

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Report: Banwell, North Somerset

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Submitted to: Prepared by:

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Quality Assurance

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Where field investigations have been carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

This work has been undertaken in accordance with the quality management system of RSK ADAS Ltd.

Revision History

Revision	Date	Amendment



Summary

In May, June and July 2020, ADAS was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief for Western Power Distribution during groundworks for a new fibre optic cable at Banwell, North Somerset.

Although the cable route was located within a rich archaeological area of potential associated with the nearby Banwell Caves and Banwell itself, no archaeological artefacts or features were identified during monitoring of the groundworks.

The absence of archaeological features recorded during the archaeological monitoring may be attributed to the relatively limited ground impact of the cable trench and the existing road carriageways at the eastern end of the Route which may have truncated previously unknown archaeological remains. These results indicate that the monitoring methodology used was effective in ensuring that the development resulted in no harm to the historic environment resource.



Acknowledgements

This archaeological watching brief was commissioned by Western Power Distribution, and thanks are due in this regard. Fieldwork was carried out by Cameron Cleaver, Charlotte Barley, James McNicoll-Norbury, Peter Vellet and Nick Dawson. The report and supporting illustrations were prepared Charlotte Barley, and checked by James McNicoll-Norbury. The archive was compiled by Charlotte Barley.



1 Introduction

Project Background

- 1.1 Between May and July 2020 ADAS carried out an archaeological watching brief for Western Power Distribution of groundworks required for a new underground telecommunications cable trench on land located in Banwell, North Somerset. The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during groundworks for the works between ST 38336 58969 and ST40140 593093 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The works were carried out within the permitted development rights of the Client under the Electricity Act 1989, and therefore were not subject to a planning application.
- 1.3 Ms Cat Lodge, the Senior Archaeologist for North Somerset Council however recommended archaeological monitoring should be carried out on the excavation of all intrusive groundworks (Cat Lodge Pers Comm 12th May 2020).
- 1.4 It was considered that this part of the proposed development had particular potential to impact upon unknown buried archaeological remains along Dark Lane which is recorded as an Early Medieval hollow way (MNS4683). Human remains potentially dating to the Early Medieval period have also been recovered (MNS9050) in the immediate vicinity of the part of the Route which goes through Wint Hill and Dark Lane. It was also considered that there was a general potential for artefacts. Monitoring was required as a section of the cable route passed along the edge of the Banwell Caves, which are of geological and archaeological importance.
- 1.5 RSK ADAS Ltd were instructed to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to carry out the required archaeological works and record any archaeological remains during the monitoring of the groundworks (ADAS 2020a).
- 1.6 The fieldwork followed the Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (CIfA 2020), the ADAS Technical Manual (2019), the Somerset Archaeological Handbook (2017), the Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (English Heritage 1991) and the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (Historic England 2015).
- 1.7 In carrying out this work the Client complied with their obligations to the historic environment, as outlined in Section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989.



2 The Site, Development and Geology

The Site

2.1 The western section of the Route began to the north of Banwell Caves, along Well Lane (NGR: ST38336 58969) and travelled 3km east and south of Banwell (Figure 1). The Route mainly passed through pasture fields and a dirt track. The Route was aligned along a short section of highway which is located within the Banwell Conservation Area along Dark Lane before terminating adjacent to the A368 East Street (NGR: ST 40140 59093).

The Development

2.2 The development involved the groundworks for the installation of the new underground fibre optic cable at Banwell (Figure 2). The section of the trench north of Banwell Caves was stripped of topsoil up to 4 m in width before the cable trench was dug, other sections of the Route did not require a topsoil strip prior to the digging of the trench. The trench dimensions were approximately 0.5 m in width and approximately 0.6 m in depth.

The Geology

2.3 The underlying bedrock geology along the majority of the Route is recorded as limestone of the Burrington Oolite Subgroup. At the eastern portion of the Route, along Dark Lane, the underlying bedrock geology is recorded as Mudstone and Halite-stone of the Mercia Mudstone Group. (BGS, 2020). The monitoring recorded the presence of limestone and mudstone along the length of the cable trench.

3 Objectives

Aims and Scope

- 3.1 The general aims of the archaeological monitoring and recording were:
 - intended to ensure that any archaeological features/deposits exposed during ground works associated with the development are identified, recorded and interpreted to an acceptable standard
 - ensure that any significant discoveries of artefactual evidence are recorded and analysed to an acceptable standard
 - to inform a strategy to avoid or mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains identified.
 - To report the results as appropriate.



- 3.2 The specific aims of the fieldwork were to
 - to identify and record any currently unknown buried archaeological remains, artefacts or earthworks associated with the Roman settlement camp Scheduled Monument
 - to identify and record any remains of Early Medieval date in the vicinity of Dark Lane and Banwell Wood
 - To identify and record any evidence of Post-medieval settlement remains or industrial activity along the Route

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5 Archaeological and Historical Context

Introduction

- 5.1 A previously prepared archaeology constraints report was prepared prior to the start of the fieldwork which highlighted the known heritage assets within a 300 m Study Area around the Route (ADAS 2020b). A summary of the findings of this report are given below.
- 5.2 A search of Historic England datasets, the North Somerset HER (Historic Environment Record) and the Local Authority record no World Heritage Sites, Designated Wrecks, Designated Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens within 300 m of the groundworks.
- 5.3 There are 34 designated heritage assets within 300 m of the groundworks. These include three Scheduled Monuments, one Grade I Listed Building, six Grade II* Listed Buildings and 23 Grade II Listed Buildings. Whilst the Route was located within 20 m of three Grade II* Listed Buildings (1129781; 1129782 and 1320658) none of these or any other Listed Buildings were physically impacted by the groundworks (ADAS 2020b).
- 5.4 The three Scheduled Monuments recorded within 300 m of the Route all date to the Romano-British period. They are located between 161 m 295 m from the Route. The closest of the three is a



- Roman camp (1008111) which is located 161 m to the east of the Route at its eastern end (Historic England, 2020).
- 5.5 The Route also passed through the Banwell Conservation Area at Wint Hill and along the A371.
- 5.6 There are 106 records for known non-designated heritage assets within 300 m of the Route (ADAS, 2020b).
- 5.7 The Study Area surrounding the Route contained eleven assets dating to the Prehistoric Period. The Pleistocene remains and Palaeolithic flints recovered at Banwell Caves (MNS73), which are located immediately to the south of the groundworks at the western end of the Route, are particularly significant. Additional evidence of the Prehistoric period is recorded in the eastern section of the Route. Flint scatters have been recorded 45 m to the south of this part of the Route (MNS4475). More flint scatters have been unearthed 220 m to the south of this part of the Route, MNS4474, and MNS2139 (ADAS, 2020b).
- 5.8 The main focal point of Roman settlement in the Study Area is the Roman Camp Scheduled Monument, which is located within 161 m of the eastern end of the Route. Further Roman deposits (MNS223) and pottery (MNS5196) have been identified 210 m to the east of the eastern end of the Route (ADAS, 2020b).
- 5.9 The Route along Dark Lane is recorded as an Early Medieval hollow way (MNS4683). Human remains potentially dating to the Early Medieval Period have also been recovered (MNS9050) in the immediate vicinity of the part of the Route which goes through Wint Hill and Dark Lane. Banwell village, along with the Banwell Minister, is thought to have its origins in the Early Medieval period (MNS4682) (ADAS2020b).
- 5.10 During the Post-medieval period a number of records indicate quarrying and lime kilns are present throughout the Study Area, but in particular to the north of the Route near Wint Hill (MNS1536, MNS940, and MNS6800). Post-medieval quarrying may have truncated or removed buried archaeological deposits at these locations along the Route (ADAS 2020b).
- 5.11 An online search of previous archaeological investigations ...

6 Methodology

Introduction

6.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation (ADAS 2020a). An archaeologist was present during all intrusive groundworks to excavate the new cable trench within the watching brief area.



6.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance:

Archaeological watching brief 2020.

Artefacts, Human Remains, Treasure and Environmental Sampling

6.3 No artefacts or human remains were encountered during the watching brief. No archaeologically significant deposits were disturbed by the groundworks, so no environmental sampling was undertaken.

Post-Excavation Analysis

No archaeological artefacts or deposits were encountered during the watching brief, and therefore no post-excavation analysis was required.

Archives and Deposition

6.5 The archive is currently held by ADAS at their offices in Milton Park. No artefacts were recovered during the monitoring and therefore no artefacts will need to be deposited with an approved local museum. A paper archive will be deposited with Somerset Heritage Centre within six months of the completion of the fieldwork under an accession number which will be issued upon deposition. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS database of archaeological projects in Britain. An OASIS form, ID reference adasuklt1-394720 has been provisionally completed and will be submitted at the time of completion.

ADAS Project Team

6.6 Fieldwork was undertaken by Cameron Cleaver, Charlotte Barley, James McNicoll-Norbury, Peter Vellet and Nick Dawson. The report was written by Charlotte Barley. The illustrations were prepared by Charlotte Barley. The archive was compiled and prepared for deposition by Charlotte Barley. The project was managed for ADAS by James McNicoll-Norbury.

7 Results

- 7.1 This section provides an overview of the monitoring results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendix A.
- 7.2 The watching brief area followed the cable trench (Figure 1; Plates 1-9). The ground works consisted of using a mechanical excavator with a flat bladed 0.3 m bucket to a depth of 0.6 m under constant archaeological supervision. The works were completed between May and July 2020. The weather generally consisted of bright sunshine, with some cloud and rain (Plates 1 9).



Trench 1 - Banwell Caves Area

- 7.3 The area was previously stripped of topsoil prior to digging the trench measuring 1.72 km. The topsoil strip measured 4 m in width and was 0.30 m deep through the topsoil (101). The excavated trench measured 0.60 m deep and comprised the remainder of the topsoil overlaying natural geology (102) which comprised Dolostone (102) as recorded by the British Geological Survey.
- 7.4 No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed or recovered from the trench.

Trench 2 – Gravel Trackway

- 7.5 Trench 2 measured approximately 293 m in length by 0.5 m in width and 0.6 m in depth. The topsoil (201) was comprised of a soft brown sandy silt to a depth of 0.2 m which was overlying a light brown grey silt subsoil (202) with root occurrences to a depth of 0.2m Some areas of the trackway did not contain a subsoil and made ground from the trackway as recorded to a depth of 0.2 m The natural substrate was comprised of Dolostone (203) as recorded by the British Geological Survey.
- 7.6 No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed or recovered from the trench.

Trench 3 – Wint Hill and Castle Hill

- 7.7 Trench 3 measured 195 m in length by 0.5 m in width and 0.6 m in depth. The topsoil (301) comprised a soft dark greyish brown sandy silt with no inclusions. The topsoil was recorded to a depth of 0.2 m. A subsoil (302) was observed long the verge of the trackway at the eastern end of the Route and comprised a soft light brownish grey sandy silt with no inclusions to a depth of 0.3 m. Made ground (303) comprising the trackway surface and the road surface was also observed and recorded to a depth of 0.3 m. The natural substrate (304) was recorded as a firm mid-brownish red silty clay with infrequent limestone inclusions to a depth of 0.2 m. At the bottom of the trackway approaching Wint Hill, a 9 m long path of degraded limestone was observed. Excavations along Castle Hill revealed 0.15 m of tarmac (305) overlying 0.45 m of a levelling deposit (206). At the southern end of the trench 0.1 m of natural substrate (204) was observed.
- 7.8 No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed or recovered from the trench.

Trench 4 – Dark Lane

7.9 Prior to the commencement of the works along Dark Lane it was decided that the previously proposed trench would be diverted long the length of Dark Lane rather than dig through the adjacent field which contained the Scheduled Monument. Trench 4 measured 234 m in length by 0.5 m in width and 0.6 m in depth. The surface of the road is made ground (401) to a depth of 0.2 m. Beneath the made ground is the natural substrate (402) which is recorded as a firm mid-



brownish red silty clay with frequent limestone inclusions to a depth of 0.4 m. The natural substrate is mottled in places with large limestone boulders.

7.10 No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed or recovered from the trench.

8 Discussion and Conclusions

- 8.1 Despite the cable route being located within a potentially rich archaeological area the archaeological monitoring and recording during the groundworks for the new fibre optic cable at Banwell did not identify any archaeological remains along the Route.
- 8.2 The archaeological monitoring along Wint Hill, Castle Hill and Dark Lane revealed that whilst natural geology was observed these areas had however been heavily truncated previously by the services and previous works to the roads.
- 8.3 The absence of archaeological features recorded during the archaeological monitoring may be attributed to the relatively limited ground impact of the cable trench and the existing road carriageways which may have truncated previously unknown archaeological remains.
- 8.4 The archaeological monitoring methodology used was effective and the results of the monitoring indicates with a high degree of confidence that no unknown buried archaeological remains or artefacts were harmed by the groundworks. These results indicate that the monitoring methodology used was effective in ensuring that the development resulted in no harm to the historic environment resource.
- 8.5 By carrying out these works, Western Power Distribution has fulfilled their obligations to the Historic Environment in accordance with the Electricity Act 1989.



9 References

ADAS 2020a Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording in Banwell, Somserset

ADAS 2020b Archaeocheck Report: Sandford to Weston Super Mare

CIfA 2020 Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief.

English Heritage 1991 The Management of Archaeological Projects 2.

English Heritage 2006 The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide.

Grove, J and Croft, B (2012) South West Archaeological Research Framework Research Strategy 2012 2017. Somerset County Council.

Online Resources

(BGS 2020) British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer. Available at: http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html [accessed August 2020].

Google Maps 2020. Available at: https://www.google.co.uk [accessed August 2020].

Heritage Gateway 2020 Available at: http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results.aspx [accessed August 2020].



Appendix A: Context Descriptions

Trench 1 – Banwell Caves Area

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)
101	Layer	Topsoil – Brown sandy silt	2,000	0.5	0.2
102	Layer	Natural substrate – Dolostone	2,000	0.5	0.4

Trench 2 – Gravel Trackway

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)
201	Layer	Topsoil – Brown sandy silt	2,000	0.5	0.2
202	Layer	Subsoil – Light brown grey silt	2,000	0.5	0.2
203	Layer	Natural substrate – Dolostone	2,000	0.5	0.2

Trench 3 – Wint Hill and Castle Hill

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)
301	Layer	Topsoil – Dark grey brown sandy silt	195	0.5	0.2
302	Layer	Subsoil – light brownish grey sandy silt	195	0.5	0.3
303	Deposit	Made Ground – trackway surface	195	0.5	0.3
304	Layer	Natural substrate – brownish red silty clay with limestone inclusions	195	0.5	0.2
305	Deposit	Made ground – Road surface along Castle Hill	195	0.5	0.15
306	Deposit	Levelling deposit related to existing surfaces	195	0.5	0.45



Trench 4 – Dark Lane

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/ Thickness (m)
401	Deposit	Made Ground – Existing road surface	234	0.5	0.2
402	Layer	Natural substrate – brownish red silty clay with frequent limestone inclusions	234	0.5	0.4



Appendix B: The Finds

No artefacts were identified during the course of the archaeological monitoring.



Appendix C: Oasis Report Form

OASIS ID: adasuklt1-394720

Project details

Project name Banwell Hill, Archaeological Monitoring

the project

Short description of In May, June and July 2020, ADAS carried out an archaeological watching brief for Western Power Distribution as requested by Ms Cat Lodge, the senior archaeologist for North Somerset Council. The groundworks were for a cable route in Banwell, North Somerset between ST 38336 58969 and ST40140 593093 as shown on Figure 1. The groundworks consisted of excavations for a new fibre optic cable. Although the cable route was located within a rich archaeological area of potential, no archaeological artefacts or features were identified during monitoring of the groundworks. The absence of archaeological features recorded during the monitoring of the cable route may be attributed to the relatively limited impact of the groundworks. These results indicate that the monitoring methodology used was effective in ensuring that the development resulted in no harm to the historic

environment resource.

Project dates Start: 18-05-2020 End: 31-07-2020

Previous/future

work

Yes / No

Any associated project reference

codes

BAN20 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Monument type **NONE None** Significant Finds **NONE None**

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Electricity Act 1989 Section 36

Project location

Country England

Site location NORTH SOMERSET NORTH SOMERSET BANWELL Banwell Hill

Archaeological Monitoring

Postcode **BS29 6NQ**

Study area 2.5 Kilometres

ST 39538 58793 51.324516962318 -2.867812765049 51 19 28 N 002 52 04 Site coordinates

W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation **RSK ADAS Ltd**

Project brief originator

RSK ADAS Ltd

Project design originator

James McNicoll-Norbury



Project

James McNicoll-Norbury

director/manager Project supervisor

James McNicoll-Norbury

Electricity Authority/Company

Type of

sponsor/funding

body

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?

No

Digital Archive recipient

Somerset Heritage Center

Digital Contents

"none"

Digital Media available

"GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Text"

Paper Archive recipient

Somerset Heritage Center

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available

"Diary", "Photograph", "Unpublished Text"



Plates



Plate 1: North-east facing section of Trench 2 at the western end of the gravel trackway



Plate 2: North-east facing section of Trench 2 along the gravel trackway



Plate 3: North-east facing section of Trench 2 along the gravel trackway showing natural limestone



Plate 4: North-east facing section of Trench 2 along the gravel trackway



Plate 5: Overhead shot of Trench 3 along Wint Hill



Plate 6: Section showing the stratigraphy of Trench 3 along Castle Hill



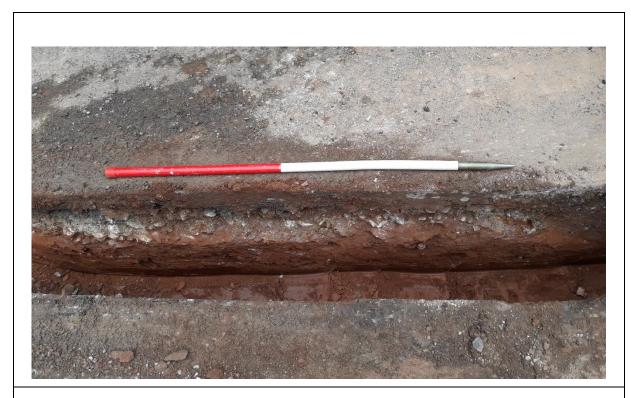


Plate 7: East facing section of Trench 4 along Dark Lane



Plate 8: East facing section of Trench 4 along Dark Lane



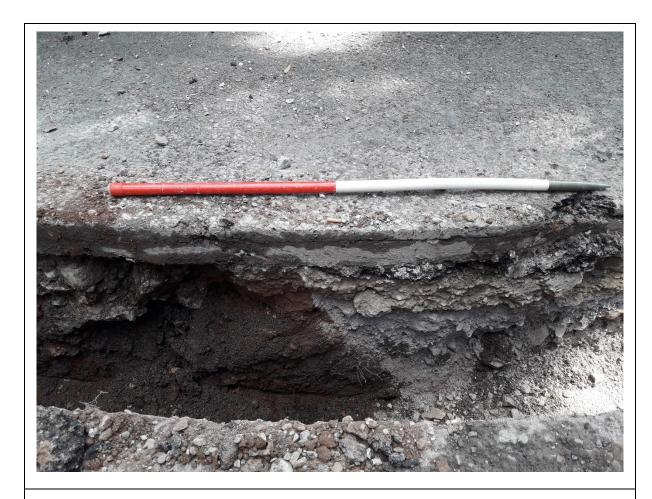
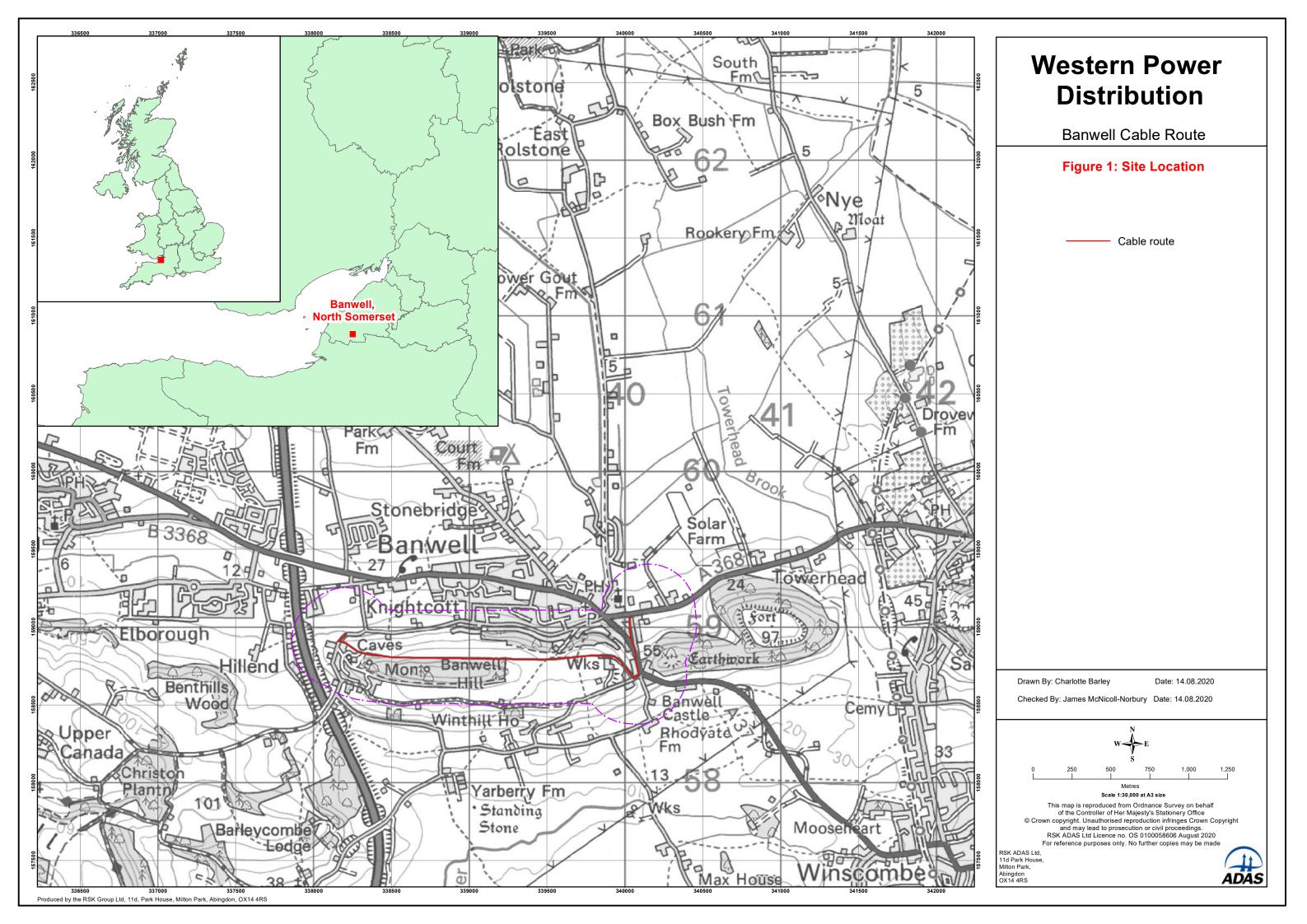
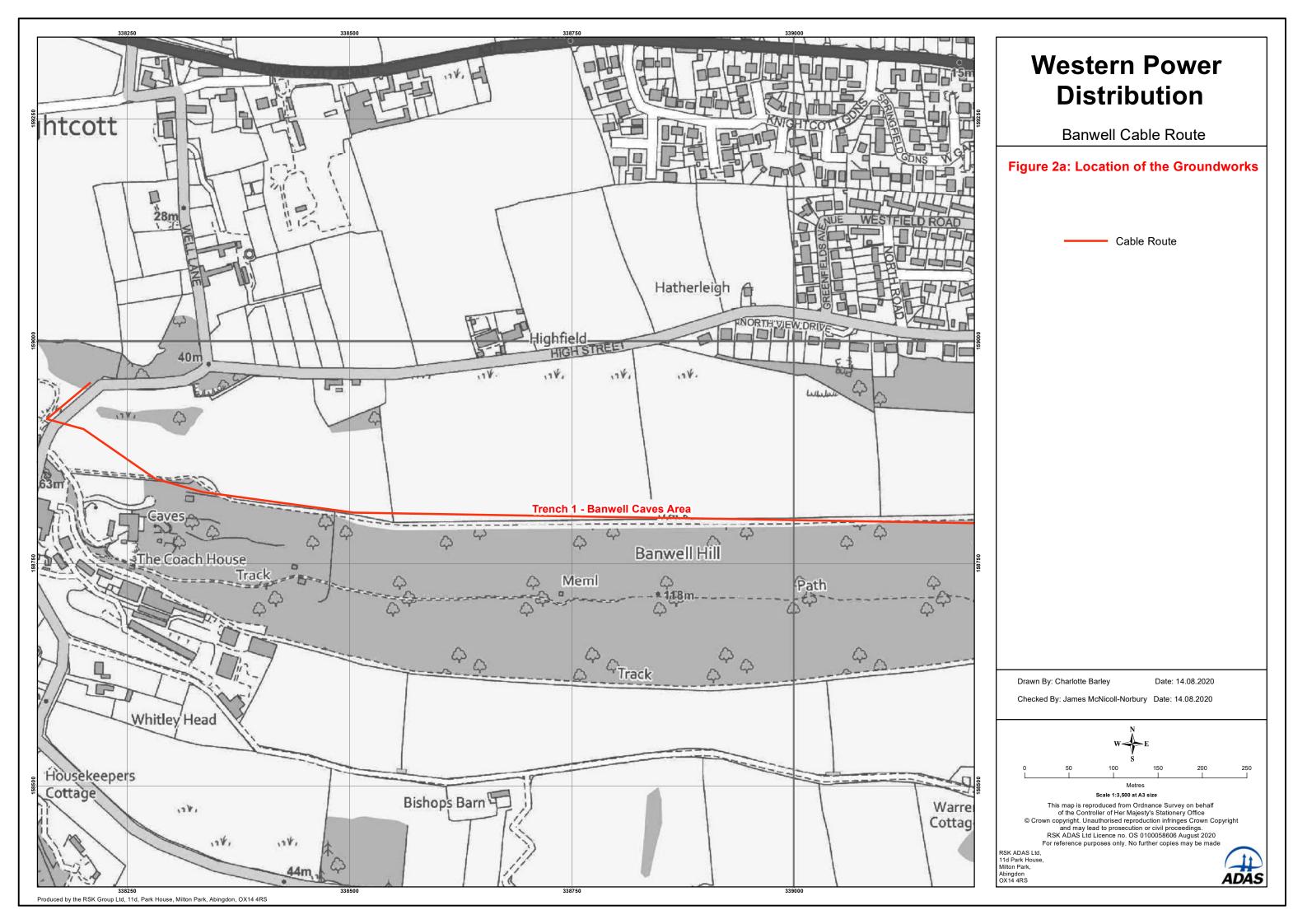
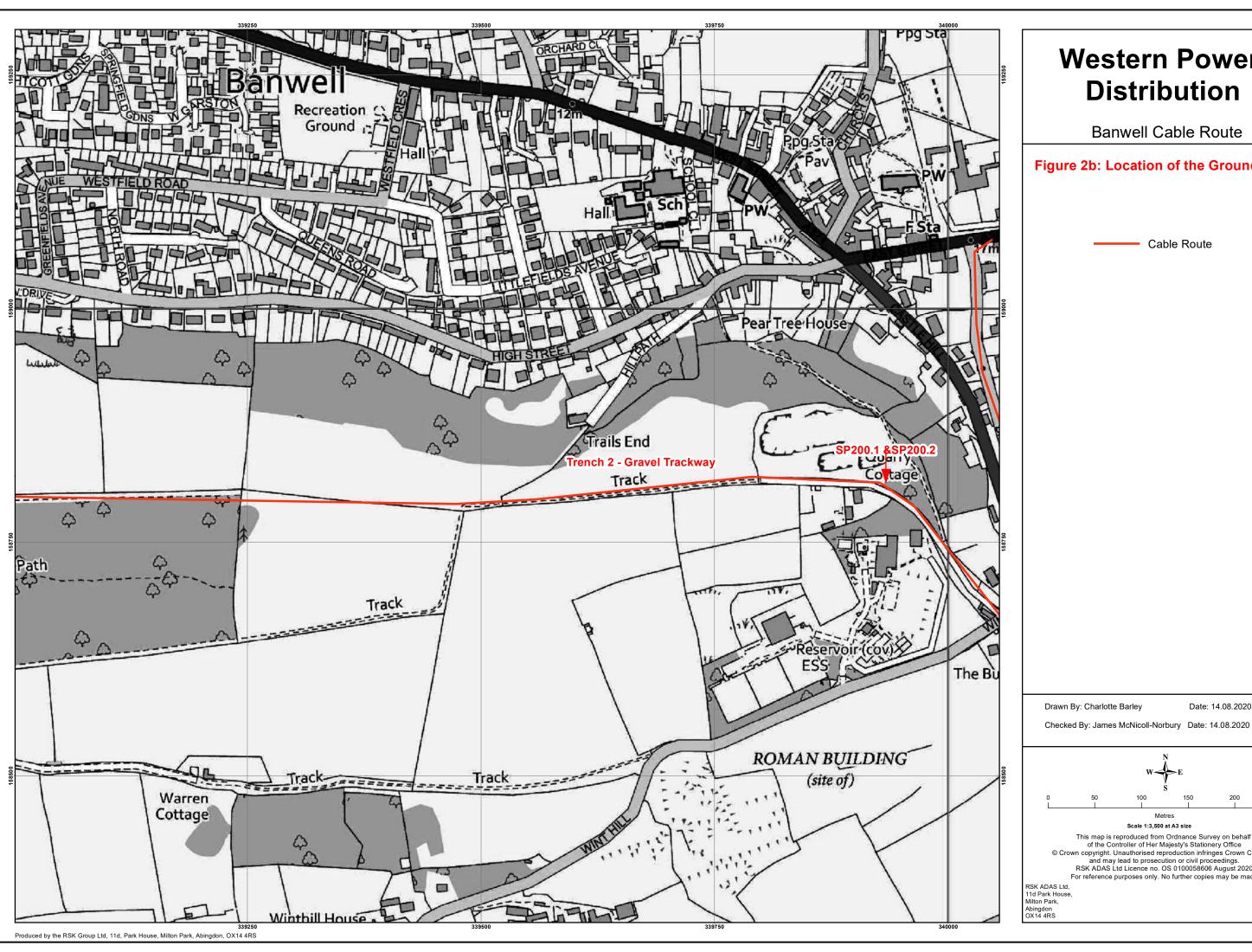


Plate 9: East facing section of Trench 4 at the bottom of Dark Lane showing made ground cutting the natural substrate





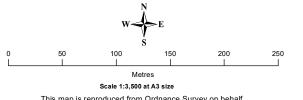




Western Power Distribution

Figure 2b: Location of the Groundworks

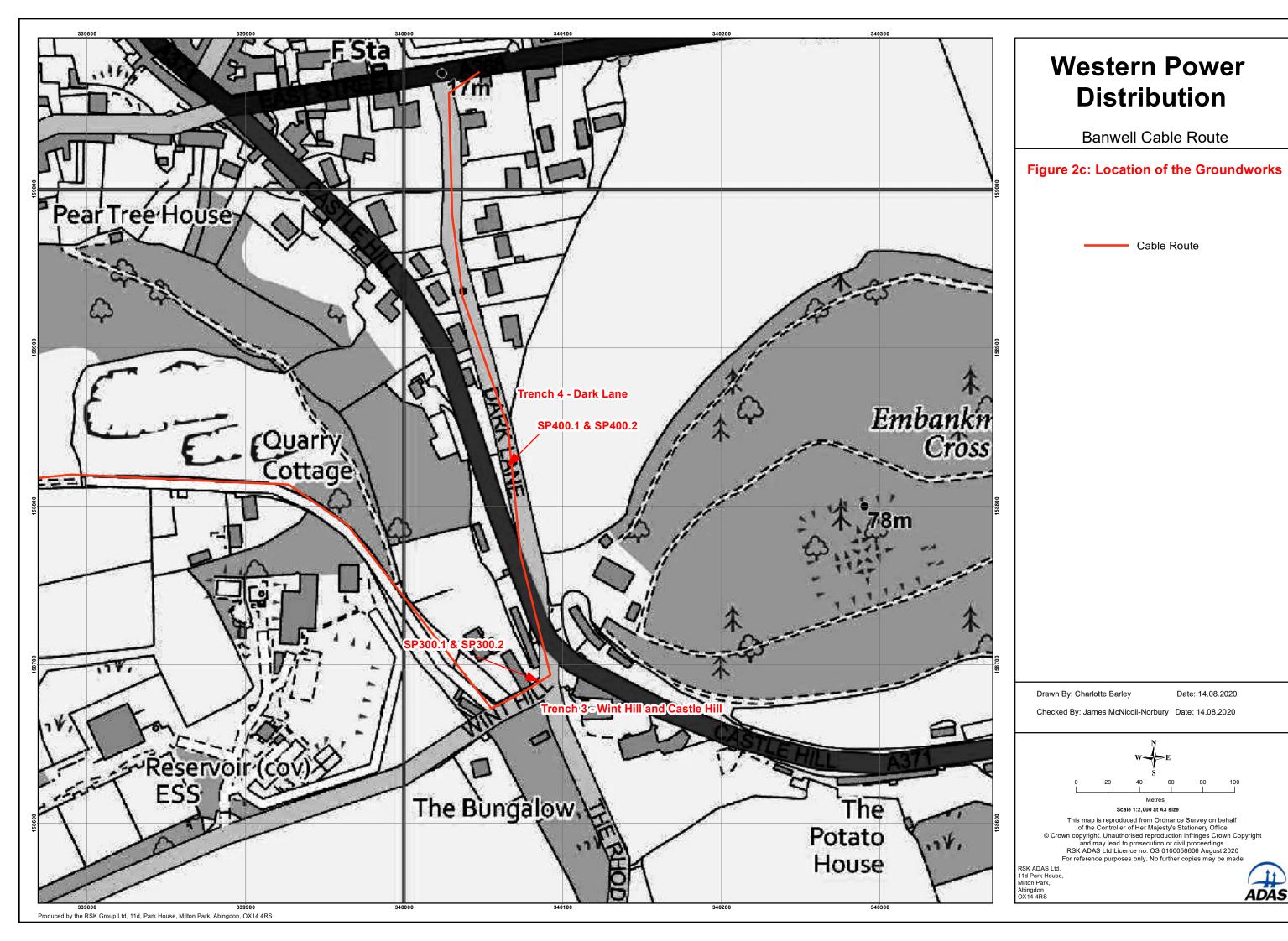
Cable Route

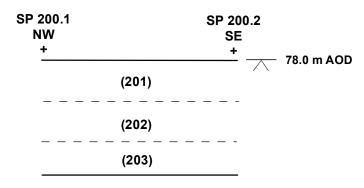


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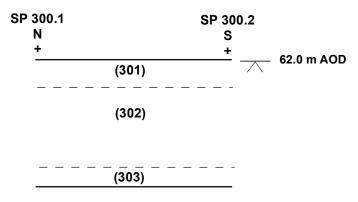




Section 1 - North-east facing section of Trench 2



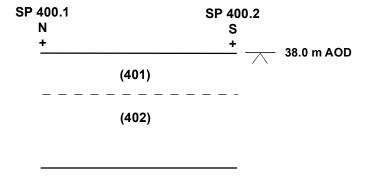
Plate 2: North-east facing section of Trench 2



Section 2 - North facing section of Trench 3



Plate 6: North facing section of Trench 3



Section 3 - East facing section of Trench 4



Plate 7 - East facing section of Trench 4

Western Power Distribution

Banwell Cable Route

Figure 3: Representative Section of Trench 2, Trench 3 and Trench 4

Drawn by: Charlotte Barley Date: 14.08.2020

Verified By: James McNicoll-Norbury Date: 14.08.2020

0 1 Metres Scale: 1:20 @ A3 Size

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