



DOGBURY PLANTATION, MINTERNE MAGNA, DORSET
Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of:

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Through their agents:

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Dogbury Plantation, Minterne Magna, Dorset
Archaeological Evaluation, December 2000

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in Dogbury Plantation (ST662051), in advance of a proposal to erect a radio mast and base station. Two test-pits were excavated just to the east of the possible unfinished hillfort of Dogbury Camp. No archaeological deposits or features were encountered.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This project was commissioned by Vodafone Ltd, through their agents Tony Thorpe Associates. Vodafone are seeking planning permission for the erection of a radio mast and West Dorset District Council, the Local Planning Authority, have requested an archaeological evaluation, following advice from Steven Wallis, Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council, in order that the archaeological impact of the proposed works is assessed prior to determination of planning permission. This is in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Archaeology and Planning).
- 1.2** The proposed development comprises a concrete base slab, about 9.0 m by 3.4 m across, supporting a 30 m high lattice mast and antennae with equipment cabin and ancillaries, surrounded by a 1 m wide gravel path, screened by a hawthorn hedge. The power duct will be a 300 mm wide, set within a surface-dug trench running from the southeast corner of the base station southwards for about 10 m, then across the existing track to the existing Orange power supply (Figure 2).
- 1.3** The site (NGR ST662051) lies on Dogbury Hill, part of the chalk ridge on the eastern side of the Cerne valley, about 800 m to the north of Minterne Magna (Figure 1). It is within the woodland of Dogbury Plantation, just below the summit of the hill and adjacent to the earthwork known as Dogbury Camp, which is thought to be an unfinished hillfort. The site lies at a height of about 235 m above Ordnance Datum. The solid geology is Chalk with superficial deposits of Clay-with-Flints on top of the ridge (Geological Survey of England and Wales Sheet 313 *Shaftesbury* 1:50000 Drift 1977).
- 1.4** The fieldwork was carried out on 18th December 2000.
- 1.5** Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge the help and cooperation of Tony Thorpe in setting up this project and would like to thank the landowner Lord Digby and his agent Charles Field, Symonds & Sampson, for allowing access to the land. Terrain Archaeology is also grateful to



Steve Wallis of the Dorset County Council Archaeology Service and Claire Pinder of the Dorset County Sites and Monuments Record. The fieldwork was undertaken by Rod Brook and Becky Montague. This report was compiled by Peter Bellamy.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The earthwork in Dogbury Plantation is clearly shown on the Ordnance Survey 25-inch and 1:2500 sheets (Figure 1) and has been described by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England as possibly an unfinished enclosure or small hillfort, though it is noted that, in its present form, it is more like a cross ridge dyke (RCHME 1952, 169). The earthwork consists of a bank running northeastwards across the top of the ridge, with a ditch on the southeast side. It curves round at the northern end and has a rounded angle to the southeast. There appears to be an original entrance through this earthwork, north of the present track (Figure 1).
- 2.2 Dogbury Plantation has a low flint bank defining its boundary, with an entrance to the south. This plantation is likely to be 18th or more probably 19th century in date.
- 2.3 There has been no previous archaeological work done on the site.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objective of the archaeological works is to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site, that is, to appraise the nature, extent, level of preservation, and importance of any archaeological deposits.
- 3.2 The evaluation will comprise a series of trial trenches located and excavated commensurate with the aims of the evaluation.
- 3.3 The evaluation will aim to record all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the works in order to provide sufficient data to assess the archaeological significance of the site.
- 3.4 The results of the evaluation may be used to formulate a strategy for the preservation or management of any archaeological remains; and/or formulate an appropriate response or mitigation strategy to planning applications or other proposals which may affect adversely any such



archaeological remains, or enhance them; and/or formulate a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The observations were carried out in compliance with the specification prepared by Terrain Archaeology and approved by Dorset County Council's Archaeologist and in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeology's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (1994, rev. 1999).
- 4.2 The specification states that the evaluation will comprise the excavation of two test pits: one 2m by 1m (Trench 1) and the other 1m by 1m (Trench 2). Trench 1 was located in the position of the proposed base slab and Trench 2 was located on a point along the length of the course of the proposed power duct (Figure 2).
- 4.3 The trenches were located by taped measurements taken from plans provided by the client.
- 4.4 The groundworks consisted of the excavation of the test-pits by hand down to the top of the natural deposits. The base and sides of the test pits were cleaned by hand and all deposits and features recorded using Terrain Archaeology's recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records.
- 4.5 The records have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current UKIC guidelines and the requirements of the receiving museum, Dorset County Museum.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1

5.1.1. The following stratigraphic sequence was exposed: -

<i>depth</i>	<i>description</i>	<i>context numbers</i>
0 – 0.14 m	Topsoil	101
0.05 m – 0.21 m	Subsoil	102
>0.05 m	Natural gravels	103



A list of all contexts can be found in Appendix 1.

- 5.1.2. The natural subsoil encountered was a compact flint gravel with a small amount of reddish brown clay matrix (103). The flint gravels were up to 15 cm across with some pea grit also. The surface of this layer sloped down towards the east, possibly indicating the presence of a tree throw hollow immediately to the east.
- 5.1.3. Lying on top of the flint gravel 103 was a 0.07 m thick layer of greyish brown clayey silt with moderate small natural flint fragments (102). This layer was thickest to the east (Figure 3).
- 5.1.4. The topsoil/leaf litter layer (101) was a loose humic dark brown clayey silt with occasional flint fragments and very frequent roots. It also became thicker towards the east (Figure 3).
- 5.1.5. No finds were recovered.

5.2 Trench 2

- 5.2.1. The following stratigraphic sequence was exposed: -

<i>depth</i>	<i>description</i>	<i>context numbers</i>
0 – 0.11 m	Topsoil	201
>0.11 m	Natural	202

A list of all contexts can be found in Appendix 1.

- 5.2.2. The natural subsoil was a reddish brown clay silt (201) with frequent flint gravel, encountered at a depth of 0.11 m below ground level (Figure 3).
- 5.2.3. The topsoil was a 0.11 m thick layer of loose brown silty clay loam (201) with occasional flint fragments.
- 5.2.4. No finds were recovered.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered. The impression gained from the evaluation is that there was not a great deal of activity immediately outside the earthwork of Dogbury Camp. This conclusion is, of necessity, rather tentative, given the small area excavated.



7. PROJECT ARCHIVE

7.1 The archive (TA5071) will be deposited with the Dorset County Museum, which has agreed in principle to accept the archive, subject to fulfilment of the Museum's requirements of the preparation of archaeological archives. A copy of the microfiche archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record.

7.2 The indexed and cross-referenced project archive consists of: –

- | | | |
|----------------|-----|---|
| File 1: | 1.1 | Written Scheme of Investigation T3046 |
| | 1.2 | Report 5071.1 |
| | 1.3 | Trench record |
| | 1.4 | Drawing register |
| | 1.5 | Photographic register and monochrome contact sheets |
| File 2: | 2.1 | Monochrome negatives |
| | 2.2 | Colour transparencies |
| File 3: | | Drawings |

8. REFERENCES

RCHME 1952 = Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset*, **1**, West Dorset



Appendix 1: List of all contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth below surface
101	Humic dark brown clayey silt with occasional small flint fragments and frequent roots.	Topsoil	0 m
102	Greyish brown clayey silt with moderate small flint fragments.	Subsoil	0.05– 0.14 m
103	Compact flint gravels.	Natural	0.05–0.21 m
201	Humic dark brown silty clay loam with occasional flint fragments.	Topsoil	0 m
202	Fine reddish brown clay with frequent flint gravels.	Natural	0.11 m

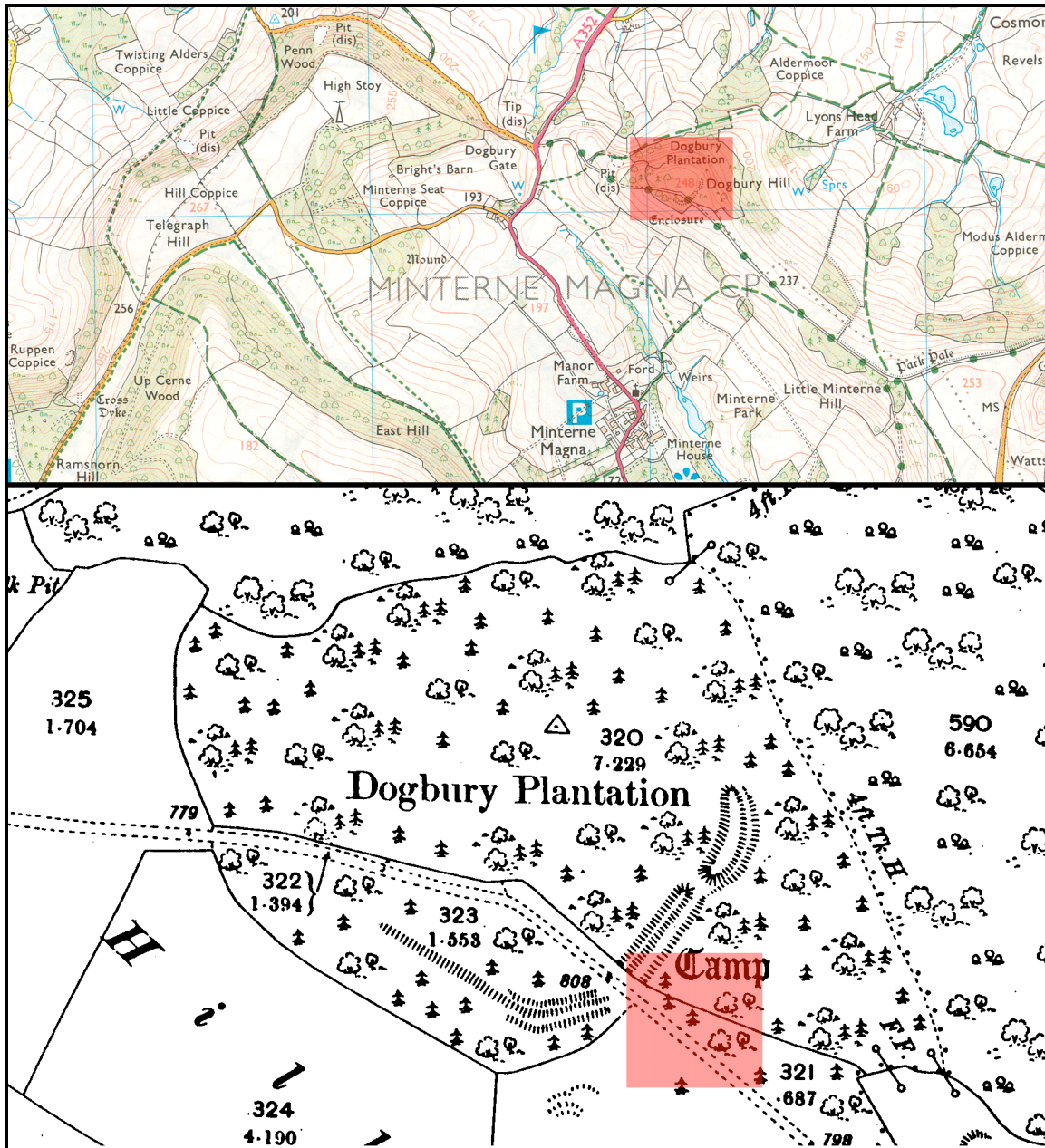


Figure 1: Location map (© Crown copyright. Reproduced with permission of H.M.S.O. Licence no. AL52842A)

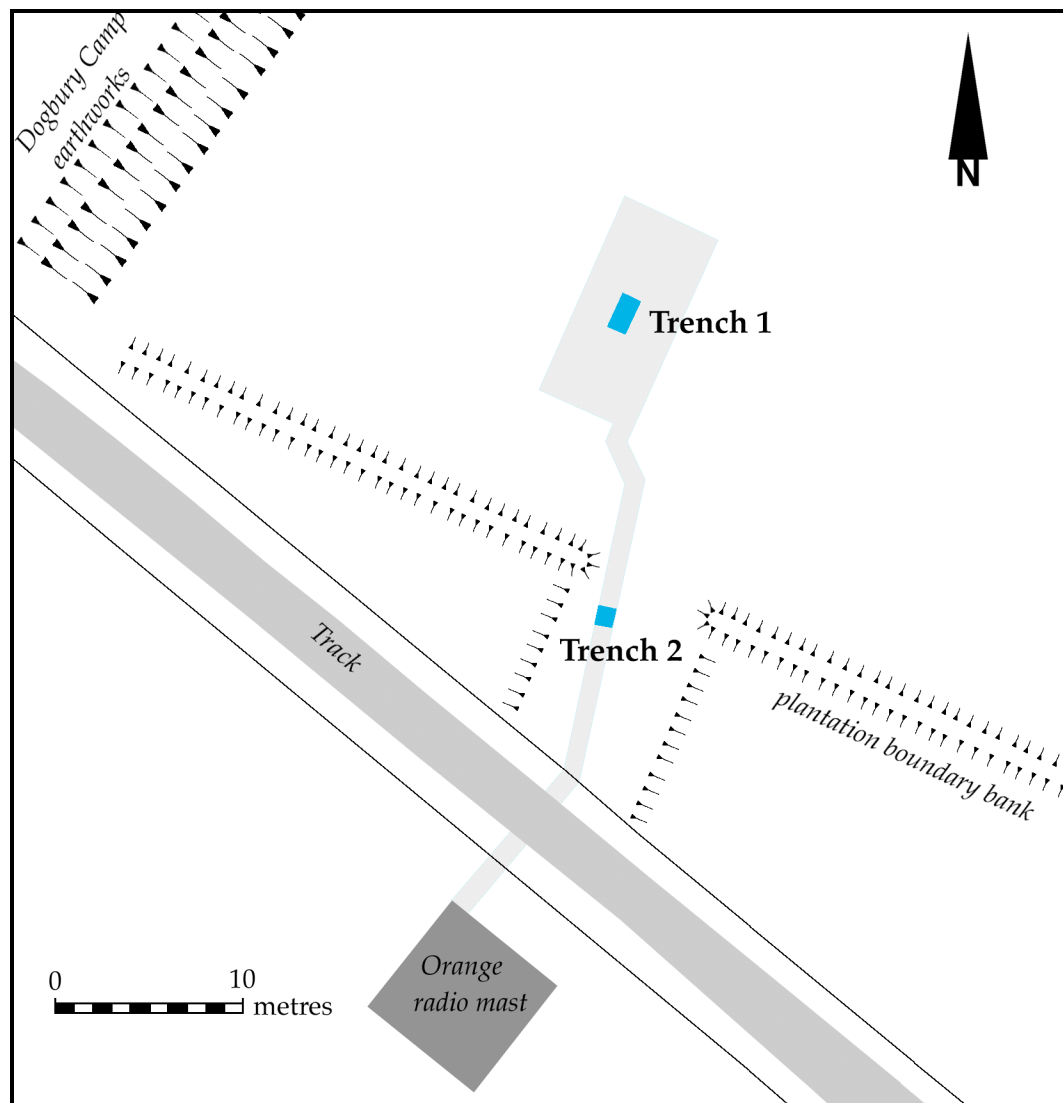


Figure 2: Plan of Trenches

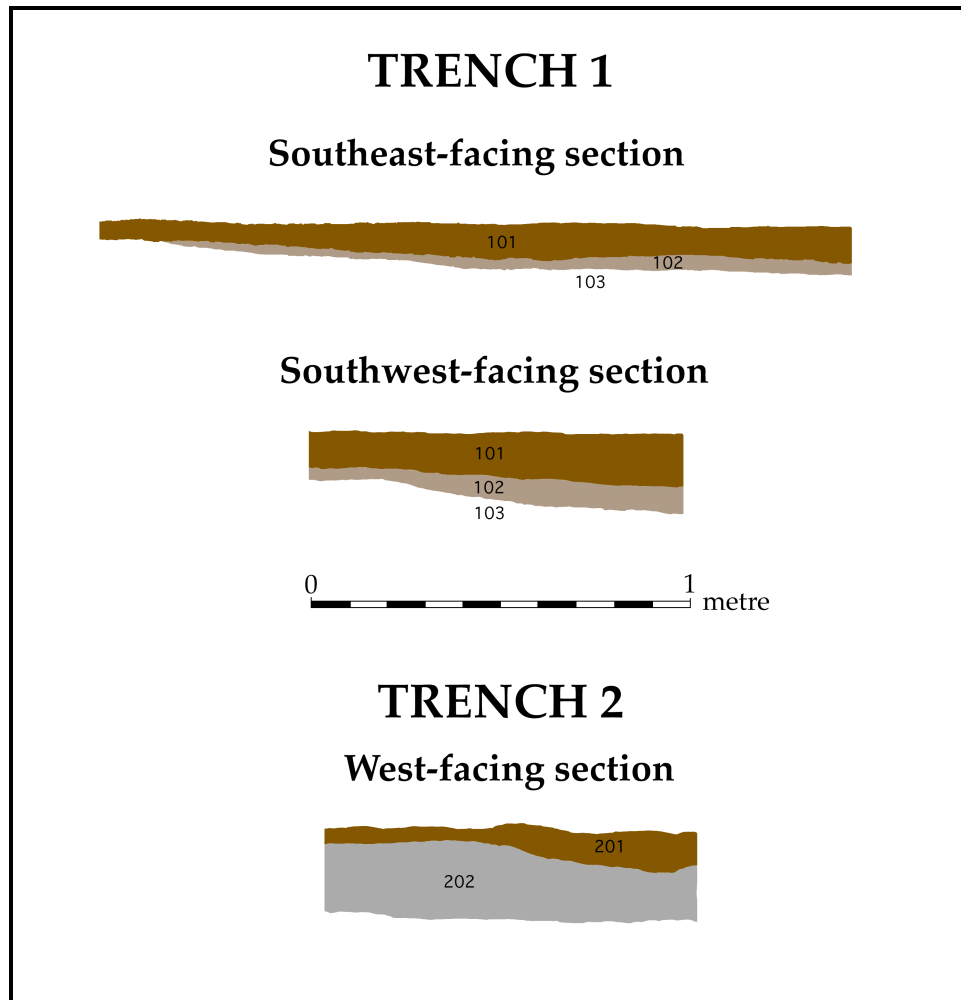


Figure 3: Sections