



North Castle Field, Norden, Corfe Castle, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording of New Water Supply



Report No. 53496/3/1

November 2018

North Castle Field, Norden, Corfe Castle, Dorset

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April 2018

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Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
OASIS Reference	terraina1-335123 & terraina1-335125		
Project Title	New Water Supply, North Castle Field, Norden, Corfe Castle		
Short Description of Project	Terrain Archaeology undertook archaeological observations and recording during the installation of a new water supply in North Castle Field, Corfe Castle. For most of its length the new pipe was installed using a mole plough and no archaeological observation was possible. At the northwest end of the field, was a spread of Roman pottery, and a layer of chalk flecks. It is likely that this is associated with the Roman chalk surfaces and occupation layers discovered in this same area in 1987 and most probably part of the extensive Roman site at Norden that lies just to the north of the present site.		
Project Dates	Start: 27-04-2018	End: 27-04-2018	
Previous/Future Work	Yes/No		
Project Code	53496		
Monument Type and Period	Occupation Layer (Roman)		
Significant Finds	Rim Sherd (Roman); Sherd (Roman); Mortar (Vessel) (Roman)		
Project Location			
County/District/Parish	Dorset/ Purbeck/ Corfe Castle		
Site Address	North Castle Field, Norden, Corfe Castle, Dorset, BH20 5DS		
Site Coordinates	SY 95697 82547 – SY 95798 82459		
Site Area	c. 32 m ²		
Height OD			
Project Creators			
Organisation	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Brief Originator	Martin Papworth		
Project Design Originator	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Supervisor	Peter Bellamy		
Project Manager	Peter Bellamy		
Sponsor or Funding Body	The National Trust		
Project Archive			
Archive Type	Physical	Digital	Paper
Location/Accession No	National Trust	National Trust	National Trust
Contents	Pottery, Stone object	Photographs	Context sheets, plan

North Castle Field, Norden, Corfe Castle, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording of New Water Supply, April 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 Project introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by the National Trust, to undertake Archaeological Observations and Recording during the installation of a new water supply and cattle trough in North Castle Field, Norden, Corfe Castle.

The fieldwork was carried out on the 27th April 2018 by Peter Bellamy.

1.2 Project Brief and Specification

No written brief was issued by The National Trust for this project.

1.3 Site Location

The site lies in a field to the north of Corfe Castle in the gap in the east/west chalk ridge. The field lies to the south of the A351 and the topography rises slightly upwards to a low E-W ridge, then drops more steeply down to the south east to the Corfe River which runs just south of the field. The ground lies between about 15m and 30m aOD. The new water pipe runs between SY 95697 82547 – SY 95798 82459.

1.4 Geology

Bedrock geology is mapped as Portsdown Chalk Formation in the northern part of the field and Seaford Chalk Formation, Newhaven Chalk Formation And Culver Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) in the southern part, with no recorded superficial deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies on the edge of an area of significant Late Iron Age and Roman activity. To the north of the site is an important Late Iron Age and Roman settlement and shale-working site at Norden (RCHME 1970; Sunter 1987). The edge of this settlement probably impinges on the northern part of North Castle Field (Papworth 1987).

In the field on the opposite side of the A351 a Late Iron Age temple site lies in the south east part (Woodward 2006), together with a Late Iron Age and early Roman coin concentration (Tatler *et al.* 2007). In the northern part of the field was a Roman well containing special deposits and associated with two portable stone altars was excavated in 1970-73 (Hughes 1972; 1973). A scatter of third and fourth century AD coins were found in the northern part of the field also (Tatler *et al.* 2007).

1.6 Previous Archaeological fieldwork

A watching brief was undertaken by Martin Papworth of the National Trust in August 1987, when a trench 2.0 by 1.8 m was dug to examine a faulty water pump (Figure 2). This revealed two separate yard surfaces of compacted chalk lumps and flints, separated by an occupation layer (Papworth 1987).

1.7 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Archaeological Observations and Recording 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 professional standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

1.8 Groundworks

A new water pipe was laid between the water pump in the north west part of North Castle Field and the field barn in the south east part of the field, with a spur to a new trough against the field boundary in the north west. The majority of the new pipe was installed using a mole plough behind a tractor. The two ends of the new pipe route (and the new spur) were excavated by machine. The trench to the water pump was 0.35 m wide and up to 0.6 m deep. The trench at the other end, against the wall of the barn, was up to about 1.0 m deep, to expose the existing pipe running beneath the wall of the building.

1.9 Methods

The observation and recording of the groundworks was undertaken to the standards of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIfA 2014), with an archaeologist in attendance during all groundworks associated with installation of the new water supply.

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. 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, has been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current guidelines (Brown 2011; CIfA 2014b) and the requirements of the receiving museum. It is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 53496. In due course, the archive will be accessioned for long-term curation and storage by the National Trust.

1.10.2 Artefacts

The artefacts retained from the site will be deposited alongside the Written Archive with the National Trust.

1.10.3 Report

A copy of this report will be lodged with the National Trust Sites and Monuments Record and with Dorset 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 *terraina1-335123* and *terraina1-335124*. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

2. Results

2.1 Introduction

The observations of the new water pipe were divided into three parts. The main length of the water pipe route was numbered Trench 1 (Plates 1–2), the open-cut trench at the north west end was numbered Trench 2 (Plates 3–6) and the opening against the barn was numbered Trench 3 (Plates 7–8) (Figure 2). The context descriptions are presented in Appendix 1.

2.2 Trench 1

As the new water pipe was laid using a mole plough for most of its length, there was little scope for detailed observation (Plates 1–2). The only material brought to the surface was the ploughsoil (100) and/or the dark brown subsoil (101) beneath. At the crest of the ridge, fairly frequent small chalk lumps (102) were brought to the surface. These are thought to be part of the eroded natural chalk that lies just below the surface on the edge of the ridge. No artefacts were noted along the length of Trench 1.

2.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 lay at the north west end of Trench 1 and was L-shaped in plan, linking the new water pipe with the existing supply at the manhole, with a spur running down to the position of a new trough along the fence line (Figure 2; Plates 3–6). For most of its length the trench revealed a layer of dark brown silty loam (201) beneath the topsoil. At the western end near the manhole and water meter, a dark brown silty loam soil with frequent small chalk lumps and flint (202) was exposed at a depth of 0.53 m below the surface, sealed below layer 201 (Figure 2: Plate 6). This layer produced ten sherds of Roman Black Burnished Ware pottery.

2.4 Trench 3

Trench 3 lay at the south east end of Trench 1 adjacent to the field barn (Figure 2; Plates 7–8). The trench revealed a layer of dark brown soil containing quantities of stone rubble (301), beneath the topsoil. Layer 301 lay immediately on top of the natural sand (302). The rubbly soil 301 and the natural sand 302 were cut by an earlier water pipe trench (303) filled with dark brown soil (304).

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

A small assemblage of finds was recovered from the observations and these are quantified in Table 1 below.

Context	Roman Pottery	Post-medieval pottery	Stone Objects
201	8/133g	1/43g	--
202	10/203g	--	--
301	--	--	1/3900g
<i>Total</i>	<i>18/336g</i>	<i>1/43g</i>	<i>1/3900g</i>

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context (count/weight in grams)

3.2 Pottery

3.2.1 Roman Pottery

Eighteen sherds of Roman pottery were recovered; eight from context 201 and ten from context 202 (Table 1). They are all coarsewares of the Wareham/Poole Harbour Black Burnished ware type. The assemblage from context 201 included two rim sherds from a straight-sided dish, a jug body sherd with handle fragment, and a base sherd. The material from context 202 included two everted rim sherds from a large jar, a bead rim jar sherd and a base sherd. One body sherd from context 201 had wiped surfaces.

3.2.2 Post-medieval Pottery

A single sherd with part of the rim and handle of a salt-glazed stoneware (bellarmine) jug of probable seventeenth century date was recovered from the southeastern part of Trench 2 (201).

3.3 Stone Objects

A broken Purbeck Marble mortar was recovered from the stone rubble in context 301. It consists of about half of the base of a straight-sided mortar, with a diameter of 225 mm. The external surface is pitted with diagonal tool marks along the base of the side at the angle with the base. Internally the surface also exhibits chisel toolmarks across the surface. This mortar may have broken during manufacture.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

The observations confirmed the presence of archaeological activity in the northwestern part of the field. The nature of the work meant that there was no real opportunity to determine the extent of the occupation traces recorded in 1987 with any degree of precision. The trench did not penetrate deep enough to expose in situ surfaces as seen in 1987. Context 202 is similar in character to the deposits immediately overlying the chalk surfaces exposed in 1987, so may still survive below the base of the trench. If this is the case, then the chalk surfaces may be relatively localised in the western end of Trench 2. The pottery recovered from context 202 potentially has a wide date range from early to late Roman, including a possible first century AD bead rim jar and third century AD jar sherds. This seems to fit with the date range of material recovered in 1987. The pottery recovered from the overlying layer 201 was sparsely distributed along the length of the trench.

No reliable data on the potential archaeology surviving along the route of Trench 1 across the field can be recovered from the observations because of the use of a mole plough for the insertion of the new water pipe. It is likely that the depth reached by the mole plough was too shallow to impinge on any potential archaeology.

The broken unfinished stone mortar undoubtedly came from the Norden Roman industrial site, where evidence for the production of stone mortars has been recovered (Sunter 1987). The mortar was recovered from a layer of stone rubble adjacent to the surviving farm buildings and may have been brought to the site from elsewhere as part of the hardcore used for the buildings.

4.2 Conclusions

For most of the length of the new water supply, the new pipe was installed using a mole plough and no archaeological observation was possible. However, at the northwest end of the field, there was a spread of Roman pottery, and a layer of chalk flecks, which is likely that this is associated with the Roman chalk surfaces and occupation layers discovered in this same area in 1987 (Papworth 1987) and most probably forms part of the extensive Roman site at Norden that lies just to the north of the present site.

5. References

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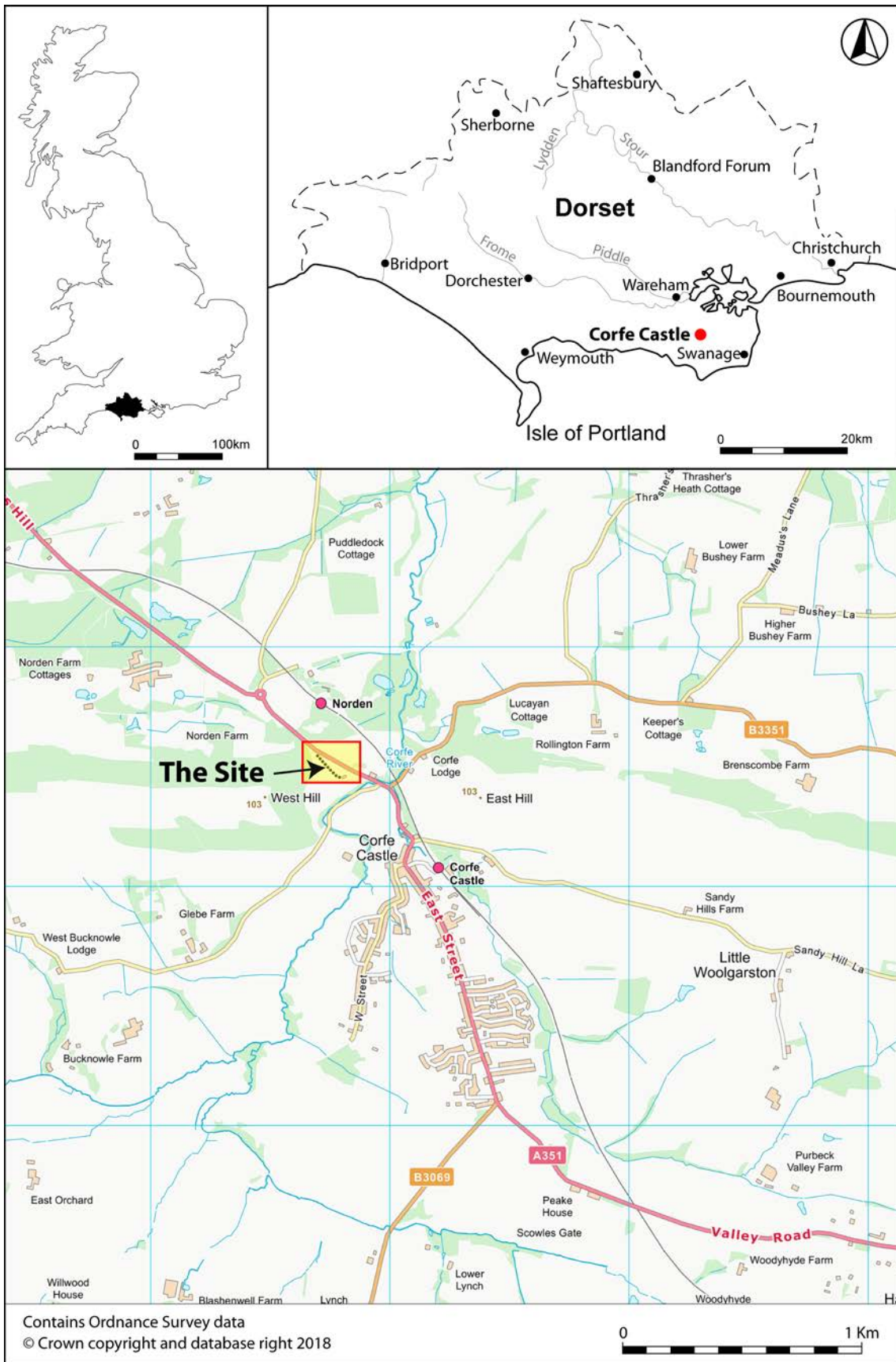


Figure 1: Site Location.

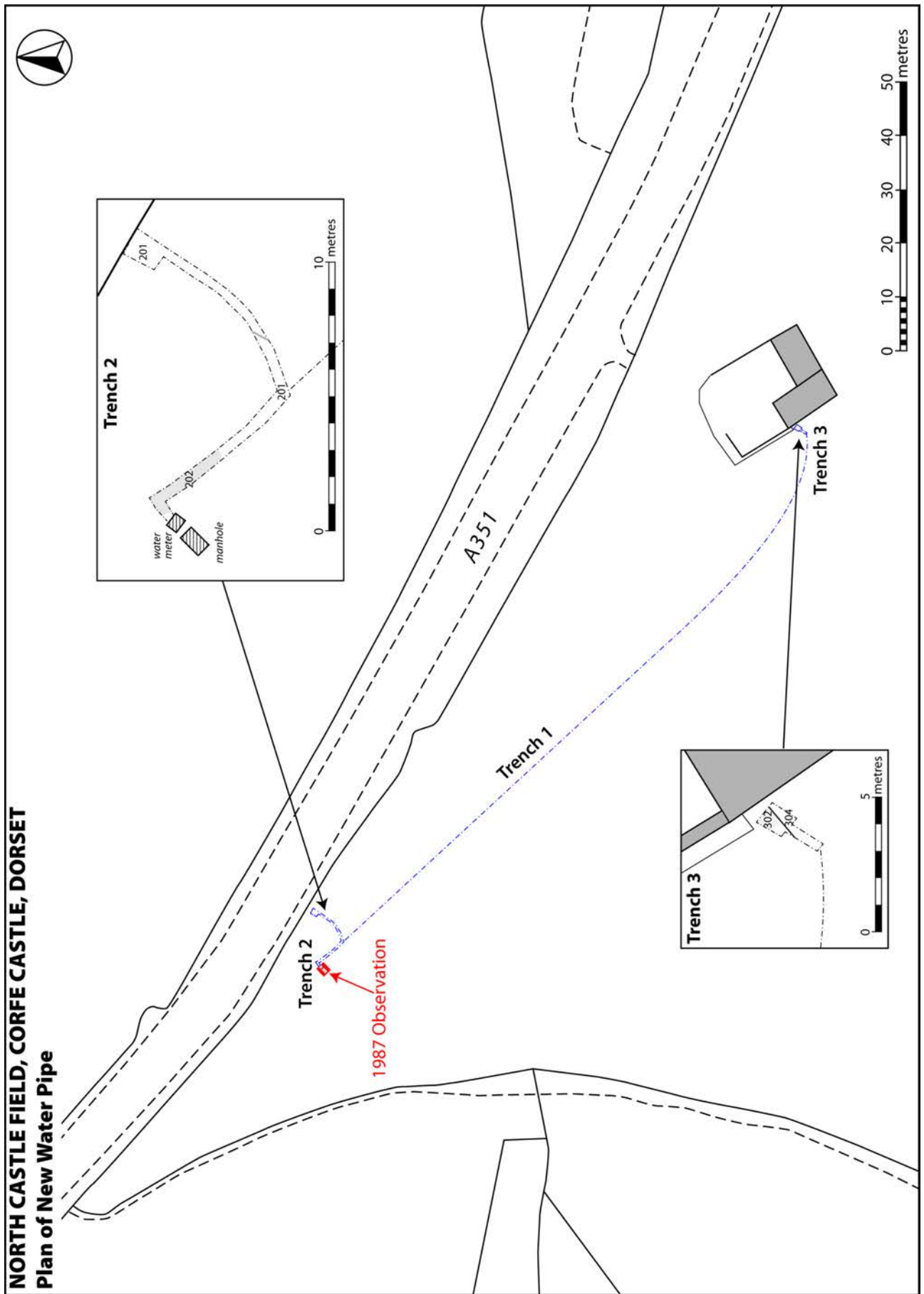


Figure 2: Plan of New Water Pipe.



Plate 1: View of west part of Trench 1 from Trench 2 looking ESE.



Plate 2: View of east end of Trench 1 looking ESE towards field barn.



Plate 3: General view of location of Trench 2, looking ESE.



Plate 4: Trench 2 during excavation of arm to trough, looking NE.



Plate 5: Trench 2 looking NW from end of Trench 1. 2m scale.



Plate 6: Detail of Context 202 in base of Trench 2. 1m scale.



Plate 7: General view of Trench 3 after excavation, looking north.



Plate 8: Trench 3 after excavation, showing stone rubble 301 over natural 302. 2m scale.

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Trench 1

Length: c. 130 m; approximate depth 0.3 m.

Context	Description and Interpretation	Depth (m) below ground level
100	Topsoil: Dark brown silty loam.	0.00 – 0.20m
101	Subsoil: Dark brown silty loam	0.20m+
102	Eroded Natural Chalk: Frequent small chalk lumps.	0.20m+

Trench 2

Length: 15.12 m; Width 0.35 m; maximum depth 0.65m.

Context	Description and Interpretation	Depth (m) below ground level
200	Topsoil: Dark brown silty loam.	0.00 – 0.20m
201	Subsoil: Dark brown silty loam with occasional to moderate small chalk lumps and flint. Contains medieval and Roman pottery.	0.20 – 0.53m
202	Occupation Layer: Very dark brown silty loam with moderate/frequent chalk lumps and flint. Contains Roman pottery.	0.52m+

Trench 3

Length: 2.5 m; Width 0.8 m; maximum depth 1.2m.

Context	Description and Interpretation	Depth (m) below ground level
300	Topsoil: Dark brown silty loam.	0.00 – 0.20m
301	Subsoil: Dark brown sandy loam with moderately frequent stone rubble.	0.20 – 0.55m
302	Natural: Dark yellow/orange sand.	0.55m+
303	Water pipe Trench: Vertical sided trench cutting 301 and 302. Not fully exposed. Filled with 304.	0.20 – 1.2m
304	Fill of Water Pipe Trench: Dark brown sandy loam with occasional stone.	0.20 – 1.2m