (Corton Denham, Somerset) (see 4.8).

¹¹ Historic England, 2018 'The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project'

¹² ClfA, 2017 'Updated Guidelines to the Standards for Recording of Human Remains'

¹³ Historic England (Campbell, G; Moffett, L & Straker, V), 2011 'Environmental Archaeology', pp. 5-14

4.6.13 All structures, deposits and finds are to be recorded according to accepted professional standards. All recording points used should be accurately tied into the National Grid and located on to the 1:1250 map of the area. Plans indicating the location of all archaeological features are to be drawn at an appropriate scale, located on the site plan and levelled with respect to OD, or surrounding permanent ground levels or street level. An overall site plan is to be maintained at a suitable scale, usually 1:200 or 1:500. All plans are to accurately tied in to the site grid by triangulation from existing permanent features and through the use of a hand-held GPS device. All plans and sections are to be drawn on polyester based drafting film and clearly labelled.

4.6.14 All archaeological contexts are to be recorded individually on context record sheets. A further, more general, record of the work comprising a description and discussion of the archaeology is to be maintained as appropriate.

4.6.15 An adequate photographic record of the excavation will be prepared. This will include photographs illustrating the principal features and finds discovered, in detail and in context. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. All photographs of archaeological detail will feature an appropriately-sized scale. The photographic record will consist of digital images of a size of no fewer than 18 megapixels.

4.6.16 The site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the project, is to be prepared in accordance with *Standard & Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives (CiFA 1014/2020b)* and Brown 2011¹⁴. On completion of the project any artefacts will be retained by the archaeological contractor until ultimate deposition at Somerset Heritage Centre. The digital archive will be uploaded to the Archaeological Data Service; provision has been made within the project budget to satisfy the long term storage fees of both organisations. Treatment of digital born and derived data will be in accordance with the contractor's Data Management Plan (appendix i).

4.7 Artefact Selection, Recovery & Treatment Strategy

4.7.1 Modern archaeologically sterile material will be carefully removed through the use of the machine. During this phase exposed material will be inspected to allow recovery of artefacts of all classes and spoil heaps will be regularly examined for the same purpose. Machine excavated material will be allocated to context if this is assured, artefacts retrieved from the spoil heaps will be retained as Unstratified. At this stage all cultural material will be retained with the exception of post medieval or modern ceramic building materials, bonding materials and other objects of clearly modern origin. A note will be made of the presence,

¹⁴ Brown, DH, 2011 'Archaeological Archives: a Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation', Revised; Archaeological Archives Forum

approximate quantity and distribution of all material not retained at this stage and recorded on a 'finds discard record'.

4.7.2 On exposure of intact archaeological features and deposits machine excavation will cease immediately and manual investigation will proceed and during this phase of the work all artefacts recovered will be retained. 'Small finds' (regarded as possessing particular significance) not excavated from within secure feature contexts will be allocated a unique number and their location recorded to three dimensions. Upon excavation each artefact will be suitably packaged in accordance with guidance for each material and treated with regard to stability, in accordance with current accepted guidance¹⁵. If further stabilisation or special treatment is required, either during the fieldwork or assessment stages, external specialist advice will be sought. Metal objects of archaeological provenance to be retained within the archive will be X-rayed in accordance with HE guidelines¹⁶.

4.7.4 At completion of the post excavation phase deselected material will be dispersed through a policy developed and agreed in advance through consultation with the landowner and the collections curator at SWHT.

4.8 Environmental Sampling Strategy

4.8.1 The environmental sampling strategy will follow guidelines provided by Historic England¹⁷. Bulk samples will be 40 litres or 100% of smaller contexts. Bulk samples will be recorded by a unique sample number against relevant context numbers.

4.8.2 Wet sieving will be carried out by Geoflo of Sutton Montis, Somerset. Pre-soaked samples of known and recorded weight are processed by standard flotation methods. Samples are gently agitated by hand thus enabling a controlled and constantly monitored process, minimizing breakage of fragile material. Flots are retained on a 0.25mm mesh and residues on a 0.5mm mesh. Flots and residues are dried in preparation for fractionation and sorting unless they contain organic material which needs to be kept wet. Residues will be fractionated into >4mm & <2mm using Endicott sleeves; >4mm residues are completely sorted and bagged unless the volume of these exceeds 1 litre in which case 25% will be sorted. The 2-4mm & <2mm are visually scanned and bagged separately. Block samples of 15-50mm length will be taken from appropriate contexts, particularly waterlogged deposits if present; the advice of a suitably qualified specialist in this field will be sought.

4.8.3 The strategy will be designed around an aim to assess site's environmental potential through the examination of a representative range of deposits, whether or not containing dateable artefacts and will include:

¹⁵ Rescue, Icon, Cardiff University 'First Aid for Finds'

¹⁶ Historic England, 2006 'Guidelines on the X-Radiography of Archaeological Metalwork'

¹⁷ Historic England, 2015 'Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recovery to post excavation'

- Retrieval of charred plant macro and microfossils; small faunal remains and land molluscs from former dry land palaeosols and features;
- Retrieval of plant macro and microfossils, insect, faunal remains, molluscs, pollen and other biological remains from waterlogged deposits;
- Absolute dating of critical contexts in respect Historic England guidelines¹⁸

4.8.4 A suitably qualified and experienced specialist will be consulted for each class of material represented within the samples and these will be appointed accordingly through the advice of Geoflo.

4.9 Post Works Assessment & Dissemination

4.9.1 In the short term a summary of the results, to include adequate description and illustration of the excavated sequence within each trench and initial conclusions will be produced to be submitted to HE to allow an informed mitigation strategy to be formulated.

4.9.2 Following completion of the works a report will be produced of the findings. All post excavation work will follow the formula laid out in Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (2015).

4.9.3 All artefact, faunal and environmental assessments will be conducted by suitably qualified external specialists. The expected classes of finds and relevant consultants are: prehistoric/Roman ceramics (Rachel Hall/Jo Mills); medieval/post medieval ceramics (John Allen); faunal remains (Dr Matthew Laws); environmental analysis (Ellen Simmons/Dr Mathew Laws). Should other classes of material occur advice will be sought from persons with relevant specialist knowledge.

4.9.4 The report will include scale drawings and any specialist reports. A copy of the report will be submitted to HE and SWHT for inclusion on the county HER.

4.9.5 It is envisaged that any significant results may form an original article in the *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society*.

4.10 OASIS

4.10.1 An OASIS entry will be completed as part of the submission of the report. All classes of finds will be tagged in OASIS uploads. A copy of the OASIS form will be included in the report. On approval of the report a PDF copy will be uploaded to the OASIS database.

4.11 Archive Deposition

4.11.1 Ownership of finds initially rests with the landowners (the applicant). Transfer of title to allow the transfer of ownership to Somerset Heritage Centre has been agreed (appendix ii). It is understood that a box fee will be payable to the recipient museum and it has been

¹⁸ Historic England, 2022 'Radiocarbon dating & chronological modelling guidelines and best practice'

agreed that the cost of this will be met by the client/applicant. The project manager will ensure the guidance for deposition relevant to that museum will be followed.

4.11.2 In the event of the results of the investigation being entirely negative a minimal archive will be prepared for submission to the Somerset Heritage Centre. This will consist of a location and site plan; a brief summary description of the process employed and the deposits encountered along with an indication of the extent of the excavation including depths below modern ground level that were explored.

4.11.3 The digital born components of the archive, primarily consisting of photographs & survey data, will be suitably prepared, ordered and indexed in accordance with the contractor's Data Management Plan and submitted for storage and general access with the Archaeological Data Service within 6 months of the completion of the project (or other time scale as agreed with SWHT).

4.12 Public Engagement

4.12.1 It is not expected that any results from the investigation will warrant public access.

5.0 RESOURCES & PROGRAMMING

5.1 Staffing

5.1.1 All staff employed by the contractor are professional archaeologists and will have a minimum of three months experience.

5.1.2 The field team will consist of a minimum of two experienced field archaeologists; additional suitably experienced personnel will join the team as required.

5.1.3 Post excavation finds work will be coordinated by the project director and conform to the practices and standards described in the ClfA *Standards and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* (2014).

5.2 Timetable

5.2.1 The duration of the fieldwork will be dependent on ground and weather conditions and archaeological complexity; but it is estimated that the process will span 3 days.

5.2.2 Post excavation assessment and reporting is partly dependent on the availability of specialists, but the contractor aims to produce the report within six weeks of completion of fieldwork.

5.3 Health & Safety

5.3.1 The contractor adheres to health and safety legislation. The contractor conducts its health and safety procedures on site in line with the FAME *Manual of Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* (2010).

5.3.2 Before work on site commences, a Safety Method Plan will be drawn up, which will include a full risk assessment. Any Safety, Health and Environmental rules in force for the project will be strictly adhered to.

5.3.3 Before beginning work on site, all staff will take part in a project briefing, so they are made aware of specific site hazards and appropriate mitigation required. All archaeological personnel will be made fully aware of the archaeology specifications and any other safety related documentation or requirements.

5.3.4 No staff will enter an area under machine excavation without alerting the machine driver. The archaeologists will remain alert at all times in proximity to machines.

5.3.5 Deep features will be excavated according to safe working methods detailed in the FAME Manual (2010), where open excavation may persist to a depth of no more than 1m and thereafter stepping or shoring would become necessary to complete the excavation. A depth of 1m should be considered a maximum rough guide only, as actual depth will be determined by soil cohesion and prevailing ground conditions. An auger may be used to determine depth of deposits to ensure safe working conditions, though its use will be inhibited by stone deposits.

5.3.6 The contractor will provide suitable accommodation to provide shelter for staff in poor weather and during breaks. Hand washing and toilet facilities will be provided.

5.4 Budget

5.4.1 An adequate budget will be agreed with the client to suitable resources for the initial excavation, monitoring, post excavation and reporting.

5.4.2 In addition a contingency plan and fund has been agreed with the applicant following discussions regarding potential further investigation on site, as warranted by the results of the fieldwork, likely external specialist fees, environmental analysis, scientific dating and additional post excavation work.

5.5 External Monitoring

5.5.1 The evaluation and any subsequent expanded investigations will be monitored by officers of Historic England and South West Heritage Trust and monitoring by those bodies until the completion and submission of final report and OASIS record or publication of the results should this be warranted.

5.5.2 Any changes to the specifications that the Project Manager may wish to make after approval by SWHT will be communicated directly for approval.

5.5.3 SWHT will be kept informed about developments during the fieldwork and post excavation process.

5.6 Insurance

The contractor carries Public Liability insurance through AXA with maximum cover of £5 million. Copies of the insurance certificates are available on request.

5.7 Copyright & Title

5.7.1 Ownership of archives and artefacts remains with the landowner with an aim, on conclusion of the post excavation and reporting, to transfer title to the recipient museum (Somerset Heritage Centre). Copyright of reports completed during and subsequent will remain with the contractor.

6.0 APPENDIX

i) Data Management Plan

i) DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN**Section 1: Project Administration**

Project ID / OASIS ID
Prospect1-544942
Project Name
Land to the North of Halswell House, Goathurst, Somerset
Project Description
Monitoring during restoration works and installation of new infrastructure
Project Funder / Grant reference
Edward Strachan
Project Manager
James Brigers
Principal Investigator / Researcher
James Brigers
Data Contact Person
James Brigers
Date DMP created
6 th February 2025
Date DMP last updated
20 th June 2026
Version
7
Related data management policies

Section 2: Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?
Only photographs will be digital born; digital scans of drawings; digital scans of context sheets and other catalogues will be created off site during the project and the post excavation stages
How will the data be collected or created?
Digital Camera; digital scanning device (post excavation)

Section 3: Documentation and metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?
Survey data; finds, context & photographic catalogues

Section 4: Ethics and legal compliance

How will you manage any ethical, copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues?

Regular review of content to ensure any potential conflicts are covered by relevant permissions; individuals have provided permission for likeness to be included in record in some circumstances; removal of personal data/information

Section 5: Data Security: Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored, accessed and backed up during the research?
--

Daily backup to PC hard drive, external hard drive & external server (eg. 'Cloud')
--

Section 6: Selection and Preservation

Which data should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?
--

All photographs; digital scans of drawings and locational data
--

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?
--

By storage with the Archaeological Data Service

Have you contacted the data repository?

Pending

Have the costs of archiving been fully considered?
--

Yes

Section 7: Data Sharing

How will you share the data and make it accessible?

Will be accessible through ADS at completion of the project/post excavation programme

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?
--

No

Section 8: Responsibilities

Who will be responsible for implementing the data management plan?
--

James Brigers

Section 9: Data Use and Re-use Statement

How has data reuse been considered?

Where has the potential and significance of the digital archive been discussed?

List any references to reports or publications related to the collection