



making sense of heritage

Charity Farm, Burlton Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Planning Ref: 14/02537/FUL
Ref: 113020.01
May 2016



**Charity Farm, Burlton,
Shropshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Charity Farm, Burlton, Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Lightsource to conduct an archaeological watching brief on the soil stripping operations prior to the construction of the access tracks and compound areas for the development of a solar farm. The development is located at Charity Farm, Burlton, Shropshire and is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 345600, 325350.

Areas impacted by the construction of the access roads across the site were stripped under archaeological supervision to the level of natural geology. The natural substrate was reached at an average depth of 0.3 m below ground level. No subsoil deposits were identified, with only a topsoil deposit being recorded.

The monitored groundworks identified no surviving archaeological remains. Numerous field drain and plough scars were observed cutting the natural substrate but no features pre-dating the post-medieval agricultural use of the land were identified. No finds were recovered from the topsoil strip that would indicate a more ephemeral archaeological presence on Site. The lack of identified features is consistent with the lack of known archaeological evidence previously identified in the vicinity of the site.

The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under Wessex Archaeology project code 113020. The archive will be deposited with Shropshire Museums under accession number E.00971. An OASIS form, ID wessexar1-251168 has been completed for this job.



Charity Farm, Burlton Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

The archaeological watching brief was commissioned by CgMs Consulting and thanks are extended to Sara Jago in this regard. The archaeological works were monitored by Andy Wigley (Historic Environment Manager) on behalf of Shropshire County Council. Fieldwork was conducted between 7th April and 15th April 2016 by Phil Maier and Michael Keech. Illustrations were produced by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed by Chris Swales for Wessex Archaeology.



Charity Farm, Burlton Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (hereafter the 'Client') to conduct an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the construction of access roads and compound areas associated with the development of a solar farm. The development was located at Charity Farm, Burlton, Shropshire and centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 345600, 325350 (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'; **Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological watching brief and this report are intended to fulfil the archaeological conditions attached to the consent for planning (planning Ref 14/02537/FUL).
- 1.1.3 The programme of archaeological works comprised a watching brief on the excavation of five access roads and associated compound areas.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by CgMs Consulting outlining the strategy and methodology for the work (CgMs 2014). The WSI was approved by Andy Wigley, (Historic Environment Manager) on behalf of Shropshire County Council, prior to any groundworks commencing. All archaeological work was undertaken in line with industry best practice (ClfA 2014a-d; Historic England 2015).
- 1.1.5 In format and content this document conforms with current best practice and to the guidance outlined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and Historic England (ClfA 2014a; 2014b, Historic England 2015).

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site was in use as agricultural land at the time of the archaeological works. It is bounded to the west and north by the B4397 and to the North. The Site is bounded to the east by the A528, with open farmland to the south.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the site comprises of comprises mudstone of the Upper Triassic Sidmouth Mudstone Formation, overlain by a superficial diamicton, Devensian Till.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The following section is reproduced from the Historic Environment Appraisal (CgMs 2013).



2.2 Prehistoric and Romano-British

- 2.2.1 There is no recorded activity within the Site and its immediate environs from the prehistoric or Roman period.
- 2.2.2 The closest notable prehistoric evidence can be found 1.5 km northwest of the watching brief area has been interpreted as a Bronze Age bowl barrow, which lies close to Castle Mound (Scheduled Monument, NMR68514, NHLE1016826),
- 2.2.3 The nearest substantial Iron Age feature is the Middle Iron Age hillfort known as The Berth, 2.6 km southwest of the Site.
- 2.2.4 The Site is located close to the route of the River Severn which has been of great importance as a route of communication since the prehistoric period, as such there is a general potential for encountering remains from this period within the Site.
- 2.2.5 No evidence for Roman activity has been recorded within 1 km of the Site boundary. The Roman road from *Viroconium* passed 10 km east of the Site, and possibly runs to a sandstone quarry at Grinshill, 7.2 km east of Charity Farm.

2.3 Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval

- 2.3.1 There is no recorded activity from the Anglo-Saxon period within the Site boundary nor evidence of Anglo-Saxon or medieval activity within 1 km of the Site.
- 2.3.2 There is little evidence for activity during the medieval and post-medieval periods within the Site and its environs, with the area likely used for agricultural purposes.

2.4 19th century and modern

- 2.4.1 There is little recorded evidence from the 19th century within the Site although cartographic evidence from the 1838 Tithe map shows the Site to be mainly within agricultural use, comprising of 17 different parcels of land.
- 2.4.2 The only notable changes to the land since this mapping have been the removal of hedgerows and boundary markers.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the project were:
- *to identify any archaeological remains present;*
 - *to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated;*
 - *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 any archaeological remains to be placed within their local, regional and national contexts; and*
 - *to produce an accurate and comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits disturbed by the works.*



4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the approved WSI (CgMs 2014) and professional standards and guidelines (ClfA 2014a-d). The programme of archaeological works comprised a watching brief on the excavation of five access roads and associated compound areas (**Figure 1**). Compounds A, B and D were monitored in line with the approved WSI. However, Compound C was not monitored after discussions between CgMs and Andy Wigley (SCC) and following on from the negative results within the previously observed watching brief areas.

4.2 Machine excavation

4.2.1 Excavation was conducted using a mechanical excavator fitted with toothless bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. The areas of impact were stripped in level spits to the level of natural geology and recorded.

4.3 Recording

4.3.1 All deposits encountered were recorded using Wessex Archaeology *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A digital photographic record was maintained but no features were encountered which would require recording with 35 mm film.

4.4 Specialist strategies

4.4.1 Strategies for the recovery of finds and environmental samples were included in the WSI (CgMs 2014) but were not required during fieldwork.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information held in the Site archive, with a full list of context numbers and context descriptions contained in **Appendix 1**.

5.2 Access Road 1

5.2.1 Access Road 1 ran from the southwest corner of the Site on a northeast to southwest alignment. Compound A was also stripped during this phase of work. The access road strip measured 250 m in length and 4 m in width. (**Figure 1, Plate 1**).

5.2.2 No archaeology was present within Access Road 1, although a number of modern land drains and plough scars were visible. A natural substrate of compact dark-red brown sandy clay, with sparse patches of sub angular stones. Layer **102**, was encountered at a depth of 0.3 m, overlain by a mid-brown silty clay topsoil **101**. No subsoil horizon was present (**Plate 2**).

5.3 Access Road 2

5.3.1 Access Road 2 ran east to west from the southwest corner of the Site. The access road strip measured 370 m in length and was 4 m wide (**Figure 1, Plates 3 and 4**). Compound B was also stripped during this phase of work.



5.3.2 No archaeology was present along Access Road 2, although some field drains and plough scars were evident. The natural substrate, **202**, was encountered at an average depth of 0.3 m, overlain by a mid-brown silty clay topsoil, **201**. No subsoil horizon was present. The natural geology varied between compact mid-red brown silty clay at the east of the trench (same as **102**), and moderately loose light orange yellow clay towards the west of the trench.

5.4 Access Road 3

5.4.1 Access Road 3 ran south to north along the central portion of the Site. The access road strip measured 360 m in length and was 4 m wide. Compound D was also stripped during this phase of work (**Figure 1**).

5.4.2 The access road strip was excavated to a depth of 0.24 m (**Plate 5**). The natural substrate was a compact mid-brown yellow compact silty clay **302**. This was overlain by topsoil **301**. No archaeology was encountered. No subsoil horizon was present.

5.5 Access Road 4

5.5.1 Access Road 4 forms a spur road to the east off of Access Road 2. Access Road 4 ran west to east for 85 m before turning sharply south for 250 m in length. The strip was 4 m wide (**Figure 1**, **Plate 6**).

5.5.2 No archaeology was present along Access Road 4, although many field drains were evident at the sharp southerly turn. The natural substrate, a compact mid-brown yellow compact silty clay, **402**, was encountered at an average depth of 0.27 m, overlain by a mid-brown silty clay topsoil, **401**. No subsoil horizon was present.

5.6 Access Road 5

5.6.1 Trench 5 forms a spur to the south of Access Road 2. Access Road 5 ran southwest for 150 m in length, with a width of 4 m (**Figure 1**, **Plate 7**).

5.6.2 No archaeology was present along the access road, a number of land drains and plough scars were present. The natural substrate was a compact mid-red silty clay, **502**, and recorded at a depth of 0.3 m. This was overlain by a mid brownish silty clay topsoil **501**. No subsoil was present.

5.7 Conclusions

5.7.1 The monitored groundworks revealed no surviving archaeological remains. Numerous field drain and plough scars were observed cutting the natural substrate but no features pre-dating the post-medieval agricultural use of the land were identified. No finds were recovered from the topsoil strip that would indicate a more ephemeral archaeological presence on Site. The lack of archaeological evidence is consistent with the lack of known archaeological remains previously identified in the vicinity of the Site.

6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Archive

6.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with National guidelines for archive preparation and in accordance with guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 2001, SMA 1995; ClfA 2014d; Brown 2011; ADS 2013). Wessex Archaeology will retain the archive until deposition with the relevant body.



6.1.2 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with the Shropshire Museum Service. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project under accession number E.00971.

6.1.3 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code, and a full index will be prepared.

6.2 Copyright

6.2.1 The archaeological contractor retains full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the Client for the use of the report by the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements can be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority.

6.2.2 The archaeological contractor will assign copyright to the Client upon written request but retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (Chapter IV, s.79).

6.3 Security copy

6.3.1 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.



7 REFERENCES

7.1 Bibliography

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- CgMs, 2014, *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Works In respect of Charity Farm, Burlton, Shropshire*
- ClfA, 2014a, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief*
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- ClfA, 2014c, *Codes of Conduct*
- ClfA, 2014d, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA), 2014c. *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, Institute for Archaeologists
- Historic England, 2015, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*.
- Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA), 1995, *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC), 2001, *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage*.

7.2 On-line resources

British Geological Survey: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Heritage Gateway: <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>



8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1: Context descriptions

Trench No. 1	Access Road 1 and Compound A	Max depth: 0.30m bgl
Context	Description	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil: Mid-brown silty clay	0 – 0.30m
102	Natural: Dark-red brown sandy clay	0.30m+

Trench No. 2	Access Road 2 and Compound B	Max depth: 0.30m bgl
Context	Description	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil: Mid-brown silty clay	0 – 0.30m
202	Natural: Compact mid-red brown silty clay/ light orange yellow clay	0.30m+

Trench No. 3	Access Road 3 and Compound D	Max depth: 0.30m bgl
Context	Description	Depth (m)
301	Topsoil: Mid-brown silty clay	0 – 0.24m
302	Natural: Mid-brown yellow compact silty clay	0.24m+

Trench No. 4	Access Road 4	Max depth: 0.30m bgl
Context	Description	Depth (m)
401	Topsoil: Mid-brown silty clay	0 – 0.27m
402	Natural: Mid-brown yellow compact silty clay	0.27m+

Trench No. 5	Access Road 5	Max depth: 0.30m bgl
Context	Description	Depth (m)
501	Topsoil: Mid-brown silty clay	0 – 0.30m
502	Natural: Compact mid red silty clay	0.30m+



8.2 Appendix 2: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-251168

Project details

Project name	Charity Farm, Burlton, Shropshire
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of Lightsource to conduct an archaeological watching brief on the soil stripping operations prior to the construction of the access tracks and compound areas for the development of a solar farm. The development is located at Charity Farm, Burlton, Shropshire and is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 345600, 325350. Areas impacted by the construction of the access roads across the site were stripped under archaeological supervision to the level of natural geology. The natural substrate was reached at an average depth of 0.3 m below ground level. No subsoil deposits were identified, with only a topsoil deposit being recorded. The monitored groundworks identified no surviving archaeological remains. Numerous field drain and plough scars were observed cutting the natural substrate but no features pre-dating the post-medieval agricultural use of the land were identified. No finds were recovered identified from the topsoil strip which would indicate a more ephemeral archaeological presence on Site. The lack of identified features is consistent with the lack of known archaeological features previously identified in the vicinity of the site.
Project dates	Start: 07-04-2016 End: 15-04-2016
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	113020 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	14/02537/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 4 - Character Undetermined
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location



Country	England
Site location	SHROPSHIRE NORTH SHROPSHIRE LOPPINGTON Charity Farm, Burlton
Postcode	SY4 5SX
Study area	0 Hectares
Site coordinates	SJ 45600 85950 53.367347794635 -2.817647783743 53 22 02 N 002 49 03 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting Ltd.
Project design originator	CgMS Consulting Ltd
Project director/manager	Chris Swales
Project supervisor	Philip Maier
Project supervisor	Michael Keech
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

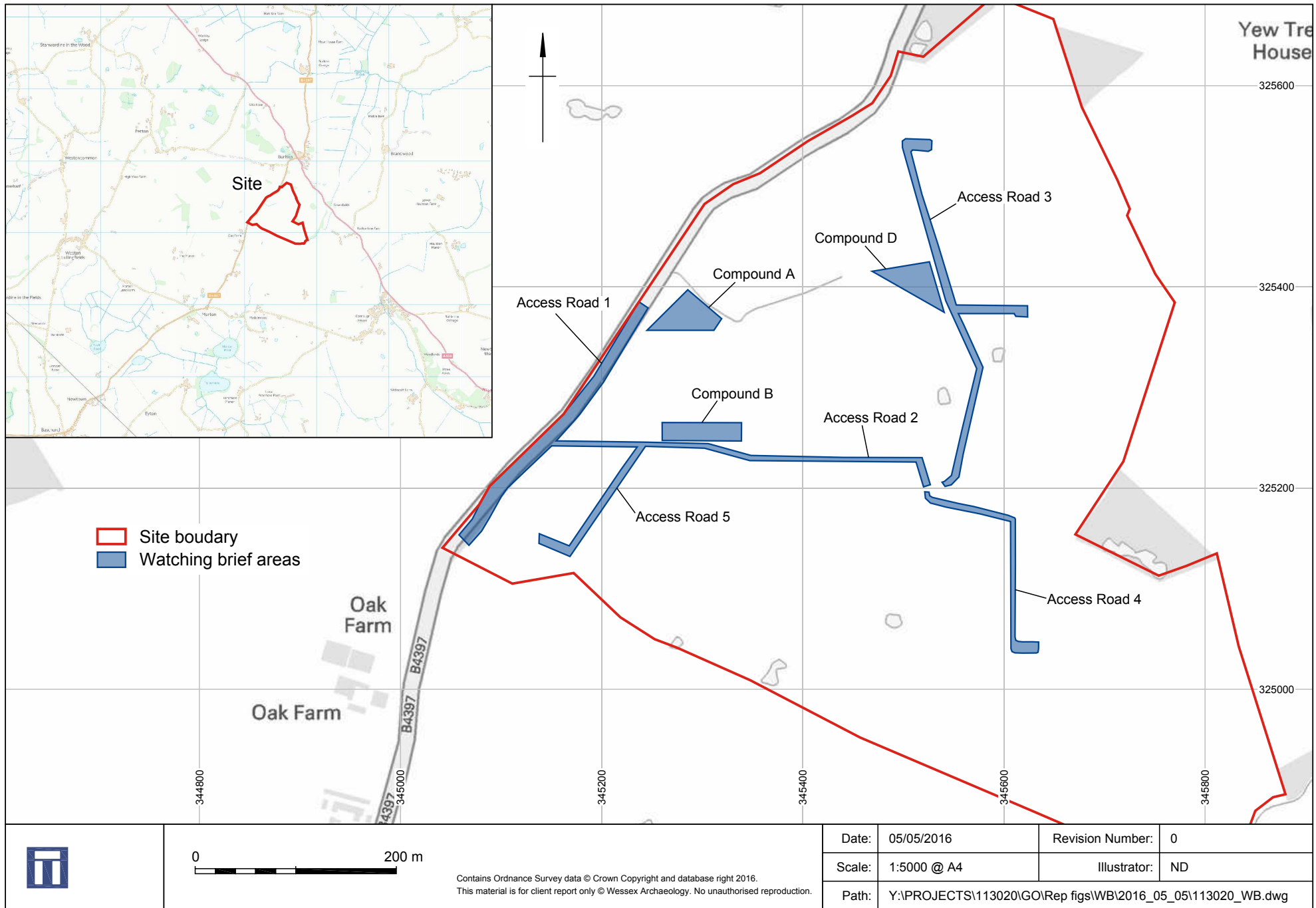
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Shropshire Museum Service
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Shropshire Museum Service
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Photograph","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Site location and plan of watching brief areas

Figure 1



Plate 1: General view of Access Road 1, facing south



Plate 2: Representative section along Access Road 1


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Plate 3: General view Access Road 2, facing east



Plate 4: General view Compound B within Access Road 2, facing northeast



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Plate 5: General view of Access Road 3, facing south



Plate 6: General view of southern limit of Access Road 4, facing northwest

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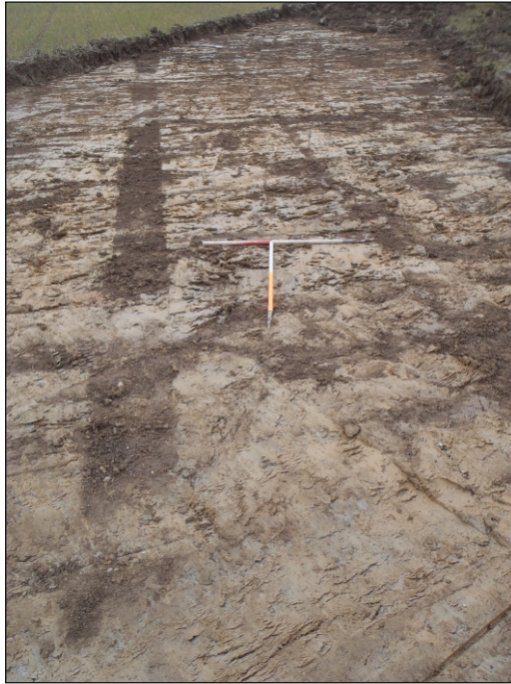



Plate 7: General view Access Road 5, facing northeast

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