



Danebury Hillfort, Nether Wallop, Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Figure 1 Site location plan

Plate 1 View of trench looking north-east

Plate 2 View of trench looking west after the removal of rabbit burrow with Blackstoke Hill in the background

Plate 3 View of trench looking west with Blackstoke Hill in the background

Front cover Fence foundation trench with views to the east

Back cover Views to the south

**DANEBURY HILLFORT,
NETHER WALLOP,
HAMPSHIRE****Archaeological Watching Brief Report****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by A.G. Lambert and Partners to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of rabbit proof fencing around the southern boundary of Danebury Hillfort, Nether Wallop, Hampshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 432385 137658.

Danebury Hillfort is a Scheduled Monument (SM HA53) and Scheduled Monument Consent (ref SC0009445) was granted by English Heritage (on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport) on condition an archaeological watching brief was maintained during the groundworks.

A watching brief was maintained during the machine excavation of a narrow trench positioned parallel to the southern boundary of the hillfort. The machine excavated trench measured 0.4m wide and on average 0.15m deep and as such, did not extend below the depth of the modern plough soil horizon. The presence of existing rabbit burrows meant it was necessary to increase the depth of the trench in one location. The upper surface of the natural chalk geology was revealed at 0.4m below ground level and exposed evidence of plough scarring.

No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the watching brief. Three rolled fragments of burnt flint, one piece of slate, two fragments of modern brick and a length of rope were identified but were not retained.

The watching brief was undertaken on 24th October 2011.

**DANEBURY HILLFORT,
NETHER WALLOP,
HAMPSHIRE**

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by A. G. Lambert and Partners and Wessex Archaeology would particularly like to thank Gerald Lambert in this regard.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Susan Clelland who also prepared this report. Illustrations were prepared by Elizabeth James. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

Danebury Hillfort, Nether Wallop, Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by A. G. Lambert and Partners (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of rabbit proof fencing at Danebury Hillfort, Nether Wallop, Hampshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 432385 137658 (hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 Danebury Hillfort is a Scheduled Monument (SM HA53) comprising an Iron Age multivallate hillfort. Detailed and extensive archaeological excavations have been undertaken within the interior of the hillfort by Barry Cunliffe between 1968 -1988.
- 1.1.3 Scheduled Monument Consent (ref SC0009445) was granted by English Heritage (on behalf of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport) to facilitate the erection of rabbit proof fencing around the southern boundary of the hillfort. on condition an archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavations.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2010), setting out the methodologies and standards to be implemented during the watching brief, was prepared by Wessex Archaeology in advance of the fieldwork commencing and submitted to English Heritage and the County Archaeologist at Dorset County Council for approval.
- 1.1.5 The watching brief was undertaken on 24th October 2011.

1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 Danebury hillfort is positioned approximately 3km to the east of the River Test and approximately 2km west of Wallop Brook, a tributary of the River Test in Nether Wallop parish.
- 1.2.2 Danebury is situated on a hill rising to a height of 143m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The land falls away steeply on the north and west sides, but less sharply on the southern boundary.
- 1.2.3 The British Geological Survey map for the area (1:50,000 Solid and Drift Series) indicates that the underlying geology of the Site consists of Middle Chalk. Excavations undertaken at Danebury (Cunliffe 1984) have indicated that occasional patches of clay with flints filling fissures within the chalk occur across the hill.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 Danebury is a multivallate hillfort and has been subject to a major programme of excavation which began in 1969. There are three volumes published on the excavations which have provided a detailed picture of the Site, the material remains from within it and the cultural landscape within which Danebury lies (Cunliffe & Poole, 1991).
- 2.1.2 The defences consist of 3 principle components. The inner main earthwork, which encloses an area of 5.3ha, comprises a large bank with an outer ditch and a slight outer bank. The earthwork has an elaborate eastern entrance and is the main defence. The middle earthwork comprises a bank and ditch which encloses a further 1.2ha. Beyond this is the outer earthwork which consists of a ditch and low bank and encloses the entire hilltop (c. 16.2ha).
- 2.1.3 The inner earthwork represents the earliest phase of the monument and forms the principal defensive structure. The middle earthwork was added either as an additional defence or to provide space for stock/grazing. The outer earthwork was added at a consistent distance of between 20 to 40m from the limit of the other earthwork structures.
- 2.1.4 Extensive settlement evidence is recorded from within the ramparts and includes 24 circular timber built structures, 41 rectangular or square timber structures, 99 four-post built structures and 1122 pits.

3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

3.1 General

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

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (Wessex Archaeology 2010) and the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008),

4.2 Health and Safety

- 4.2.1 The work was undertaken in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992. A health and safety Risk Assessment was produced by Wessex Archaeology prior to the commencement of the watching brief.

4.3 Fieldwork

- 4.3.1 A machine excavated trench, measuring approximately 600m in length, was positioned parallel to the southern boundary of Danebury Hillfort (**Figure 1**) and was required to partially bury the rabbit proof fencing. The trench was

aligned approximately 3m to 3.5m south of the existing boundary and was located within the set-aside margin of three connected arable fields.

- 4.3.2 The trench was excavated using a Volvo EC25 mini excavator equipped with a 0.4m wide toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision.
- 4.3.3 The archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, without causing unreasonable delay to the groundworks programme. A digital photographic record was maintained throughout the fieldwork, illustrating both the detail and the general context of the Site as a whole.

5 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section includes information on the natural deposits encountered and any archaeological features and deposits recorded during the watching brief. Details of the excavated contexts and deposits are retained in the project archive.

5.2 Fieldwork

- 5.2.1 The stratigraphic sequence within the trench comprised topsoil overlying natural chalk geology. The upper interface of the underlying chalk geology was exposed at 0.15m below the plough soil at either end of the fence line route (**Figure 1**). No archaeological features were observed.
- 5.2.2 The remainder of the trench was machine excavated to a depth of between 0.15 and 0.2m deep and terminated within the modern plough soil, indicating the plough soil increased in depth in the centre of the watching brief area. The trench was only excavated to a greater depth if it was necessary to remove existing burrows (see below)
- 5.2.3 Three interconnecting rabbit burrows and four additional deep single burrow runs were removed during the excavation of the trench. The three burrows were approximately 8m wide and recorded to a maximum depth of 0.4m below the ground surface. Modern plough scarring was observed at this interface indicating that the fields had previously been ploughed up to the field boundary.

6 FINDS

- 6.1.1 All excavated spoil was scanned for artefacts. Three rolled fragments of burnt flint, one piece of slate, two fragments of modern brick and a length of rope were identified but have not been retained.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

- 7.1.1 No material suitable for environmental analysis was present within the monitored areas.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1 Although the Site is situated within the boundaries of Danebury hillfort, no archaeological features or deposits were observed during the fieldwork.
- 8.1.2 Across the majority of the area, the topsoil strip was insufficient to expose the underlying geology and as a consequence, there remains the potential for archaeological features to be present within the areas investigated.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1 Preparation and Deposition

- 9.1.1 The archive, which consists of a report, daybook, survey location plan and cross referenced digital photographs is currently held under Wessex Archaeology project code **77420**.
- 9.1.2 The complete archaeological project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's *Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2007).
- 9.1.3 The project archive was prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990).

9.2 Copyright

- 9.2.1 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey), 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. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

10 REFERENCES

- Cunliffe, B. (1984), *Danebury: An Iron Age hillfort in Hampshire Vol. 1 The excavations 1969-1978*, CBA Research Report No 52a
- Cunliffe, B and Poole C(1991), *Danebury: An Iron Age hillfort in Hampshire Vol. 4 The excavations 1979-1988*, CBA Research Report No 73a
- Institute of Field Archaeologists (2008) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*
- Wessex Archaeology 2011, Danebury Hillfort, Nether Wallop, Hampshire *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpubl. client rep., ref 77420.01

APPENDIX 2: OASIS REPORT

OASIS ID - wessexar1-114106

Versions

View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	Sue Farr	s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk	17 November 2011

Completed sections in current version

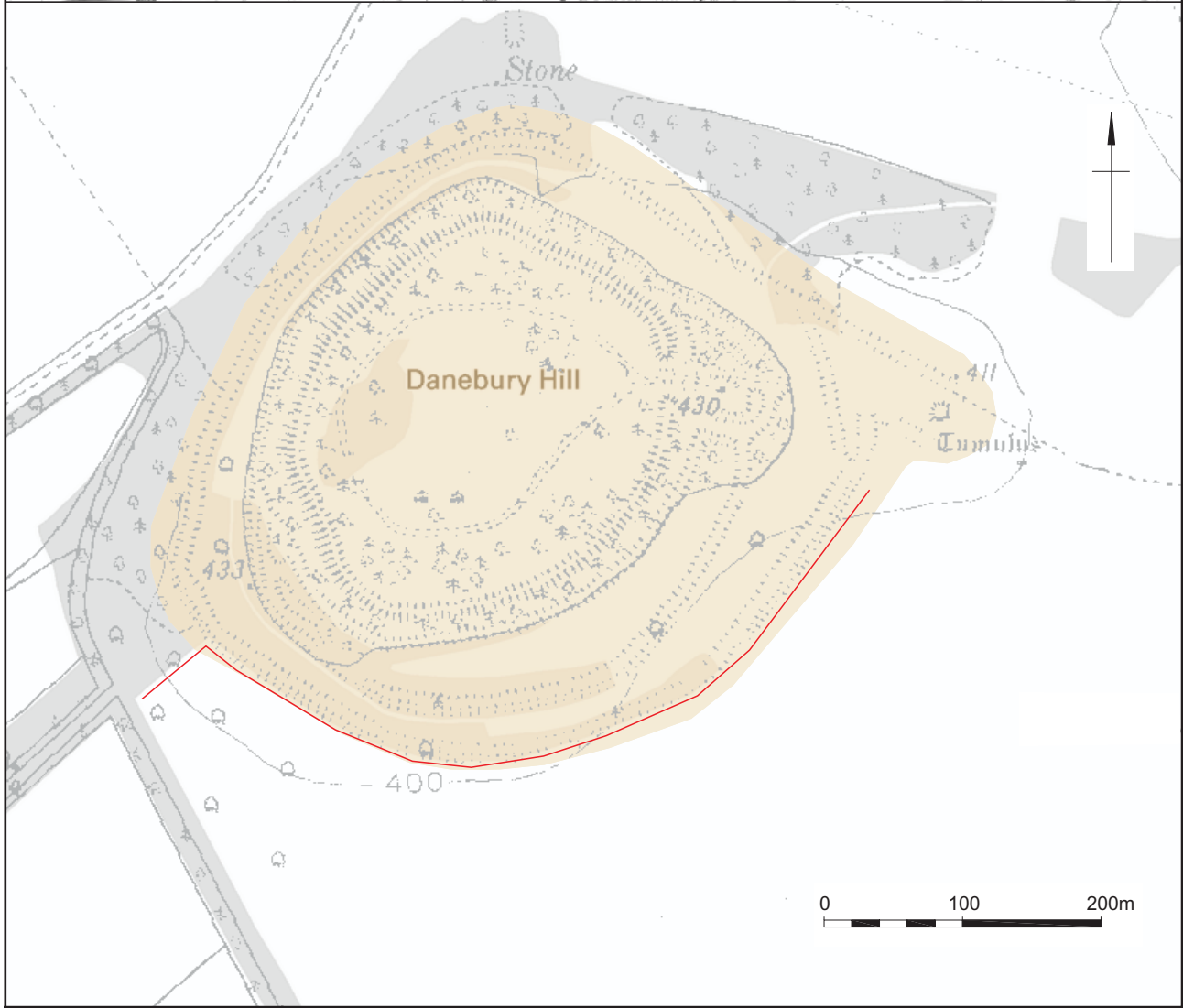
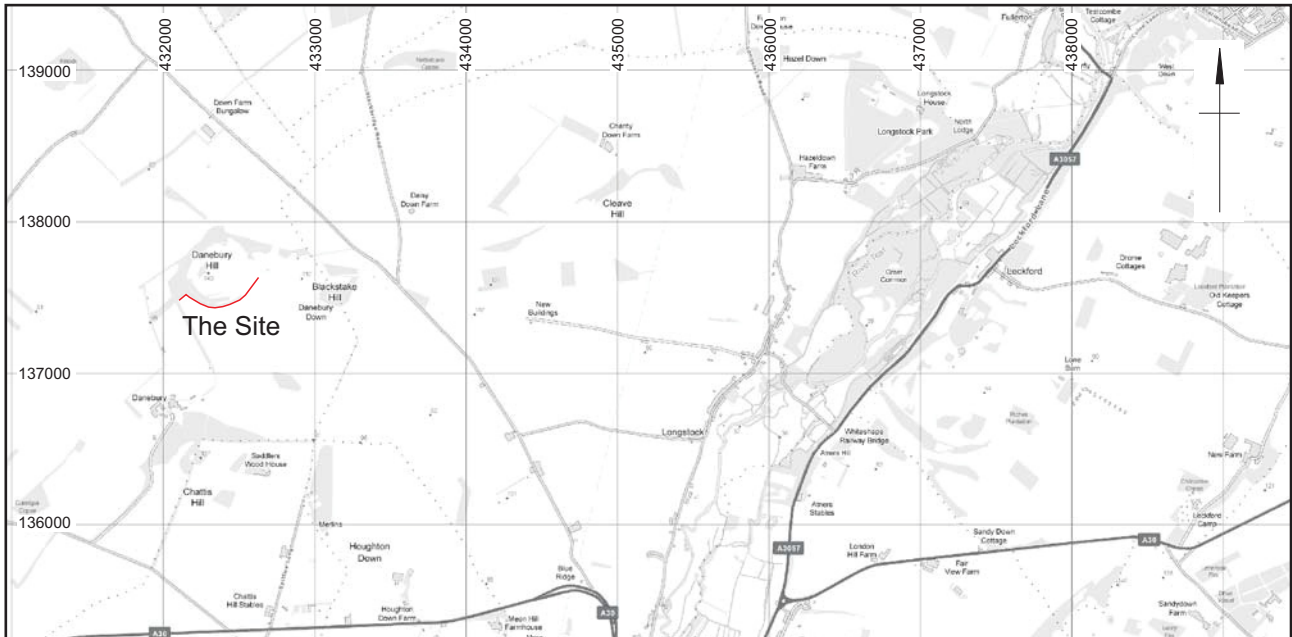
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Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1


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
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Site location plan

Figure 1




Plate 1: View of trench looking north-east



Plate 2: View of trench looking west after removal of rabbit burrow with Blackstoke Hill in the background



Plate 3: View of trench looking west with Blackstoke Hill in the background

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