



Fargo Road, Shrewton, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**FARGO ROAD,
SHREWTON, WILTSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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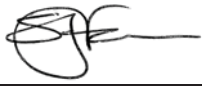
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QUALITY ASSURANCE

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| SITE CODE | 71840 | ACCESSION CODE | | CLIENT CODE | |
| PLANNING APPLICATION REF. | | NGR | | 410345 144600 | |

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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**FARGO ROAD,
SHREWTON, WILTSHIRE****Archaeological Watching Brief****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Options Utility Services Ltd (the Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief during intrusive groundworks associated with the installation of a new telecommunications duct along the Packway between Rolleston crossroads and Fargo Road ammunition compound, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 410345 144600.

The site is located along the northern boundary of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and the cable route runs through the southern edge of a Scheduled Bronze Age barrow cemetery (SM 10233). Scheduled Monument Consent was granted for the works on condition that an archaeological watching brief was maintained during any intrusive excavations.

Although the majority of the groundworks within the highway consisted of launch pits to facilitate lateral drilling and limit damage to the highway itself, within the Scheduled area a single open cut trench was machine excavated under archaeological supervision, to allow for the identification and recording of any archaeological remains present.

No archaeological features were found during the watching brief and no artefacts were recovered. The absence of the characteristic 'tiger stripes' within the upper levels of the natural chalk suggest the site had been graded down during the original construction of the Packway, removing any archaeological features which may have been present.

The watching brief was carried out from 19th July 2011 to 30th July 2011.

**FARGO ROAD,
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Archaeological Watching Brief

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Steve Wilson on behalf of Options Utility Services and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Steve Wilson in this regard.

The watching brief was undertaken by Phil Andrews, Darren Baker and Phil Harding. The report was researched and compiled by Darren Baker and the illustrations were prepared by Rob Goller. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

**FARGO ROAD,
SHREWTON, WILTSHIRE****Archaeological Watching Brief****1 INTRODUCTION****1.1 Project Background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Options Utility Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks along Fargo Road, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 410345 144600 (hereafter the Route).
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was required during the installation of a new BT Open Reach telecommunications duct, positioned between Rollestone crossroads and Fargo Road ammunition compound. A Scheduled Bronze Age barrow cemetery (SM 10233) lies partially within the road and English Heritage, acting as advisors to the Secretary of State, had advised an archaeological watching brief should be maintained during the excavations.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI, Wessex Archaeology 2011) was produced before the commencement of any intrusive works. This document detailed the methodologies and standards which would be employed during the watching brief and was submitted to English Heritage and Wiltshire Council for approval.
- 1.1.4 The WSI was prepared in line with guidelines set out within *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* ('MoRPHE', English Heritage 2008) and the Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 2008).
- 1.1.5 The watching brief was carried out from 19th July 2011 to 30th July 2011

1.2 The Site, location and geology

- 1.2.1 The Route is positioned along the Packway to the west of Fargo Road ammunition compound and to the east of Rollestone Crossroads. The Route is bounded to the south by the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and to the north by the Larkhill Artillery Ranges (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.2 The surrounding area consists of arable farmland to the south and the MOD Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) to the north.
- 1.2.3 British Geological Survey maps of the area (1:50 000 solid and drift series, sheet 298) indicate that the underlying geology in the area comprised Upper Chalk.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The Route is situated immediately outside the northern limits of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site which comprises a highly significant prehistoric funereal and monumental landscape, and includes many

important sites and find spots of a predominantly Neolithic and Bronze Age date.

- 2.1.2 A Bronze Age barrow cemetery (SM 10233) is positioned partially within, but largely to the north of the Packway. The monument includes nine round barrows which together form a nucleated round barrow cemetery on Rollestone Bake Farm, 300m north-west of Fargo Road ammunition compound. The cemetery contains six bowl barrows, arranged in a linear group aligned broadly north to south, two disc barrows and a saucer barrow. The saucer barrow forms an outlier to the cemetery and is the subject of a separate Scheduling.
- 2.1.3 Of the bowl barrow mounds, only four are visible as earthworks, the other two having been levelled, possibly by recent military activity. The surviving mounds range in size from 15m to 20m in diameter and are up to 1m high. Two of the barrow mounds are cut by the line of the road.
- 2.1.4 The easternmost of the two disc barrows, some 100m east of the line of bowl barrows, is c. 46m in diameter and includes a mound and surrounding berm or platform. Although difficult to identify, a second disc barrow is recorded immediately to the west.
- 2.1.5 A circular feature with a possible entrance on the northern side has been identified by aerial photography (RCHME 1995) to the south-east of the barrow cemetery and forms one of many features identified from aerial photographic transcription within the immediate area. Further ring ditches relating to probable ploughed out round barrows are recorded to the north and south of the Packway.
- 2.1.6 Knighton Barrow, a Neolithic long barrow, is recorded approximately 600m to the west of the Route and to the north, Bronze Age tools have been found. In addition, archaeological evaluation within Larkhill Barracks to the east of the Route identified two adjacent pits and a posthole. Although some truncation by later military activity had occurred, both pits produced worked and burnt flint, animal bone and Bronze Age pottery.
- 2.1.7 An archaeological watching brief undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in February 2009 (Wessex Archaeology 2009), during the formation of a car park within Alanbrooke Barracks to the north-east of the Route revealed evidence of probable prehistoric settlement in the form of approximately twenty-five postholes. Eight of the postholes formed what may be the remains of a sub-circular post-built structure, with an internal diameter of 4.6m.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The aim of the watching brief was to establish, within the constraints of the agreed strategy, the presence or absence, location, extent, date, condition, character and depth of any surviving remains, which may be affected by the proposed development.

4 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works undertaken during the watching brief were conducted in accordance with the methods and standards outlined within the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA, 2011), and the requirements of the Client, Wiltshire Council and English Heritage. All site attendance and recording was conducted in compliance with the Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidelines for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008).

4.2 Fieldwork

4.2.1 Fieldwork consisted of the monitoring of intrusive works within the Route, and comprised a number of launch pits for lateral drilling, as well as an open cut trench where the Packway passes through the Scheduled Monument.

4.2.2 Excavations were undertaken using a mini digger and a hydraulic breaker, to remove the highways surfaces and foundations. This was conducted under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. When necessary the machine excavation was halted to allow archaeological investigations by hand.

4.2.3 Six launch pits, each measuring c. 2m x 1m x 1m deep, were machine excavated under archaeological supervision. A single trench, measuring 110m in length was excavated within the southern limits of the Scheduled area. The trench measured 0.4m wide and between 0.5m and 0.6m deep.

4.3 Health and Safety

4.3.1 All work was carried out in accordance with Health and Safety at Work *etc.* act of 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety regulations of 1992 as well as all other relevant Health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time the work commenced.

4.3.2 In advance of the fieldwork, a Risk Assessment was prepared. All staff involved with the project signed and complied with this document.

4.4 Recording

4.4.1 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.

4.4.2 During the fieldwork a full photographic record was maintained and included all intrusive excavation, using a digital camera with a 10 mega pixel image sensor. All digital images will be subjected to managed quality control and curation processes, resulting in appropriately embedded metadata within the image to ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

5 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 No archaeological features were exposed during the intrusive works, and no artefacts were recovered.

5.2 Stratigraphic Sequence

- 5.2.1 The stratigraphy of the open cut trench and launch pits were broadly consistent and dominated by the roads make up and construction. This consisted of tarmac overlying loose gravel and compacted stone foundations located above the chalk natural (**Plate 1 & Plate 2**).
- 5.2.2 The launch pits were excavated to a total depth of approx 1m, whilst the open cut trench was left at the level of the natural chalk geology.
- 5.2.3 In each intervention, the absence of the characteristic 'tiger stripes' within the upper levels of the natural chalk (**Figure 2, plate 3**) suggests the road has been graded to a single level during it's initial construction, and in so doing, destroyed any surviving archaeological features which may have been present.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL

- 6.1.1 No features or deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1.1 Despite the high archaeological potential of the Route, being positioned partially within the Scheduled Monument and on the northern boundary of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, no archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were discovered during the course of the excavations.
- 7.1.2 In both the launch pits and the open cut trench, the highway's construction was located immediately above the natural chalk geology and lacked a well developed subsoil. The absence of the characteristic 'tiger stripes' within the upper levels of the natural chalk suggests the Route had been graded down to the current level during the original construction of the Packway.

8 ARCHIVE

- 8.1.1 Arrangements will be made with the local museum for the deposition of the archive.
- 8.1.2 On the completion of the report the archive will be cross-referenced and made internally consistent before deposition. The archive will include copies of all photographs and paper records produced during the watching brief.
- 8.1.3 The completed archive will be prepared in accordance to guidelines outlined in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (Walker 1990).

9 REFERENCES

Walker, K. 1990: *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage*. UKIC Archaeology section.

English Heritage, 1991: *Management of Archaeological Projects*.

IfA, 2008: *Standards and Guidelines for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.

RCHME (1995): *Aerial Photographic Transcription*

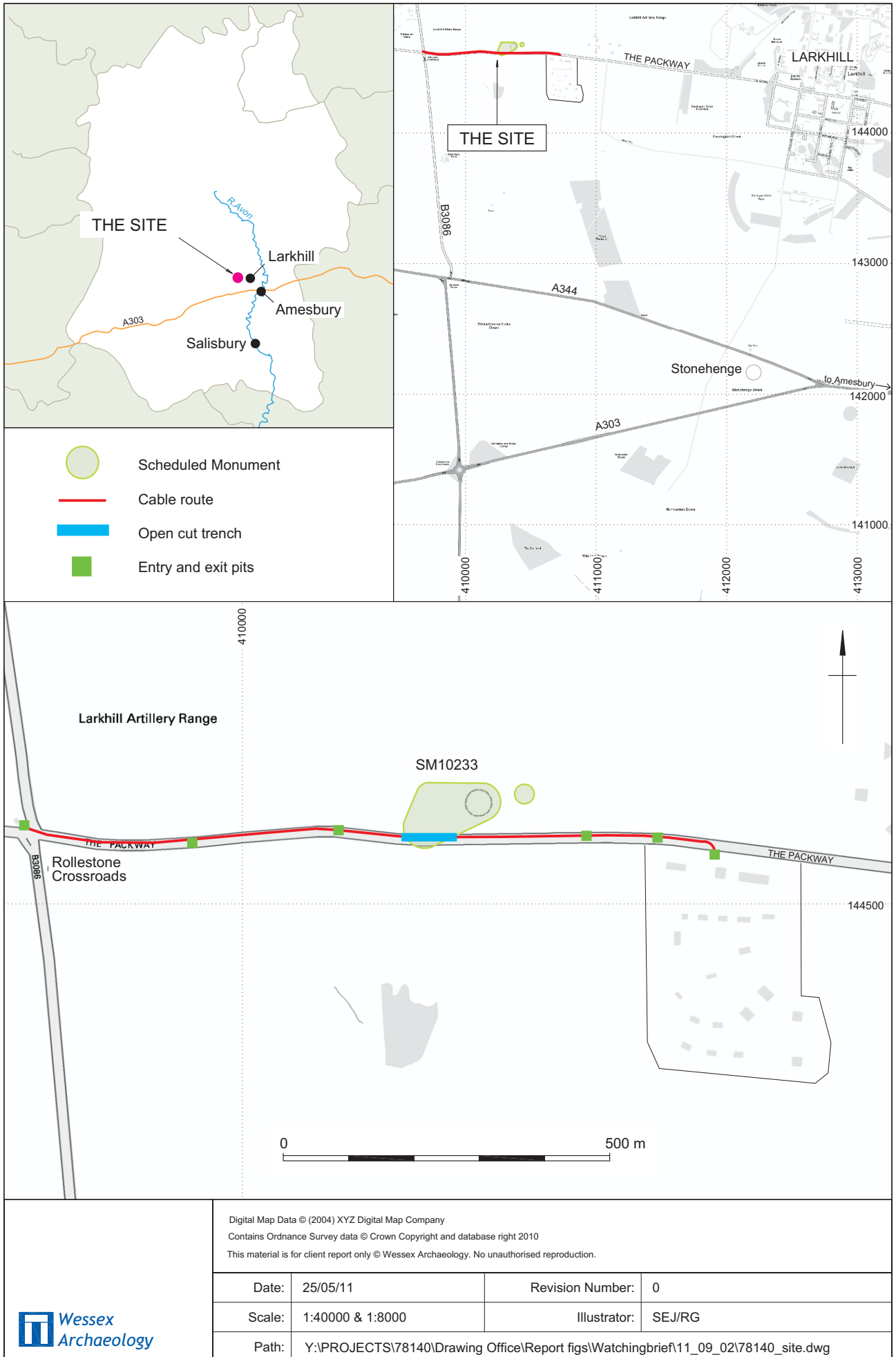
Wessex Archaeology 2009: *Archaeological Watching Brief Report: Alanbrooke Barracks, Larkhill Camp, Larkhill, Wiltshire: Report Reference 70411.05*

Wessex Archaeology 2011: *Project Design for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Fargo Road, Shrewton, Wiltshire. Report Reference: 78140.01*

APPENDIX 1: OASIS RECORD

OASIS ID - wessexar1-110990

| Versions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| View | Version | Completed by | Email | Date | |
| View 1 | 1 | Sue Farr | s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk | 29 | September 2011 |
| Completed sections in current version | | | | | |
| Details | Location | Creators | Archive | Publications | |
| Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | 1/1 | |
| Validated sections in current version | | | | | |
| Details | Location | Creators | Archive | Publications | |
| No | No | No | No | 0/1 | |
| File submission and form progress | | | | | |
| Grey literature report submitted? | No | Grey literature report filename/s | | | |
| Images submitted? | No | Image filename/s | | | |
| Boundary file submitted? | No | Boundary filename | | | |
| HER signed off? | | NMR signed off? | | | |



Site location plan showing cable route and watching brief areas

Figure 1



Plate 1: Section through road surface showing road construction down to chalk natural



Plate 2: Fully excavated launch pit at east end of trench



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Plate 3: Chalk natural at base of trench

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