

M27 (Junction 3 to 4 Climbing Lanes), Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





Wessex Archaeology

**M27 (Junctions 3 to 4 Climbing Lanes)
Hampshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Prepared for:

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M27 (Junctions 3 to 4 Climbing Lanes) Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

An archaeological Watching Brief was maintained by Wessex Archaeology during ground works associated with widening the M27 in Hampshire between Junctions 3 and 4 at NGR 440165 118030.

A number of potential archaeological sites lie close to the motorway including a Roman Road.

The results show that few areas not disturbed during the original construction of the motorway were present and that no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present.

The Watching Brief was undertaken on 19 May and 20 August 2008.

M27 (Junctions 3 to 4 Climbing Lanes) Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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The watching brief was undertaken by Dave Parry and Jamie Wright. The illustration was prepared by Elizabeth James and the project was managed by Mark Williams.

M27 (Junctions 3 to 4 Climbing Lanes) Hampshire

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Figure 1 Site Location

M27 (Junctions 3 to 4 Climbing Lanes) Hampshire

Report of an Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Costain Group Plc to undertake an archaeological watching brief during aspects of the construction extra lanes on the M27 between Junctions 3 and 4 (hereafter 'the Site') located at NGR 440165 118030.
- 1.1.2 A programme of archaeological works was requested, comprising an archaeological watching brief, supported by a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). The WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2008a) was prepared in response to an Archaeological Design prepared by Atkins which detailed the methodology and location for archaeological investigations (Atkins 2008).
- 1.1.3 The WSI, which was submitted to and approved by the Archaeological Advisor to the Local Planning Authority, prior to the commencement of work at the Site, set out the manner in which Wessex Archaeology would implement the watching brief. It was prepared in accordance with best practice following the standards and guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 1999).

1.2 Site Location, Topology and Geology

- 1.2.1 The construction works took place along the sides of both carriage ways of the M27 between Junctions 3 and 4, to the north of Southampton (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.2 Between the junctions the motorway climbs from 25m aOD (above Ordnance Datum), near the River Test, towards the interfluvium between the Rivers Test and Itchen at 80m aOD, in the east. The Site lies in the syncline of the Hampshire Basin and underlying geological deposits are mapped as Nursling Sand, Whitecliff Sand and London Clay, all early Tertiary deposits; these are overlain by patches of differing, mainly gravel, Pleistocene Terrace Deposits and a narrow band of Holocene Alluvium associated with Tanner's Brook (GSB Sheet 315, 1987).

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.3.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment was prepared which detailed and assessed the impact of development works on potential archaeological remains (Highways Agency 2006). Works on the Site had the potential to

impact upon preserved archaeological remains of various dates including the projected alignment of a possible Roman Road.

- 1.3.2 The south-west aligned Roman Road – road 422 (Margary 1967) - linking *Venta* (Winchester) to the New Forest and its pottery industry is intersected to the east of Rownhams services by the M27 (Ordnance Survey 1991).

2 AIMS

2.1 Watching Brief

2.1.1 The principal aim of the watching brief was to provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the new development.

2.1.2 The archaeological watching brief was to be maintained on the following aspects of the development:

- Those areas where cable re-routing or other service diversions required the excavation of trenches located in otherwise previously undisturbed ground. These areas could lie within the highways agency land or outside it.
- Between chainages 9,400 and 9,600 on both east and west carriageway near the line of the postulated Roman Road.

2.1.3 As developments in the design and construction methodologies identified additional areas for work, the contractor's archaeologist liaised, when appropriate, with the design team and informed Wessex Archaeology of relevant developments.

2.2 Metal detecting

2.2.1 The use of metal detectors before the start of mechanical stripping was proposed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2008a). However, during work undertaken in the eastern area of the motorway upgrade, two areas between Junctions 11 and 12, where topsoil stripping was proposed, were investigated by metal detecting. It was apparent that there was a large amount of motorway related metal work, including iron bars, aluminium can ring pulls, barbed wire, tin cans etc, which was drowning the response of any potential archaeological material, and it was realised that this made metal detecting impractical (Wessex Archaeology 2008b). The contractor's archaeologist was informed of these results and no further metal detecting was undertaken during topsoil stripping.

3 METHOD

3.1 Monitoring of Development

3.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the groundworks associated with the development.

- 3.1.2 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, supported by a photographic record and day book entries.

3.2 Date of work

- 3.2.1 The Watching Brief was undertaken intermittently between 16 July and 20 August 2008.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Watching Brief

Area 1

- 4.1.1 A Watching Brief was maintained during topsoil stripping and subsequent excavation of a 3m wide strip to the south of the west bound carriageway between chainages 9,400 and 9,500. The motorway enters a cutting and lies at c. 55 to 60m aOD.

- 4.1.2 Topsoil and c. 0.5m of underlying geological sands were mechanically excavated in spits. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were exposed. The boundary between the present topsoil and geological sands was very sharp and straight suggesting that the topsoil was relatively immature, possibly having been laid following truncation during the original construction of the motorway.

Area 2

- 4.1.3 During topsoil stripping of the embankment to the north carriageway a Watching Brief was maintained between chainages 9500 and 9600.
- 4.1.4 The area under observation measured c. 80m east to west and was c. 4m wide.
- 4.1.5 A thin layer of topsoil overlay natural sand and gravel clays. This suggests that the area had been previously landscaped, probably during the original motorway construction.
- 4.1.6 Modern disturbance including a buried electricity cable, the bases of abandoned motorway signs were encountered but no archaeological deposits were identified.
- 4.1.7 The spoil was visually scanned for the presence of artefacts but none were recovered.

5 FINDS

- 5.1.1 No archaeological artefacts were recovered.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL

- 6.1.1 No soils suitable for environmental analysis were encountered.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 No archaeological deposits or artefacts were observed and it is possible that had any been present they were truncated during the original construction of the motorway.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 It is proposed to deposit the archive with the Hampshire County Council Museum Service, Winchester.

8.2 Archive Storage

- 8.2.1 The project archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology under the site code 69430. The archive comprises a ring bound file that contains a watching brief attendance form, the risk assessment, the method statement, site location plans, a written record of the watching brief and a digital photographic record sheet. All material will be packaged according to overall standards required for the acceptance of archaeological archives.

- 8.2.2 The complete Site archive, which will include records, plans, photos, and artefacts will be prepared to comply with guidelines set out in *Environmental Standards for the permanent storage of excavated material from archaeological sites* (UKIC 1984, Conservation Guidelines 3), and *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (Walker 1990).

8.2.3 Copyright

- 8.2.4 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The Museum Service, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

8.2.5 Security Copy

- 8.2.6 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record Centre (Swindon); a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records at the Museum, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

9 REFERENCES

Atkins, 2008, *Highways Agency M27 Junctions 3-4 Climbing Lanes: Archaeology Design*. Unpublished project brief.

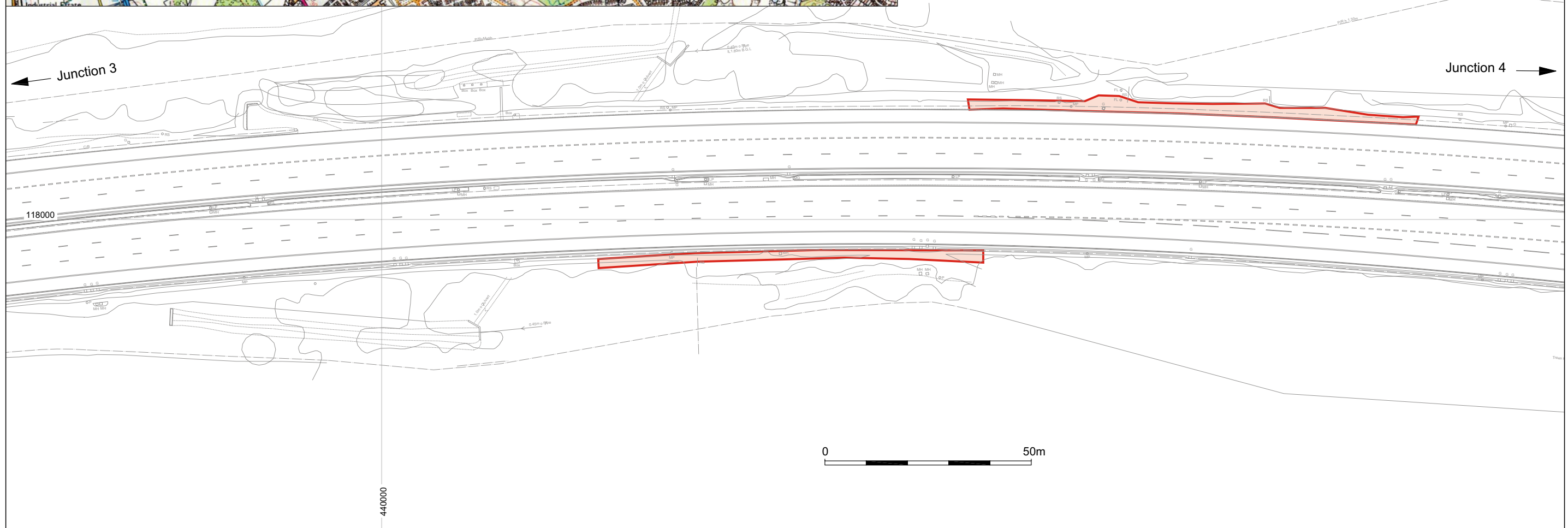
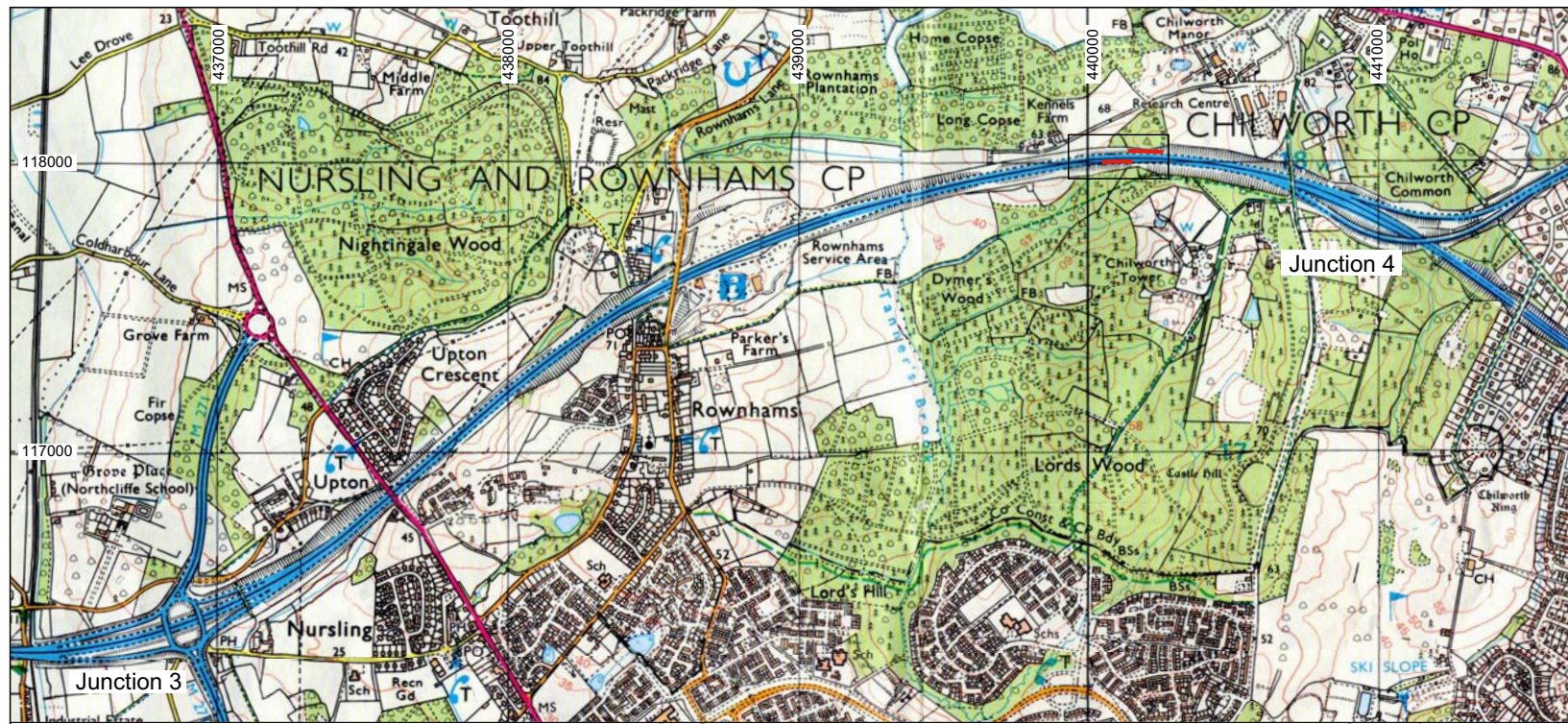
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 Area of Watching brief

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Site location

Figure 1



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