Martin's Down Main Replacement, Long Bredy, Dorset
Archaeological Observations, July 2001

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during works to replace the water main between Long Bredy Hut Lane and Litton Cheney. No archaeological features were observed. Large quantities of worked flint of Bronze Age date were recovered from the topsoil strip, together with a very small quantity of earlier prehistoric flintwork. Small quantities of Roman and medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil near Long Barrow Farmhouse.

INTRODUCTION

This project was commissioned by Wessex Water. An archaeological watching brief was requested by West Dorset District Council, the local planning authority, as part of the planning condition for the replacement of an existing water main from Martin's Down to Litton Cheney. This request, following advice from Steven Wallis, Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council, is in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Archaeology and Planning).

The replacement water main runs for about 1.1 km from Long Bredy Hut Lane, just to the south of Dowerfield House (SY56839110), towards Long Barrow Farmhouse, then along the northern side of the road between Long Bredy and Litton Cheney and terminating just north of Baglake Farm (SY55699075). The pipeline was laid in an open cut trench approximately 0.5 m wide and 1.1 m deep within a soil strip area 10 m wide. The replacement main was laid side by side, approximately 0.7 m from the existing main.

The pipeline is situated on the south facing slopes of the Bride Valley, immediately to the south of the South Dorset Ridgeway. The route of the pipeline runs down the western side of a small coombe from a height of about 125 m above Ordnance Datum then curves round to run along the contours of the valley slope at a height of about 90 m above Ordnance Datum. The whole of the route is in agricultural land, either pasture or maize fields. The geology along the route is complex and a series of Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous strata were encountered. These are mapped (from west to east) as Corallian, then Passage Beds, Kimmeridge Clay, Gault, Upper Greensand, and Upper Chalk (Geological Survey of England and Wales Sheet 327 *Bridport* 1:50000 Drift 1974).

The fieldwork was carried out between 9th – 27th July 2001.

Terrain Archaeology would like to thank Andy Gale of Wessex Water for his help during this project and would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation of the contractors on site. The fieldwork was carried out by Paul Pearce. Pottery identification was by Jo Draper. This report was compiled by Peter Bellamy.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential, although no archaeological discoveries have been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the course of the pipeline. The

South Dorset Ridgeway lies just to the north with its dense concentration of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age monuments (RCHME 1970; Woodward 1991).

Roman remains have been found in Litton Cheney, including a pit (Bailey 1965) and human remains (Pinder & Wallis 1994), suggesting a Roman settlement here.

The route of the pipeline crosses an area, which has many surviving medieval strip lynchets (see Figure 1).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of the archaeological observations is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

The archaeological works aimed to observe and record all the in situ archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.

METHODOLOGY

The observations were carried out in compliance with the Institute of Field Archaeology's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994, rev. 1999).

The route of the pipeline crossed seven fields, which were numbered 1 to 7 from east to west (Figure 1). All finds and features were located by field.

The topsoil was stripped from the working area by a tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. Most of the stripping operation was observed archaeologically. Any areas not directly observed were subsequently walked over to check for any visible archaeological features or significant finds.

The digging of the pipeline trench itself was also by toothless-bucket machine. The full length of the trench was inspected for archaeological remains.

A surface collection was carried out on a field-by-field basis after topsoil stripping. The surface collected finds were bagged by field.

All other observations were recorded in a notebook.

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.

RESULTS

There were no significant archaeological features or deposits observed during the works.

All the fields were under grass except Fields 2 and 7, which had a maize crop. No significant earthworks were visible other than a pit adjacent to the eastern side of the pipeline at the northern end of Field 2. This does not seem to be of great antiquity. Details of the field boundaries are described below.

Field boundaries

The boundary between fields 1 and 2 is formed by a well-defined lynchet about 0.5 m high. A modern fence runs along the top of the lynchet.

A hedge-bank forms the boundary between fields 2 and 3. There was no clear evidence of any accompanying ditches, other than a shallow hollow filled with topsoil on the southern side of the hedge. There was no visible evidence of a former land surface beneath the bank in the section cut by the pipe trench.

The boundary between Fields 6 and 7 was also defined by a hedge. The section through the hedge was very disturbed by previous water-main works. There was a small ditch to the west but this appears to be a relatively recent feature. A large quantity of unworked limestone rubble was dumped close to this hedge.

All other field boundaries were defined by modern wire fences.

Other features

A linear anomaly, oriented roughly east/west, was observed in Field 3 about 84 m south of the boundary with Field 2. This feature comprised a roughly 1.2 m wide shallow strip of yellowish brown clay about 0.2 m deep. It is unclear whether this feature is geological or archaeological.

In Fields 3 – 7, a number of modern ceramic field drains were encountered. These were not plotted in detail.

Surface collection

The surface collection was carried out during topsoil stripping of the working area. There were no discrete concentrations of material noted, though the majority of the pottery came from Field 3. Fields 6 and 7 had higher densities of flaked stone. The total finds assemblage recovered is presented in Appendix 1. Only the pottery and flaked stone are discussed below, as all other classes of artefacts were of recent date and of little archaeological significance. Details of these can be found in archive.

Pottery. A total of 57 sherds of pottery dating from the Roman to the post-medieval period was recovered (Table 1). The Roman pottery assemblage was restricted to two abraded sherds from Field 3: one sherd of New Forest Colour Coated ware and a small fragment of Black Burnished coarseware. All the medieval pottery (four sherds) also came from Field 3. These included some early medieval flint-gritted cookpot sherds and one 15th century jug sherd. The post-medieval pottery included both finewares and earthenwares dating from the 17th century to the late 19th century. The finewares included two sherds of a Bellarmine jug and a late 17th/early 18th century manganese ware sherd (all from Field 1) and one mid 19th century cup. The earthenwares also date from the 17th to the 19th century and include not only Verwood but some East Holt vessels also.

Field	Roman		Medieval		Post-medieval		Total	
	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)
1							*0*	*0*
2					8	78	*8*	*78*
3	2	12	4	56	24	532	*30*	*600*
4					2	17	*2*	*17*
5					5	67	*5*	*67*
6					1	27	*1*	*27*
7					11	161	*11*	*161*
Total	*2*	*12*	*4*	*56*	*51*	*882*	*57*	*950*

Table 1: Pottery assemblage

Worked Flint. 695 pieces of flaked stone were retained from the surface collection (Table 2). The vast majority of pieces were of chalk flint with a small quantity of greensand chert also present. The pieces were generally in a rolled condition with some recent plough damage. Many pieces were patinated.

The assemblage comprises primarily waste with a large proportion of cores, preparation and trimming flakes. The overall character of the assemblage, which is dominated by large thick hard-hammer flakes with plain butts, suggests a predominantly Bronze Age date. The cores are mainly multi-directional flake cores with a small number of single platform cores. There is also a significant proportion of unclassified cores present, which appear to be the result of either the testing of raw materials or the expedient use of flint out in the field. The tool assemblage is dominated by scrapers but also includes a number of other rough tools and retouched flakes. Most of these would fit comfortably within a Bronze Age context.

There is also a very small component of the assemblage derived from a blade industry of earlier prehistoric date. In Field 3, there is a small backed blade and one other bladelet, most likely from a Mesolithic or Early Neolithic context. A number of other blades are also present but these are larger and thicker and perhaps would fit better within a Late Neolithic context. The fabricator from Field 3 is also likely to be of a Late Neolithic date.

The condition of the flint artefacts and the lack of discrete clusters suggests that this material represents a material which has been washed downslope from the Ridgeway, together with a background scatter of material derived from expedient use of flint in the fields during the Middle-Late Bronze Age.

Field	Raw mat.	Flakes	Broken flakes	Flake shatter	Blades	Broken blades	Blade shatter	Cores	Tools	Tool type
1	Flint	22	1	1	1			4	2	1 scraper; 1 retouched flake
2	Flint	22	4	5		2		5	3	3 scrapers
2	Chert	2					1		1	1 scraper
3	Flint	40	5	11	3			7	2	1 fabricator; 1 backed bladelet
3	Chert	4	1	2				1		
4	Flint	17	3	4	1			3	1	1 scraper
5	Flint	31	4	5	3			10	2	1 retouched flake; 1 retouched core
5	Chert							1		
6	Flint	222	30	45	9	1	3	20	20	12 scrapers; 1 notch; 6 retouched flakes; 1 rough core tool
7	Flint	59	19	11	3			4	12	7 scrapers; 5 retouched flakes.
Total		*419*	*67*	*84*	*20*	*3*	*4*	*55*	*43*	

Table 2: Flaked stone assemblage

CONCLUSIONS

The full length of both the surface stripping and the excavation of the pipe trench was observed. No significant archaeological features and deposits were observed along the course of the pipeline.

The surface collection produced significant quantities of flaked stone. This appears to be largely Bronze Age in date. Very little of this material seems to be *in situ* and most of it is likely

to have been washed downslope. A very small quantity of early prehistoric flint was found in Field 3. The significance of this is unclear.

Field 3 produced all the Roman and medieval pottery. The small number of Roman sherds and their abraded condition suggest that they are not necessarily derived from the immediate vicinity. The medieval pottery may relate to a settlement in the vicinity, perhaps in the location of the present Long Barrow Farmhouse at the junction between Long Bredy Hut Lane and the Litton Cheney to Long Bredy road.

PROJECT ARCHIVE

The archive (Terrain Archaeology Project No. TA5082) 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 microfiched archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record.

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

File 1:	1.1 Archive Index
	1.2 Correspondence
	1.3 Report 5082.1
	1.4 Field Notes
	1.5 Context Finds record
	1.6 Drawing register
	1.7 Drawings
	1.8 Photographic register
	1.9 Monochrome contact sheet
File 2:	2.1 Monochrome negatives
	2.2 Colour transparencies

REFERENCES

Bailey, C. J., 1965 'A Romano-British rubbish pit at Litton Cheney' *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* **87**, 91–2.

Bailey, C. J., 1973 'Some archaeological and historical notes on sites in the Bride Valley' *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* **95**, 100–1.

Pinder, C. and Wallis, S., 1994 'Human remains from Manor Farm Cottages, Litton Cheney' *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* **116**, 131.

RCHME 1970 = Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset* **2** South-east.

Woodward, P. J., 1991 *The South Dorset Ridgeway: Survey and Excavations 1977–84* Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Monograph No. 8.

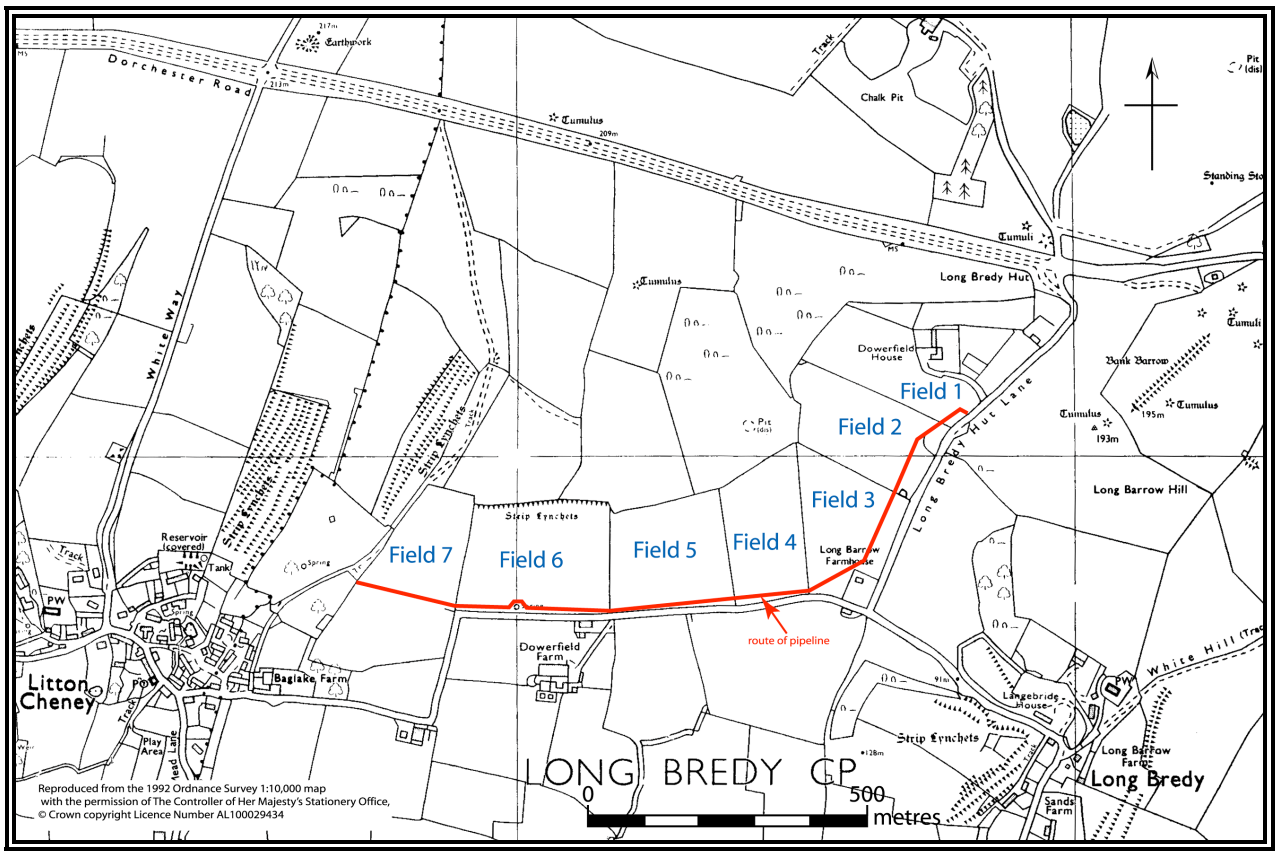

Figure 1: Location Map

Appendix 1: Surface Collection Finds Assemblage

Field		Roman pottery		Medieval pottery		Post-medieval pottery		Clay tobacco pipe		Worked flint and chert		Burnt flint	Iron	Animal Bone		Shell	
		No.	Wt (g)	No.	Wt (g)	No.	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No.	Wt (g)	Wt (g)	No.	No.	Wt (g)	No.	Wt (g)
1										31	1163	85					
2						8	78			45	3060		1			2	29
3		2	12	4	56	24	532			76	3245	445	1	1	27		
4						2	17			29	1417	486	1				
5						5	67			56	3933	70	4				
6						1	27			350	11698	600					
7						11	161	1	3	108	2490	113		2	42		