



Corfe Hills Roman Road, Poole, Dorset

Observations and Recording, during Drain Re-
pairs



Report No. 53422/3/1

September 2014

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Archaeological Observations and Recording during Drain Repairs,
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Scheduled Monument No: 1018195

Scheduled Monument Consent Ref: S00086591

Client: Transportation Services Borough of Poole, Civic Centre, Poole BH15 2RU

Agent:

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Project Report Summary Page

| Project Details | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| OASIS Reference | terrains1-190354 | | |
| Project Title | Corfe Hills Roman Road, Poole, Dorset | | |
| Short Description of Project | Terrain Archaeology observed the repair of a drain on the edge of the Corfe Hills Roman road, Poole. The trench to locate the blocked pipe was dug along the edge of the agger of the road. Most of the area exposed was disturbed by drain and gas main trenches and the agger itself appears to have been disturbed in the later 20th century, but a small portion of the agger base and buried soil layer below survived. No trace of a roadside ditch was found. | | |
| Project Dates | Start: 15-09-2014 | End: 16-09-2014 | |
| Previous/Future Work | No/No | | |
| Project Code | 53422 | | |
| Monument Type and Period | Road (Roman) | | |
| Significant Finds | None | | |
| Project Location | | | |
| County/District/Parish | Dorset/ Poole/ Poole | | |
| Site Address | Roman Road, Corfe Hills, Poole, BH21 3QU | | |
| Site Coordinates | SY 9930 9676 | | |
| Site Area | 7 m ² | | |
| Height OD | c. 120 m aOD | | |
| Project Creators | | | |
| Organisation | Terrain Archaeology | | |
| Project Brief Originator | English Heritage | | |
| Project Design Originator | Terrain Archaeology | | |
| Project Supervisor | Peter Bellamy | | |
| Project Manager | Peter Bellamy | | |
| Sponsor or Funding Body | Client | | |
| Project Archive | | | |
| Archive Type | Physical | Digital | Paper |
| Location/Accession No | No Archive | Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the receiving museum. | Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the receiving museum. |
| Contents | None | Digital photography | context sheets, plans, sections, report |

Corfe Hills Roman Road, Poole, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording during Drain Repairs, September 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Project introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Stuart Priest, Highways Maintenance Technician, on behalf of the Borough of Poole, to undertake a programme of archaeological observations and recording during groundworks associated with the repair of a drain pipe along the side of the Scheduled Monument 1018195 *Two Sections of Roman road on Barrow Hill and Corfe Hills*.

The archaeological programme was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observations and Recording (Terrain Archaeology 2014), and in fulfilment of Conditions attached to the grant of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC No. S00086591).

'Archaeological observations and recording', also more colloquially known as an archaeological watching brief, is defined by the Institute for 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 2008). Its purposes are: "to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works " and "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."

Fieldwork was carried out between the 7th and 27th May 2014 by Peter Bellamy.

Terrain Archaeology wishes to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of Stuart Priest (Highways Maintenance Technician, Transportation Services, Borough of Poole), Keith Miller (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage), and the contractors, Langley Civil Engineering Ltd, particularly Paul Charity and the groundworkers Paul, Darren and Sam.

1.2 Brief

No written brief for the works was produced by or on behalf of the Borough of Poole, though the works have benefitted from advice from Keith Miller, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage.

1.3 Site Location and Topography

The broken pipe lies on the east side of Bridleway No.1, which runs along the western edge of the Scheduled Roman road between Rushcombe Way and Lancaster Drive on the parish boundary between Poole and Corfe Mullen, at NGR SY 9930 9676 (Figures 1 and 2).

1.4 Geology

The geology is mapped as sands silts and clays of the Poole Formation (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). No superficial geology is recorded.

1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The Scheduled Monument forms part of the Roman road that ran from Lake Farm Roman fort to the Roman military supply base on the Hamworthy peninsula (Bellamy 2000; Coles and Pine 2009). The route of the road was investigated and described by H P Smith in (Smith 1932). In the area of the pipe break the road survives as an earthwork agger, though the flanking ditches are not clearly visible.

1.6 Previous Archaeological fieldwork

There have been no archaeological investigations of the Roman road in close proximity to the site. H. P. Smith excavated a section through the road further to the south in Hamworthy, which revealed details of its construction (Smith 1932, 9-11) and another section was dug through the road at Vineyard's Copse, Hamworthy in 1982 (Jarvis 1983).

1.7 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the archaeological programme was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

Its objectives were:

- To observe and record all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate archaeological standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

1.8 Groundworks

A rectangular trench measuring approximately 3.5 m by 2.0 m across and up to 2.15 m deep was dug by machine on the edge of the linear earthwork of the Roman Road agger (Figure 3).

1.9 Methods

The methodology, scope, aims and objectives of the works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Terrain Archaeology in August 2014 (Terrain Archaeology document no. 3422/0/1) and approved prior to commencement of work by the local planning authority's archaeological advisor.

All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 2008).

The observation and recording of the groundworks was *intensive*, as defined by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008), with a qualified, experienced archaeologist present on site during all sensitive groundworks.

All features and deposits were recorded using components of Terrain Archaeology's system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records, regardless of their perceived date and archaeological significance. These records have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current guidelines (AAF 2007; IfA 2009) and the requirements of the receiving museum. A photographic record of the works was maintained in digital format, which includes aspects of their setting, conduct and technical detail.

1.10 Archive and Dissemination

1.10.1 Paper Archive

The project archive, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and appropriate background documentation, is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 534122. In due course, and assuming appropriate transfer of title from the landowner, the archive will be accessioned for long-term curation and storage by Poole Museums Service. Deposition of the archive will place it in the public domain.

1.10.2 Report

A paper copy of this report will be lodged with Dorset County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a publicly funded and accessible resource, and deposition of the report will place it, and the project results, in the public domain.

A digital summary of the archive will be placed with the OASIS project (www.oasis.ac.uk) under the reference code *terrains1-190354*. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

A brief summary report of the project and its key findings will be published by Terrain Archaeology in the *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*.

2. Results

2.1 Natural Deposits

Natural yellowish-reddish brown sand (106) was encountered at a depth of between 1.0 and 1.2 m below the present ground surface. The upper part was darker brown and slightly harder than lower down (Plate 2).

2.2 Buried Soil

On top of the natural sand was a 0.07 m thick layer of very dark brown sand (105), which had a sharp, slightly wavy boundary with the natural sand 106 below. This may be the remnants of a buried soil.

2.3 Possible Roman Road Agger Deposit

Immediately overlying the buried soil 105 was a 0.08 to 0.15 m thick layer of compact brownish-red clay (104) with frequent angular flint gravel, moderate larger flints and lumps of pale grey and red clay. Unlike the clayey gravel deposits above, this layer did not contain any modern material and may be the *in situ* remains of the base of the Roman road agger.

2.4 Modern Deposits

Overlying possible agger deposit 104 was a 0.05 to 0.15 m thick layer of dark grey sandy loam (103) with frequent flint gravel and occasional small fragments of tarmac. This layer may represent a topsoil development over layer 104, or is a more topsoil-rich part of layer 102 above. The larger part of the earthwork disturbed by the drain repair trench comprised a layer, up to 0.85 m thick, of compact dark reddish-brown clayey sand (102) with frequent flint gravel and occasional pale yellow clay lumps. It also contained large broken pieces of tarmac, lumps of concrete, kerbstones and limestone fragments, throughout the full depth of the deposit.

2.5 Service Trenches

2.5.1 Surface Water Drain

The drain trench (107) was 0.9 m wide and 1.95 m deep with vertical sides and flat bottom, with the concrete drain at the base. It cut through layers 102, 103, 104, 105 and 106. It was filled with dark reddish-brown clayey sand (108) with frequent flint gravel and occasional large lumps of concrete and tarmac.

2.5.2 Gas Main

A vertical sided, flat-bottomed trench (109) containing a plastic gas main was found along the western edge of the trench. The trench measured over 0.3 m wide and about 1.1 m deep. It cut through layers 102, 105 and 106. It was filled with mid greyish-brown sand with flint gravel and occasional fragments of tarmac (110).

2.6 Topsoil

The upper part of the trench was covered by a 0.15 m thick layer of humic greyish-brown sand with moderate flint gravel (101).

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

No artefacts were retained from the works. A single probably 20th century glazed earthenware sherd was noted in context 102.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

The drain repair trench was cut along the edge of the linear earthwork that is assumed to be the remains of the agger of the Roman road. In this area, however, the earthwork appears to have been disturbed, with large quantities of tarmac, concrete and kerbstones incorporated down to a depth of about 0.85 m. These modern materials were incorporated within a compact clayey sand and flint gravel deposit (102), which is similar to the make up of the agger recorded elsewhere on the line of this road (Smith 1932), so may be a disturbed, reworked part of the Roman road structure. The date of this disturbance is probably later 20th century in date and appears to be stratigraphically earlier than the insertion of the drain and the gas main.

A small part of undisturbed agger may survive at the base of the earthwork where a clayey gravel layer (104) seals the original soil layer (105). The published section recorded by H. P. Smith near Carter's Avenue, Hamworthy in 1930 shows a layer of yellow clayey sand 0.1 m thick overlying the buried turf line, which may be analogous to context 105 (Smith 1932, 10-11).

No trace of a ditch was visible within the drain repair trench or as an earthwork in the vicinity of the drain repair.

4.2 Conclusions

The drain repair trench was dug immediately beside the presumed agger of the Roman road, but caused very little disturbance to the in situ remains of the road. The works have shown that there has been significant disturbance and reworking of the agger material in the later 20th century in this part of the road. No trace of a roadside ditch was found.

5. References

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------|--|
| AAF, | 2007 | <i>Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation.</i> Archaeological Archives Forum. |
| Bellamy, P. S., | 2000 | 'Poole, Shapwick Road, Hamworthy' <i>Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society</i> 122 , 164. |
| Coles, S. and Pine, J., | 2009 | 'Excavation of an Iron Age and Roman settlement and salt production site at Shapwick Road, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset' <i>Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society</i> 130 , 63-98. |
| IfA, | 2008 | <i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief.</i> (Revised Edition). Institute for Archaeologists. |
| IfA, | 2009 | <i>Standard and guidance for the creation, preparation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.</i> Institute for Archaeologists. |
| Jarvis, K. S., | 1983 | 'A section of the Roman Road from Hamworthy to Badbury Rings at Vineyard Copse, Hamworthy' <i>Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society</i> 104 , 194-6. |
| Smith, H. P., | 1932 | 'The Hamworthy section of the branch Roman road from Badbury Rings to Poole Harbour' <i>Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society</i> 54 , 5-14. |

Terrain Archaeology

2014

Roman Road, off Lancaster Drive, Corfe Mullen, Poole: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observations and Recording during Drainage Repairs. Terrain Archaeology Document 3422/0/1, August 2014.

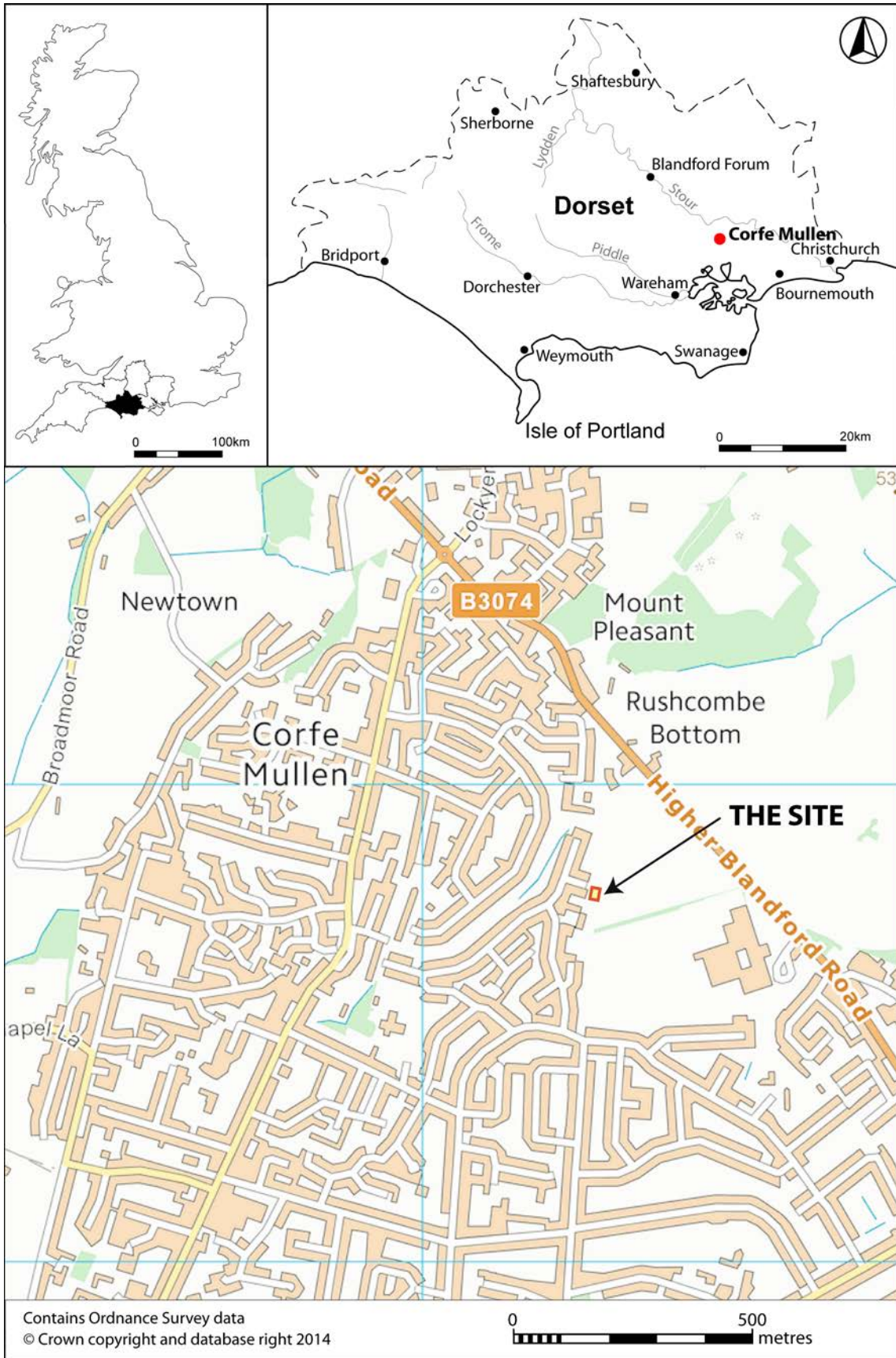


Figure 1 Location map.

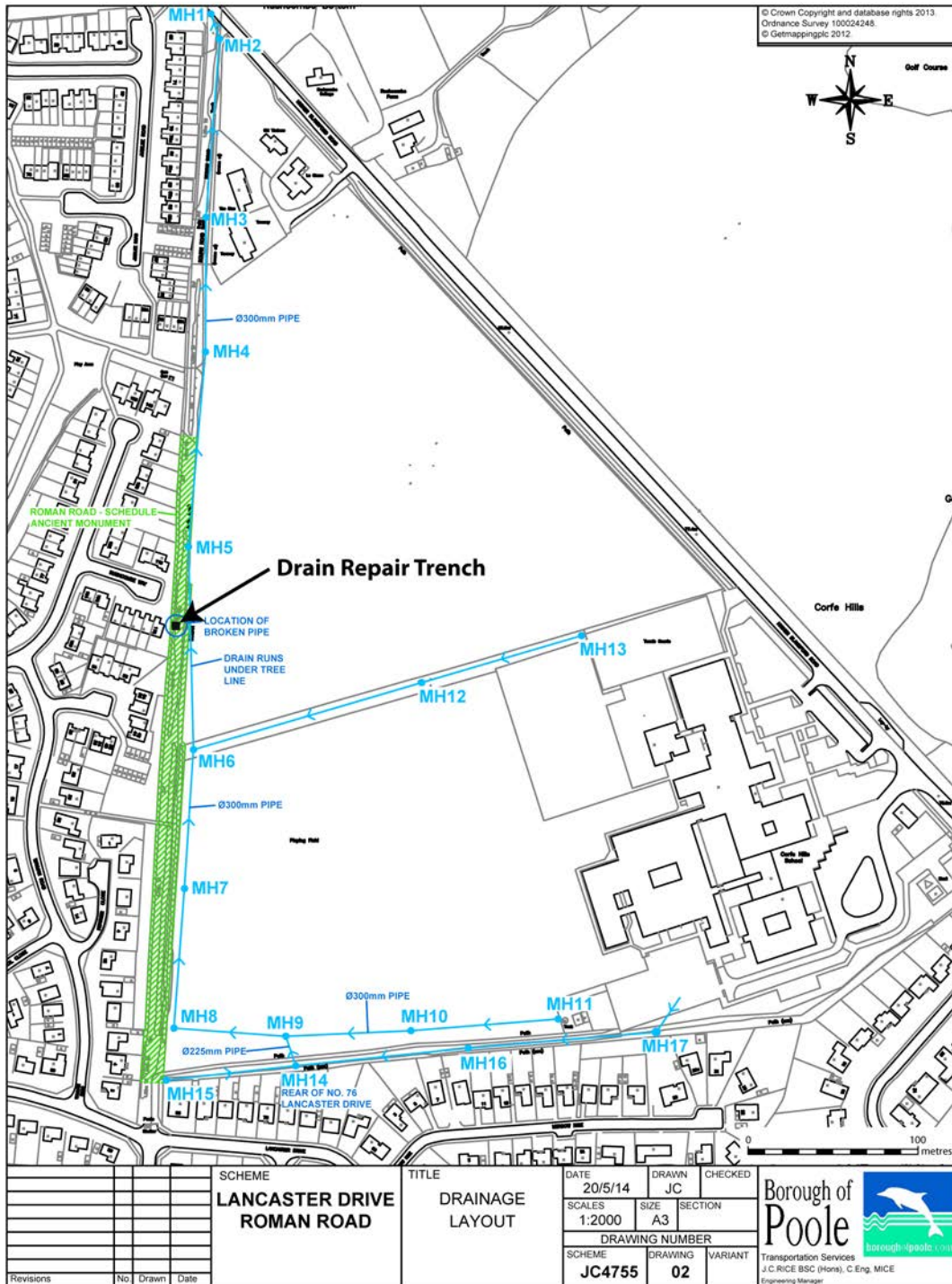


Figure 2: Location of drain repair trench. (Plan provided by Client).

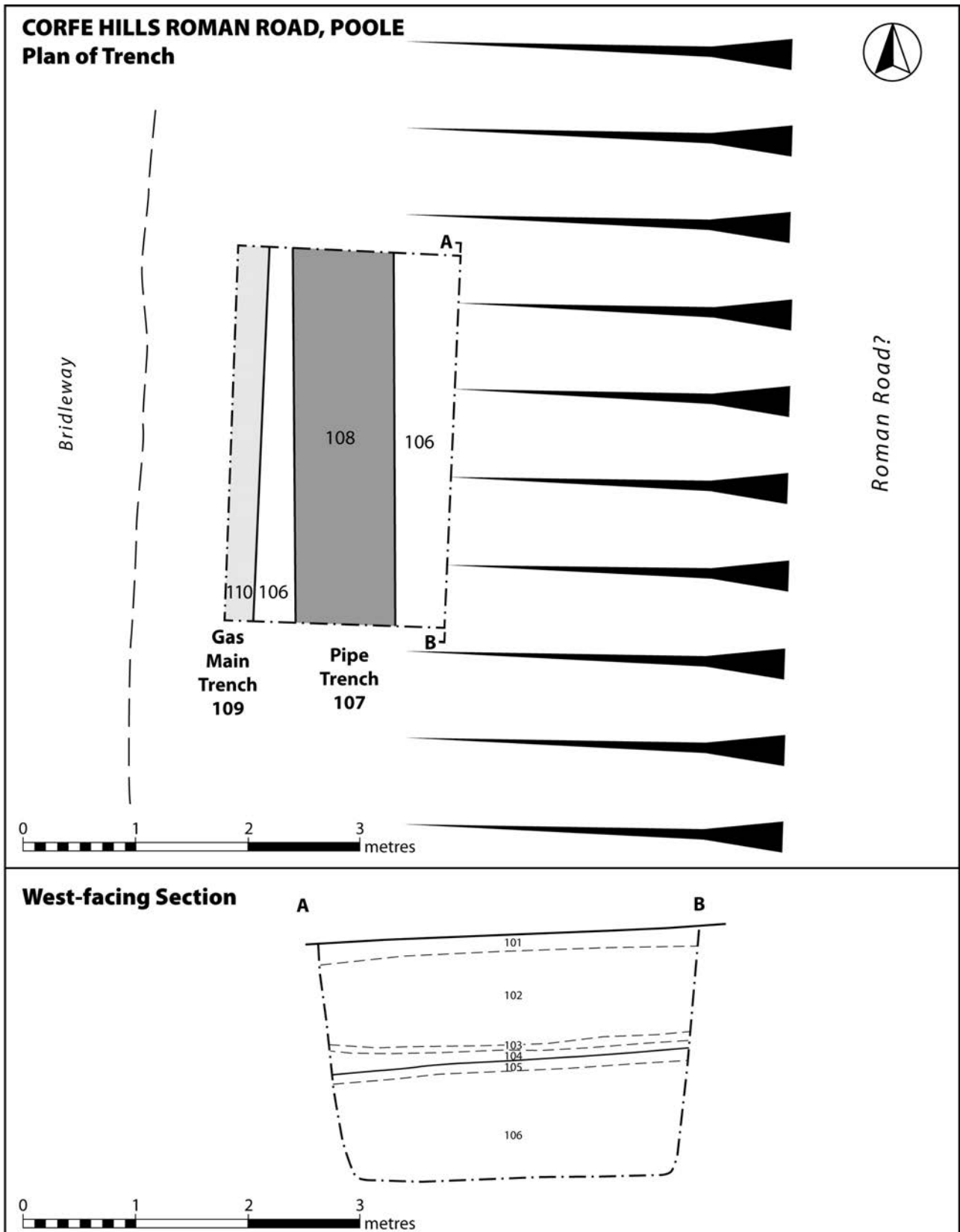


Figure 3: Plan and section of Drain Repair Trench.



Plate 1: View of location of drain trench from south.



Plate 2: West-facing section of drain repair trench. 2 m scales.



Plate 3: Drain repair trench viewed from north. 2 m scale.