



Bedwyn Water Treatment Works Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Ref: 114160.03
November 2016



**Bedwyn WTW
Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by eight20 on behalf of Thames Water to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Bedwyn Water Treatment Works, Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 428350 165325. The watching brief relates to groundworks associated with the excavation of a new soakaway with 200 m of pipeline and associated works. These include the installation of a gravelled foot path along the edge of the field, a discharge manhole and a concrete path. The watching brief revealed two pits, a ditch and a shallow gully, all of which were undated. All four features were located at the north-eastern end of the watching brief area. The watching brief fieldwork was completed in a number of stages between the 22nd August and the 21st October 2016.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Lauren Hughes of Costain for commissioning the work on behalf of eight20 and in particular Luke Duckett, Site Manager for Costain for his help and assistance during the course of the works. Thanks are also due to Nicholas Cooke, Principal Archaeologist for Atkins Global who monitored the archaeological works on behalf of eight20, for his advice and support during the course of the works.

The watching brief was carried out by Piotr Orczewski, Rachel Williams and Lee Newton. This report was compiled by Rachel Williams and Lee Newton. The flint was assessed by Matt Leivers. The illustrations were prepared by Elizabeth James. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Ruth Panes.



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by eight2O on behalf of Thames Water to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Bedwyn Water Treatment Works (WTW), Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 428350 165325 (hereafter the 'Site') (**Figure 1**). The watching brief relates to the excavation of a new soakaway and 200 m of pipeline and associated works which include the installation of a gravelled foot path along the edge of the field, a discharge manhole and a concrete path.
- 1.1.2 The works are considered to be permitted development and as such do not require planning permission. However in light of the potential for buried archaeological remains it was recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during the intrusive groundworks.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location, topography and geology

- 2.1.1 The Site lies on the northern edge of Great Bedwyn in Wiltshire, to the north of the road to Little Bedwyn (**Figure 1**). The works took place partially within the existing Thames Water facility, with the soakaway and pipeline predominantly within the agricultural field lying adjacent to the east.
- 2.1.2 The Site lies between 124 m and 128 m above Ordnance Datum (OD) on a gentle slope from Chisbury to the north-west down to the River Dun 250 m to the south-east. The underlying geology is mapped as Newhaven Chalk Formation, with no recorded superficial deposits overlying the Site (British Geological Survey).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the archaeological and historical background of the Site. Relevant National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) and National Heritage List for England (NHLE) records are included where appropriate.

3.2 Prehistoric

- 3.2.1 Early evidence of human activity is relatively sparse within the vicinity of the Site. A Lower Palaeolithic handaxe has been found at Chisbury Pit 1.1 km to the north, however this was on the edge of High Terrace Gravel geology with higher archaeological potential from this period than the deposits mapped within the Site. The other findspots within the surrounding landscape have also been found in areas of terrace gravels.

- 3.2.2 Similarly, there is little from the Mesolithic or Neolithic in the surrounding landscape, a single tranchet axe has been found to the south of Great Bedwyn. A Neolithic flint assemblage including a core, broken scraper, flake and 4 utilized flakes were found near Chisbury Camp to the north. A possible long barrow is recorded 2 km to the west.
- 3.2.3 The site of a round barrow is recorded in the 18th century by Stukeley in *Iter curios* between Great Bedwyn and Chisbury, roughly 25 m to the south-west of the Site. No surface trace of this has been identified and the earthwork has probably been ploughed out, therefore the precise location is unknown.
- 3.2.4 A further possible ring ditch identified as a cropmark has been identified to the south-east on the opposite bank of the River Dun. There are numerous other ring ditches and barrows along the valley further from the Site. This indicates a busy landscape during the Bronze Age.

3.3 Iron Age and Romano-British

- 3.3.1 Evidence of activity from these periods within the vicinity of the Site is concentrated 500 m to the north-west of the Site around the Scheduled Iron Age hillfort of Chisbury (NHLE 1017290). Some small scale excavations have found evidence of Romano-British occupation, as well as post-medieval activity.
- 3.3.2 A number of Roman finds, including several coins, axes, adzes, harness and a hoard of 99 small 4th century bronze coins have been made to the north of the Site, predominantly to the east of Chisbury camp, but also within the field that contains the Site.
- 3.3.3 Excavations within Great Bedwyn itself have also uncovered evidence of activity from the period. An Iron Age pit containing pottery was found on Farm Lane 500 m to the south-west.

3.4 Saxon and medieval

- 3.4.1 It has been suggested that Chisbury is the site of *Cissanbyrig*, a burh listed on the Burghal Hidage another possible site is at nearby Great Bedwyn.
- 3.4.2 The Bedwyn Dyke, which may be a continuation of Wansdyke, is a probable early linear fortification, or landscape boundary dating from around the 5th to 6th centuries. The earthworks are most pronounced to the east of the River Dun, however the line of this feature can be traced to the south of the Site and along the road to the south-west of the Site. This has been reflected in the parish boundary.
- 3.4.3 A 13th century chapel is located in Chisbury Camp nearest to the Site. This was built by the lord of Chisbury manor as a chapel-of-ease to allow the lord and local people to attend services and pay their taxes, or tithes, without having to travel to the parish church at Great Bedwyn.

3.5 Post-medieval, 19th century and modern

- 3.5.1 A Cold War Royal Observer Corps monitoring post is recorded in the vicinity of the Site. The post is located adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the WTW. This post is now in private ownership and is used as an occasional meeting place.



4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 General aims and objectives

4.1.1 The aims of the archaeological works were:

- *to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works; including*
 - *to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard;*
 - *to confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;*
 - *to determine or confirm the approximate extent of any remains;*
 - *to determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains; and*
 - *to determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.*
- *to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and*
- *to prepare a report on the results of the watching brief.*

4.2 Fieldwork methodology

4.2.1 The full detailed methodology of the archaeological works was set out in the agreed WSI (WA 2016) and comprised of the monitoring of all intrusive groundworks. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance on an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a).

4.2.2 The trenches and foundations were excavated using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator employing a toothless ditching bucket, under the constant supervision by an experienced archaeologist. Machine levels were determined by construction levels with groundwork temporarily halted whilst investigations were carried out by WA staff. The topsoil was separated from the subsoil and the spoil from the trenches scanned for artefacts.

4.2.3 An initial topsoil strip was undertaken of an area which encompassed the route of the pipe trench, the soakaway and the discharge manhole. Excavation of subsoil and underlying natural deposits were undertaken within the pipe trench, the soakaway trench and the discharge manhole to the relevant construction levels (**Figure 1**).

4.3 Monitoring

4.3.1 WA informed the eight20 Principal Archaeologist of the commencement of fieldwork and the progress of the investigations on the Site.

4.4 Recording

4.4.1 All archaeological deposits were recorded using WA's *pro forma* record sheets with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Archaeological features and deposits were hand-drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.

- 4.4.2 A full photographic record was maintained during the watching brief using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. The record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features, finds excavated, and the site as a whole. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 4.4.3 The survey was carried out with a Leica Viva series GNSS unit, using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 (02) British National Grid coordinate system. A unique site code **114160** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

4.5 Specialist strategies

Artefact

- 4.5.1 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date.
- 4.5.2 All retained artefacts were, as a minimum, washed, weighed, counted and identified. All artefacts recovered during the excavations on the Site are the property of the landowner. They are suitably bagged, boxed in accordance with the guidance given by the relevant museum and generally in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (ClfA 2014b) and the Museums and Galleries Commissions Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (1992). On completion of the archaeological post-excavation programme and with the permission of the landowner it is anticipated that any artefacts will be deposited with the relevant museum.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The following section provides a summary description of the results of the archaeological watching brief. Details of individual excavated contexts and features are retained in the project archive. Summaries of the excavated sequences can be found in **Appendix 1**.

5.2 Natural deposits and soil sequences

- 5.2.1 The stratigraphy across the Site followed a uniform pattern of off white chalk natural (**Layer 3**), although the depths at which the chalk was noted varied between 125 m aOD at the eastern end of the Site and 123 m aOD at the western end of the Site. The chalk across the Site was generally fairly soft with evidence of periglacial activity and rare flint boulder inclusions. At the western end of the Site, the chalk was capped by a mid-orange brown clay with rare rounded flint cobbles natural (**Layer 4**). The clay natural was capped by a colluvial deposit (**Layer 401**) consisting of a mid – dark brown silty clay with rare inclusions of sub angular flint cobbles and gravels, the diffuse horizon with the plough soils might indicate that this deposit was derived by a mixture of hill wash and ploughing over many centuries. Colluvium **Layer 401** capped the archaeology. Over all of the Site, there was a plough soil (**Layer 1**) comprising a mid-grey brown silty loam with rare angular and sub angular flint cobble inclusions.

5.3 Summary

- 5.3.1 Observed archaeological remains comprised of a small number of pits and linear features (**Figure 1**), however none of these features contained any evidence as to their date of origin.

5.4 Prehistoric

- 5.4.1 A single pit, **403**, was uncovered which can with some certainty be ascribed to the general prehistoric period on the basis of material recovered from one of the fills. This consisted of burnt flint, struck flint and fired clay. Although not intrinsically datable in itself, this material is commensurate with a general prehistoric date. **Pit 403** was 1.2m wide and 0.6m deep with steeply-sloping sides, one of which was stepped (**Plate 2**).

5.5 Features of uncertain date

- 5.5.1 **Pit 503** was a sub-circular, flat-bottomed pit with steeply-sloping, convex sides. It measured 0.84 m x 1.10 m x 0.31 m deep and contained evidence of in-situ burning. Although undated, this feature could represent a small oven or hearth (**Plate 3**). **Pit 503** and **Pit 403** may be contemporary in date, although the nature of the excavations did not allow for any possible relationship between the two pits to be established.
- 5.5.2 A north-south aligned curvilinear, **Ditch 506** had steeply-sloping sides and a concave base. It was 0.8 m wide and 0.51 m deep (**Plate 4**). No datable material was recovered from this ditch. It may be that this feature represents a boundary ditch demarcating an area of occupation or industry as no further pits were noted west of this ditch. A pit was noted on the southern side of the trench adjacent to this ditch but as the pit was not going to be impacted by the further works it was recorded in plan only (**Figure 1**).
- 5.5.3 **Gully 508** was a shallow NW-SE aligned gully, 0.64 m wide and 0.12 m deep with moderately-sloping sides and a concave base (**Plate 5**). This feature had no obvious relationship or similarity with the other features noted and no datable artefacts were recovered.
- 5.5.4 None of the material recovered is datable in itself, although taken together it suggests a generic prehistoric date for **Pit 403**.

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

- 6.1.1 The finds recovered comprised 14 pieces of prehistoric worked flint and one piece of burnt, unworked flint. Most finds came from the topsoil, with one worked flint from **Pit 403** and one worked and one burnt flint from **Ditch 506** (Table 1).
- 6.1.2 The topsoil finds are all rolled and worn and have the surface and edge damage typical of ploughzone assemblages, consisting exclusively of larger, sturdier pieces. Ten are flakes, and four of these have retouch which may be deliberate: one is a scraper. None are chronologically significant. The remaining two pieces include a triangular core platform rejuvenation flake and a chuck with incipient cones of percussion and three apparent bladelet removals.
- 6.1.3 **Pit 403** and **Ditch 506** both contained probable flake cores. Neither can be dated.
- 6.1.4 The unworked flint is completely undatable, but the material type is frequently taken as an indicator of prehistoric activity, and the association with worked flint in this instance tends to confirm this interpretation.

Table 1: All finds by context (number of pieces)

Context	Description	Burnt Flint	Worked Flint
101	Topsoil		12
404	Pit 403		1
505	Ditch 506	1	1

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 None of the archaeological deposits uncovered were deemed worthy of environmental sampling.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Summary

8.1.1 The watching brief confirmed the presence of archaeological material within the study area, including activity likely to date to the general prehistoric period.

8.1.2 The pits located by the watching brief are clustered in the eastern area of the Site and protected by a depth of colluvium. The fills of the pits are indicative of industrial activity rather than settlement activity, both of the excavated pits contained strong evidence for burning and may be kilns or furnaces.

8.1.3 **Ditch 506** may represent a truncated boundary ditch as no significant archaeological remains were noted after this. **Gully 508** may be the truncated base of the same ditch, both ditches are curvilinear and it is not inconceivable that they are from the same feature, they are 23 m apart and may form a univallate enclosure (**Figure 1**). The depth of the overburden reduces significantly between the two, increasing the risk that any discreet features have been truncated away by ploughing.

8.2 Conclusion

8.2.1 Given the findings of the watching brief, as well as the known archaeological potential of the area, it remains likely that archaeological features and deposits may survive outside of the area monitored.

9 STORAGE AND CURATION

9.1 Museum

9.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Wiltshire Museum, Devizes. The Museum is not currently accepting archives and as a result, the project archive will be stored at WA offices until such time that a suitable repository becomes available. WA will pass charges incurred onto the Client or return the archive to them upon completion of the project.

9.1.2 Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

9.2 Preparation of archive

- 9.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, is currently stored at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury, under the project code 114160. It will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 9.2.2 The archive of all records and finds will be consistent with the principles of Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (Historic England 2015a).

9.3 Selection policy

- 9.3.1 WA 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 any future analysis. In this instance, the few finds recovered were of modern date and did not warrant retention for long-term curation.
- 9.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2011).

9.4 Security copy

- 9.4.1 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.

9.5 Copyright

- 9.5.1 The Trust for Wessex Archaeology shall retain 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 may be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority.

10 REFERENCES

- Archaeology Data Service (ADS), 2013, *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice*, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice
- Brown, D.H., 2011, *Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum (revised edition)
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Watkinson, D. and Neal, V., 1998, *First Aid for Finds: Practical Guide for Archaeologists*, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works

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Online resources

<http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list> - information on designated assets

<http://oasis.ac.uk/england/> - data on sites, find-spots and excavations

<http://www.pastscape.org.uk/> - data on sites, find-spots and excavations

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



11 APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Context Table

		Co- ordinates E:428260.806 N: 165292.955	Length 214.79 m	Width 7.57 m	Ground level 125 – 126 m aOD
Context	Description				Depth (m)
1	Layer	Topsoil – Grey brown silty loam with rare angular and sub angular flint cobble and coarse gravel inclusions, moderately loose with a diffuse horizon with 2			0 – 0.1 m
2	Layer	Subsoil – Mid red-brown silty clay loam with rare sub angular flint cobbles and gravels, moderately loose with a distinct horizon with 3.			0.1 – 0.5 m
3	Layer	Natural Chalk – Off white chalk with periglacial cracking and weathering, rare flint boulder inclusions, moderately compact, overlain in places by layer 4, especially to the eastern end of the Site.			0.5 m +
4	Layer	Natural Clay – Mid orange brown clay with rare rounded flint cobbles, moderately sorted, moderately compacted, cut by 403 , 503 , 506 and 508 . Overlay layer 3.			0.48 – 2.2.m
401	Layer	Colluvium – Mid-dark brown silty clay with rare sub angular flint boulders, cobbles and gravels, poorly sorted, diffuse horizon with layer 2, distinct horizon with layer 4.			0.2 – 0.55 m
402	Layer	Natural Clay – Mid orange brown clay with rare rounded flint cobbles, moderately sorted, moderately compacted, cut by 403 , 503 , 506 and 508 . Overlay layer 3.			0.48 – 2.2.m
403	Cut	Cut of Pit – Undated but probably prehistoric pit with steep steeped sides and a flat base, measured 1.2 m wide x 0.6 m deep, contained 3 fills. Only recorded in section.			0.75 – 1.38 m
404	Fill	Deliberate Backfill – Black- very dark grey silty clay with rare fine gravel inclusions, poorly sorted. Archaeological components include burnt flint, worked flint, fired clay and charcoal. Moderately loose with distinct horizons.			0.4 m
405	Fill	Secondary Fill – Mid orange brown silty clay with rare fine gravel inclusions, poorly sorted. Moderately loose with distinct horizons.			0.24 m
406	Fill	Secondary Fill - Mid grey brown silty clay with sparse sub rounded and sub angular flint cobble inclusions, poorly sorted. Moderately loose with an indistinct horizon with the colluvium 401			0.34 m
503	Cut	Cut of Pit – Neat well cut sub circular pit with convex sides and a flat base, measured 0.84 m x 1.1 m x 0.31 m. Contained two fills, no datable material was recovered from this pit.			0.9 – 1.21 m
504	Fill	Deliberate Backfill - Red clay layer lining the sides and base of the pit. Moderately compact with a distinct horizon.			0.03 m
505	Fill	Secondary Fill – Dark brown silty clay with common angular, sub-angular, rounded and sub-rounded flint cobbles and gravels, poorly sorted. Archaeological components included struck flint, burnt flint and charcoal. Moderately compact with a distinct horizon.			0.29 m
506	Cut	Cut of Ditch – Neatly cut curvilinear ditch with steep straight sides and a flat base, 0.8 m wide and 0.51 m deep. Contained one fill.			0.6 – 1.11 m
507	Fill	Secondary Fill – Mid – dark brown silty clay with common angular, sub-angular, rounded and sub-rounded flint cobbles			0.51 m



		and gravels, poorly sorted. Fairly compacted with a fairly distinct horizon.	
508	<i>Cut</i>	Cut of Gully – Shallow ditch with moderately sloped concave sides and a concave base, measured 0.64 wide x 0.12 m deep. Contained one fill, no anthropogenic material was recovered from this slot.	0.54 – 0.66 m
509	<i>Fill</i>	Secondary Fill – Mid brown sandy clay with rare flint cobbles and gravels, some were angular and sub angular but most were rounded and sub rounded, rare charcoal flecks, rare manganese flecks, moderately compact with a distinct horizon.	0.12



11.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: wessexar1-269072

Project details

Project name Bedwyn WTW, Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire

Short description of the project Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by eight2O on behalf of Thames Water to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Bedwyn Water Treatment Works, Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 428350 165325. The watching brief relates to groundworks associated with the excavation of a new soakaway with 200 m of pipeline and associated works. These include the installation of a gravelled foot path along the edge of the field, a discharge manhole and a concrete path. The watching brief revealed two pits, a ditch and a shallow gully, all of which were undated. All four features were located at the north-eastern end of the watching brief area. The watching brief fieldwork was completed in a number of stages between the 22nd August and the 21st October 2016.

Project dates Start: 22-08-2016 End: 21-10-2016

Previous/future work Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference codes 114160 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Cultivated Land 4 - Character Undetermined

Monument type PIT Uncertain

Monument type DITCH Uncertain

Significant Finds WORKED FLINT Uncertain



Project location

Country	England
Site location	WILTSHIRE KENNET GREAT BEDWYN Bedwyn WTW
Postcode	SN8 3TR
Study area	1671 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 428350 165325 50.946088840753 -1.390195932813 50 56 45 N 001 23 24 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 125m Max: 125m

Project creators

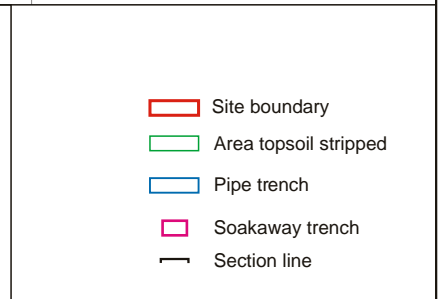
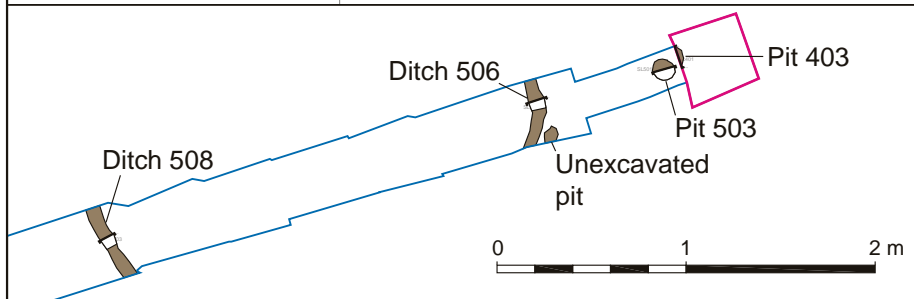
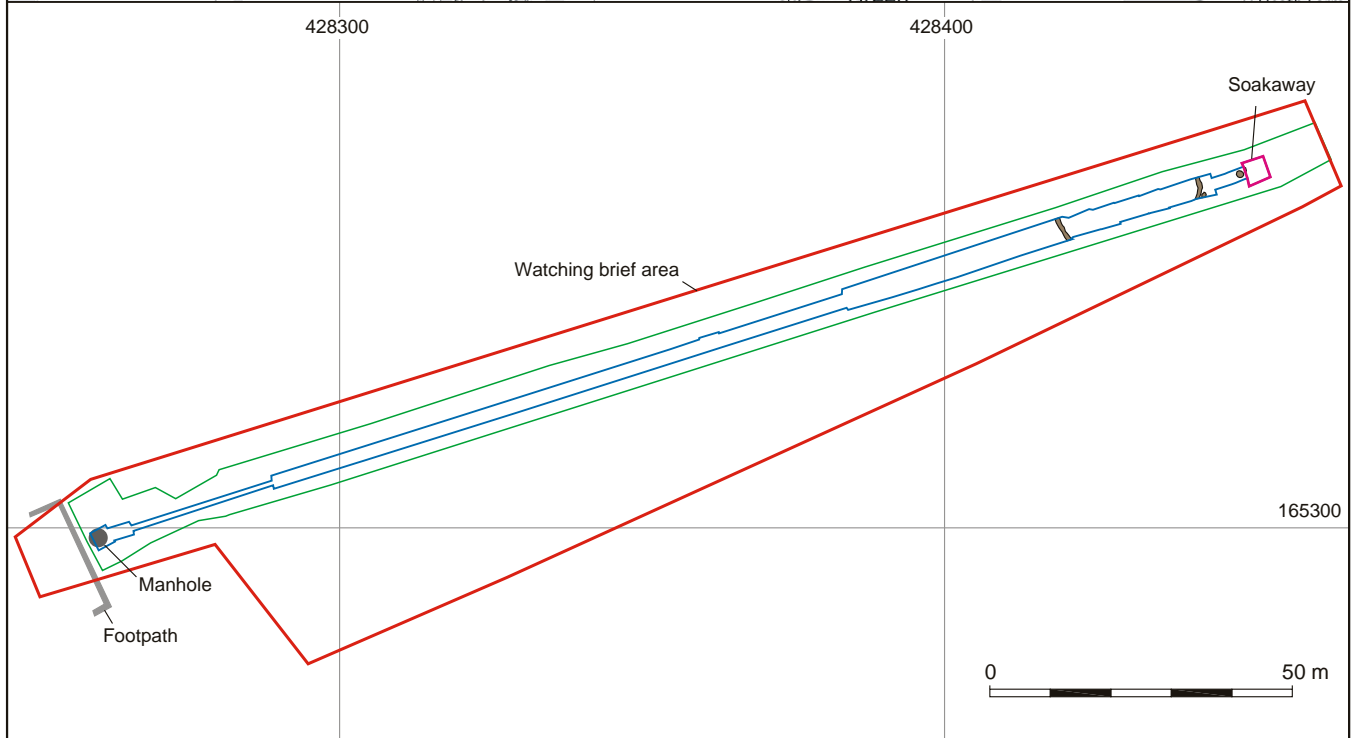
Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Thames Water Utilities
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Ruth Panes
Project supervisor	Piotr Orczewski
Project supervisor	Rachel Williams
Project supervisor	Lee Newton
Type of sponsor/funding body	Utility supplier
Name of sponsor/funding body	eight20 on behalf of Thames Water




Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Wiltshire Museum Devizes
Physical Contents	"Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Wiltshire Heritage Museum
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Wiltshire Museum Devizes
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Diary", "Drawing"

Entered by	Rachel Williams (r.williams@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	17 November 2016



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Location of site and watching brief area

Figure 1



Plate 1: Representative section at south-western end of pipe trench, view from the north-west.



Plate 2: Pit 403 visible in soakaway trench, view from the north-east


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Plate 3: Section through Pit 503, view from the south-east



Plate 4: Section through Ditch 506, view from the south



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Plate 5: Section through Gully 508, view from the south-east

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