



SHURDINGTON SCHEME, SHURDINGTON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief





**SHURDINGTON SCHEME, SHURDINGTON,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by Morgan Sindall on behalf of Severn Trent Water (hereafter 'the Client') to undertake an archaeological watching brief to mitigate any loss of archaeological remains during the creation of a site compound at Shurdington, Gloucestershire (hereafter 'the Scheme') (**Figure 1**).

The proposed area of works is located to the northwest of the village of Shurdington, in the Tewkesbury district of Gloucestershire.

The watching brief was undertaken between the 17th and 20th of January 2011 and comprised of the monitoring of the removal of topsoil. No features of archaeological interest were encountered within the monitored area and no artefacts were recovered.

The results of the watching brief confirm the low level of archaeological activity that was identified in an earlier scoping report prepared by ARCUS (2008). No further work is recommended in respect of this phase of the development.

The project archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code 76320 and will be deposited in due course with the repository museum (Accession code CAGM2011.12).

SHURDINGTON SCHEME, SHURDINGTON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE**Archaeological Watching Brief****Acknowledgements**

This project was commissioned by Morgan Sindall on behalf of Severn Trent Water. Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Charles Parry of Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service for his help and guidance during the project.

This report was researched and compiled by Grace Corbett and the fieldwork was undertaken by Oliver Good. The illustrations were prepared by Chris Swales. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andrea Burgess.

SHURDINGTON SCHEME, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Morgan Sindall on behalf of Severn Trent Water to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the replacement of an existing overland sewer pipeline crossing the Ham Brook (hereafter 'the Site'). The construction of a temporary site compound and a pit at the eastern side of the Site were monitored by an archaeologist.

1.1.2 The monitoring was required as a condition of planning consent and was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2010) and submitted to and approved by the Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service.

1.1.3 The watching brief was undertaken between the 17th and 20th of January 2011 and involved monitoring the removal of topsoil within the footprint of the compound and a pit at the eastern end of the Site.

1.2 The Site, Location and Geology

1.2.1 The Site is located to the northwest of the village of Shurdington, in the Tewkesbury district of Gloucestershire (**Figure 1**).

1.2.2 The underlying geology is Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone (BGS 1972: sheet 234).

1.2.3 At the time of fieldwork the Site was in use as an arable field.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Chronology

2.1.1 The following background is summarised from the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2010).

2.1.2 The archaeological periods mentioned in the text are broadly defined by the following date ranges:

- Modern 1900-present
- Nineteenth century 1800-1900
- Post-medieval 1500-1799
- Medieval AD 1066-1499
- Saxon AD 410-1066
- Post-Roman AD410-650
- Romano-British AD 43-410
- Iron Age 700 BC- AD 43
- Bronze Age 2400-700 BC

- Neolithic 4000-2400 BC
- Mesolithic 8500-4000 BC
- Palaeolithic 500000-10000 BP

- 2.1.3 Two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) are located c.2km from the Site. These are a medieval churchyard cross at Badgeworth (SAM 28525) and a medieval moated site and fishponds at Yew Tree Farm, Little Shurdington. There are a further twelve SAMs within 5km of the Site, the majority on the higher ground to the southeast. These include two long barrows of probable Neolithic date, two Bronze Age round barrow cemeteries, two Iron Age hillforts, at least one of which has Neolithic origins, two Roman villas, two medieval churchyard crosses and two medieval moated sites. None of the SAMs will be impacted by the current works. There are no Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens within 2km of the development.
- 2.1.4 The County Historic Environment Record (HER) contains seven archaeological sites or events within 1km of the Site. This includes the overland pipeline itself (HER 15092), which was constructed between 1929 and 1949, and a small building of unknown use (HER 15091), of a similar date to the pipeline, which may be a former pumping station or associated structure. Other than the pipeline, the nearest site to the proposed works consists of the findspot of a lead alloy spindle whorl (HER 31800), which could be of Romano-British to medieval date. This was found by a metal detector a short distance to the south of the Site. A desk-based assessment was undertaken across the area in 1992 for proposed routes of the Shurdington bypass (HER 20234). This identified that all three routes crossed areas of known ridge and furrow earthworks.
- 2.1.5 At a greater distance, c.300m to the south of the proposed works, is an oval enclosure, visible as a cropmark (HER 6854), which could be of prehistoric to Romano-British date. In Shurdington itself, two sites are within the 1km search area: the grade II* listed St Paul's church (HER 8386), and a watching brief undertaken on the construction of four houses close to a former school (HER 15120). The latter recorded a shallow pit or gully, with no associated finds, possibly related to a former orchard.
- 2.1.6 Aerial views indicate that there are extensive medieval to early post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks in the area surrounding the proposed works, with some remains visible only as cropmarks in the field to the west. No earthwork remains are visible in the area to be impacted. Further to the west, in the vicinity of Badgeworth, are linear cropmark features indicative of probable post-medieval field drainage.
- 2.1.7 The SAMs on the higher ground to the southeast indicate that there was prehistoric occupation in the vicinity, and the oval enclosure to the southwest may also be of this date; however, the low-lying, frequently flooded land around the Site is unlikely to have been a focus for settlement. The extensive ridge and furrow remains and various moated sites, churches and crosses in the vicinity indicate that the area was settled by the medieval period. The site appears to have been outside the area of medieval settlement. In the 19th century, much of the parish was in pastoral use.

- 2.1.8 The 1887 Ordnance Survey (OS) map showed the Site as fields, with curving boundaries indicative of piecemeal enclosure from open field. Areas of wood and scrubland were shown to the north and south. The majority of the wood and scrub to the north was removed between 1924 and 1954. The overland pipeline was shown on the 1977 OS map. Two trackways were shown running through the triangular field adjacent to the river from 1887 onwards. No other significant archaeological features were noted on the historic OS maps.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and Scope

- 3.1.1 The principal aim of the watching brief was to identify and record any archaeological remains that were disturbed or destroyed during construction groundworks.

- 3.1.2 The specific aims of the project were:

- To accurately record the location and stratigraphy of excavated areas;
- To record all archaeological remains disturbed by the groundworks;
- To determine the extent, condition, character, importance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered;
- To provide information that will enable the archaeological remains to be placed with their local, regional and national contexts;
- To recover artefacts disturbed by the site works;
- To produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits disturbed by the site works.

3.2 Watching Brief

- 3.2.1 The watching brief was undertaken by a suitably qualified member of Wessex Archaeology staff between the 17th and 20th January 2011. Excavation of the topsoil was undertaken by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and monitored by an archaeologist. All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, supported by a photographic record.

- 3.2.2 The creation of the site compound involved the stripping of topsoil to the south of the existing pipeline. One pit was also excavated at the eastern end of the compound area.

- 3.2.3 Archaeological monitoring of the replacement of the piers of the overland pipe was recommended in the Written Scheme of Investigation. Once on site Wessex Archaeology were informed that this would not involve any disturbance outside of the footprint of the existing piers therefore, in consultation with the Gloucestershire County Council Senior Archaeological Officer, it was not deemed necessary to monitor work in this area.

3.3 Best Practice

- 3.3.1 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with current industry best practice and national guidelines (IfA 2008; English Heritage 1991).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information held in the site archive. Observed contexts are tabulated as **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Stratigraphic Sequence

- 4.2.1 The compound area was stripped of 0.18m deep topsoil. This revealed dark grey subsoil (**Plate 1**). The pit at the eastern end of the Site revealed identical deposits overlaying orangey-grey clay natural deposits (**Plate 2**). A summary of recorded contexts recorded is presented in **Appendix 1**.

4.3 Archaeological Features

- 4.3.1 No archaeological features were encountered within the monitored area.

4.4 Finds

- 4.4.1 Part of the site had been heavily disturbed, containing large amounts of modern building debris, bricks and mortar etc. Most of the site remained undisturbed but no archaeological finds were recovered.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 No archaeological remains were identified during the watching brief, confirming the low archaeological potential identified by the scoping report.
- 5.1.2 The Site does, however, lie within an area with relatively high archaeological potential and the negative results from this watching brief are likely to reflect the small scale of the development rather than an absence of archaeological activity in this part of Shurdington. It is also possible that previous disturbance has removed archaeological remains in this specific area.

6 ARCHIVE

6.1 Location and Deposition

- 6.1.1 The project archive has been compiled into a stable, fully cross-referenced and indexed archive in accordance with Appendix 6 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (2nd Edition, English Heritage 1991) and *Archaeological archives – a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007). The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code **76320**. The full list of the contents of this archive is detailed in **Appendix 2** of this

report. It is proposed that the archive will be deposited in due course with the repository museum (Accession code: CAGM2011.12).

6.2 Copyright

- 6.2.1 This report, and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

7 REFERENCES

7.1 Bibliography

ARCUS 2008 *Shurdington Pipeline Replacement, Scoping Advice*, Unpublished Client Report 40263

Brown, D. H. 2007, *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation*.

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*, (2nd ed.) London; English Heritage.

Institute for Archaeologists 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Wessex Archaeology 2010 *Shurdington Scheme, Shurdington, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished Client Report 76320.01

7.2 Cartographic

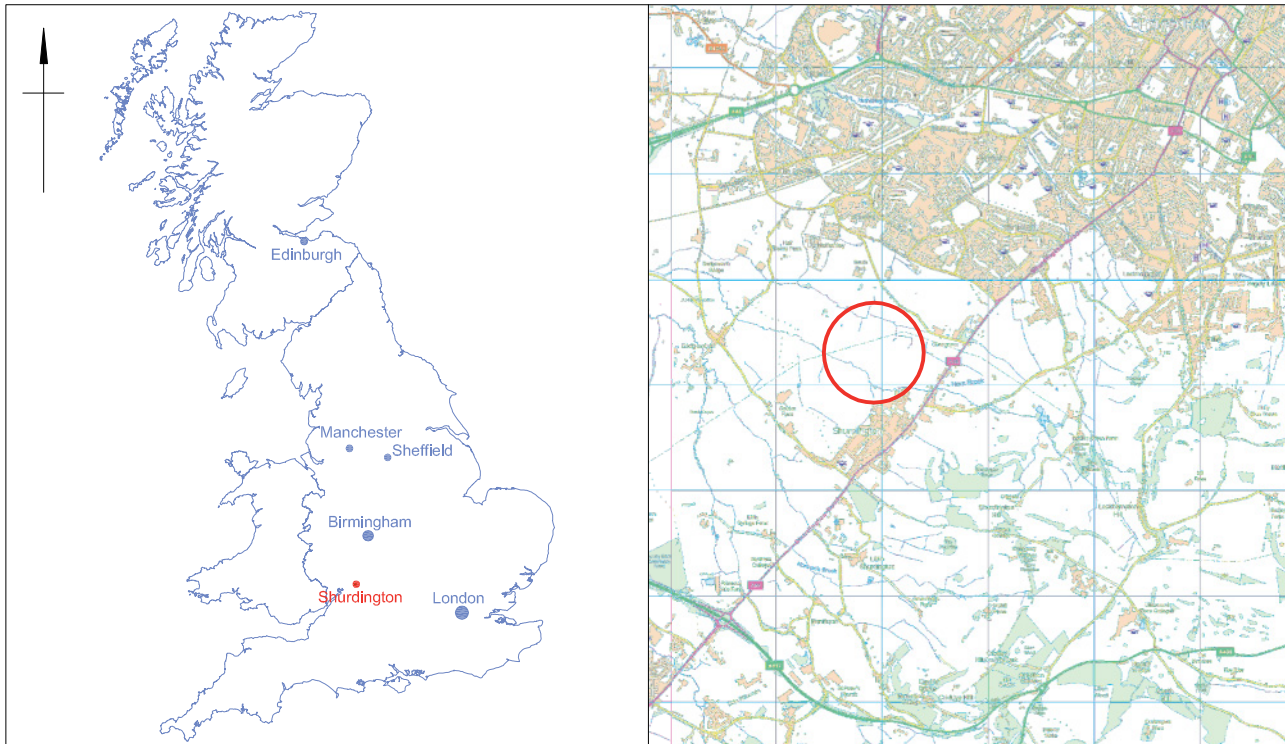
British Geological Survey (BGS) 1972: Sheet 234, 1:50000 scale




APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

Context	Description	Interpretation
101	Dark greyish brown silty clay	Topsoil
102	Dark orangey grey silty clay	Subsoil

APPENDIX 2: ARCHIVE INDEX

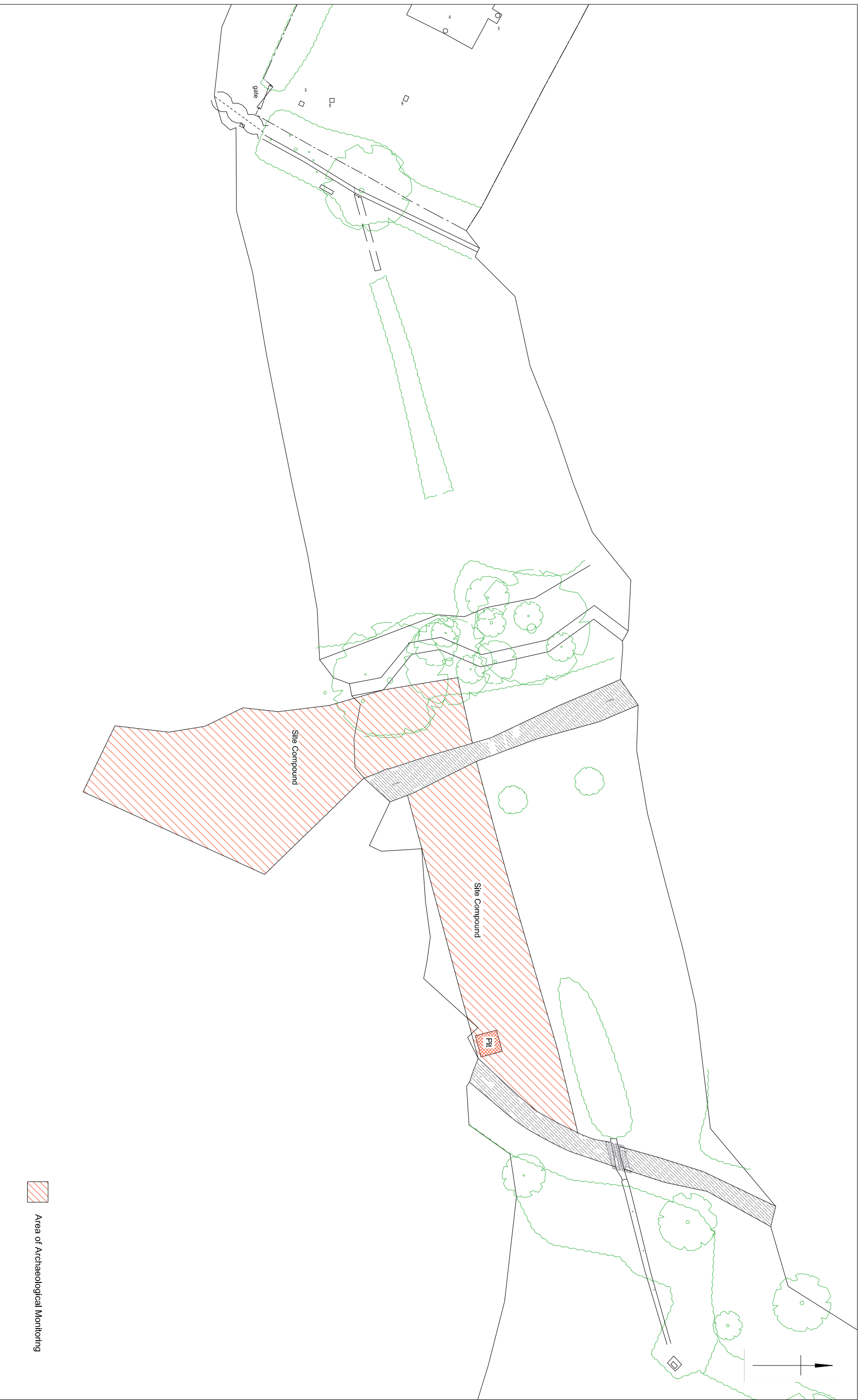
Paper archive			
Folder no.	Folder type	Item(s)	No.
1	A4 ring binder	Risk Assessment	1
		Day Register	0
		Day Book (copied)	1
		Test Pit/Trial Trench Record	0
		Photographic Record	0
		Colour slides	0
		Contact sheets	0
		Bound copy of final report	1



 Site location  Area of Archaeological Monitoring 	Reproduced from the 2010 Ordnance Survey Streetview / District Raster © map with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright, Wessex Archaeology, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire. SP4 6EB. Licence Number: 100028190. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.		
	Date: February 2011	Revision Number:	1.0
	Scale: Main graphic - 1:6250 @ A4	Illustrator:	CB
	Path: Y:\Projects\76320 (Shurdington Pipeline)\Report Figs		

Site location

Figure 1



 Area of Archaeological Monitoring

Date:	February 2011	Revision Number:	1.0
Scale:	1:500 @ A3	Illustrator:	CB
Path:	Y:\Projects\76320 (Shurdington Pipeline)\Report Figs		



Plate 1: North facing section of compound area



Plate 2: East facing section of pit

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