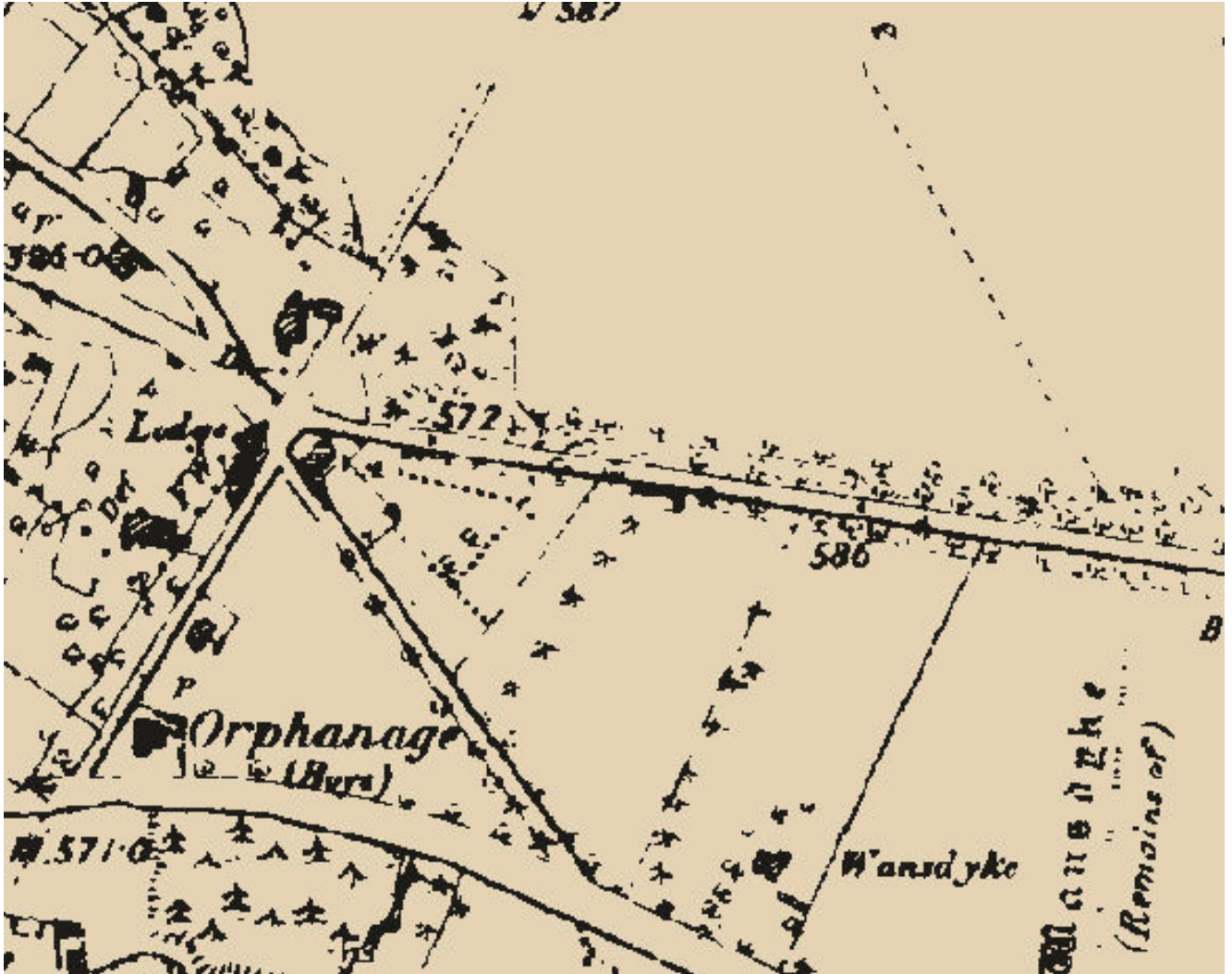


# The Avenue, Claverton Down, Bath, Bath & North-East.

An Archaeological Watching Brief.



**CONTEXT ONE**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

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# The Avenue, Claverton Down, Bath, Bath & North-East Somerset.

## An Archaeological Watching Brief for Wessex Water plc

by



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**Wessex Water scheme reference:** BR123  
**Baths Museum and Pump Room Accession Number:** BATRM 2007.200

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December 2007

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## **Non-technical summary**

*Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief during groundworks for a water main replacement at The Avenue, Claverton Down, Bath (NGR ST 77040 64224 to ST 77418 64159), over eight days between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August and the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2007. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc.*

*The investigation was requested by Mr Richard Sermon (Archaeological Officer, Bath and North East Somerset Council), following a consultation request by Ms Katie Dunmore (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc).*

*No archaeological features/deposits were observed during the course of the Watching Brief and no artefacts were recovered.*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief during groundworks for a water main replacement pipeline at The Avenue, Claverton Down, Bath (NGR ST 77040 64224 to ST 77418 64159) (hereafter referred to as the Site), over eight days between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August and the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2007. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc.
- 1.2. The investigation was requested by Mr Richard Sermon (Archaeological Officer, Bath and North East Somerset Council), following a consultation request by Ms Katie Dunmore (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc).
- 1.3. The Site is situated c. 2km east of the historic core of Bath. The County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) records an 'ancient road' (**SMR No. MBN10099**) running in a north-easterly to south-westerly direction, situated approximately 100m south-east from the eastern extent of the Site (see **Figure 1**). Earlier OS maps suggest that this road may be part of the Wansdyke.
- 1.4. Given the recorded archaeological data for the environs, it was considered that archaeological features/deposits could be present on the Site, and that these would be damaged or destroyed by the development. However, as the nature or presence of such features/deposits had not been proven on the basis of currently available information, it was determined that a reasonable archaeological response would be to carry out a Watching Brief during all ground disturbance.
- 1.5. The request for the archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 1 (PPG1), General Policy and Principles*, 1997 and *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16)* issued by the DoE in 1990. The recommendation also conforms to Policy 19 of the *Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Joint Replacement Structure Plan* (adopted September 2002) and Policy BH.12 of the *Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan Revised Deposit* (adopted December 2002). In addition the recommendation conforms to *Archaeology in Bath and North East Somerset: Supplementary Planning guidance* (adopted 2004) and *Archaeology in the City of Bath: Supplementary Planning guidance* (adopted 2004).
- 1.6. This report summarises the topographical, geological, archaeological and historical setting of the site, and presents the results of the Watching Brief.

## 2. Definition and objectives of a Watching Brief

- 2.1. An Archaeological Watching Brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) as:

*"...a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive."* (IFA rev.1999).

- 2.2. The purpose of a Watching Brief is similarly defined by the IFA and is:

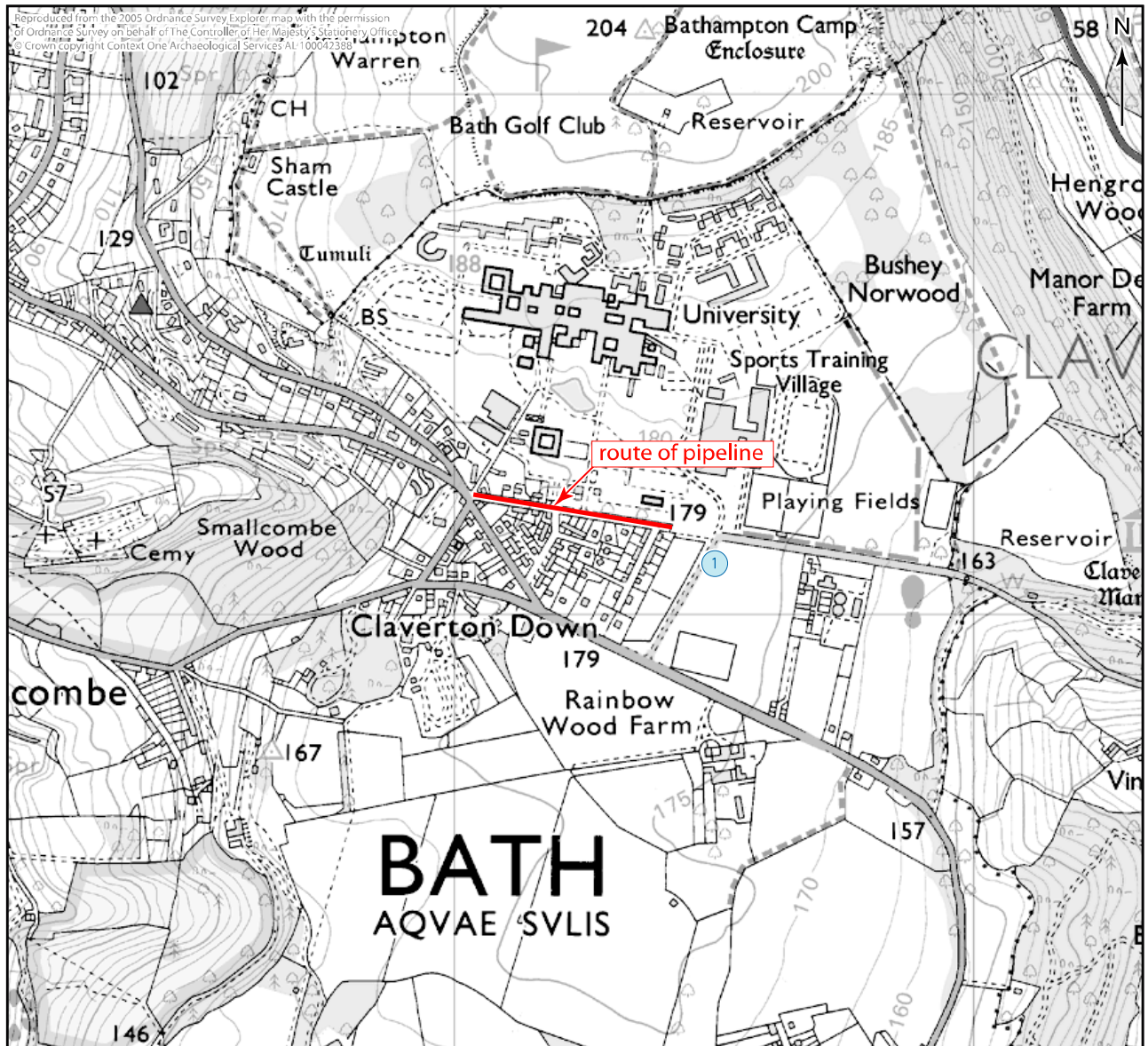
- *“To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, their presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.*
- *To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the Watching Brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.” (IFA rev.1999)*

2.3. The results of a Watching Brief are used to:

- produce a record of the location, nature, significance, importance and date of any archaeological remains encountered on the Site;
- add to the knowledge about the previous history of activity on the current site and its surroundings; and
- provide information to influence future planning decisions in the area.

### 3. Topography and geology

3.1. The Site (NGR ST 77040 64224 to ST 77418 64159) is situated c. 2km east of the historic core of Bath (**Figure 1**). The Site occupies roughly level ground, rising from c. 174m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the western end of the pipeline, to c. 179m AOD at the eastern end. According to the British Geological Survey (2001), the underlying geology is Upper Lias and Inferior and Great Oolite. The soils in this area are characterised by shallow freely draining, loamy lime-rich soils overlying chalk or limestone (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC), 2006).



① SMR No. MBN10099 Saxon "ancient road" (?Wansdyke)

0 1km



PROJECT TITLE  
The Avenue, Clayerton Down,  
Bath, Bath & North-East Somerset

FIGURE TITLE  
Site setting showing known  
archaeological landscape

SCALE  
as shown

PROJECT CODE.  
COAS/WBF/07/ACB

FIGURE NO.  
**1**

## 4. Archaeological Background

- 4.1. The archaeological background for the Site has largely been drawn from secondary sources. This comprised a data search of archaeological records held by Bath and North East Somerset Council as part of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).
- 4.2. The eastern end of the Site is situated in close proximity to what is referred to as either an 'ancient road' on the OS 1939 County Series 1:25" (**SMR no. MBN 10099**) (centred on ST 775 641) or as part of the 'Wansdyke' on earlier OS maps (see 'cover image'). The Wansdyke is an Anglo-Saxon long linear defensive earthwork, dated AD 400-700, which runs from the Avon valley south of Bristol to Savernake Forest near Marlborough in Wiltshire.

## 5. Methodology

### Wessex Water methodology

- 5.1. The total length of the pipeline under archaeological observation was *c.* 0.38km. Initially, four trial pits measuring 1m x 0.5m were dug to a depth so as to locate the existing services. A machine equipped with a 0.30m wide bucket was then used to excavate the trench for the replacement water supply main to a maximum depth of 1.20m and a maximum width of 0.30m.

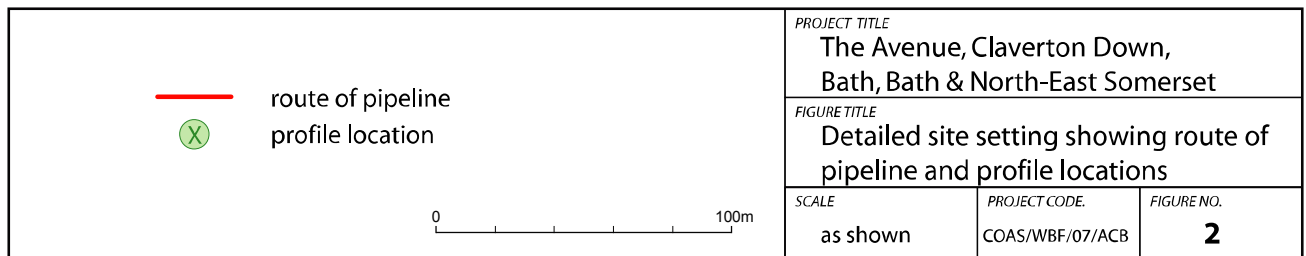
### Archaeological methodology

- 5.2. The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) in October, 1994 (rev. September, 1999). COAS adhered to the *Code of Conduct* issued by the IFA in October, 1997, and *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (1990, rev. September, 2000), at all times during the course of the investigation. The current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.

### Trenching

- 5.3. A representative profile (Profile 1) was recorded within one of the four trial pits. A second profile (Profile 2) was subsequently recorded within the trench section (see **Figure 2**). COAS *pro-forma* profile log sheets were used to record and illustrate the principal stratigraphic and physical characteristics of the deposits encountered.
- 5.4. A photographic record of the Watching Brief was prepared involving the use of monochrome photographs and digital images. This included photographs illustrating the recorded profiles and working shots to illustrate the general nature of the archaeological operation mounted.





## 6. Results

- 6.1. The deposits encountered during fieldwork are listed and described below. Context numbers for layers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (100).
- 6.2. Profiles 1 and 2 revealed a modern layer of cemented tarmac (100), 0.10-0.15m thick, overlying a gravel road base (102), 0.10-0.25m thick. In Profile 1 the modern road layers overlay yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) natural limestone (103), whereas in Profile 2 these overlay natural limestone with some clay (202).

## 7. The finds

- 7.1. No finds were recovered during the course of the Watching Brief.

## 8. Conclusion

- 8.1. Despite the course of the pipeline running close to the line of a conjectured Anglo-Saxon earthwork (Wansdyke), no evidence of this was discovered during archaeological monitoring. Instead, observations only revealed the foundation layer for the present road and occasional modern services overlying natural limestone.

## 9. Archive

- 9.1. The site archive is currently held at the offices of Context One Archaeological Services Ltd and consists of 2 monochrome photographs and 7 digital images in .jpg format, 2 COAS *pro-forma* profile log sheets and a photographic register. Arrangements will be made to deposit the archive with the Roman Baths Museum and Pump Room within 12 months following the submission of this report.
- 9.2. Copies of the Watching Brief report will be deposited with:

**Wessex Water plc**  
Claverton Down Road  
Claverton Down  
Bath  
BA2 7WW

**Planning Services**  
Bath & North East Somerset Council  
Trimbridge House  
Trim Street  
Bath  
BA1 2DP

- 9.3. As part of our commitment to public archaeology, an e-report will be available to view online or download as an Adobe Acrobat™ file from the COAS website at [www.contextone.co.uk/bath\\_&\\_ne\\_somerset.htm](http://www.contextone.co.uk/bath_&_ne_somerset.htm) following entry onto the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) where it will become a publicly accessible document.

## 10. COAS acknowledgements

- 10.1. Context One Archaeological Services Ltd would like to thank Ms Katie Dunmore (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc.), for her kind assistance throughout the course of the investigation, and Mr Richard Sermon (Archaeological Officer, Bath & North-East Somerset County Council), for curatorial advice.

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<b>Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), 1994 rev. 1999</b>	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i>
<b>Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC), 2006</b>	<a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">http://www.magic.gov.uk</a>