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Livestock Building, Park Farm West Amesbury

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Ref: 86871.02
August 2015



**Livestock Building,
Park Farm, West Amesbury,
Wiltshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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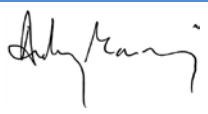
August 2015

Report Ref. 86871.02



Quality Assurance

Project Code	86871	Accession Code	-	Client Ref.	-
Planning Application Ref.	S/2012/1034	Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	414248 141693		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	I	LN	AIM		28th August 2015
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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Front Cover: Stripping the Site



Livestock Building, Park Farm, West Amesbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by the land owner, Mr Sawkill, to maintain an archaeological watching brief during the reduction of ground level in advance of construction of a livestock building at Park Farm, West Amesbury, Wiltshire. The stripped area measured approximately 10.5 m x 15.5 m, and was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 414248 141963. The footprint of the building is considerably larger than this, however due to the sloping nature of the ground the remainder of the area is to be built up in order to create a level platform.

The area is located within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, with a total of three Scheduled Monuments in the immediate vicinity of the site. These are Vespasian's Camp, (NHLE no. 1012126) The Stonehenge Avenue (NHLE no. 1010140) and a group of three bowl barrows (NHLE no. 1012132). Consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist confirmed that given the high archaeological potential, an archaeological watching brief was required during all open area stripping.

The archaeological watching brief was carried out on 12th August 2015. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the excavations.



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Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Mr Sawkill. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Clare King of Wiltshire County Archaeological Service (WCAS) for her advice during the project.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Lee Newton. The report was compiled by Lee Newton and the graphics were prepared by Rob Goller. The project was managed by Andrew Manning.



Livestock Building, Park Farm, West Amesbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Mr Sawkill ('the Client'), to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the erection of a new livestock building on land at Park Farm, Stonehenge Road, West Amesbury, Wiltshire (**Figure 1**), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 414248 141693 (hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 A planning application for the erection of the barn was made in July 2012 which was supported by an archaeological Heritage Statement (Wessex Archaeology 2012). The environs of the Site are rich in prehistoric archaeological monuments Consultation between the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service (WCAS) and the Inspector of Monuments at Historic England (formerly English Heritage) confirmed that the barn was within an area of high archaeological potential and that appropriate archaeological mitigation would be required.
- 1.1.3 According, planning permission (application number S/2012/1034) was granted in November 2012 with the following archaeological condition (condition 5):

No development shall commence within the area indicated (proposed development site) until:

- A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and*
- The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest – Policy CN20.

- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology and approved by the Wiltshire County Archaeological Service in advancement of the works being undertaken (WA 2015). This document laid out the methods and standards to be employed throughout the work, and was in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a).



1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located within the existing farm holding of Park Farm, on land to the west of Amesbury and north of the village of West Amesbury, Wiltshire, adjacent to the northern side of Stonehenge road and c350 m south of the A303. (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.1 The Site is located on sloping ground on the western side of a southerly opening to a dry valley, which extends broadly north-south from the A303 to the eastern edges of West Amesbury and the River Avon, and is parallel to the western limits of Amesbury Park and Vespasian's Camp hillfort.
- 1.1.2 The Site is situated at c85 m aOD. The proposed livestock building is situated immediately east of an existing general purposed steel framed building, and north of a steel framed farm storage building (**Plates 1 and 2**)
- 1.1.3 The Site is underlain by sedimentary Upper Chalk of the Upper Cretaceous period, which is overlain within the adjacent dry valley by recent and Pleistocene superficial deposits of Valley Gravel (British Geological Survey Online Viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background was assessed in detail within the Heritage Statement (Wessex Archaeology 2012) which considered the recorded historic environment resource within a 1 km Study Area around the Site in order to place the site within its historical and archaeological context. The results of this assessment and relevant Wiltshire Historic Environmental Records (NHER) and entries from the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) are summarised below.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 2.2.1 The Site is situated within part of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site which covers 2,665 hectares to the west of the town of Amesbury. It was inscribed as a World Heritage Site status in 1986. The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site Management Plan (Nichols and Tyson 2015) describes the World Heritage Site as *'internationally important for its complexes of outstanding prehistoric monuments... Together with interrelated monuments, and their associated landscapes, they demonstrate Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and mortuary practices resulting from around 2,000 years of continuous use and monument building between c 3,700 and 1,600 BC.*
- 2.2.2 There are three Scheduled Monuments within the Study Area, The Avenue (NHLE no. 1010140), a group of three bowl barrows (NHLE no. 1012132) and Vespasian's Camp (NHLE no. 1012126). In addition to these assets, a further three Scheduled bowl barrows (NHLE no. 1012130, 1012131 and 1012127) are situated within 400 m of the Site.
- 2.2.3 At its closest point The Avenue (NHLE no. 1010140) extends in a broadly north-north-west to south-south-east direction on higher ground c.100m west of the Site (**Figure 1**). The Avenue represents a ceremonial route-way or corridor defined by low parallel banks, where it has not been ploughed, c.12m apart with shallow outer flanking ditches. The Avenue extends in an irregular arc between Stonehenge to the northwest, and the River Avon to the south of the Site. Within the projected route of The Avenue two Iron Age pits have also been located (WHER no. SU14SW207).

- 2.2.4 Vespasian's Camp (NHLE no. 1012126), located next to the eastern edge of the Study Area is a large Iron Age hillfort, which represents the only Iron Age fortification within the Stonehenge area. Excavations have identified two phases to the construction of the western rampart, the second phase containing Early Iron Age occupational material. Recent research excavations also uncovered approximately 10,000 fragments of worked flint dating to the Mesolithic period on this site. This constitutes some of the oldest evidence of human activity within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site.
- 2.2.5 With the exception of the designated assets described above no further prehistoric activity is known within the Study Area and Romano-British activity is limited to a single pit found on the northern edge of West Amesbury, c.170m south of the Site (WHER no. SU14SW307).
- 2.2.6 It has been suggested that Amesbury may have been the centre of operations for the semi-legendary leader of resistance against Saxon encroachment during the late 5th century, Ambrosius Aurelianus. It has been assumed that the Iron Age fortifications at Vespasian's Camp represented the site of his stronghold, however, no physical evidence of re-fortification has been identified, and medieval documentation suggest that a defended site may have been located in the area of the present town.
- 2.2.7 Medieval earthworks at West Amesbury lie along the north banks of the River Avon (WHER no. SU14SW450). The village is recorded as West Amesbury in 1205 and may represent a planned colonization on Amesbury manor.
- 2.2.8 The Site is located in the former larger 18th century parkland owned by the Duke of Queensbury, which included the formal planting around Vespasian's Camp and the landscape westwards to the Kings Barrow Ridge.
- 2.2.9 A farm is not recorded on OS maps until the early 20th century, when a small building is recorded near the Stonehenge Road on the 1924 OS map. The later 1937 map shows a more substantial farm complex extending northwards with a series of geometric pens and structures in the fields to the north of the Site.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to:
- *provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains; and*
 - *place any identified archaeological remains within their historical context, particularly with reference to the known prehistoric features and finds found in the immediate and wider area.*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the WSI (WA 2015). All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014a).
- 3.2.2 The fieldwork consisted of the monitoring of groundwork made beneath the present ground surface. The stripped area measured approximately 10.5 x 15.5 m.



- 3.2.3 The groundwork was carried out under constant archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket (1 m in width). The mechanical excavation proceeded in spits to the top of the solid geological deposits (Upper Chalk). The machine excavated arisings were scanned for artefacts at regular intervals.

3.3 Recording

- 3.3.1 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.
- 3.3.2 A complete drawn record of the Site was compiled and included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal levels were calculated and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.
- 3.3.3 A photographic record was maintained during the watching brief using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.

3.4 Health and Safety

- 3.4.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 3.4.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992*, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following summary details the results of the archaeological watching brief carried out on the Site on 12th August 2015. (**Figure 1**).
- 4.1.2 The thin turf had already been removed prior to the archaeological watching brief taking place. The remaining topsoil and subsoil was removed under archaeological supervision to the top of the chalk, within the main impact footprint of the building (**Plate 3**). Stripped material was relocated to maintain a level base.
- 4.1.3 Where the top of the natural chalk was exposed, this was inspected but no archaeological features were observed. No residual finds were located during the watching brief.

5 ARTEFACTUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Artefactual Evidence

- 5.1.1 No archaeological finds were recovered during the course of the fieldwork.

5.2 Environmental Evidence

- 5.2.1 No material suitable for environmental sampling was observed within the monitored areas.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the excavations associated with the soil stripping. This is consistent with a separate archaeological watching brief conducted by AC Archaeology in 2000, immediately west of the Site on land now occupied by the present general purpose steel framed building (WA26). This watching brief also observed no pre-modern archaeological features, deposits or finds (AC Archaeology 2000).
- 6.1.2 However, both areas investigated in this and the 2000 fieldworks were concentrated within relatively small areas. Although neither works found any evidence of archaeological activity, the area is still clearly of high archaeological potential and the possibility still exists that archaeological features and deposits may survive outside of the area monitored.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

- 7.1.1 The normal holding museum, Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum in Salisbury, is not currently accepting archives. The archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's Salisbury office under the project code **86871** and will be deposited once arrangements can be agreed.

7.2 Preparation of Archive

- 7.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Devizes Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; Brown 2011; ADS 2013; ClfA 2014b).
- 7.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site code, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:
- 1 file of paper records and A3/A4 graphics.

7.3 Discard Policy

- 7.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant further analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.
- 7.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2011).

7.4 Security Copy

- 7.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.



8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

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9 APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: wessexar1-220875

Project details

Project name	Livestock Building, Park Farm, West Amesbury
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Sawkill to maintain an archaeological watching brief during the reduction of ground level in advance of construction of a proposed livestock building at Park Farm, West Amesbury, Wiltshire. The stripped area measured approximately 10.5 m x 15.5 m, and was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 414248 141963. The area is located within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. The archaeological watching brief was maintained during the removal of topsoil and subsoil from the area of the proposed development. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the excavations..
Project dates	Start: 12-08-2015 End: 12-08-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	86871 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WILTSHIRE SALISBURY AMESBURY Livestock Building, Park Farm, West Amesbury
Postcode	SP4 7DA
Study area	162.75 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 14248 41693 51.1737764007 -1.79616718123 51 10 25 N 001 47 46 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Andrew Manning
Project supervisor	Lee Newton



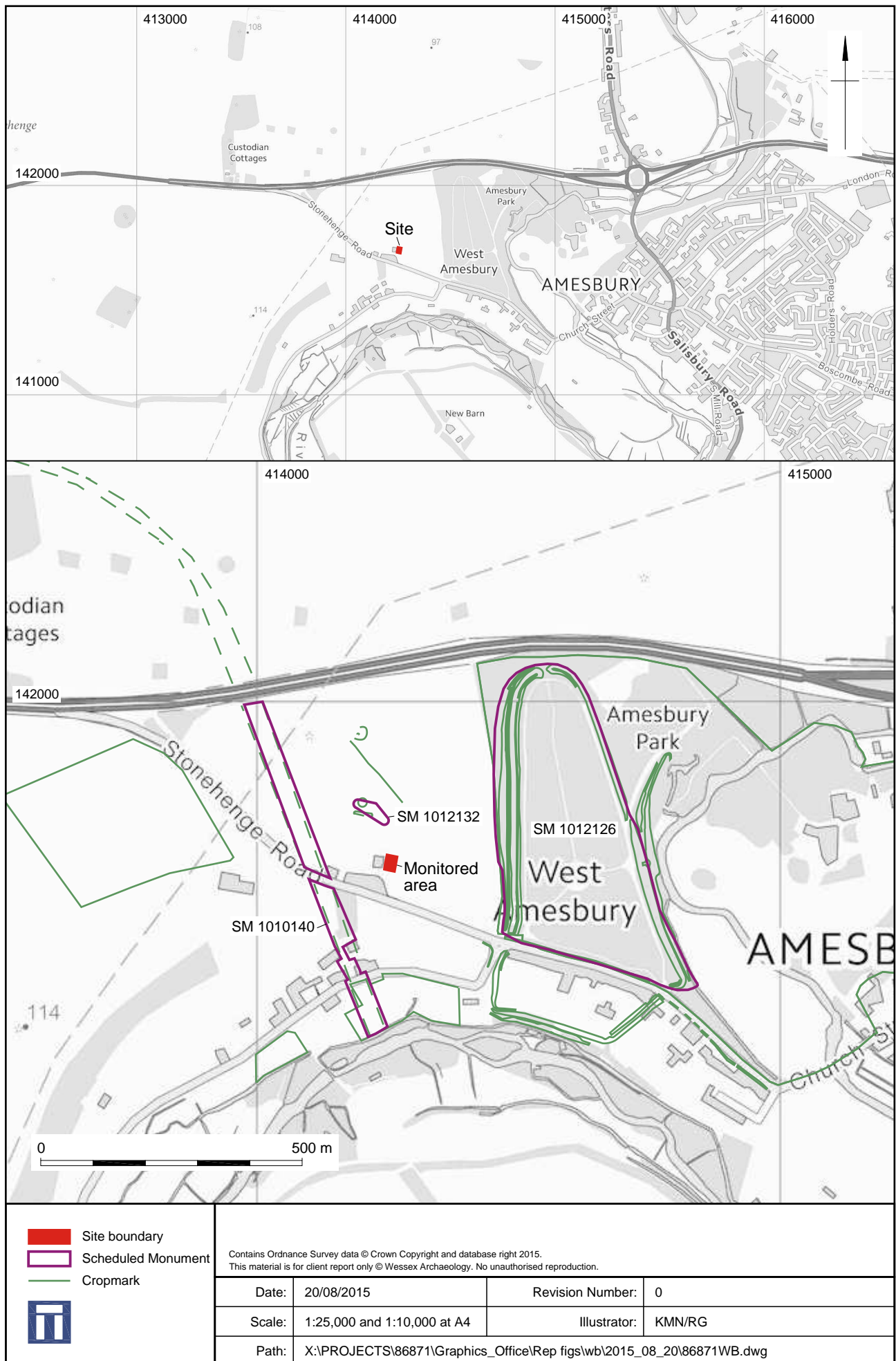
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
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Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum
Digital Archive ID	86871
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum
Paper Archive ID	86871
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Diary", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Livestock Building, Park Farm, West Amesbury, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Newton, L.
Other bibliographic details	report number 86871
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Wessex Archaeology - Salisbury
Description	A4 bound client report



Location of the Site and monitored area

Figure 1



Plate 1: View of the Site from The Avenue



Plate 2: View of the Site from the group of three barrows



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Plate 3: Stripped area from the north-west

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