

# **A303 STONEHENGE**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS**

### **Written Scheme of Investigation for Field Evaluation**

#### **Area P**

Prepared for

**Mott MacDonald  
Capital House  
48-52 Andover Road  
WINCHESTER  
SO23 7BH**

On behalf of

**Highways Agency  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
BRISTOL  
BS1 6HA**

By

**Wessex Archaeology  
Portway House  
Old Sarum Park  
SALISBURY  
SP4 6EB**

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**Figures 1 and 2**      Proposed trench layout Area P

# A303 STONEHENGE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

### Written Scheme of Investigation for Field Evaluation

#### Areas P

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of the report

- 1.1.1. The context, background and general approach to the proposed field evaluation is set out in a separate document (Wessex Archaeology 2001, *A303 Stonehenge – Archaeological Surveys: Field Evaluation Strategy*), which should be read in conjunction with this written scheme of investigation (WSI).
- 1.1.2. This WSI relates to that part of Area P which would be impacted on by the construction of the Illustrative Design. The document appraises the known archaeological resource and reviews the Monument Interest Value scores allocated by previous studies. Proposals for archaeological evaluation are presented for comment by the archaeological monitors (English Heritage, the National Trust and the County Archaeologist of Wiltshire County Council) and approval by the Highways Agency.

### 1.2 Site description

- 1.1.3. Area P lies within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, to the south of the A303 and east of Winterbourne Stoke Longbarrow Roundabout (**Figure 1**). It runs from SU 100414 to SU 112415 and falls within the parish of Wilsford cum Lake. The junction between the A303 and A360, to the west, and the land immediately around it is described in a separate document (Areas K, L, M, N, O).
- 1.1.4. The part of Area P affected by the Illustrative Design comprises the northern part of three arable fields (scheme fields 73, 79 and 80). The ground here undulates where it crosses the head of a shallow dry valley between the northern parts of Wilsford Down and Normanton Down, falling from 108.46m to 97.00m aOD, before rising gently to c. 103m aOD towards Stonehenge Down.
- 1.1.5. The northern part of Area P contains two Scheduled Monuments (a round barrow and a prehistoric shaft: below), while the boundary with Area O comprises a linear bank and ditch earthwork which is also a Scheduled Monument (below).

- 1.1.6. A Listed milestone stands on the southern verge of the A303, 0.7km east of the Longbarrow Roundabout.
- 1.1.7. The underlying geology comprises Middle Chalk. All the fields in Area P are currently under arable cultivation.

## **2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**

### **2.1. Introduction**

- 2.1.1. This section summarises the existing knowledge of the archaeological resource in the northern part of Area P. This is based on a number of sources, principally the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Stonehenge WHS GIS database, together with the results of previous surveys. This information has been collated and summarised in the *A303 Stonehenge Archaeological Appraisal* (Wessex Archaeology 2001), which, together with the results of additional non-intrusive surveys commissioned under Stage 2 of the scheme, forms the basis of this section of the WSI.

### **2.2. Archaeological appraisal**

- 2.2.1. The *A303 Stonehenge Archaeological Appraisal* (Wessex Archaeology 2001) has identified five known sites within the northern part of Area P:

- 277: undated field systems revealed by aerial photographs (APs)
- 337: probably modern linear ditch revealed by APs
- 356-8: prehistoric shaft: The Wilsford Shaft. **SM 10478**
- 360; linear features, probably natural
- 509: round barrow; **SM 10477**

- 2.2.2. Fieldwalking for the Stonehenge Environs Project collected significant quantities of struck flint and prehistoric pottery from the northern end of Field 73 (Richards 1990, Area 59). This coincides with the traces of the field system (277) and both probably relate to the later Bronze Age settlement excavated at Longbarrow Crossroads (Areas M and O). However, the concentration of surface finds does not extend into the area fieldwalked to the north of the A303 (Area N: Wessex Archaeology 1992, ref. 34852) nor to the east.

- 2.2.3. Geophysical survey undertaken for English Heritage on both sides of the A303 (Darvill 1991) did not locate any significant features.

- 2.2.4. Geophysical survey, undertaken in 2001 (full report forthcoming), has detected some linear anomalies which may confirm traces of the field system (277), and other linear anomalies (360). It has also confirmed the position of the scheduled round barrow (509).

- 2.2.5. With the exception of the field system and its associated artefact scatters, the evidence for archaeological remains within this area is scant. The area contains one excavated Bronze Age round barrow (509), an outlier from the

Normanton Down group. The presence of the Wilsford Shaft, probably a Bronze Age well, may suggest that at that time the area was used for pasture.

2.2.6. Documentary evidence (Bond 1991) suggests that during the Middle Ages the area formed downland grazed by the manors of Normanton and Wilsford. Although the modern field boundaries reflect the alignment of the boundary between these manors, its line (which is followed by the eastern limit of the Winterbourne Stoke Clump to the north of the A303) is now lost. The boundary between Areas P and R, which forms the parish boundary between Wilsford and Amesbury, also follows the same alignment. The boundary between Areas P and O follows a prehistoric earthwork (306, SM 10489) which also marks the boundary between Wilsford and Berwick St James.

2.2.7. Although the road existed earlier, the A303 was formalised as a turnpike road in 1760/1. The Listed milestone beside the A303 at SU 107415 (No 5/201) is thought to be of this period.

### 2.3. Initial evaluation of the cultural heritage resource

2.3.1. In 1995 (Blore et al 1995), a Monument Interest Value (MIV) was calculated for the sites within the northern part of Area P (amongst others):

Site	Type	Survival	Potential	GV (clust.)	GV (Assoc)	Diversity	SAM	Total MIV
277	fields	1	2	2	3	2	X	22
337	linear	0	0	0	0	0	X	0
356-8	shaft	1	1	1	1	1	Y	45
360	linear	1	2	1	2	1	X	11
509	barrow	1	1	1	1	1	Y	45

2.3.2. These scores reflect the current knowledge and perceived importance of the sites. Thus, the barrow and the shaft are considered to be of Major Importance because of their situation within the WHS, despite the fact they have been extensively excavated. The Moderate Importance attached to the field system is in recognition of its association with a known settlement. Although the information available prior to the A303 Stonehenge Improvement proposals has been enhanced, there is currently no need to adjust the scoring.

## 3. POTENTIAL IMPACT

### 3.1. Design constraints

3.1.1. In this part of the Preferred Route the Illustrative Design has to accommodate the following design constraints:

- Construction of dual carriageway on-line and largely to the south of the existing trunk road;
- Minimal divergence from the existing carriageway within the WHS;

- Alignment with the western tunnel portal and the junction at Longbarrow Roundabout; and
- Avoidance of Scheduled Monuments

### **3.2. Illustrative design**

- 3.2.1. The Illustrative Design presents a diversion from the existing A303 carriageway to the south. The existing at grade roundabout to the west is replaced with a grade-separated junction, with the main carriageway of the A303 passing beneath the A360 in a cutting extending into Area P, returning to grade at about ch. 6900. The cutting accommodates a slip road on the southern edge to allow westbound traffic to join the A360. In the east of Area P, the illustrative design for the cut and cover tunnel option shows the road passing into shallow cutting from ch. 7300. For the shallow bored tunnel option, the road will diverge from the existing carriageway and enter cutting from about ch. 7250, with landtake extending up to the scheduled round barrow (site no. 509).
- 3.2.2. No additional landtake for landscaping is proposed in Area P.
- 3.2.3. It is intended that the design will avoid all Scheduled Monuments. Impact will therefore be restricted to buried features such as elements of field systems (277) and linear cropmark features (360), the position of a Listed milestone and any other as yet undiscovered remains.
- 3.2.4. The area affected by the Illustrative Design (maximum landtake for shallow bored tunnel option) is 4.66 ha.

## **4. EVALUATION PROPOSALS**

### **4.1. Trenching strategy**

- 4.1.1. Previous surveys may indicate the presence of buried archaeological remains (*Strategy*, 3.5.1.c). However, the pattern of detected anomalies is not wholly coherent and it is probable that many of these reflect natural features. Should this be the case, it is still desirable to demonstrate an absence of buried archaeological remains (*Strategy*, 3.5.1.a), not least because of the potential for unmarked graves in proximity to funerary monuments.
- 4.1.2. Sufficient field evaluation should be undertaken to determine the nature of the recorded anomalies, to gauge the survival of the archaeological resource across Area P, and to confirm the apparent absence of archaeological remains within the area of the Illustrative Design.
- 4.1.3. In order to address these requirements, ten trial trenches, each 50m x 1.8m, together with six trenches 10 x 10m and one trench 20m x 5m, will be excavated by machine in Area P at the locations shown on **Figures 1 and 2**. This amounts to 1,600 sq. m, representing a sample of some 3.4% of the affected area.

## 4.2. Aims and objectives

4.2.1. The general aims and objectives of the proposed evaluation are as set out in the *Field Evaluation Strategy*. Site specific objectives will be (within the limits of the specified techniques and trench disposition):

- To confirm the nature of the geophysical anomalies, where targeted;
- To confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains in areas that appear blank;
- To identify and date if possible elements of the field systems (Site 277);
- To locate and assess the preservation of possible linear features (Site 360); and
- To assess the degree of preservation of remains across the whole road corridor.

4.2.2. Trench specific objectives will be:

Trench 1	To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark features intersected by the trench.
Trench 2	To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark features intersected by the trench. To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.
Trench 3	To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark features intersected by the trench.
Trench 4	To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark features intersected by the trench. To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the short linear anomaly.
Trenches 5 & 6	To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.
Trench 7	To investigate the nature of any activity in the apparently blank area.
Trenches 8-14	To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the linear and pit-type anomalies.
Trench 15	To investigate the survival of any features related to the scheduled round barrow to the south.
Trenches 16-17	To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.

## **5. METHODS**

### **5.1. Trial trenching**

- 5.1.1. Mechanical excavation, hand excavation, recording, treatment of finds and environmental samples, post-fieldwork and preparation of archive will be undertaken in accordance with the general methodology set out in the *Field Evaluation Strategy*.
- 5.1.2. The limits of analysis and reporting will be as stated in the *Strategy*.
- 5.1.3. It is understood that the land is to be returned to arable cultivation following completion of the evaluation. Trenches will be backfilled with excavated material but not re-seeded, re-turfed or otherwise reinstated.

### **5.2. Timing and monitoring**

- 5.2.1. Evaluation is proposed to commence on 3 December 2001.
- 5.2.2. It is anticipated that a team of up to six archaeologists will be required for a period of up to two weeks in the field (excluding backfilling of trenches). A programme for the fieldwork, monitoring, recording and reporting will be agreed with the client and the monitors.

## **6. DISSEMINATION**

### **6.1. Client report**

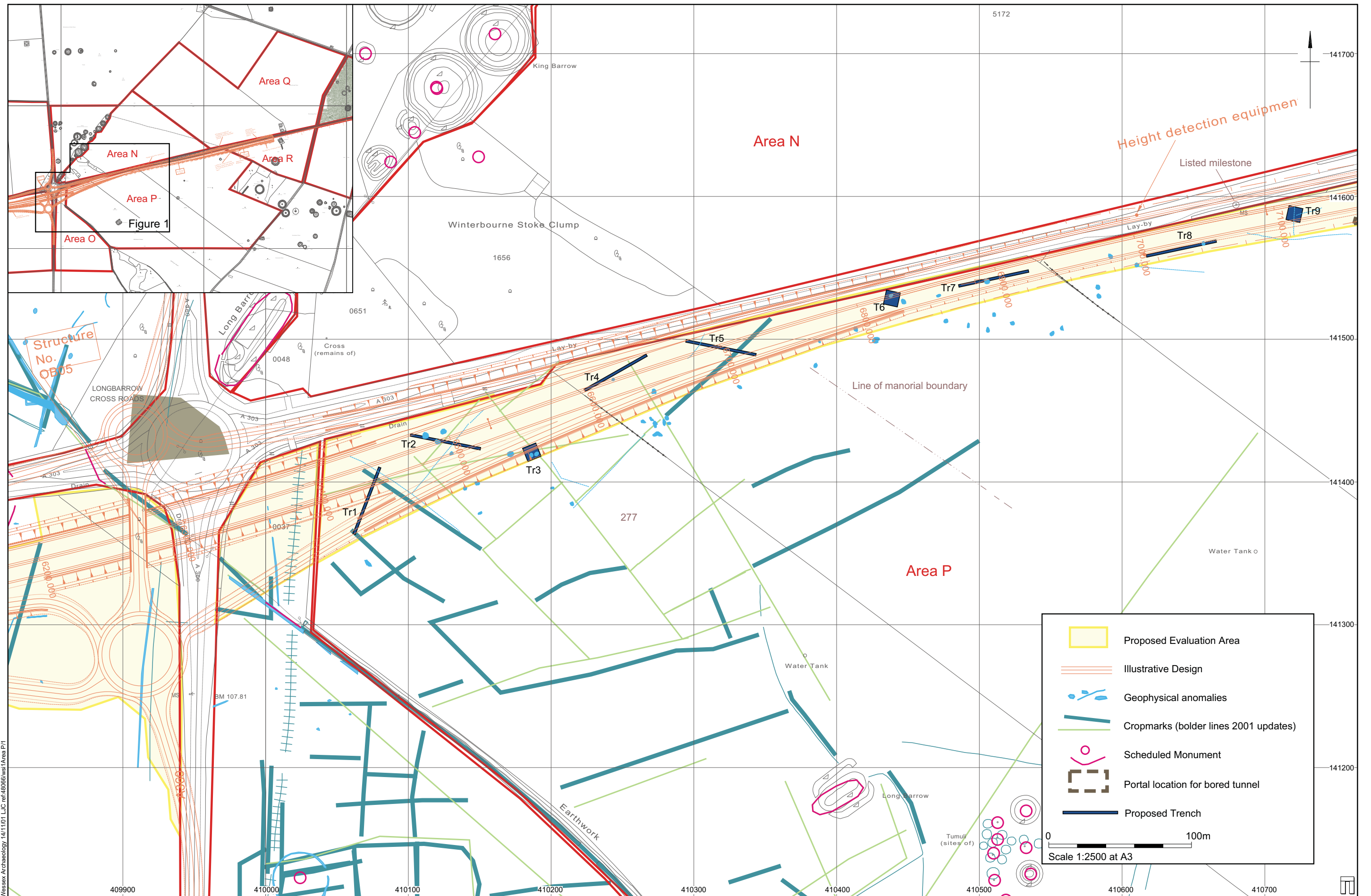
- 6.1.1. A client report will be prepared as described in the *Strategy*. The client report will be circulated to the client and monitors as a draft for approval. The draft is likely to be available by the end of January 2002. The final agreed report will form a supporting document to the Environmental Statement.

## **7. REFERENCES**

Wessex Archaeology, 1993 A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down, Wiltshire – Alternative Routes: Field Evaluations (March-April 1993) Statement of Results Unpublished client report, ref. 35734 Report No. W580 – Rev. 1: May 1993.

Wessex Archaeology, 2001 A303 Stonehenge – Archaeological Surveys: *Field Evaluation Strategy* Unpublished client report ref. 48066.10





Proposed trench layout Area P (west)

Figure 1

Wessex Archaeology 14/11/01\_LIC ref:48066 West Area P/1

