



**WATER MAIN REPAIR, POOR LOT, KINGSTON RUSSELL,
DORSET**
Archaeological Observations and Recording



Report No. 53253/3/1

July 2007

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DORSET**
**Archaeological Observations and Recording,
May 2007**

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Water Main Repair, Poor Lot, Kingston Russell, Dorset

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SUMMARY

Terrain Archaeology monitored the repair of a burst water main adjacent to the Poor Lot Barrow Group, Kingston Russell, Dorset (SY58789084) in May 2007. The works revealed a layer of colluvium 0.5 m deep, but no archaeological features or finds were exposed. No damage was caused to the Scheduled Monument (SM No. 22926).

INTRODUCTION

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Wessex Water to undertake archaeological monitoring during emergency burst Water Main Repair work adjacent to the Poor Lot barrow group, Kingston Russell, Dorset at SY58789084 (Figure 1).

The location of the burst water main was adjacent to the A35, just to the north of the Poor Lot Barrow group within the northwestern corner of a pasture field (Plate 1). It lies on the lower northern slopes of Black Down in a coombe running east-west, at a height of approximately 125 m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is mapped as Upper Chalk.

The burst water main was in the same field as the Scheduled Monument '*Twenty-one barrows forming part of a round barrow cemetery at Winterbourne Poor Lot*' (SM No. 22926). It lay to the northwest of the scheduled monument (Figure 2), but access to the site was through the scheduled area.

Following the locating of the burst water main, Wessex Water consulted English Heritage, given its location adjacent to the Scheduled Monument. Following advice from Phil McMahon, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage, Terrain Archaeology recorded the trench excavated to repair the leak and monitored the condition of the scheduled area during the works.

The fieldwork was carried out on the 17-18th May 2007 by Peter Bellamy.

Terrain Archaeology would like to acknowledge the following for their help and cooperation during this project: Phil McMahon (English Heritage), Kathryn McElwee (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water), Mark McMaster (Operations Engineer, Wessex Water), the Wessex Water team on the ground and Mr and Mrs Hart.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies in an area rich in prehistoric remains. It is close to a group of Bronze Age barrows, which form the core of a dispersed round barrow cemetery known as Winterbourne Poor Lot. The cemetery contains at least 44 barrows, the remainder of which cluster in a series of small groups to the south, east and northeast. The cemetery contains a wide range of different forms of barrows, including a number of disc and pond barrows.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the archaeological observations was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site and to monitor the site to minimise any disturbance to the scheduled monument.

The objective of the archaeological works was to record, to an appropriate professional standard, all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed by the groundworks.

METHODS

Given the very short lead-in time, there was no written brief for this work, but the scope of the works was discussed verbally with Kathryn McElwee (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water) and Phil McMahon (Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage). The work was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct and *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*.

An area approximately 2.6 m long by 1.8 m wide was stripped of topsoil, then excavated to a depth of about 1.8 m by a tracked excavator fitted with a grading bucket.

All deposits exposed in the trench were recorded using elements of Terrain Archaeology's recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records. The position of the trench was located by taped measurements to existing field boundaries. All depths recorded were below existing ground surface.

RESULTS

Ground Condition monitoring

The excavation was carried out by a small rubber-tracked excavator, which was tracked across the pasture field from Wellbottom Lodge to the site through the Poor Lot Scheduled Monument area, avoiding the visible earthwork remains of the barrows. The tracking of the machine left shallow track impressions but did not break the turf (Plate 7). The pump and other equipment were initially brought to the site by 4x4 around the top of the scheduled area. Subsequently all equipment was taken onto the site across the fence to the north, running along the side of the verge to the A35 road.

The spoil from the site was stored adjacent to the trench and at the completion of the works the trench was backfilled and compacted by the machine (Plates 8–9).

Monitoring of the works and subsequent ground inspection after completion of the repairs indicated there was no damage to the Scheduled Monument.

Stratigraphy

At the base of the trench the coombe rock natural was exposed (Plates 2–6). The upper surface of the coombe rock was affected by a number of solution features filled with reddish-brown clay (Plates 2–6). The natural was sealed by a layer of dark reddish-brown clay colluvium with moderate to frequent manganese-stained flint fragments, up to 0.5 m in thickness (Plates 5–6). This was sealed by a 0.3 m thick layer of dark reddish-grey-brown silty clay loam topsoil with occasional to moderate flint fragments.

The water main ran along the southern side of the trench in a one metre wide steep-sided trench, backfilled with mixed chalk and soil (Plates 3 & 6).

Finds

No finds were recovered from the works.

CONCLUSIONS

The works were carried out with care and consideration resulting in almost no impact on the Poor Lot Scheduled Monument No. 22926. No damage to the Scheduled Monument occurred.

The trench excavated for the repair of the burst water main revealed a colluvial sequence above coombe rock. No artefacts or other dating evidence was recovered to be able to date this sequence. No archaeological features were encountered and no finds were recovered.

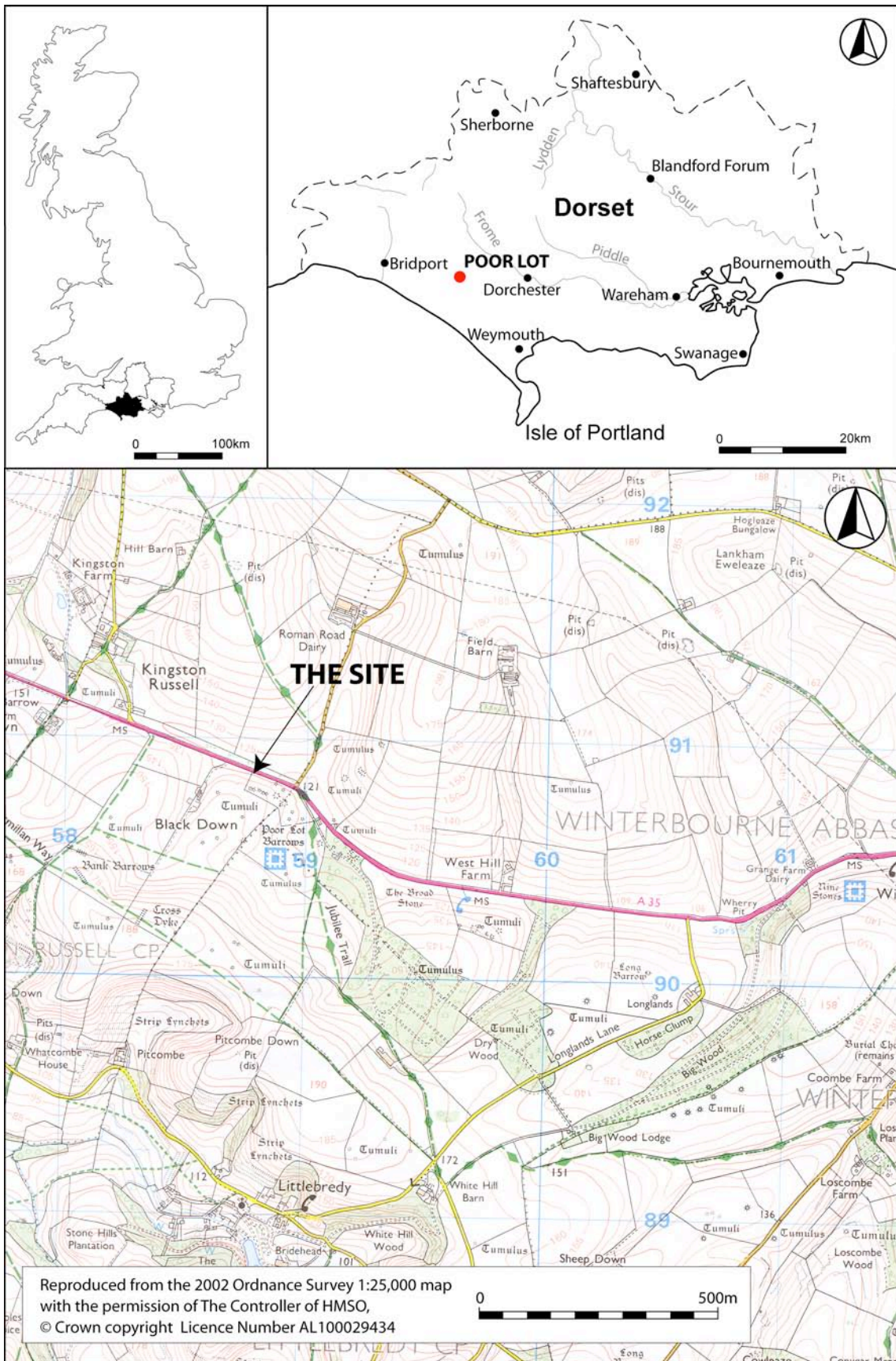


Figure 1: Location map

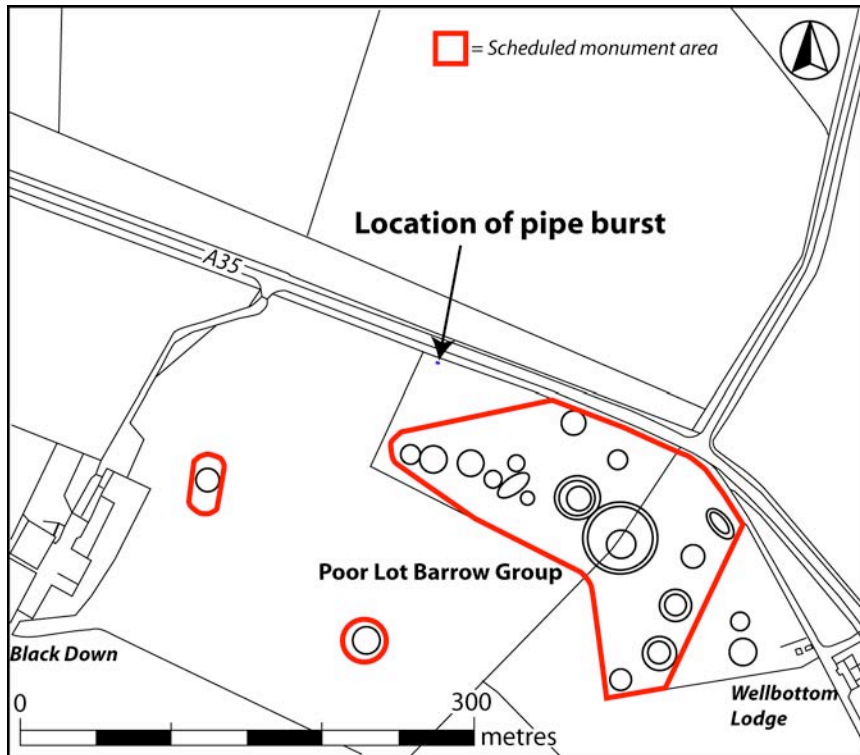


Figure 2: Site location



Plate 1: General view of area of pipe burst, viewed from southeast.



Plate 2: View of trench during excavation – from south.



Plate 3: View of trench during excavation, with pipe trench visible to left. View from east.



Plate 4: View of south-facing section of trench.



Plate 5: View of north-facing section of trench.



Plate 6: View of east-facing section of trench, showing pipe trench.



Plate 7: View westwards towards site with the nearest barrow to the site in middle distance and showing digger track marks in foreground.



Plate 8: View looking east towards the Scheduled Area after backfilling.



Plate 8: The site after backfilling, looking southwest.