

The Human Skeletal Remains from Rupert's Valley, St Helena

Discussion paper

Andrew Pearson

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper

This paper discusses potential options for the human skeletal remains that were excavated from Rupert's Valley in 2008.

Its initial sections provide background information: the present situation; the contexts of the discoveries; the project timeline; and public and academic outcomes since 2008. It then discusses the previous options appraisal, undertaken in 2009, before outlining a new set of options for the remains. Appendices provide supplementary information about the excavation, consultees, and the wider issues surrounding human remains and archaeology.

The options presented are (with the probable exceptions of cremation and burial at sea) a mainstream set of responses to excavated human remains, all of which have precedents across the world. Neither this paper, nor the consultation that will follow, will provide St Helena with a single definitive solution. Rather, it is intended to provide information about responses that have been adopted elsewhere, and to give St Helena the confidence to adopt a solution with which, above all, it is comfortable.

The human skeletal remains

The human remains currently in store in the Pipe Building were excavated from Rupert's Valley during 2008, from an area adjacent to the Mid-Valley Fuel Farm. They were exhumed because the airport haul road cut through graveyards at this location, and no design alternative could be found that would have prevented the disturbance of graves.

The bodies are those of 'recaptive' or 'liberated' Africans – people rescued from slave ships by the Royal Navy during the 19th century. Over 25,000 captives were brought to St Helena between 1840 and the mid-1860s, and taken into reception depots at Lemon Valley and Rupert's Valley. Approximately 8,000 died after landing: some were buried in Lemon Valley, but most were interred in two graveyards in Rupert's Valley.

In total, 325 complete skeletons were exhumed in 2008, along with a large quantity of disarticulated human bone, the latter derived from an unknown number of individuals.

The current situation

After excavation each set of remains was taken to the Pipe Building in Jamestown, where they still remain.

After cleaning and analysis each skeleton was placed in either one or two heavy-duty cardboard boxes. Ideally each body would have gone into a single box, but because of the lack of storage space in the Pipe Building it was more practical to place the skull in one box and the bones from the torso in a second. Only when the skull was badly damaged was it possible to use a single box for an entire body. Each box is labelled with a unique Skeleton number (SK 200 – 525). Within each box, the bones are separated into a number of plastic bags, each with a waterproof label carrying the Skeleton number.

The disarticulated bone is held within several large cardboard boxes.

The legal context

St. Helena has a body of locally-enacted laws (ordinances and secondary legislation). In any matter not covered by a local law, St Helena uses English Law. In this instance, it appears that no relevant local legislation exists.

In respect of the excavation of the human remains from Rupert's Valley, one of the following pieces of UK legislation is likely to have been relevant:

- Burial Act 1857
- Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981

Both of these acts address the disinterment of human remains, from consecrated and unconsecrated/disused cemeteries respectively. It is unclear in this instance which act might apply. This would depend upon the interpretation of the Rupert's Valley graveyards: if considered to be within a graveyard which has not passed into other use, then the 1981 act would apply; if the land is considered to have passed into other use, including having been built over, then the 1857 act would apply.

UK planning law can also lead to professional cemetery clearance – which is a distinct process that is separate from an archaeological project. Such clearances are often followed by immediate reburial, without any study of the remains. This is particularly the case where the remains post-date AD 1500.

In respect of re-interment, the author is unaware of any applicable St Helenian legislation. In the UK, where the 1857 Burial Act applies, the archaeological excavation of human remains requires a Section 25 licence. Historically, Section 25 Licences allowed for the retention and curation of human remains, but in 2008 the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) stipulated that all licences had to set a date for reburial. Normally two years is allowed for study, but with further extensions permitted. This situation, however, is considered by all parties to be problematic, as MoJ recognises that it is desirable to retain older and more important collections for study. At the time of writing this issue still awaits resolution (see the addendum to the chapter provided in Appendix 4).

The 2004 Human Tissue Act only pertains to human remains that are less than 100 years old, and thus is not applicable to the Rupert's Valley assemblage.

Guidance and Codes of Conduct

Worldwide, various non-binding codes of conduct exist. The Vermillion Accord, for example, has direct relevance (see below). The documents subsequently cited for museum collections do not have relevance at this stage – but might do so if the Rupert's Valley remains come to form part of a curated collection.

Vermillion Accord (1989)

The Vermillion Accord on Human Remains (adopted by the World Archaeological Congress in 1989) states overarching principles for the treatment of human remains:

1. Respect for the mortal remains of the dead shall be accorded to all, irrespective of origin, race, religion, nationality, custom and tradition.

2. Respect for the wishes of the dead concerning disposition shall be accorded whenever possible, reasonable and lawful, when they are known or can be reasonably inferred.
3. Respect for the wishes of the local community and of relatives or guardians of the dead shall be accorded whenever possible, reasonable and lawful.
4. Respect for the scientific research value of skeletal, mummified and other human remains (including fossil hominids) shall be accorded when such value is demonstrated to exist.
5. Agreement on the disposition of fossil, skeletal, mummified and other remains shall be reached by negotiation on the basis of mutual respect for the legitimate concerns of communities for the proper disposition of their ancestors, as well as the legitimate concerns of science and education.
6. The express recognition that the concerns of various ethnic groups, as well as those of science are legitimate and to be respected, will permit acceptable agreements to be reached and honoured.

Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums (2005)

In 2005, the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport issued *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums*. This document provides guidance for museums and other institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that hold human remains in permanent collections.

International Council of Museums: Code of Ethics for Museums (1986)

The ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums states that:

Collections of human remains and material of sacred significance should be acquired only if they can be housed securely and cared for respectfully. This must be accomplished in a manner consistent with professional standards and the interests and beliefs of members of the community, ethnic or religious groups from which the objects originated, where these are known. (Section 2.5: culturally sensitive material).

A note on terminology

Within this document, 'reinterment' is used as a general term. It refers to below-ground burial, as well as to above-ground storage (i.e. within an ossuary).

'Reburial' specifically refers to below-ground burial in an earth-cut grave.

Contexts

The historical context of the burials

The graves belong to 'liberated' or 'recaptive' Africans. These were people who had been aboard slave-trading vessels making the Middle Passage between Africa and America, but which had been intercepted by Royal Naval patrols. The captured ships were brought to St Helena for trial, and the slaves were landed at two reception 'depots' – one at Lemon Valley and the other at Rupert's Valley.

St Helena received about 25,000 liberated Africans between 1840 and the mid-1860s.

About 8,000 of these people are estimated to have died in the immediate aftermath of landing. Most are buried in two graveyards in Rupert's Valley.

A few hundred stayed on St Helena; the other survivors were compulsorily emigrated to British colonies in the Caribbean, and to the Cape.

The date of the excavated area

The excavated area is thought to date to the later 1840s.

The origins of the liberated Africans

The evidence shows that the slaves brought to St Helena were mainly from Central Africa, that is to say roughly from the regions now defined as Congo and Angola. A lesser number came from South-East Africa, e.g. Mozambique. It is not currently possible to refine this statement, nor to precisely establish the origin of any single individual from the 2008 excavation.

The relationship of modern St Helenians to the liberated Africans

The modern St Helenians will not be directly descended from those buried in Rupert's Valley. The graves there are interpreted as those of people who had died aboard the slave ships, or shortly after landing in the depots.

However, there will be those who are descended from the survivors of the ships. About 500 settled on St Helena, the last dying in 1929. Their community had grown to about 750 by 1872, at which date some 250 of them emigrated to Africa. As the 19th century progressed, the remaining Africans gradually intermarried and merged into the wider island population.

There is no recognisably 'African' community on St Helena in the present day.

The liberated Africans' religions

Historical sources from the depots talk of the Africans' native beliefs, which placed much emphasis on spiritualist and animist tenets.

It is highly unlikely that the people excavated in 2008 were Christian. They came straight 'out of Africa' and died without having significant contact with anyone from St Helena. Missionary work with the liberated Africans on St Helena did take place, but not until the late 1850s. This is ten years later than the date of the excavated area. Previously, the

religious authorities on the island specifically complained about the lack of any attempt to teach or convert these people. Even in the late 1850s and 1860s, conversion was only attempted for the survivors from the ships – and mainly as a prelude to their emigration.

The graveyards in the modern day

Two principal areas of graves in Rupert's Valley have been identified: a lower graveyard, approximately 400m from the coast; and an upper graveyard, 1km inland, underlying and adjacent to the Power Station. Other burials are likely to exist elsewhere in the valley, though in far smaller numbers.

The total area occupied by burials is approximately 16,000 square metres, divided roughly equally between the two known graveyards. It is estimated that approximately 8000 bodies are interred within them.

The graves are a combination of single, multiple and mass interments. They lie at shallow depth: the deepest grave cut found in 2008 was 1m deep at its base; 0.6m-0.7m was common; some skeletons were covered by just a few centimetres of earth.

Project Timeline

1950s – 1970s

Human remains are periodically disturbed in Rupert's Valley.

1985

Construction of the Power Station and Mid-Valley Fuel Farm disturbs large numbers of graves.

A Committee of Enquiry recommends that the remains be reinterred in Rupert's Valley, and that the opening of the power station be accompanied by a multi-faith ceremony of blessing. The bones are, instead, reburied in land adjacent to St Paul's Cathedral in the centre of the island. St Helena Government subsequently apologises for its actions.

2006

Human remains are revealed in geotechnical test pits dug in Rupert's Valley for the Airport project (Atkins).

2007

Archaeological evaluation in Rupert's Valley reveals skeletons in the lower and upper graveyards.

Environmental Statement for the Airport project published.

2008

Archaeological excavation is carried out in a part of the upper graveyard, to facilitate construction of the Airport Haul Road. 325 human skeletons are exhumed and placed in storage in the Pipe Building, Jamestown.

Airport project suspended (November).

2009

Osteological analysis of the human remains is undertaken on St Helena.

Original Options Appraisal compiled, followed by an outline ossuary design.

2010

Ossuary adopted as the preferred solution for reburial. Money is allotted for its construction. Planning permission is obtained.

Detailed specification for an ossuary compiled, together with draft tender documents.

2011

Construction contracts for Airport signed.

Excavation monograph *Infernal Traffic* published.

2012

Haul road construction commences in Rupert's Valley.

Airport works in upper Rupert's Valley, away from the haul road, disturb graves. These are inspected by the Museum of St Helena before being re-covered. Spoil excavated in the upper valley, within the construction corridor for the new fuel farm, is also found to contain much comminuted human bone: this material was upcast derived from Power Station construction deposited there in 1985.

Samples from the human remains in the Pipe Building are taken, to facilitate stable isotope and DNA analyses (EuroTAST project).

2013

Draft Rupert's Development Plan recognises heritage considerations, including the African graveyards, as being of 'material significance' to planning decisions.

2014

Haul Road construction completed. No human remains were encountered during its construction.

Liberty Bound exhibition opens at International Slavery Museum, Liverpool.

Possible relocation of human remains from the Pipe Building considered and rejected (August).

Rupert's Valley Development Plan in the process of revision.

Human bone disinterred during Air Access works, on ground immediately above the 2008 excavation area (December).

Outcomes since 2008

Publications, Exhibitions and Media

'Infernal Traffic'

Excavation monograph, published by the Council for British Archaeology (2011).

'Liberty Bound'

Museum exhibition at the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool (2014).

Media

Print newspaper articles: The Times; The Guardian. Popular magazines: British Archaeology; Archaeology Magazine. Numerous web pages and blogs.

Academic publications

Items published or forthcoming in the following journals: Slavery and Abolition; Atlantic Studies. Book chapter in the forthcoming 'Archaeologists and the Dead' (Oxford University Press).

Research projects

EuroTAST Marie Curie Initial Training Network

Date: ongoing

Web: <http://eurotast.eu>

Major EU-funded, Europe-wide research project, supporting a new generation of science and humanities researchers. Its aim is to uncover and interpret new evidence on the history and contemporary legacies of the transatlantic slave trade. Four PhD fellows are conducting scientific research into the Rupert's Valley site, including DNA and stable isotope studies.

REACT project grant, Arts and Humanities Research Council

Date: 2014

Web: <http://www.react-hub.org.uk/objects-sandbox/projects/2014/reflector/>

Project leaders Professors Mark Horton and Alex Bentley, University of Bristol, in collaboration with the International Slavery Museum. Designing an interactive connected object that links school groups and museums, using the Rupert's Valley finds as the subject matter.

Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship

Date: 2010-2012

Awarded to Andrew Pearson, University of Bristol. *Distant Freedom: St Helena and the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1840-1872*. The resultant book will be published by Liverpool University Press in 2015.

MPhil grant, Arts and Humanities Research Council

Date: 2009-10

Awarded to Helen MacQuarrie, University of Bristol. *Prize possessions: Transported Material Culture of the Post-Abolition Enslaved – New Evidence from St Helena*. This work will be published as an article by the journal *Slavery and Abolition* in 2015.

Conference presentations

African Archaeology Research Day, Brunel Institute, Bristol, 2014.

Archaeology of Slavery Symposium, St Maarten, 2013.

British Association for Biological Anthropology and Osteology, Annual Meetings, Universities of York and Durham, 2013 and 2014.

European Palaeopathology Association, Lund, 2014.

Liberated Africans and the African Diaspora, University of California, Irvine, 2013.

Society for Historical Archaeology, Austin Texas, 2011.

Society for the Social History of Medicine, University of Oxford, 2014.

Theoretical Archaeology Conference, Birmingham, 2012.

Academic lectures

Brunel University, London.

College of William and Mary, Virginia.

Gilder Lehrmann Center, Yale University.

Reading University.

Tulane University, New Orleans.

University of Massachusetts.

University of Leiden.

University of Oklahoma.

World History Center, University of Pittsburgh.

Public engagement

Public talks have been given at: Society of Antiquaries of London; Huntington Library, California; International Slavery Museum, Liverpool; Friends of St Helena, Annual Meetings (Oxford, Liverpool); Museum of St Helena.

Other events

Black History Month: poster and video display, York.

Community event as part of the Festival of Social Science, Birmingham.

The 2009 Options Appraisal

The options presented

The paper evaluated four proposals, as follows.

Option 1. Simple reburial (immediate)

To rebury all the human remains in Rupert's Valley, in an earth-cut grave that was safe from future development, floods and land-slip. This was to take place in later 2010 once the osteological analysis undertaken for the post-excavation programme was complete.

Option 2. Simple reburial (delayed)

As Option 1, but with reburial taking place after an interval of five years, enabling time for more detailed academic study of the remains.

Option 3. The creation of a permanent research collection

Removal of the human remains from St Helena, for curation in a UK-based academic institution. In this scenario there would be no reinterment.

Option 4. Ossuary

Reinterment of the human remains within a purpose-built ossuary in Rupert's Valley. Consultation was to be undertaken to decide whether this building was to be a permanently 'closed' burial place for the remains, or whether its contents could be accessible to scholars (under strict conditions) over the long-term.

Evaluation

The four options were evaluated as follows:

Option 1

Advantages: Comparatively inexpensive; lays the bodies permanently 'at rest'.

Disadvantages: Potential difficulties finding suitable ground in Rupert's Valley, given the extent of the graveyards and potential for development in the future. Precludes detailed study of the remains by making them inaccessible to researchers at an early stage.

Option 2

As Option 1, but with the advantage of allowing a certain amount of study to take place before reburial.

Option 3

Advantages: creates a permanent resource for research; inexpensive or cost-neutral, as it assumes that the host institution will carry the expense of curation.

Disadvantages: the remains are kept unburied, instead becoming a scientific resource.

Option 4

Advantages: an ossuary could be built on or into the valley sides – i.e. beyond the graveyards and away from areas that might be developed in the future. The decision about having the remains accessible for long-term study can be deferred.

Disadvantages: the most expensive option, and probably the most complex to realise from a technical standpoint.

Conclusions reached

The paper concluded that Options 1 and 2 were not viable, given the limited space in Rupert's Valley, and the uncertain plans for future land-use. It recommended against reburial elsewhere on the island, on the basis that it would place the individuals in a context that had little resemblance to their original resting place. In addition, Option 1 in particular would not find approval amongst those advocating further research.

Option 3 was considered viable, though the moral and ethical objections (both on St Helena and internationally) were acknowledged.

Option 4 was the preferred option. It was seen as technically deliverable, involved little land-take, and allowed for a flexible (and perhaps changeable) attitude towards the future study of the human remains.

Consultation

2009 Options Appraisal

In offering its conclusion, the 2009 Options Appraisal stated that ‘the decision on the nature of reinterment should involve (within reason) all interested parties, and in particular the St Helenians’.

No formal consultation was undertaken, though considerable effort was made to gain a sense of local sentiment. The extent to which Sharon Wainwright, then Air Access Director, canvassed opinion on St Helena is not known.

Independent research

2012: Andrew Pearson, University of Bristol

This research was intended to investigate public reactions on St Helena to the Rupert’s Valley excavation. Questionnaires were circulated to St Helenians and non-St Helenians then living on the island. It was entirely qualitative research, without attempt to formally analyse the results.

The respondents were asked about their knowledge of the slave graveyards prior to 2007, and about St Helena’s longer slave-keeping history; about whether they felt a personal ancestral connection to the liberated Africans; and about their general attitude towards the fact that these bodies had been exhumed as a result of archaeological work.

The issue of reburial was not raised within the questionnaire, but many respondents did offer comment within the free text section of the form. The majority who commented stated that some form of reinterment was desirable. There was also a strong sentiment that the remains had already been kept in storage for too long.

2014: Heidi Bauer-Clapp, University of Massachusetts

As part of doctoral research, the attitudes of those living on St Helena to the issue of reinterment was investigated. Respondents comprised a group of Year 12 school children, and other adult residents of the island. The following question was asked:

The human skeletons excavated in Rupert’s Valley in 2008 are still in storage here on St Helena. What do you think should happen to these skeletons in the long term?

- *Place them in an ossuary (an ossuary would provide a permanent place of rest but researchers could still gain temporary access to the skeletal remains if further study was desired)*
- *Rebury them permanently, with no further access for research*
- *Do nothing and leave them in storage*

The option to create a curated collection was not offered. Of the 54 respondents, 80% expressed a preference for an ossuary. The remaining 20% expressed a preference for reburial. No respondent expressed a preference for the do-nothing scenario.

Comment

The public consultation undertaken to-date has been informal, and in large part has been driven by academic interest.

While these studies provide an indication of preference - namely for reinterment in some form – the sample of opinions is limited. The 2012 questionnaire reached a very small audience, comprising those St Helenians and expatriate residents with a particular interest in the project. The 2014 survey reached a slightly wider audience, including local children, but is likely to have suffered from the same bias in terms of adult respondents.

Key groups have therefore been overlooked to-date. The views of ‘ordinary’ St Helenians (that is to say those outside the higher paid jobs in government) have not been canvassed, nor have specific residential groups – above all those living in Rupert’s Valley.

Options (2014)

Do-minimum (same place of storage)

Description	Keep the remains in the Pipe Building. Intended as long-term storage only, with no intent to facilitate study.
Processes/ Requirements (immediate term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Processes/ Requirements (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic replacement of cardboard boxes, once degraded • Inspection regime needed
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple • Cost-free (immediate term) • Low cost (long term) • No specialised archaeologist required to oversee the move
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ties up the Pipe Building indefinitely • Risk of inundation of the building by flood water
Neutral/Subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No research outcomes • Leaves the remains unburied
Indicative cost (immediate term)	Nil
Indicative cost items (long term)	<p>£1000 every 10 years to replace the boxes</p> <p>Curation costs assumed to be absorbed by SHG as part of a staff member's normal duties</p> <p>Building maintenance as required</p>

Do-minimum (relocation to new place of storage)

Description	Move the remains to an alternative location. No alteration to the mode of storage. Intended as long-term storage only, with no intent to facilitate study.
Processes/ Requirements (immediate term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of boxes from the Pipe Building to new location. Transport vehicles and staff required
Processes/ Requirements (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic replacement of cardboard boxes, once degraded • Inspection regime needed
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple • Inexpensive (immediate term) • Low cost (long term) • No specialised archaeologist required to oversee the move • Frees up the Pipe Building
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for a new storage building • Ties up the new storage location indefinitely
Neutral/Subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No research outcomes • Leaves the remains unburied
Indicative cost (immediate term)	Nil (if achieved with SHG's in-house staff and resources) <£1000 (if contracted out).
Indicative cost items (long term)	£1000 every 10 years to replace the boxes Curation costs assumed to be absorbed by SHG as part of a staff member's normal duties Building maintenance as required

Creation of a curated collection: on St Helena

Description	Long-term storage of the remains on St Helena, with the intent of facilitating further study of the collection										
Processes/ Requirements (immediate term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of the remains from the Pipe Building to a new location that is conducive to long-term preservation. Transport vehicles and staff required Re-boxing of the remains, and re-organisation of the collection 										
Processes/ Requirements (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The acid-free boxes will need to be periodically replaced A curator will need to be appointed An expert 'gatekeeping' panel must be in place to evaluate applications for study of the collection 										
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The collection is accessible for future study 										
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate location needed; tied up permanently Limited cost, but an ongoing financial commitment Researchers (and their equipment) must travel to St Helena in order to study the remains 										
Neutral/Subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaves the remains unburied 										
Indicative cost (immediate term)	<table> <tr> <td>£1,000</td> <td>acid-free boxes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£8,000</td> <td>specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee re-boxing and reorganisation of collection</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£1,000</td> <td>transport of the remains to the new place of storage</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£1,000</td> <td>equipping of new storage with shelving etc</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£11,000</td> <td>Total</td> </tr> </table>	£1,000	acid-free boxes	£8,000	specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee re-boxing and reorganisation of collection	£1,000	transport of the remains to the new place of storage	£1,000	equipping of new storage with shelving etc	£11,000	Total
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£11,000	Total										
Indicative cost items (long term)	<p>£1000 every 10 years to replace boxes</p> <p>Curation costs assumed to be absorbed by SHG as part of a staff member's normal duties</p> <p>Building maintenance as required</p>										

Creation of a curated collection: at an international institution

Description	Removal of the remains to an international institution, which would curate the collection in perpetuity, and facilitate further research										
Processes/ Requirements (immediate term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-boxing and reorganisation of the collection prior to it being moved • Moving/loading for transport (vehicles and staff required) • International shipment 										
Processes/ Requirements (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 										
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal cost to St Helena • The collection is conveniently accessible for future study 										
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Helena will have less, limited or no control over the research that is carried out. (This would depend on the terms of transfer) 										
Neutral/Subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaves the remains unburied 										
Indicative cost (immediate term)	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">£1,000</td> <td>acid-free boxes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£8,000</td> <td>specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee re-boxing and reorganisation of collection</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£1,000</td> <td>Transport and staff costs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£10,000</td> <td>international shipment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£20,000</td> <td>Total</td> </tr> </table>	£1,000	acid-free boxes	£8,000	specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee re-boxing and reorganisation of collection	£1,000	Transport and staff costs	£10,000	international shipment	£20,000	Total
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£8,000	specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee re-boxing and reorganisation of collection										
£1,000	Transport and staff costs										
£10,000	international shipment										
£20,000	Total										
Indicative cost items (long term)	Nil										

Reburial (immediate)

Description	Below-ground interment in an earth-cut grave.												
Processes/ Requirements (immediate term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of the remains into small wooden coffins or caskets; each c. 30cm x 55cm x 25cm • Archaeological supervision of transfer of the remains into coffins • Transport to place of burial (staff and transport vehicles required) • Excavation of grave (plant hire) • Suitable area of ground needed. Approx. area 12m x 10m • Fencing or other means of delineating the plot 												
Requirements (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of the plot 												
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less expensive and less complex than an ossuary • A 'one-off' solution; little ongoing maintenance required • Puts the remains 'to rest' 												
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No possibility for future study (except by exhumation)* • Mid- to long-term deterioration of the bones, reducing research potential • Not a future-proofed solution: i.e. no contingency for any further remains exhumed from Rupert's Valley 												
Indicative cost (immediate term)	<table> <tr> <td>£10,000</td> <td>325 wooden coffins (based on £30/coffin)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£8,000</td> <td>specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee moving of remains to coffins, and from storage to the burial site</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£1,000</td> <td>Transport and staff costs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£2,500</td> <td>Excavation plant hire (assumes 5 days @ £500/day)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£1,000</td> <td>Erection of wooden fencing around the burial plot</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£22,500</td> <td>Total</td> </tr> </table>	£10,000	325 wooden coffins (based on £30/coffin)	£8,000	specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee moving of remains to coffins, and from storage to the burial site	£1,000	Transport and staff costs	£2,500	Excavation plant hire (assumes 5 days @ £500/day)	£1,000	Erection of wooden fencing around the burial plot	£22,500	Total
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£1,000	Erection of wooden fencing around the burial plot												
£22,500	Total												
Indicative cost items (long term)	Limited – minor plot maintenance												

* At the time of reburial, a metric survey could be undertaken, recording the precise location of each coffin (millimetre accuracy from a permanent benchmark). This would enable the exhumation of individual coffins in the future, without the need to disturb the remainder. As time progresses, however, the buried remains will degrade, reducing their research potential.

Reburial (following further study)

This option has the same attributes as immediate reburial, but would be preceded by a targeted programme of study.

It offsets, to an extent, the objections of those who wish to have the collection's full research potential realised. On the other hand, it still renders the collection inaccessible for long-term study.

The basic cost for the reburial process is also comparable. The expense of a research programme would vary according its scope, but an indicative cost would be of the order of several tens of thousands of pounds. Part or all of this cost could be sought from external funding organisations, but such grants are highly sought-after and obtained only through a competitive process. The adjudication process is also protracted: often up to a year.

St Helena Government might therefore consider funding or part-funding the research – particularly if it wishes to gear it towards creating a 'product' for on-island education, museum display and tourism.

Reburial (following extraction of samples)

This option envisages reburial on the same basis as the two preceding options. However, preceding burial, samples would be taken (comprising bone, teeth and organic material), and removed from St Helena for curation in a laboratory. In this way some long term study is facilitated – though less than if the whole assemblage remained unburied. The cost would probably be comparable to that for reburial with further study – i.e. approximately **£22,500**.

An example of an institution holding such samples is the W. Montague Cobb Research Laboratory, which curates and studies the residual samples of human remains from the New York African Burial Ground (see <http://www.cobbresearchlab.com>).

General comments on the reburial options

Reburial in Rupert's Valley

- An appropriate setting; arguably where these people 'belong'
- A good focal point for memorial/interpretation/education
- Limited ground is available and there are competing land-use requirements
- There would be a need to explain to visitors the (justifiable) reasons why the remains were reinterred in an area that is busy, industrialised, and in large part unattractive. If this is not done, their placement in Rupert's Valley could be seen as disrespectful

Reburial elsewhere on St Helena

- Ample space
- A possibly incongruous setting, lacking relation or relevance to the original place of burial
- A poor focal point for memorial/interpretation/education

Other considerations

The costings given for this option are for the basic process of removal and reburial. Additional costs (both immediate and long term) could be incurred by such actions as the erection of a monument, or the creation of a 'garden of remembrance'. Such costs are open-ended, depending on the complexity of what is put in place and the extent of ongoing maintenance that they would require.

Ossuary

Description	An ossuary is a purpose-built structure constructed to house human remains. Architecturally it can take many forms, and may be entirely above ground, entirely below ground (i.e. with the characteristic of a crypt) or both.
Processes/ Requirements (immediate term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of the remains into small wooden coffins or caskets; each c. 30cm x 55cm x 25cm • Archaeological supervision of transfer of remains into coffins • Transport to ossuary (staff and transport vehicles required) • Construction • Suitable area of ground needed (building footprint c. 8m x 10m)
Processes/ Requirements (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term maintenance of the building • Inspection regime • An expert 'gatekeeping' panel must be in place to evaluate applications for study of the collection
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comparatively space-efficient means of reinterment; the building has a small footprint • If built with additional capacity, allows for easy reinterment of any human remains exhumed in the future • A flexible solution: it allows for the option of future study; equally, it could be permanently closed, thus putting the remains to rest. This decision may be revisited at any time • The structure could be a visible monument
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By a wide margin, the most complex and expensive option • Finding a contractor may be difficult in a situation where building firms will be in demand and many (contractually less risky) domestic projects will be available
Neutral/Subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the assemblage remains accessible for study, some people may consider the remains not to be at rest

Continued .../

Indicative cost (immediate term)	<p>£10,000 325 wooden coffins (based on £30/coffin)</p> <p>£8,000 specialist archaeologist/osteologist employed to oversee moving of remains into coffins, and from storage to ossuary</p> <p>£1,000 Transport and staff costs</p> <p>£10,000 Design (if 2009 design not adopted)</p> <p>£80,000 Construction of ossuary (based on £1000/square metre and a structure of dimensions 10m x 8m)</p> <p>£109,000 Total</p>
Indicative cost items (long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term maintenance • Inspection regime

NB: the 2009 design for an ossuary had a projected cost of fractionally under £100,000. However, even at the time it was recognised that price inflation of key items (e.g. fuel and building materials) was likely to increase the cost. The cost given in the table above – including the ‘rule of thumb’ figure of £1000/square metre, applicable in the UK for domestic structures – is probably too conservative.

Other options (non-viable)

Repatriation to Africa

This option comprises sending the remains to a destination in West-Central Africa for reburial. In doing so it would seek to return the bodies 'home' – which is undoubtedly what all of those who were enslaved would have sought. However, the reality is that this would be a hollow gesture. The liberated Africans came from multiple destinations across a vast area, and we only understand their origins in the most general terms. There is no single, appropriate, place to which they could be returned, and it is probable that most would be buried in a place hundreds of kilometres from their home. For many, particularly any from Mozambique, 'repatriation' to Congo or Angola would be as inappropriate as the reburial of somebody from Scandinavia in south-eastern Europe.

It is also likely that agreeing a location for reburial would be politically complex.

In order to confirm this conclusion, it is recommended that international consultees be asked for their opinion on the viability and appropriateness of repatriation.

Cremation

Cremation has been suggested as an option, but is inappropriate and to a large extent impractical. In respect of the first point, from what is known of their societies, central and south-eastern Africans of the period practiced inhumation, and not cremation. In respect of the second, no facilities for cremation exist on St Helena, meaning that the remains would have to be sent off-island for cremation, or a mobile cremation unit imported.

It is not recommended that this option be put forward for consultation.

Burial at sea

While practical, this option is not recommended. The ocean had entirely negative connotations for the enslaved, as it was seen as both a physical and metaphysical barrier between them and their African homelands. It was believed by many that salt water prevented their souls returning home, thus sundering them from freedom even in death. Moreover, on St Helena in the 1840s some attempts were made to bury recaptive corpses at sea – with unfortunate results: bodies washed up on the island shore, and local fishermen reported that they were catching fish containing human remains. A modern repetition of this process is not recommended.

It is not recommended that this option be put forward for consultation.

Summary of options

Option	Commentary	Approx. immediate-term cost
Do-nothing	A passive approach, which while cheap does not resolve any of the practical or ethical issues.	£0
Do-minimum	Moves the remains to a new location, presumably to a place more convenient to SHG, and one in which storage conditions will be improved. While inexpensive, it does not resolve many of the practical issues, and none of the ethical issues.	<£1000
Curated collection (St Helena)	Creates a valuable research resource, but commits SHG to its long-term curation. Likely to satisfy the archaeological and scientific community, but may cause unease amongst those groups on St Helena and internationally who wish to see the remains laid to rest.	£11,000
Curated collection (International)	Creates a valuable research resource, without any onus on SHG for its long-term curation, but reducing St Helenian influence on access and research agendas. Likely to satisfy the archaeological and scientific community, but may cause unease amongst those groups on St Helena and internationally who wish to see the remains laid to rest.	£20,000
Reburial (immediate)	A comparatively cheap and simple means of putting the remains permanently to rest. Will satisfy those who place the 'needs' of the dead above the potential for further research – but not vice-versa.	£22,500
Reburial (following further study)	A compromise option, enabling some further research but afterwards putting the remains to rest, and thus beyond use. It is an open question whether this would satisfy all parties, or none.	£22,500
Reburial (following extraction of samples)	Another compromise option that may be attached to either of the preceding two options. It enables the remains to be put to rest, and facilitates a degree of future study – though less than if the entire collection were retained. Again, it might satisfy all groups, or none.	£22,500
Ossuary	The retention, above ground, of the remains in a purpose-built structure. This flexible option allows for 'permanent' reinterment (i.e. without study) or for periodic research as scientific techniques progress. It could also serve as a visible monument. It is the option perhaps most likely to satisfy the majority, but is the most complex and most expensive to realise.	£110,000 +
Repatriation	Superficially an attractive idea, and one which might be advocated by those taking the most 'hard-line' cultural standpoint. In practice it would be impossible to realise – and at best a hollow gesture that returned the bodies to a single (perhaps unrepresentative) place in Africa.	Not costed.
Cremation	An inappropriate and largely impractical option.	Not costed.
Burial at sea	An inappropriate option.	Not costed.

Precedents

There are precedents for most of the options outlined above. These are outlined below. No attempt is made here to interpret motives or rationale: this is extremely difficult to determine for anyone who was not an integral part of each project team.

Reburial of human remains, either as a result of professional graveyard clearance or archaeological work, is commonplace in the UK. As discussed above in relation to the legal context, present MoJ Section 25 Licences have reburial as a default outcome.

If one seeks a precedent for the reburial of the remains of slaves, it is above all provided by the New York African Burial Ground (NYAGB). This site in Manhattan was discovered during building work in 1991-92, leading to the exhumation of some 420 bodies.¹ These belonged to the city's enslaved population of the 17th and 18th centuries. The discovery sparked huge public interest and controversy, reaching congressional level. The human remains were ultimately reburied on the site, within a below-ground crypt. This was undertaken with great ceremony and at considerable cost, and was dictated by extremely strong public sentiment and activism – which in this case outweighed any scientific arguments for the creation of a curated collection. Nevertheless, reburial only took place after a detailed programme of study, and samples continue to be curated at the W. Montague Cobb Research Laboratory (proposed as a consultee, below). NYAGB is a designated National Historic Monument, and the site is now occupied by a memorial (built at a cost of several million dollars) and an adjacent visitor centre.

The retention of human remains within museum or laboratory collections is commonplace on a worldwide basis. Attention has been drawn above to the curation of samples from NYAGB – though in this case it is only samples that are retained, as opposed to the skeletons themselves.

The *public display of human remains* – though sometimes contentious – is also common. There are many hundreds on display in Britain, of all periods, from Egyptian mummies and prehistoric bog-preserved bodies, through Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval remains. Exhibitions such as 'Bodyworlds', which display modern bodies, have also attracted great visitor numbers. However, most exhibited skeletons are of reasonable antiquity – in other words individuals for whom no ancestral connection with the modern population is known.

The use of *ossuaries* is a long-standing practice. They are not uncommon in continental Europe (particularly in southern and eastern countries), although they are much rarer in Britain. They are often employed in urban contexts where available land for burial is scarce, or where many unknown individuals are interred. They can also serve the dual purpose of a memorial, examples being those for the First World War casualties of Verdun and Gallipoli, and the victims of the Khmer Rouge at Cheung Ek, Cambodia.

The Prestwich Place Memorial, Cape Town, is a relevant regional example for St Helena. This was built in 2003 to house some 2500 human remains, presumed to be first generation

¹ A convenient narrative of the complex development of, and cultural reaction to, this site can be found at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Burial_Ground_National_Monument#Discovery_of_site_and_controversy

slaves from the Dutch and British colonial periods.² These were discovered during construction work in District Six, Prestwich and Green Point. An ossuary, funded by the City of Cape Town, forms the key part of the Prestwich Memorial. It is described by official sources as providing a 'final resting place', and as 'presenting a respectable home for those that helped built the City of Cape Town'. However, its creation was a contentious issue and it provides an example of the conflicting agendas (and varying interpretations of motives) that surround such a project.³

Another pertinent example of an ossuary is that for the Chumash tribe of southern California. Remains of disinterred tribal people and some sacred objects have been placed in an ossuary on the university campus of Santa Barbara. Designed in collaboration with the Chumash, this structure is deemed to provide an appropriate resting place, while still allowing scientific study to proceed.

Repatriation of human remains does occur, though it is not particularly common in the UK, simply because of the lack of 'native' communities within its modern society. However, attention may be drawn to the recent high-profile case of Richard III, where various groups are disputing whether his remains should be buried in Leicester, York or elsewhere.

A more salient discussion can be drawn from the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in the United States. This makes provision for human remains (and other cultural objects) to be returned to their native place and community – provided a suitable case can be made (i.e. a correct and accurate location for repatriation; and a genuine cultural affiliation with a modern community). NAGPRA applies to native American groups, and to Hawaiian cultures. Attention is also drawn to the Australian Government's Indigenous Repatriation Policy (2013): this seeks to return native remains to their community of origin, doing so both within Australia, and from overseas locations.

The author is not aware of any precedents for human remains from archaeological contexts being *buried at sea*.

The author is not aware of any precedents for the *cremation* of human remains from archaeological contexts.

² For the official narrative of this site see:

http://www.culturalheritageconnections.org/wiki/The_Prestwich_Memorial_Project;_Green_Point_Historical_Burial_Ground

³ See the conflicting narrative presented by http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/prestwich_place

Other considerations

A memorial

Because of the intangible, transitory, character of the Middle Passage, there are few physical locations worldwide where its victims can be remembered. Rupert's Valley is such a place, and it is noted that the Port Markers Project intends to place a memorial at or near Rupert's Bay.

On-site interpretation at the place of reinterment

Separate to 'memorial', the reinterment site could provide a place where information is presented about St Helena's role in slave-trade abolition. This would mirror, in small scale, the combined place of burial, memorial and visitor education created at the New York African Burial Ground.

A need to create linkages

Rupert's Valley is off the beaten track for both residents and tourists. If the reinterment site is to become a focus for education and/or memorial, then some form of linkage or non-physical 'signposting' needs to be created. This could take the form of information pamphlets (e.g. at Museum of St Helena and SHNT), web-based material, and school education packs.

Museum display

The International Slavery Museum (ISM) exhibition panels will be transferred to Museum of St Helena at the end of their period of display at Liverpool. Above and beyond this, there is potential for the development of other materials that would augment and deepen this existing material. Such material could be developed from existing data, or (as discussed in Appendix 1) could be specifically developed through further research.

The Wider Rupert's Valley Development Plan

This is a key aspect of the discussion, as the Development Plan sets out the basis of future land-use in the valley. It raises several issues:

- Where will there be sufficient land in Rupert's Valley for reinterment?
- Will future development lead to the exhumation of more human remains?

In relation to the second point: because of the nature of the graves (densely-packed and at extremely shallow depth), any intrusive groundworks within the two main graveyards will disturb numerous graves. However, it is understood that the graveyards will be kept free from development. There nevertheless remains a strong chance that groundworks outside of these zones will encounter smaller concentrations of burials.

Consultees

St Helena

The decision about those to be consulted on St Helena will be made at local level.

International Organisations

Advisory Panel on Archaeological Burials in England (APABE)

APABE provides case-work advice on any aspect of archaeological burials. This is a free service supported by English Heritage, The Church of England and the Ministry of Justice. Its objective is to foster a consistent approach to ethical, legal, scientific, archaeological and other issues surrounding the treatment of archaeological human remains and associated material culture. The Panel has been compiled so that its membership collectively has broad experience of dealing with human remains in a variety of different professional settings and circumstances. It may give advice on specific matters and may also advise and comment on general issues of principle or policy.

British Association for Biological Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology (BABAO)

BABAO is a UK-based organisation that promotes the study of biological anthropology for the purpose of understanding humanity from the past to the present. It acts as an advocate to encourage discussion of new research discoveries, and provides guidance to biological anthropologists and museum curators in the form of its Code of Ethics, Code of Practice and Guidance for Institutions Receiving Collections. It also has the objective of educating the general public on issues relating to biological anthropology.

Council for British Archaeology (CBA)

An educational charity working throughout the UK to involve people in archaeology and to promote the appreciation and care of the historic environment. It is one of the main advocacy groups for heritage within the UK.

CBA was the publisher of the Rupert's Valley excavation monograph *Infernal Traffic* and its staff are well aware of the site and its significance.

Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition

Based at Yale University, this organisation is part of the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies. It is dedicated to the investigation and dissemination of knowledge concerning all aspects of chattel slavery and its destruction. Its faculty include many highly recognised and respected scholars of the slave trade.

Liverpool International Slavery Museum (ISM)

The International Slavery Museum opened in August 2007 and in March 2010 welcomed its millionth visitor. It is the only museum of its kind to look at aspects of historical and contemporary slavery as well as being an international hub for resources on human rights

issues. ISM currently hosts *Liberty Bound*, the exhibition about the Rupert's Valley archaeological discoveries.

Middle Passages Ceremonies and Port Markers Project

This organisation seeks to commemorate those Africans who perished in the Middle Passage through the installation of memorials (or 'Port Markers') and through remembrance ceremonies. It also seeks to promote education and awareness about slavery and the social and cultural role of slave-successor communities. Its activities span fifty nations of North, Central, and South America, the Caribbean, and Europe. This organisation has already been engaged on the subject of a memorial/port marker on St Helena.

NAGPRA Review Committee

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a US Federal law passed in 1990. NAGPRA provides a process for museums and Federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items (human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony) to lineal descendants, and to culturally affiliated Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations.

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Review Committee was established under NAGPRA 'to monitor and review the implementation of the inventory and identification process and repatriation activities'. Its members are expert on the complex social and ethical issues surrounding disinterred human remains, and on the matter of repatriation.

Tulane University, Archaeology, Anthropology and History Departments

Tulane University, New Orleans, is a historically African-American university. The faculty in these departments have wide-ranging experience in the excavation of human remains and the attendant cultural sensitivities, having worked with native populations in Africa and North and Central America. Within the History department, Professor Rosanne Adderley is one of the leading experts on liberated Africans, and is one of the few scholars to have recognised St Helena's role in anti-slavery.

Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation (WISE)

WISE, based at the University of Hull, is an interdisciplinary institute. Its mission is to raise public awareness of issues relating to slavery, emancipation, social justice and human rights, past and present. It generates world class research; provides a forum for academic discourse and interaction; and actively partners others in advancing public understanding of both historic and contemporary slavery, thereby informing political and social change.

WISE hosted and administered the British Library EAP grant for the Pilot digitisation project for St Helena's historic archive (2012).

W. Montague Cobb Research Laboratory

This laboratory is based in Howard University, a historically Black university located in Washington, DC. It is dedicated to the advanced study of biological and archaeological materials, including amongst others the New York African Burial Ground remains. Its faculty

would be well-placed to give a perspective on the curation and study of remains of individuals of African descent.

African organisations

Congolese Association of Merseyside

This association provides a variety of social, linguistic and community services for Congolese people living or arriving in the Merseyside area. It has no heritage expertise, but is engaged with Liverpool ISM – most notably through the development of an exhibition about slavery in the Congo. Informally, some of its members have provided advice about, and translations of, some of the linguistic evidence from Rupert's Valley. The Association is suggested as a consultee because it offers a means of gauging a relevant African standpoint – and one that is specific to the region from which the liberated Africans at St Helena were exported.

African Voices Forum (AVF)

AVF is a Bristol-based network of African and African-Caribbean community associations and other organisations. It is a politically-active organisation, whose stated mission is to empower Africans and African-Caribbeans to take part in policies and initiatives. It has the potential to provide opinion from diverse African and Caribbean groups – and is accessible to us through its existing associations with Bristol University.

Individuals

'Archaeologists and the Dead' author group

Archaeologists and the Dead: Mortuary Archaeology in Contemporary Society is a forthcoming multi-author book, to be published by Oxford University Press. It contains contributions from academics and heritage professionals about (amongst other matters) the ethics of the study, display and long-term treatment of human remains that have been revealed by archaeology. Collectively these authors would provide a broad-based, international, set of opinions.

Heidi Bauer-Clapp (University of Massachusetts, Amhurst)

Mrs Bauer-Clapp has a Masters degree in biological anthropology, and is currently nearing completion of her doctoral studies. This academic career runs parallel to a professional career in archaeology in which she has been closely involved with the excavation of human remains, with repatriation under NAGPRA, and engagement with descendent communities.

Heidi's PhD studies focus on St Helena, and she will be familiar to many on the island because of her two recent visits. These visits give her considerable insight into the Rupert's Valley project and the academic and cultural issues that surround the future of the human remains.

Professor Michael Blakey (College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia)

Biological anthropologist, Director of the Institute for Historical Biology. Directed the research on the African Burial Ground in New York City, and is leading the development of the comparative database on the bioarchaeology of the African Diaspora.

Professor Alan Goodman (Hampshire College, Massachusetts)

Professor of biological anthropology. His current research includes projects on malnutrition, including study of the stresses of slavery in the human remains from the New York African burial ground. Professor Goodman is a former president of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and continues to co-direct the AAA's public education project on race (understandingrace.org).

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, the committee's attention is drawn to the following points.

Options

This paper discusses the context of the human remains, and sets out a series of options. In the main, it has not attempted to make recommendations. The options presented are necessarily discussed individually, with their basic pros and cons. However, not all are mutually exclusive, and indeed there are various combinations and/or sub-options.

Costings

The costings presented are extremely roughly calculated. It is essential that a fuller costing exercise be undertaken by a person on St Helena who is familiar with logistics, construction, and SHG's internal market for labour and resources. Nevertheless, there seems to be a clear division between the ossuary (costing above £100,000) and all other options (costing less than £30,000).

Wider contexts

This paper cannot deal in detail with the surrounding archaeological, legal and cultural issues. It is recommended that all parties read the published chapter included as Appendix 4, which provides a far more nuanced narrative.

Future research potential

It was originally intended that this report should contain a detailed statement about the future research potential of the human remains from Rupert's Valley. However, this has not yet been obtained from the EuroTAST scholars, and in the interests of completing this report only a short comment is offered (Appendix 1). When written, the detailed statement will be provided to the committee as an addendum to this report.

Consultation with African stakeholder groups

The identification of African stakeholders is desirable, because these will provide an important non-Western viewpoint. However, identifying suitable groups for consultation has proved problematic. The present consultation list contains two such groups, both of which are UK-based, and efforts are being made to identify others who might also be contacted. Ideally, groups actually within Africa should be consulted, but the current disturbances in the Democratic Republic of Congo highlight the difficulty of seeking consultees in the relevant part of the continent, where social and academic structures are fragile.

Consultation

Draft consultation documents have been drawn up in parallel with this report. Although this report attempts to predict responses (through the 'pros' and 'cons' attached to each option), consultation will give a far better picture of local and international opinions.

Recommendations have been put forward for the questions that may be asked of consultees. However, as the decision-maker, it is for the committee to finalise the questions that are ultimately put forward.

Further discussion

This iteration of the report represents the end point for this document, which will not be revised further. It is intended that this paper be a starting point for a more flexible discussion – both within the committee and more widely. Further queries can be addressed to the author by email or in phone conversations.

Appendix 1. The future research potential of the human remains from Rupert's Valley

The human remains from Rupert's Valley are unique. They are, quite simply, the only assemblage in the world that purely belongs to the Middle Passage – of first-generation slaves, straight out of the slave ship, and only weeks out of Africa. When one considers that (conservatively) over ten million Africans were shipped across the Atlantic into slavery between the 15th and 19th century, it becomes clear that the assemblage has truly global significance.

The assemblage is a unique resource for research. The site monograph *Infernal Traffic* demonstrated how much there is to be learned about the Middle Passage and its individual victims, but as was stated in its introduction, 'it is recognised that this report represents only a necessary first stage of study, and that there is great scope for further historical, osteological and artefactual lines of study'. Meanwhile, the ongoing EuroTAST programme is demonstrating the insights that can be generated from scientific analysis: it uses DNA to determine familial relationships between the skeletons, and also to reveal the diseases present; stable isotopic analysis is revealing, in broad terms, the homeland origins of these individuals; and detailed analysis of the teeth allows greater understanding of the dental modifications. EuroTAST is not only producing genuinely novel data about the slave trade, but is also pioneering new techniques in order to progress this research.

The Rupert's Valley assemblage has very great potential for research using currently available techniques, both in terms of traditional osteology (i.e. the examination of the bones) and scientific analysis. Moreover, it is important to note that techniques continue to evolve and be developed. Crucially, therefore, the full potential of the Rupert's Valley assemblage is essentially unknowable at this time. To illustrate this point: radiocarbon dating was not developed until the 1950s; DNA studies only began in the 1980s and techniques continue to progress; stable isotope analysis is still newer. It is impossible to predict what new techniques and technologies will be developed within the next few generations.

Appendix 2. Summary of the publication monograph *Infernal Traffic*

The report describes and discusses archaeological investigations of the 'Liberated African' graveyards in Rupert's Valley, on the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic. These works were undertaken between 2007 and 2008, and were funded by the British Government (Department for International Development). They arose from wider environmental studies undertaken in response to proposals to build an airport on the island, which is presently only accessible by sea.

The graveyards as a whole belong to the middle decades of the 19th century, and relate to Britain's attempts to abolish the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Between 1840 and 1872 a Vice-Admiralty court operated on St Helena, adjudicating cases of slave ships captured by the Royal Navy's West Africa Squadron. As a part of this process, the human cargo of these vessels – nearly all of whom had been transported in appalling conditions – were brought ashore on St Helena.

The records indicate that over 26,000 'Liberated' or 'recaptive' Africans were received by the 'Liberated African Establishment' on the island during this period. Receiving 'depots' were set up in two valleys, acting as receiving centres, hospitals and quarantine zones. The first of these, Lemon Valley, was abandoned after 1843, but Rupert's Valley continued to receive and treat slaves into the late 1860s.

The majority of captives survived. Some became residents of St Helena but most were moved onwards to other British colonies, principally to the West Indies. Nevertheless, the mortality rate on the slave ships and after landing was extremely high. The slave vessels arrived with corpses aboard, and many others died in the days and weeks after landing. Periodic attempts were made to dispose of the bodies at sea, but this measure proved impractical. As a result, burial on land became necessary, and large areas close to the depots were given over to unconsecrated, institutional, graveyards. Over the Establishment's lifetime it is estimated that around 8000 Africans were buried in these graveyards – most in Rupert's Valley.

Burials in the valley have been encountered in the past, but the present report is concerned with discoveries made between 2006 and 2008. These began when geotechnical trial pitting in 2006 encountered a small number of burials, work which was followed by more formal archaeological investigations in 2007. Full open-area excavation of a part of the upper graveyard was undertaken during a four-month period in 2008.

The 2008 excavation took in an area that measured only c 100m x 30m. However, the density of burials was such that 325 articulated skeletons were recovered, as well as a considerable volume of disarticulated human bone from a series of discrete pits. The general level of preservation was high, with survival of organics such as hair and fingernails being common.

Rupert's Valley is narrow, and much of it is either too rocky to allow burial, or lies within the floodplain of a small stream. Suitable space for burial was clearly at a premium, and although a reasonable number of graves contained just a single body, multiple burials were prevalent. Up to seven individuals were deposited in graves that in normal circumstances

would only have been deemed suitable for just one person. Only five people were buried in wooden coffins: four still- or newborn babies, and a single adolescent male.

The osteological analysis reveals a population that was extremely young. Children aged up to twelve years accounted for one-third of the skeletons, with young and prime adult males also well-represented. Only seventeen people were in the age bracket of 36–45 years, and these were the oldest individuals. The proportion of the sexes was more difficult to determine, mainly due to the youth of this population. There is no doubt that they were of African origin: over a third of the skeletons had teeth that had been modified into patterns by either filing or chipping – a clear indication of cultural practices.

These individuals were certainly also victims of the Slave Trade. However, there was little skeletal evidence for the physical abuse that they must have endured during captivity and transportation, other than a small number of protection injuries. The exact cause of death is also opaque, although scurvy was prevalent and must have been a major contributing factor. Given that these individuals had only spent a short time at sea, this evidence indicates that their diet prior to embarkation had been poor. Lead projectiles (ie musket balls) recovered from the graves of two older children suggest that these individuals had been shot.

Over 100 registered individual or group small finds were recovered, including coins, iron and copper alloy objects, glass ampoules and bottles, clay pipes, beads, buttons and textile fragments. Most of this assemblage has a European origin. Whilst a few of these items (notably jewellery) may have been owned by the Africans prior to their enslavement, the majority probably relate to the period spent in captivity or within Rupert's Valley.

In general the burials were of an institutional character. After the arrival of a laden slave ship burials were carried out hurriedly, and often in great numbers. For the most part the process was concerned with rapid disposal: human dignity or cultural practices were not a consideration. The coffin burials of the still- or newborn babies, on the other hand, clearly demonstrate European cultural influences.

The excavations revealed only a small portion of the upper of the two graveyards in Rupert's Valley. However, the discoveries are of very great significance. Firstly, this site is unique: no other known burial ground contains solely the bodies of first generation Africans who died as a result of their transportation. On a cultural level too, the site has a huge resonance, providing a stark physical reminder of the human consequences of the Slave Trade.

Appendix 3. Consultee Details

Organisation	Contact name (Position)	Postal Address	Email address	Organisation or informational website
African Voices Forum	Peninah Achieng (Chair)	141 City Road Bristol BS2 8YH	Africanvoicesforum@yahoo.co.uk	http://africanvoicesforum.org.uk/
APABE	Professor Holger Schutkowski (Chair)	Christchurch House C226 Talbot Campus Fern Barrow Poole BH12 5BB	hschutkowski@bournemouth.ac.uk	http://www.archaeologyuk.org/apabe
Archaeologists and the Dead author group	Various	n/a	Via Andrew Pearson	-
BABAO	Dr Piers Mitchell (President)	Division of Biological Anthropology Dept of Archaeology & Anthropology University of Cambridge Pembroke Street Cambridge CB2 3QG	pdm39@cam.ac.uk	http://www.babao.org.uk/index
CBA	Dr Mike Heyworth (Director)	Beatrice De Cardi House 66 Bootham York YO30 7BZ	mikeheyworth@britarch.ac.uk	http://new.archaeologyuk.org
Congolese Association of Merseyside	Not known	23 Prescott Road , Fairfield , Liverpool, L7 0LA	www.congomerseyside.org.uk	http://www.mysignpost.org/Congolese_Association_of_Merseyside-lst4632.html
Gilder Lehrmann Center	Professor David Blight (Director)	PO Box 208206 New Haven, CT 06520-8206	gilder.lehrman.center@yale.edu	http://www.yale.edu/glc/index.htm

Organisation	Contact name (Position)	Postal Address	Email address	Organisation or informational website
ISM	Dr Richard Benjamin (Director)	International Slavery Museum Dock Traffic Office Albert Dock Liverpool Waterfront Liverpool L3 4AX England	DrRichard.Benjamin@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk	http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/index.aspx
Middle Passages Ceremonies and Port Markers Project	Ann Chin (Director)	Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project, Inc. P.O. Box 3071 Jacksonville, FL 32206	middlepassagemarkers@gmail.com	http://www.middlepassageproject.org/
NAGPRA	Dr Sonya Atalay (Committee member)	University of Massachusetts 202 Machmer Hall 240 Hicks Way Amherst, MA 01003	satalay@anthro.umass.edu	http://www.nps.gov/nagpra/
Tulane University	Professor Chris Rodning	Department of Anthropology 101 Dinwiddie Hall Tulane University 6823 St. Charles Avenue New Orleans, LA 70118	crodning@tulane.edu	http://anthropology.tulane.edu/index.cfm
W. Montague Cobb Research Laboratory	Dr. Fatimah Jackson (Director)	Department of Biology Howard University 415 College St. NW Washington DC	fatimah.jackson@howard.edu	http://www.cobbresearchlab.com/
WISE	Professor John Oldfield (Director)	Oriel Chambers 27 High Street Hull HU1 1NE	John.Oldfield@hull.ac.uk	http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/wise.aspx
-	Professor Michael Blakey	College of William & Mary Professor Michael Blakey Washington Hall 112 P.O. Box 8795 Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795	mblak@wm.edu	http://www.wm.edu/as/anthropology/faculty/blakey_m.php

Organisation	Contact name (Position)	Postal Address	Email address	Organisation or informational website
-	Professor Alan Goodman	Mail Code DO Cole Science Center 110 Hampshire College 893 West Street Amherst, MA 01002	ahgNS@hampshire.edu	https://www.hampshire.edu/faculty/alan-goodman
-	Heidi Bauer-Clapp	Department of Anthropology Machmer Hall UMass Amhurst	hbauercl@anthro.umass.edu	http://www.umass.edu/phisanth/bauer-clapp.html

Appendix 4. A synopsis of the exhumation and subsequent treatment of human remains

The following pages are taken from Charlotte Roberts, 2009, *Human Remains in Archaeology: A Handbook* (York: CBA, 2009), Chapter 2.

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