



INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title A303 Stonehenge	Details Archaeological Survey
Road Number A303	Date 21 September 2001
Contractor Wessex Archaeology	
County Wiltshire	
OS Reference SU04	
Single sided <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Double sided A3 0 Colour 3	

A303 Stonehenge Archaeological Surveys

Written Scheme of Investigation for Field Evaluation
Areas A, B, C and D

Wessex Archaeology

Ref. 48066.12

21 September 2001

A303 STONEHENGE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS

Written Scheme of Investigation for Field Evaluation

**Areas A, B, C and D
(Land West of Winterbourne Stoke - excluding Area C1)**

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Areas A, B, C and D

(Land West of Winterbourne Stoke - excluding Area C1)

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 those parts of Areas A, B, C and D that would be impacted on by the construction of the Illustrative Design. Part of Area C, described as Area C1, is the subject of a separate Written Scheme for Investigation (WSI). 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

1.2.1. The part of Area A affected by the Illustrative Design comprises parts of two fields (scheme field nos. 10 and 13), which lie immediately to the north of the A303, west of Winterbourne Stoke and south of Parsonage Down. The scheme starts from, and progresses eastward from NGR SU 049406 (Figure 1). Area A lies on the crest and north-facing slopes of an east-west orientated ridge at between 140m and 125m aOD (above Ordnance Datum).

1.2.2. Area B comprises parts of two fields (scheme field nos. 8 and 14), on the south side of the A303 at NGR SU 055404, immediately to the south of Area A. Area B lies on the crest and south-facing slopes of the same east-west orientated ridge at between 140m and 120m aOD.

1.2.3. Area C comprises a single field (scheme field no. 17), which lies immediately to the north of the A303, south of Parsonage Down and west of Scotland Lodge at NGR SU 065409 (Figure 1). The Area lies on the eastern end of a low spur at some 125m aOD (above Ordnance Datum), the land

dropping into dry valleys to the north (Parsonage Down) and south, and to the east into the valley of the River Till. The underlying geology comprises Middle Chalk. The central part of Area C (referred to as Area C1) is covered by a separate WSI.

- 1.2.4. The part of Area D affected by the Illustrative Design comprises the extreme north-western corner of one field (scheme field no. 18), on the south side of the A303, west of Winterbourne Stoke at NGR SU 062406. The field is situated on a south-east facing slope with the affected part at some 125m aOD.
- 1.2.5. The Areas contain no Scheduled Monuments and all lie outside the World Heritage Site (WHS). A Listed milestone (no. 4/230) lies in the northern verge of the A303 at SU 058 407 (Area A).
- 1.2.6. The underlying geology in all four Areas comprises Middle Chalk. The fields are all currently under arable cultivation and are planted with cereal crops, which it is understood will be harvested during September 2001.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

2.1. Introduction

- 2.1.1. This section summarises the existing knowledge of the archaeological resource in Areas A, B, C and D. 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 seven known sites within Areas A-D:
 - Site 8, two pits imprecisely located, one containing a flexed human burial, in Area C.
 - Site 10, part of an undated field system, extends across Areas A and C to the north and west across Parsonage Down, and to the south of the A303 into Area C.
 - Site 22 comprises similar linear features visible on aerial photographs (APs) in Area D (to the south of the area impacted by the Illustrative Design).
 - Site 23, an undated square feature in Area C, comprising at least three contiguous enclosures visible on APs.
 - Site 24, a possible ovoid enclosure visible on APs in Area D.

- Site 25, a multi-period complex of oval and rectilinear enclosures, pits and hollows revealed by aerial photography within Area C
 - Site 29, a ring ditch visible on APs close to the eastern edge of Area C. (Revised plotting of APs by English Heritage in 2001 suggests the presence of 2 ring-ditches)
- 2.2.2. The earliest feature is likely to be the ring ditch, Site 29. Geophysical survey indicates an interrupted ditch, suggesting a Late Neolithic ceremonial site or an Early Bronze Age burial site.
- 2.2.3. The enclosure complex (Site 25) is of likely multi-period date, with fieldwalking suggesting both Bronze Age and Iron Age/Romano-British elements. Evaluation of the enclosure complex is the subject of a separate WSI (Area C1).
- 2.2.4. The pits with burial (Site 8) are characteristic of the Early Iron Age and are unlikely to be isolated, although they are of uncertain location.
- 2.2.5. The undated field system (Site 10) is part of a complex of enclosed fields and larger, more open areas that surround Yarnbury Camp, the dominant monument in the local landscape. Components of this may pre-date the Iron age hillfort itself, and AP evidence suggests the complex also contains strip-like elements possibly indicating a late (Medieval) date. Site 22 is also probably part of this system.
- 2.2.6. The curved enclosure in Area D (Site 24) is also undated but may be earlier than the field system (i.e. prehistoric).
- 2.2.7. The small enclosures in Area C (Site 23) are undated and of unknown function.
- 2.2.8. Geophysical survey has been conducted throughout the area of the Illustrative Design in Areas A, B, C and D, and beyond (by GSB in 2000/1). Although the full report of the survey is still awaited, the plot of the results suggests a rash of incoherent anomalies across the area. Some of these may reflect features plotted from APs. Many of the features are likely to result from natural causes whilst others may be archaeological in nature. However, two particular concentrations of linear anomalies forming possible enclosures, accompanied by pit-type anomalies suggestive of settlement activity, are present in Area B. A further, less complex such concentration is present in Area C, which is otherwise mostly characterised by larger pit-type anomalies.
- 2.2.9. Fieldwalking was undertaken in 2000 (report in prep.: Wessex Archaeology) in Areas A, B and D; Area C was under crop at the time and not available for fieldwalking. No significant concentrations of artefacts were noted (cf. Area C1).
- 2.2.10. The re-examination of AP's (by EH in 2000/1) confirmed elements of the suggested rectilinear enclosure (Site 23) and considerable detail of the

complex of enclosure (Site 25) in Area C, but did not otherwise identify additional sites.

2.3. Initial evaluation of cultural heritage resource

2.3.1. In 1995 (Blore et al 1995), a Monument Interest Value (MIV) was calculated for the sites within Areas A, B, C and D. Sites 25 (and part of Site 10) are referred to in the WSI for Area C1 but the remaining MIVs were as :

Site	Type	Survival	Potential	GV (cluster)	GV (assoc.)	Diversity	SAMM /MPP	Total
8	Pits	1	2	1	1	1	X	8
22	Fields	1	2	1	2	1	X	11
23	Enclosure	1	2	1	2	1	X	11
24	Enclosure	1	2	1	2	1	X	11
29	Ringditch	1	2	1	1	1	X	8

2.3.2. These scores suggest that all the sites are of Minor Importance. Nonetheless, should any of the sites prove to be of the same age as the other, more substantial monuments in the vicinity, they may have an enhanced Group Value. For example, should the field system and other enclosure prove to be later prehistoric date, they would complement the evidence for activity at the time from Yarnbury to the west, and Site 25 in Area C.1

2.3.3. The scoring for the ring ditch (Site 29) could be reassessed in the light of new evidence. However, it lies outside the Illustrative Design and it is not proposed to evaluate it at this time.

2.3.4. On the basis of the A303 surveys, there is currently no need to adjust the scores for these sites.

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:

- Divergence from the existing carriageway;
- A curve radius suitable for high speed traffic;
- A junction to allow western access to Winterbourne Stoke village and neighbouring properties (Option 3);
- Minimisation of atmospheric pollution on a designated National Nature Reserve and SSSI (Parsonage Down);

- The need to avoid severance of a smallholding (Scotland Lodge); and
- The establishment of suitable gradients to meet the vertical alignment of the crossing of the River Till.

3.2. Illustrative design

- 3.2.1. The Illustrative Design presents a diversion from the existing A303 carriageway, initially to the south (in Area B) before swinging to the north (through Area C), avoiding the paddock west of Scotland Lodge. The latter part follows the 'southern option' for the northerly by-pass of Winterbourne Stoke.
- 3.2.2. The Illustrative Design also presents Option 3 for the western access to Winterbourne Stoke Village. Much of the junction falls within Area B, but the loop of the eastbound exit from the A303 lies within Area A. A new access road from Winterbourne Stoke crosses the extreme north-western corner of Area D. Soft landscaping and associated environmental improvements extend further into Areas A, B and C.
- 3.2.3. The road will be generally at grade, except for a short stretch of low embankment between ch. 1700 - 2200 to accommodate the Winterbourne Stoke western access (below) and where it is in cutting between ch. 2500 - 3100 to provide a suitable gradient from the River Till crossing. The eastbound slip road of the Winterbourne Stoke Western Access is in cutting at ch. 350-500, otherwise the proposed junction is also generally at grade.
- 3.2.4. Additional geophysical survey and fieldwalking will be required in Areas A1, B1 and C2 to ensure that the full extent of the proposed junction and associated soft landscaping is covered. These surveys will await more detailed design in respect of these areas, in order to ensure effective targeting of resources and the areas are therefore excluded from further consideration in this WSI.
- 3.2.5. The areas affected by the Illustrative Design (including provisional junction and landscaping layouts) are as follows:

Area A	1.14 ha
Area A1	1.92 ha
Area B	6.15 ha
Area B1	1.82 ha
Area C	5.68 ha
Area C2	0.16 ha
<u>Area D</u>	<u>0.22 ha</u>
Total Area	17.09 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 coherent and it is probable that many 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).
- 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 Areas A, B, C and D, and to confirm the apparent absence of archaeological remains within the area of the Illustrative Design.
- 4.1.3. Trial trenching is not presently proposed in Areas A1, B1 and C2, in the absence of previous geophysical survey.
- 4.1.4. In order to address these requirements, a total of 52 trial trenches will be excavated by machine, as follows:

Area	Proposed trenches			Totals
	50m x 1.8m	25m x 1.8m	10 x 10m	
A	6	1	2	9
B	20	-	3	23
C	15	-	5	20
TOTALS	41	1	10	52

- 4.1.5. This amounts to 4,535 sq. m, representing a sample of some 3.4% of the total area proposed for trial trenching (13.19 ha).
- 4.1.6. The trenches will be excavated at the locations shown on **Figures 1-3**.
- ### 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 nature of the cropmark features, 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 10);
 - To identify if possible any Iron Age pits or burials which might relate to Site 8.
 - To identify and date if possible the square feature (Site 23) where it is affected by the illustrative design.

Trench 30 To investigate the nature of any activity in the apparently blank area.

Area B1 *To be confirmed following geophysical survey*

Area C

Trenches 31-33 To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.

Trench 34 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies (possibly related to Site 8).

Trench 35 To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the linear anomalies.

Trenches 36-37 To investigate the level, nature and date of the possible enclosures represented by the linear anomalies.

Trench 38 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the annular and pit-type anomalies.

Trenches 39-40 To investigate the level, nature and date of the possible enclosures represented by the linear anomalies (possibly related to Site 23).

Trench 41 To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.

Trenches 42-43 To investigate the level, nature and date of the possible enclosures represented by the linear and annular anomalies (possibly related to Site 23).

Trench 44 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark features (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

Trench 45 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.

Trench 46 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

Trench 47 To investigate the nature of any activity in the apparently blank area.

Trench 48 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the pit-type anomalies.

Trenches 49-50 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature and possible lynchet (part of Site 10) intersected by the trench.

To investigate the level, nature and date of activity represented by the linear anomalies.

Trench 51 To investigate the character, function and date of the cropmark feature (possibly related to Site 29) intersected by the trench.

Area C2 *To be confirmed following geophysical survey*

Area D

Trench 52 To investigate the nature of any activity in the apparently blank area.

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 take place following the harvest of the present crop. It is understood that this will be during September 2001.

5.2.2. It is anticipated that a team of up to eight archaeologists will be required for a period of up to three weeks in the field (excluding backfilling of trenches). Two weeks notice of work commencing will be given and a programme for the fieldwork, monitoring, recording and reporting will be agreed with the client and the monitors before fieldwork commences.

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 final agreed report will form a supporting document to the Environmental Statement.

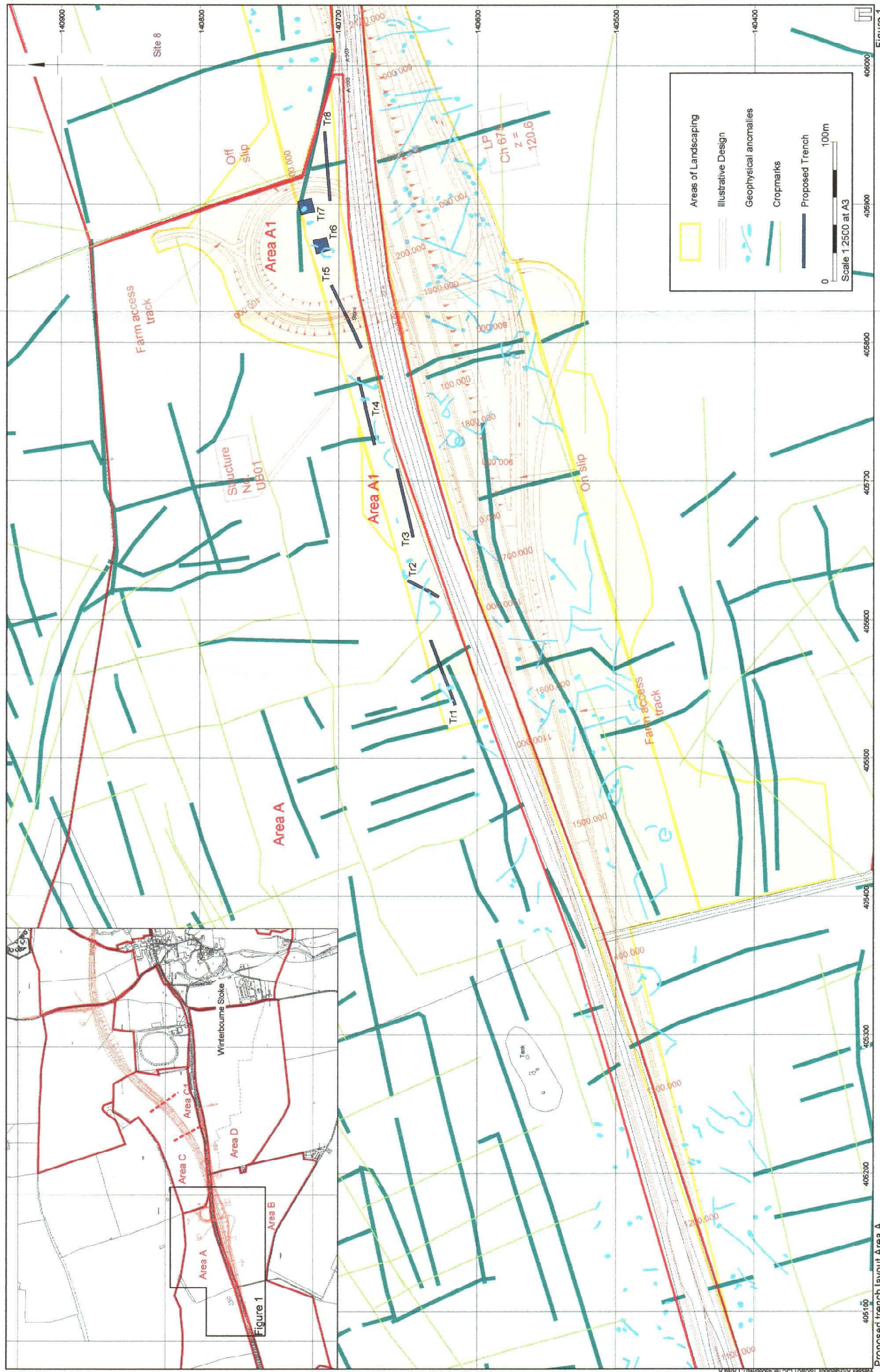


Figure 1
Proposed trench layout Area A

ORIGINAL IN COLOUR

ORIGINAL AT A3

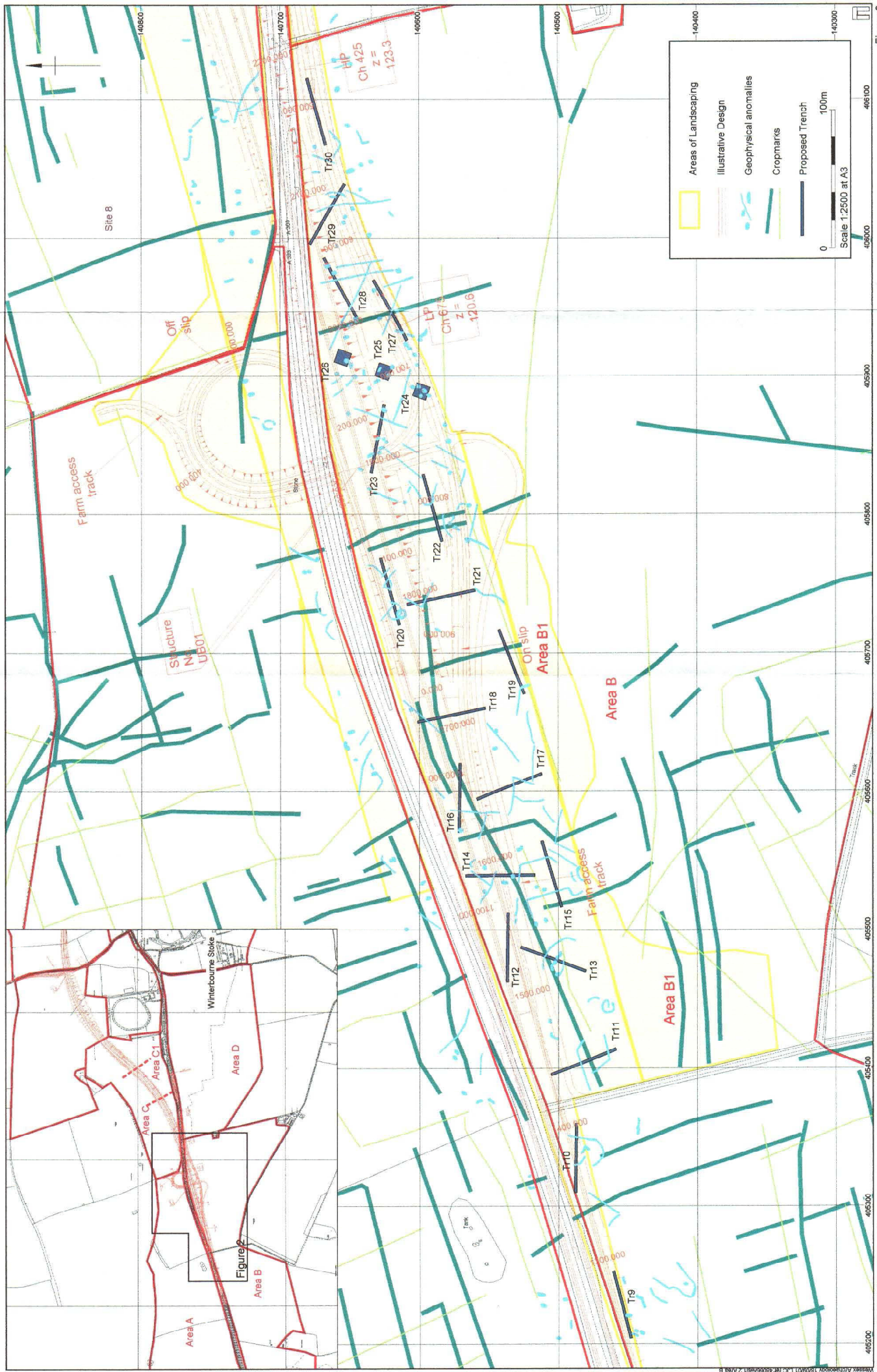


Figure 2
Proposed trench layout Area B

ORIGINAL AT A3

ORIGINAL IN COLOUR

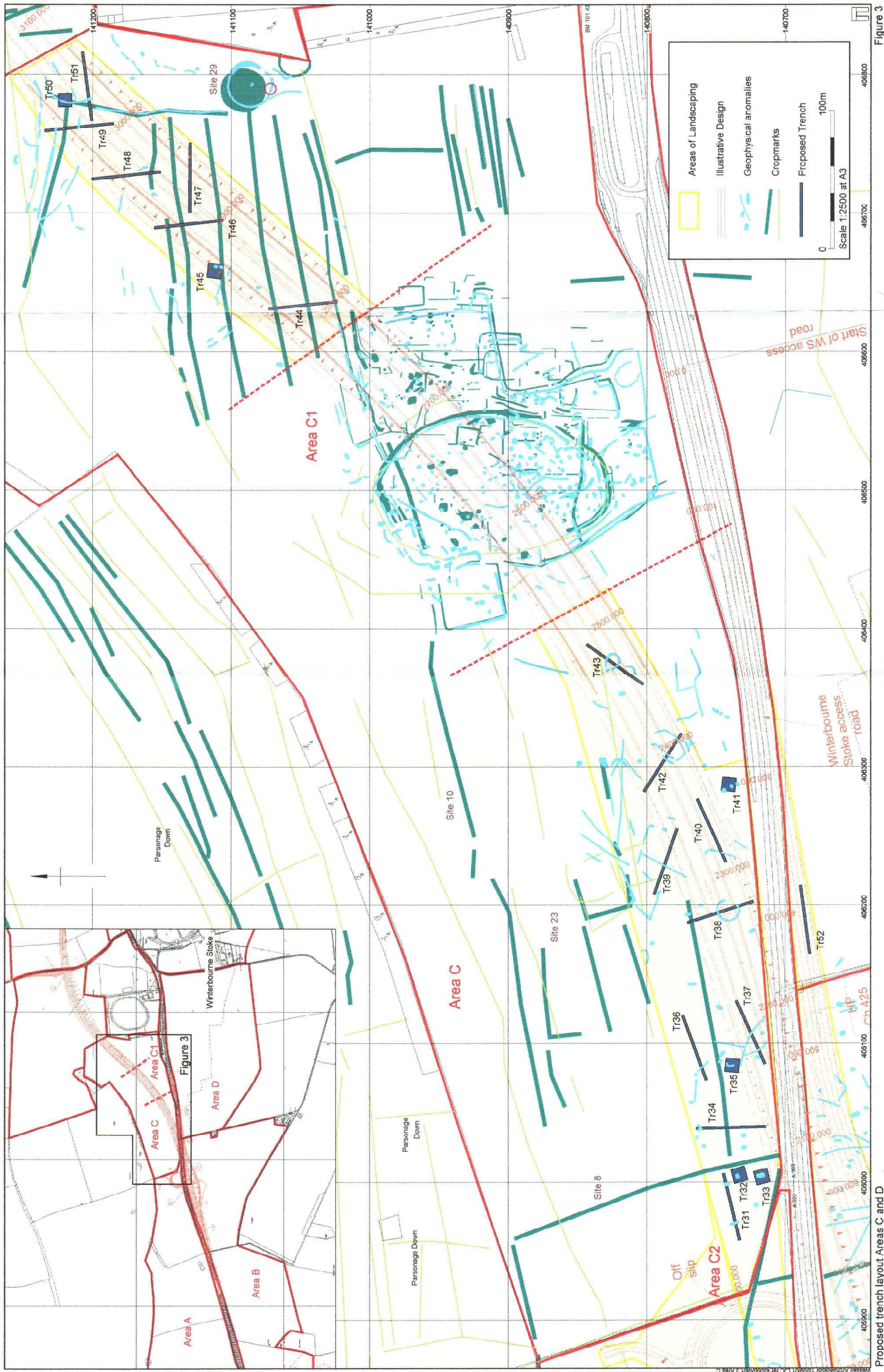


Figure 3

ORIGINAL IN COLOUR

ORIGINAL AT A3

Proposed trench layout Areas C and D