

# Durrington Down Farm to Strangways Cable Overlay Larkhill, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



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# **Quality Assurance**

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# **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by UK Power Networks Service to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of cable trenches for a replacement high voltage cable from between Fargo Road and Willoughby Road (NGR 412456 143736) to the primary substation at Strangways (NGR 413711 143395) at Larkhill, Wiltshire which was undertaken intermittently between 30 March to 18 June 2020.

The works comprised the second phase of replacement cable works and would link up with the recently completed cable trench excavated between the substation at Durrington Down Farm and the access road to the Larkhill Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW). The works involved the installation of a buried HV cable link via mechanical excavation of an open cut trench to lay ducting for the cable, with backfilling of the utility trench completed as works progressed along the route.

A total of 16 features were identified during the monitored works, all dating to the 20th century and related to World War One activity in the area, which were concentrated in the middle section of the cable trench. Made ground deposits were observed in a paddock field located at the eastern end of the cable route, and in a section of the cable trench which ran through the WWTW, as well as a few earlier services.

# **Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank UK Power Networks Services for commissioning the archaeological watching brief, in particular John Pritchard. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Martin Brown, Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire County Archaeological Services, who monitored the project for Wiltshire Council, Richard Osgood, Defence Infrastructures Organisation Archaeologist, and to LPC Construction Limited for their cooperation and help on site.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Dave Murdie and John Powell. This report was written by Matt Kendall, reviewed by Damian De Rosa, and graphics were prepared by Kitty Foster. The project was managed by Ruth Panes and Damian De Rosa on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.



# Durrington Down Farm to Strangways Cable Overlay Larkhill, Wiltshire

# **Archaeological Watching Brief**

### 1 INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Project and planning background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by UK Power Networks Service ("the Client") to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of cable trenches for a replacement high voltage cable from between Fargo Road and Willoughby Road (NGR 412456 143736) to the primary substation at Strangways (NGR 413711 143395) at Larkhill, Wiltshire (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The works comprised the second phase of replacement cable works and would link up with the recently completed cable trench excavated between the substation at Durrington Down Farm and the access road to the Larkhill Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW).
- 1.1.3 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with an overarching written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed during the monitoring of any utility works undertaken in Larkhill, Wiltshire, which fall within the Avebury, Stonehenge and Associated World Heritage Site (WHS) (Wessex Archaeology 2020). The Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire County Archaeological Services (WCAS) on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Archaeologist approved the WSI prior to fieldwork commencing. The watching brief was undertaken intermittently between the 30 March and 18 June 2020.

# 1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the watching brief, to interpret the results within their local or regional context (or otherwise), and to assess their potential to address the aims outlined in the WSI, thereby making available information about the archaeological resource (a preservation by record).

# 1.3 Location, topography and geology

- 1.3.1 The area is located within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) and the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site (WHS). The area is situated within a rich archaeological landscape within with numerous prehistoric Scheduled Monuments (**Figure 1**).
- 1.3.2 The portion of cable trench to the west of the scheme was located on the verge of the access track to Durrington Down Farm before crossing Fargo Road and extending slightly northwards. The eastern portion of cable trench from the WWTW access road and Strangways substation, was located within arable fields on Schedule One MoD land. The trench continued eastwards, to the south of residential properties on Fargo before cutting along Fargo Road to the substation (**Figure 2**).
- 1.3.3 Existing ground levels are recorded as approximately 108 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) on the western end of the route and 111 aOD on western end of the route. The underlying



geology is mapped as Chalk of the Seaford Chalk Formation with a small seam of Head deposits just east of WWTW access road (British Geological Survey online viewer).

#### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background to the area has been assessed in a prior desk-based assessment (DBA: Wessex Archaeology 2014), which considered the recorded historic environment resource within a 1 km study area of Larkhill Camp. A summary of the results relating to this project, including archaeological investigations of interest to this cable route, are summarised below.

# 2.2 Previous investigations related to the development

- 2.2.1 The archaeological watching brief comprised the second phase of ongoing works as detailed above. The first phase, as described above monitored a section of cable trenching between Durrington Down Farm substation and the WWTW access road (Wessex Archaeology 2019b). A 20th century military trench and a possible pit of unknown date were recorded within the portion of cable trench aligned north to south (within the east of Phase I works). On occasion made ground and earlier services were also encountered, particularly to the west of the works. Asbestos roof tile was encountered within the eastern area of trenching which, alongside demolition material, is suggestive of earlier buildings likely of military origin.
- 2.2.2 Recent work has also included an archaeological watching brief on a HV cable link at Larkhill WWTW commissioned by UK Power Networks (Wessex Archaeology 2018). This work included the archaeological monitoring of excavations for a new electrical switch room, a new substation and cable route. No archaeological material or remains were observed or discovered during the duration of the groundworks.
- 2.2.3 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken at Larkhill WWTW (Wessex Archaeology 2019a) during the installation of a new below ground sewage pumping station, emergency storage tank and associated manholes and sewers. The work, undertaken between October 2017 and February 2019 found no archaeological features or deposits of interest and no significant artefactual material was recovered.
- 2.2.4 A single undated pit and a 20<sup>th</sup> Century military feature was revealed in the watching brief carried out on the earlier section of the Durrington Down Farm cable link (Wessex Archaeology 2019b).

# 2.3 Archaeological and historical context

- 2.3.1 A single scheduled bowl barrow (SM list entry 1009069) can be found slightly northwest of Durrington Down Farm and is situated approximately 40 m to the west of the proposed trench along Willoughby Road. This barrow has been damaged by military activity but excavations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century produced a skeleton of Bronze Age date, a later cremation and finds associated with the burials.
- 2.3.2 A group of bowl barrows can be found approximately 60 m to the east of the proposed cable route, approximately 120m south of Fargo Road. This group consists of three barrows within Scheduled Monument (list entry no.1009064). Due to the high levels of military activity in the area these barrows have been subject to a certain amount of disturbance and truncation, but they still survive as buried features with varying levels of preservation.



- 2.3.3 Approximately 50 m to the north-west of the proposed route two Bronze age bowl barrows can be found within Scheduled Monument (1009072). The barrows are known from partial excavation to contain archaeological remains and environmental evidence relating to the monument and the landscape in which it was constructed.
- 2.3.4 Within the eastern area of works, the cable trench is located between several groups of barrows as illustrated within the Desk Based Assessment report for Larkhill Camp ABP works (Wessex Archaeology 2014). On average, approx. 50m to the south of the proposed trench several scheduled bowl barrows (1009065 66, 1009073) and a pond barrow (1009074), whilst approx. 276 to the north a round barrow cemetery is located (1009067). A further six bowl barrows are located in Larkhill Camp, to the south of the Packway; approx. 600 m to the north of the proposed cable trench. Of those barrows to the south, partial excavations of SM 1009066 and 1009073 have indicated that the barrows contain archaeological remains and environmental evidence which provides information concerning the monuments and landscape in which they were construction.
- 2.3.5 The Stonehenge Cursus (SM 1009132) is between 230 m and 120 m to the south of the proposed cable route to the Strangways Substation. The Cursus is east-north-east to west-south-west and remains one of the few cursus monuments which remain visible in the landscape within the UK. Believed to have been constructed between 3,630 and 3,370 BC (Parker-Pearson et al 2007; p14) it is one of the earliest monuments within the Stonehenge landscape and is likely to have been constructed for ceremonial purposes, possibly for processional activities. The long barrow, included within the scheduling, at the eastern end of the cursus is 120 m to the south of the Strangways Substation.
- 2.3.6 The proximity of the proposed route to the above scheduled monuments, as well as its position within the Stonehenge WHS indicates the route is situated within an area of high potential for archaeological remains. The northern part of the route has been subject to previous development, largely attributed to the presence of former military buildings and associated groundworks. Historic mapping (Ordnance Survey 1898 to 1939 25 " 3rd edition) indicates military buildings were located to the north and south of the existing track. Many of these buildings would have been built on raft supports and are likely to have involved limited excavations during their construction, hence the degree of previous disturbance in this area is unconfirmed.
- 2.3.7 The cable route is located in an area for high potential for encountering military practice trenches, which are visible on the Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record (WSHER), transcribed from aerial photographs, and illustrated within the Desk Based Assessment report for Larkhill Camp ABP works (WA 2014). Of particular interest, to the west of the works, at the junction between Fargo Road and Willoughby Roads, are a row of seven contiguous octagonal military trenches (WSHER no. SU14SW529) understood to be gun emplacements, each trench measuring approximately 24m by 21m in plan.

# 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 3.1 Aims

- 3.1.1 The aims of the watching brief, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020) and as defined in the ClfA Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (ClfA 2014a), 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 the development or other works;



- 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
- guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

# 3.2 Objectives

- 3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the objectives of the watching brief, also defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020), were to:
  - determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
  - record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
  - place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
  - make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results of the watching brief.

### 4 METHODS

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methodology set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.

#### 4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

- 4.2.1 The works involved the installation of a buried HV cable link via mechanical excavation of an open cut trench to lay ducting for the cable, with backfilling of the utility trench completed as works progressed along the route. An easement of approximately 2 m in width was initially stripped down to the base of the topsoil and a 1 m wide cable trench was then excavated with arisings stored on the side of the easement (**Plate 1**).
- 4.2.2 The watching archaeologist monitored all mechanical excavations within the specified area. Where necessary, the surfaces of uncovered archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand to aid visual definition. A sample of archaeological features and deposits was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the watching brief.
- 4.2.3 Spoil from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, although those from features of modern date (19th century or later) were recorded on site and not retained.



# Recording

- 4.2.4 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete record of excavated features and deposits was made, including plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections) and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid.
- 4.2.5 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological features. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSTN15and OSGM15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.6 A full photographic record was made 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 will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

# 4.3 Finds and environmental strategies

4.3.1 Strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of finds and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020). The treatment of artefacts and environmental remains was in general accordance with: Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (CIfA 2014b) and Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (English Heritage 2011).

# 4.4 Monitoring

4.4.1 The Assistant County Archaeologist for WCAS monitored the watching brief on behalf of the LPA.

# 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

# 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A total of 16 features were identified during the monitored works, all dating to the 20th century and related to World War One activity in the area, which were concentrated in the middle section of the cable trench. Made ground deposits were observed in a paddock field located at the eastern end of the cable route, and in a section of the cable trench which ran through the WWTW, as well as a few earlier services.

# 5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

5.2.1 Approximately 0.15 m depth of topsoil was present across the entire length of the cable route which overlaid degraded Upper Chalk Bedrock (**Plate 2**). The two exceptions to this soil sequence was in a paddock field towards the eastern end of the route, which contained a 0.40 m thick deposit of made ground which buried the original topsoil and covered by a new topsoil (**Plate 3**), and through the old sewage beds at the WWTW where substantial made ground and concrete was encountered (**Plate 4**).

#### 5.3 Archaeological features

5.3.1 Out of the 16 archaeological features identified during the monitored works, 14 (101, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 135, 127 and 131) of these were interpreted as being possible World Ware One linear features, some of which could be practice trenches. Most of these were concentrated in an arable field located south of houses south



- of Fargo Road (**Figure 2**), orientated on a north to south alignment and infilled with a midbrown deliberate backfill which contained modern artefacts (**Plate 5**). While some were shallow, suggesting another function other than practise trenches, feature 105 (**Plate 6**) was shown to be quite substantial, although this was encountered on an angle to the cable trench.
- 5.3.2 Feature 131, located towards the western end of the cable route, is the best candidate for being a practise trench. With near vertical sides, 131 was infilled with a loose concrete rubble with corrugated iron panels over the top (**Plate 7**). There was then a 0.60 m thick cap of compacted chalk rubble over the top, suggesting that the feature was sealed to prevent latter collapse.
- 5.3.3 The two other features, 103 and 130, were discrete features of a similar or later date to the other features. Pit 103 was located close to feature 101 within the paddock field towards the eastern end of the cable route and was cut through the made ground (**Plate 8**). The only artefacts recovered from 103 was barbed wire which establishes its modern date. Feature 130 was partially exposed within the cable trench and was initially thought to be the remains of a building due to a concrete floor and 12 courses of brick wall. However, on further investigation it was determined to be a possible soakaway access manhole.

#### 6 FINDS EVIDENCE

#### 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered during the monitored works but due to their modern date were not retained.

#### 7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

#### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 No material suitable for environmental sampling was present within the monitored works and accordingly no samples were taken.

# 8 CONCLUSIONS

# 8.1 Summary

8.1.1 The monitored works encountered limited archaeological evidence but did highlight military activity, particularly in the middle section of the cable route. While there was impact on the geology at the located of the former sewage beds, there seemed to be little disturbance of the chalk over the majority of the cable route, and accordingly the potential of surviving archaeology was deemed good.

# 8.2 Discussion

- 8.2.1 The surviving archaeological remains are concurrent with the use of the land for military purposes. This was to be expected given the location of the cable trench and the identification of military practice trenches within the area which is discussed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020) and encountered during the previous phase of archaeological watching brief (Wessex Archaeology 2019b).
- 8.2.2 Overall, little significant archaeology was encountered and that which was identified and relating to WWI activity was of good preservation.



#### 9 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

#### 9.1 Museum

9.1.1 The archive resulting from the watching brief is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury under the site code **215991**. Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the accession code **SBYWM**: **2020.40**. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

# 9.2 Preparation of the archive

- 9.2.1 The archive, which includes paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 9.2.2 All archive elements are marked with the **accession code**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:
  - 1 file/document case of paper records

# 9.3 Selection policy

9.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows national guidelines on selection and retention (SMA 1993; Brown 2011, section 4). In accordance with these, and any specific guidance prepared by the museum, a process of selection and retention will be followed so that only those artefacts or ecofacts that are considered to have potential for future study will be retained. The selection policy will be agreed with the museum and is fully documented in the project archive.

# 9.4 Security copy

9.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, 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 OASIS

9.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main) has been initiated, with key fields completed (**Appendix 1**). A.pdf version of the final report will be submitted following approval by the Assistant County Archaeologist for WCAS on behalf of the LPA. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

### 10 COPYRIGHT

# 10.1 Archive and report copyright

10.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with



all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

10.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

# 10.2 Third party data copyright

10.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (eg, Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.



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- Wessex Archaeology 2019b *Durrington Down Farm Cable Link, Larkhill, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief.* Unpublished client report ref. 215990.03
- Wessex Archaeology 2020 Larkhill Army Basing Programme (ABP) Utilities, Larkhill, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief. Unpublished client report ref. 215990.01



#### **APPENDICES**

# **Appendix 1 OASIS Summary**

#### OASIS ID: wessexar1-398174

#### **Project details**

Project name Durrington Down Farm to Strangways Cable Overlay, Larkhill, Wiltshire

Short description of the project

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by UK Power Networks Service to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of cable trenches for a replacement high voltage cable from between Fargo Road and Willoughby Road (NGR 412456 143736) to the primary substation at Strangways (NGR 413711 143395) at Larkhill, Wiltshire which was undertaken intermittently between 30 March to 18 June 2020. The works comprised the second phase of replacement cable works and would link up with the recently completed cable trench excavated between the substation at Durrington Down Farm and the access road to the Larkhill Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW). The works involved the installation of a buried HV cable link via mechanical excavation of an open cut trench to lay ducting for the cable, with backfilling of the utility trench completed as works progressed along the route. A total of 16 features were identified during the monitored works, all dating to the 20th century and related to World War One activity in the area, which were concentrated in the middle section of the cable trench. Made ground deposits were observed in a paddock field located at the eastern end of the cable route, and in a section of the cable trench which ran through the WWTW, as well as a few earlier services.

Project dates Start: 30-03-2020 End: 18-06-2020

Previous/future work Yes / No

Any associated project reference

codes

215991 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference

codes

SBYWM:2020.40 - Museum accession ID

Type of project Recording project
Site status World Heritage Site

Current Land use Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Monument type MILITARY EARTHWORK Modern

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Army Basing Programme of works

# **Project location**

Country England

Site location WILTSHIRE SALISBURY DURRINGTON Durrington Down Farm to

Strangways Cable Overlay, Larkhill, Wiltshire

Postcode SP4 8LL

Study area 0 Square metres



Site coordinates SU 12456 43736 51.192190856263 -1.821732654763 51 11 31 N 001 49 18

W Line

Site coordinates SU 13711 43395 51.189095524369 -1.803784520752 51 11 20 N 001 48 13

W Line

Height OD / Depth Min: 108m Max: 111m

**Project creators** 

Name of Organisation

Wessex Archaeology

Project brief originator

Wessex Archaeology

Project design originator

Wessex archaeology

Project director/manager

**Ruth Panes** 

Project

, et e ::/:::= = ::= = ::= ::

Damian de Rosa

director/manager

Dave Murdie

Project supervisor Project supervisor

John Powell

Type of

L Letter P

sponsor/funding

body

Utility supplier

Name of sponsor/funding

body

**UK Power Network Services** 

**Project archives** 

Physical Archive

Exists?

No

Physical Archive

recipient

Physical Archive ID

Digital Archive

recipient

Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum

Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum

Digital Archive ID

SBYWM:2020.40

SBYWM:2020.40

Digital Media available

"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"

Paper Archive

recipient

Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum

Paper Archive ID

Dan au Auala:

SBYWM:2020.40

Paper Media available

"Diary","Map","Miscellaneous Material","Report","Unpublished Text"

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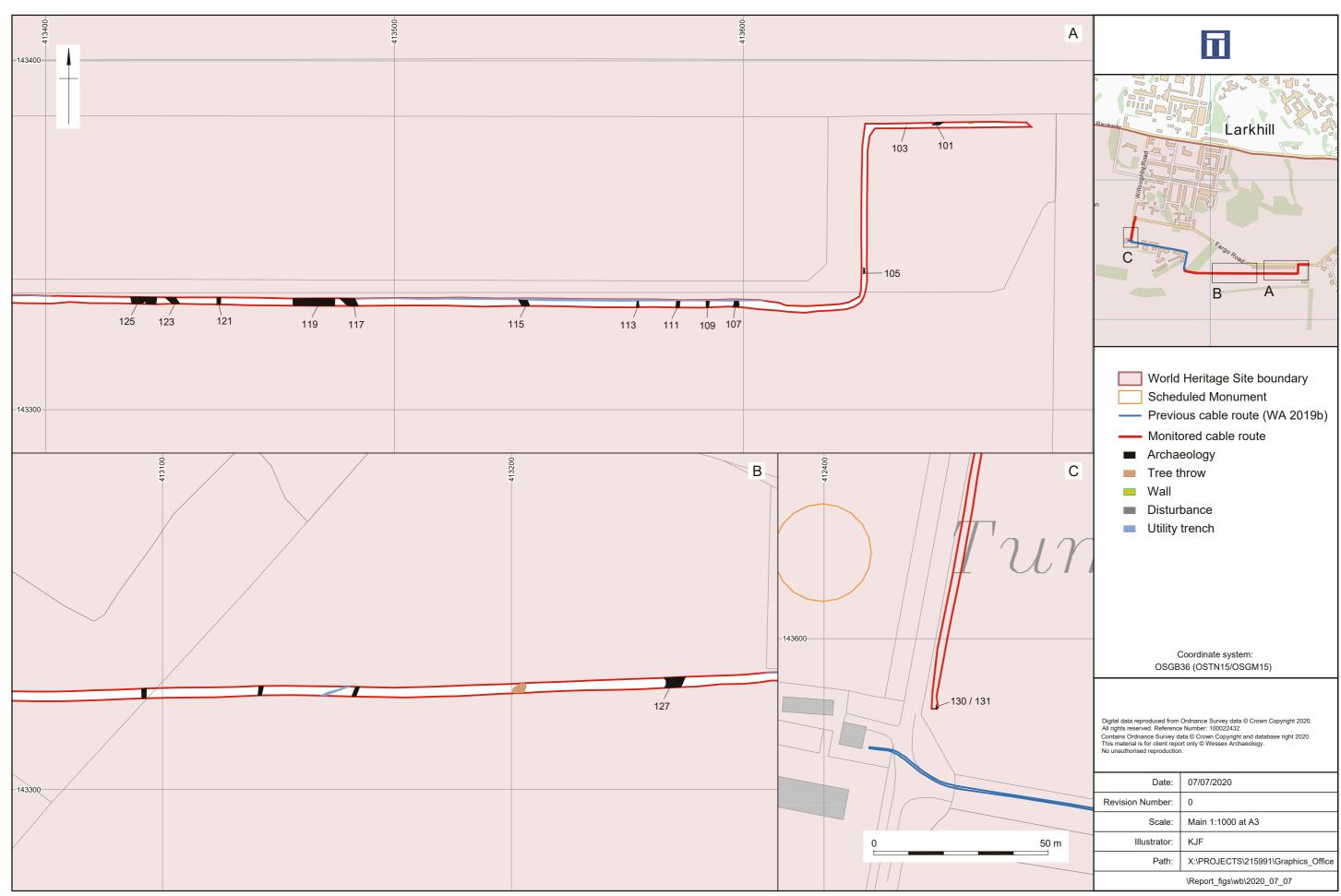




Plate 1: Cable easement and trench viewed from the east



Plate 2: Cable easement viewed from the west showing undisturbed chalk geology

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Plate 3: South facing representative section of cable trench showing made ground in the paddock field (1 x 1 m)  $\,$ 



Plate 4: North-east facing representative section of cable trench showing made ground within the old sewage beds at the WWTW

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Plate 5: Feature 109 viewed from the north



Plate 6: Possible practice trench 105 viewed from the east (1 x 1 m)  $\,$ 

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Plate 7: West facing section of World War One feature 131 (1 x 1 m)



Plate 8: South facing section of pit 130 (1 x 1 m)

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