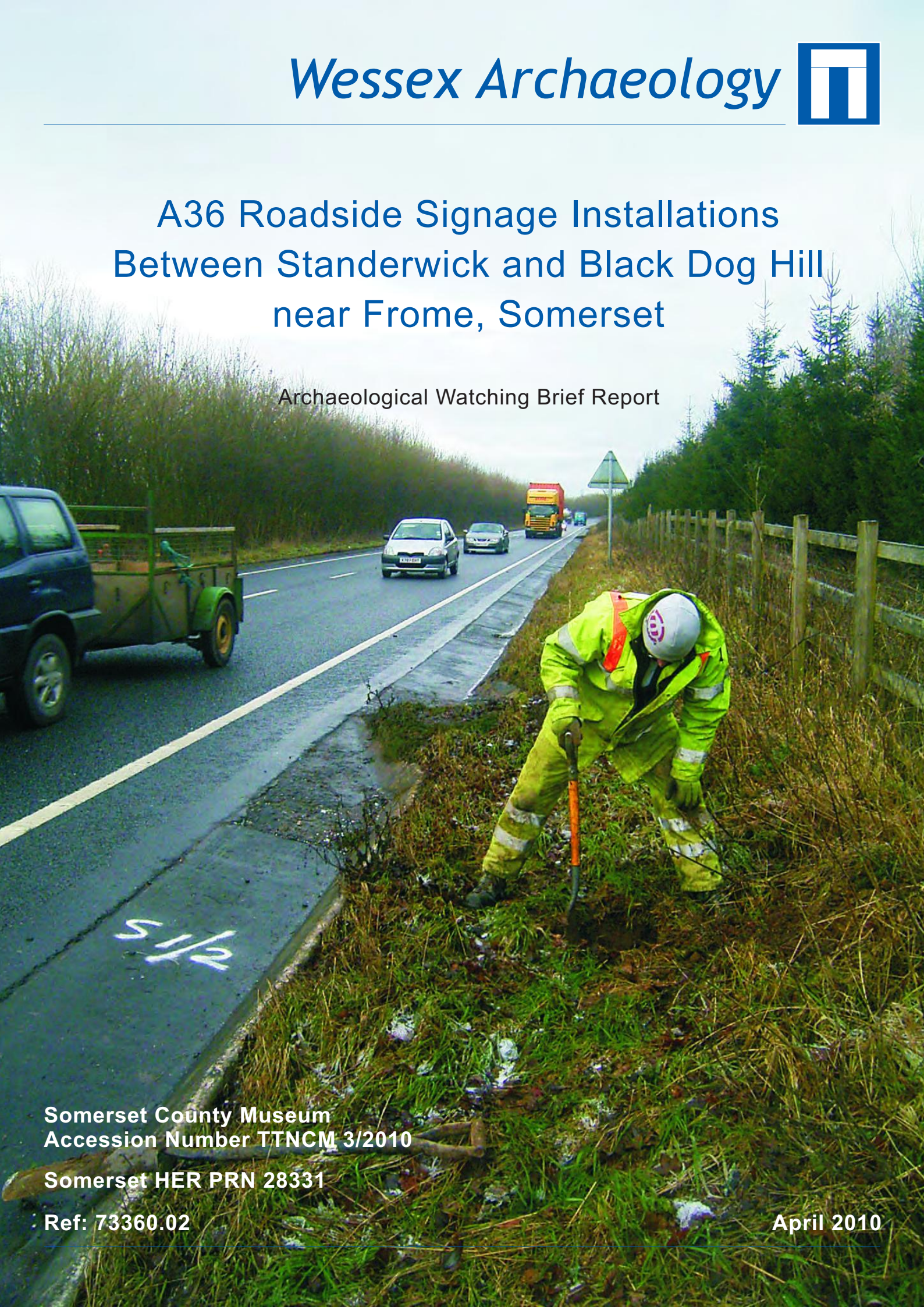
Wessex Archaeology

A36 Roadside Signage Installations Between Standerwick and Black Dog Hill near Frome, Somerset

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Somerset County Museum
Accession Number TTNCM 3/2010

Somerset HER PRN 28331

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April 2010

A36 ROADSIDE SIGNAGE INSTALLATIONS, BETWEEN STANDERWICK AND BLACK DOG HILL, NEAR FROME, SOMERSET

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report Reference: 73360.02

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April 2010

DISCLAIMER

QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	**73360**	**ACCESSION CODE**	**TTNCM 3/2010**	**CLIENT CODE**	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	**N/A**	**NGR**	**NGR 3815 1508 TO 3830 1489**		

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
73360.02	I	GSC/AIM	NDT			X:\PROJECTS\73360\REPORT\REPORT DRAFT.DOC

*** I= INTERNAL DRAFT E= EXTERNAL DRAFT F= FINAL**

A36 ROADSIDE SIGNAGE INSTALLATIONS, BETWEEN STANDERWICK AND BLACK DOG HILL, NEAR FROME, SOMERSET

Archaeological Watching Brief

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A36 ROADSIDE SIGNAGE INSTALLATIONS, BETWEEN STANDERWICK AND BLACK DOG HILL, NEAR FROME, SOMERSET

Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of 20 signposts along a *c.* 2.9km stretch of the A36 between Standerwick in Somerset and ending at Black Dog Hill near Thoulstone in Wiltshire. Much of the archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 4th/5th of January 2010. The final 3 test pits were excavated on the 29th March 2010.

The works consisted of the excavation of 20 test pits, either hand dug (0.40 x 0.40m in size) or machine dug (1.10m x 0.70m in size) to accommodate the sign posts needed for the signage installation. The test pits were excavated to a depth of 0.70m – 0.90m depending on the size of the signpost to be installed.

No archaeological features or artefacts were encountered during the course of the works. Evidence was recorded in the majority of test pits for significant levels of made ground and localised disturbance associated with the construction of the A36 and the installation of a gas main along part of the route.

It is highly likely, therefore, that any existing archaeological remains, if present, had been removed by the road construction and later service installation.

A36 ROADSIDE SIGNAGE INSTALLATIONS, BETWEEN STANDERWICK AND BLACK DOG HILL, NEAR FROME, SOMERSET

Archaeological Watching Brief

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald for commissioning the work and in particular Wayne Miles and Malcolm Davey in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank the groundworks team of Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald for their assistance on site during the course of the works.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Gareth Chaffey and Catrin Matthews, who compiled this report. The report was edited by Gareth Chaffey and Andy Manning. The report illustrations were prepared by Kenneth Lymer and the project was managed by Andy Manning, on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.

A36 ROADSIDE SIGNAGE INSTALLATIONS, BETWEEN STANDERWICK AND BLACK DOG HILL, NEAR FROME, SOMERSET

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of 20 signposts along a *c.* 2.9km stretch of the A36 between Standerwick (NGR 3815 1508) in Somerset and ending at Black Dog Hill (NGR 3830 1489) near Thoulstone in Wiltshire (**Figure 1a** and **b**), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.

1.1.2 The proposed works comprised excavations up to 1.10m by 0.70m in size and up to 0.90m in depth dependant on the size of the signpost to be installed. All excavations were situated in roadside verges on land adjacent to the existing A36 carriageway.

1.1.3 An initial assessment of the archaeological constraints of the proposed locations was carried out in conjunction with Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2009a), in line with the guidance set out in DMRB (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges 2009; Vol. 11, Section 3 Part 2 (Cultural Heritage). As a result of the assessment, in consultation with Somerset County Council and Wiltshire Council, monitoring of the groundworks of the scheme was deemed to be appropriate response to the proposed works.

1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2009b) covering the scope and methodology of the watching brief was submitted to, and approved by, Somerset County Council and Wiltshire Council

1.1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken on two separate occasions, between the 4th and 5th of January 2010, and the 29th March 2010.

1.2 The Site, location and geology

1.2.1 The Site is located along a stretch of the A36 between Standerwick and Black Dog Hill. The underlying geology of the whole of the Site comprises Carboniferous and Old Red Sandstone (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1965).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1.1 As part of the initial assessment, information relating to the known heritage resource was gathered from the Somerset and Wiltshire Historic Environment Record. Information was obtained from within a 300m radius of the Site (Wessex Archaeology 2009a), the details of which will not be repeated here. In summary, known prehistoric findspots, Romano-British sites, medieval and post-medieval sites are all recorded within the immediate vicinity of the Site.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1.1 The aim of the Archaeological Watching Brief was to establish within the constraints of the sampling strategy the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains within the Site.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1.1 *All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the WSI. All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (as amended 2008).*

4.1.2 *Works comprised archaeological monitoring by at least one experienced archaeologist of topsoil/subsoil removal during groundworks and the watching brief was maintained throughout initial stripping until it was clear that the potential for archaeological remains to be exposed has been exhausted.*

4.1.3 A total of 20 test pits were excavated, positioned to correspond with the proposed signpost installation and were located using Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald survey plans by their own staff (**Figures 1a** and **1b**).

4.1.4 In seven cases, the test pits were excavated by a 2 tonne 360° tracked excavator employing a 0.5m ditching bucket, and the remaining 13 were excavated by hand. In either case, the test pits were excavated under the constant supervision of an appropriately qualified archaeologist. Overburden, comprising topsoil and subsoil (where encountered) were removed in spits.

4.1.5 None of the test pits exceeded a depth of 0.90m. The dimensions for the machine excavated test pits were approximately 0.90 x 0.60m, whilst the hand dug test pits were approximately 0.40 x 0.40m. In each case, the excavated spoil was stored adjacent to the trench and was scanned for artefacts.

4.1.6 Recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology *pro-forma* record sheets. Representative soil profile sections of the trial trenches were drawn at a scale of 1:10. A total of 33 digital images were taken of ground work operations during the watching brief.

4.1.7 *The location of investigated areas investigated were surveyed using a Total Station/GPS and related to Ordnance Survey.*

5 RESULTS

5.1.1 This section provides a descriptive summary of information derived from the test pits. Tabulated test pit summaries, giving brief soil descriptions, dimensions and finds information are provided in **Appendix 1**. Plans showing the location of the test pits are provided on **Figures 1a** and **1b**.

5.1.2 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed during the course of the watching brief.

5.1.3 The test pits were all located within areas disturbed by previous road construction and modern made ground deposits were commonly encountered. Test pits **TP7/8**, **14/15**, **30**, and **31/32** also contained evidence of a gas main running parallel to the A36.

5.1.4 The depth of the overlying topsoil was generally around 0.10 – 0.30m deep and consisted of light grey/brown silty clay with root disturbance and sparse gravel or stone inclusions. The topsoil overlay subsoil or disturbed ground depending on the location of the test pit. The disturbed ground contained fragments of brick, fine gravel used for modern backfill, and fragments of metal.

6 FINDS

6.1.1 No archaeological artefacts were recovered during the watching brief.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL

7.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the course of the work.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1.1 The watching brief did not identify any archaeological features, deposits or finds. The test pits showed that the area under observation was largely modern made ground, likely associated with the construction of the A36 itself, or with the installation of a gas main.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1 Preparation and Deposition

9.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990). Details of the watching brief will also be entered into the online "Oasis" database maintained by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). A copy of OASIS entry will be included in the written report.

9.2 The Archive

9.2.1 The watching brief project archive consists of:

- One A4 file containing the paper records and drawings
- Digital data (site photographs, Word and pdf files)

9.2.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury under the WA project code **73360**. On completion of the project, the archive will be deposited with Taunton Museum under the accession code **3/2010**.

10 COPYRIGHT

10.1.1 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

10.2 Security Copy

10.2.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record Centre (Swindon), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records at the Museum, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

11 REFERENCES

11.1 Bibliography

Geological Survey of Great Britain, 1965, *Frome*, Sheet 281, 1:63360

Highways Agency, 2009, *DMRB* (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges), November 2009

Wessex Archaeology, 2009a, A36 Black Dog Hill LNMS Safety Scheme, Somerset and Wiltshire, Cultural Heritage Simple Assessment, Report Reference: 71496.02, July 2009 (Amended August 2009)

Wessex Archaeology 2009b: *A36 Roadside Signage Installations Along The A36 Section Between Standerwick and Black Dog Hill, Frome, Somerset: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Report Reference: 73360.01*

12 APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARY TABLES

TRENCH : TP1/2			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.40 x 0.40M		**Max. depth: 0.65m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
101	*Layer*	Topsoil. Light grey/brown with a yellowish hue, common root disturbance, soft deposit, likely to be disturbed.		0 – 0.10m
102	*Layer*	Subsoil. Dark yellowish brown silty clay – looks fairly undisturbed, homogenous deposit, with rare stone inclusions.		0.10 – 0.37m
103	*Layer*	Gravel rich deposits, with light greyish brown silty clay. Contains large flint/gravel lumps, rare 2% <0.08m. Pockets of blue-grey clay. Levelling deposit.		0.37 – 0.63m
104	*Layer*	Natural clay, light yellowish brown.		0.63m +

TRENCH : TP3/4			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 0.90 x 0.60m		**Max. depth: 0.70m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
301	*Layer*	Topsoil. Loosely compact, mid grey/brown, silty clay. Rare gravel inclusions, angular/subangular, 0.02m. Roots throughout.		0 – 0.20m
302	*Layer*	Subsoil. Loosely compact, mid grey/brown silty clay. Clear horizon with **(301)**. Slightly larger inclusions 0.05m than **(301)**. Roots throughout.		0.20 – 0.50m
303	*Layer*	Demolition rubble, bricks and fairly loosely compact mid grey/brown silty clay.		0.50 – 0.70m

TRENCH : TP6			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 0.90 x 0.60m		**Max. depth: 0.80m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
601	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid grey/brown, moderately compact silty clay. No visible topsoil/subsoil horizon. Rare flint inclusions, low frequency of root disturbance.		0 – 0.40m
602	*Layer*	Natural. Highly compact light/mid greyish orange. Blueish patches throughout. No inclusions visible.		0.40 – 0.80m

TRENCH : TP7/8			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 0.90 x 0.60m		**Max. depth: 0.70m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
701	*Layer*	Topsoil. Moderately compact, silty clay, light – mid grey/brown. Root inclusions throughout. No visible inclusions.		0 – 0.20m
702	*Layer*	Natural. Highly compact, silty clay, grey/orange. With light grey/blueish patches. Rare small, 0.02m gravel inclusions. Disturbed ground to western part of trench.		0.20 – 0.70m

TRENCH : TP11/12			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.90 x 0.38m		**Max. depth: 0.54m**		
Context	**Description**			**depth (B.G.L.)**
1101	*Layer*	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown, turfed silty loam.		0 – 0.10m
1102	*Layer*	Disturbed ground, associated with former road surface or construction of road. Wet deposit, common stone and gravel inclusions.		0.10 – 0.54m
1103	*Layer*	Natural stone – limestone?		0.54 +

TRENCH : TP13			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.30 x 0.30m		Max. depth: 0.70m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
1301	*Layer*	Moderately compact, silty clay. Rare gravel inclusions angular/subangular. No distinguishable 'topsoil' or 'subsoil'. Appears to be made ground as fragments of metal observed.		0 – 0.70m

TRENCH : TP14/15			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 0.90 x 0.60m		Max. depth: 0.50m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
1401	*Layer*	Topsoil. Fairly loosely compact, light – mid grey brown silty clay. Roots throughout. Rare gravel inclusions.		0 – 0.10m
1402	*Layer*	Disturbed ground. Sandy backfill of services, also silty clay material with rare gravel inclusions.		0.10 – 0.50m

TRENCH : TP16/17			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.55 x 0.50m		Max. depth: 0.68m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
1601	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown, silty clay. Common root disturbance, large flint/stone inclusions throughout.		0 – 0.22m
1602	*Layer*	Subsoil. Undisturbed ground. Mid yellowish brown silty clay, common stone inclusions, root inclusions.		0.22 +

TRENCH : TP18			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.40 x 0.40m		Max. depth: 0.66m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
1801	*Layer*	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown, clayey loam, root disturbance, disturbed ground. Turfed with modern debris/litter throughout.		0 – 0.20m
1802	*Layer*	Former road surface, tarmac – fairly loose and crumbly. Associated with former surface.		0.20 – 0.24m
1803	*Layer*	Disturbed ground, redeposited natural throughout. Heavily disturbed by hedgerow roots particularly towards base. Quite loamy, mid reddish brown appearance.		0.24 +

TRENCH : TP19/20			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.50 x 0.50m		Max. depth: 0.73m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
1901	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown, silty clay, common root disturbance, sparse stone/flint inclusions.		0 – 0.19m
1902	*Layer*	Disturbed ground, mixed deposit, some patches of redeposited natural. Moderate stone inclusions.		0.19 +

TRENCH : TP21/22			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.45 x 0.47m		Max. depth: 0.60m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
2101	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown, silty clay, turfed, common root disturbance, no inclusions.		0 – 0.13m
2102	*Layer*	Subsoil. Dark yellowish brown silty clay, rare stone inclusions, 5% <0.02m. mottled deposit.		0.13 – 0.48m
2103	*Layer*	Natural – mid yellowish brown clay, loose and dry deposit.		0.48 +

TRENCH : TP23/24			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.47 x 0.50m		**Max. depth: 0.70m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
2301	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown silty clay, turfed, common root disturbance.		0 – 0.17m
2302	*Layer*	Disturbed ground, mix of subsoil, redeposited natural and other deposits. Disturbed when road was constructed. Intrusive debris throughout.		0.17 – 0.66m
2303	*Layer*	Natural. Seemingly undisturbed, seen at base of trench. Mid greyish brown clay loam, dry and crumbly deposit.		0.66 +

TRENCH : TP25/26			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions:1.08 x 0.70m		**Max. depth: 0.80m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
2501	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown, silty clay, fairly homogenous deposit, root disturbance throughout. No inclusions.		0 – 0.27m
2501	*Layer*	Disturbed throughout. Largely redeposited natural clay, light reddish brown with yellow hue, also contains modern brick patches of blue grey clay.		0.27 +
TRENCH : TP27			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 1.10x0.65m		**Max. depth: 0.90m**		
context	**description**			**depth (bgl)**
2701	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown silty clay, turfed, heavy root disturbance. Disturbed ground.		0 – 0.27m
2702	*Layer*	Made ground. High levels of disturbance throughout entire trench due to association of road close by. Some metal deposits feature at base of deposit.		0.27m+

TRENCH : TP28/29			Type:	Machine Excavated
Dimensions: 0.90 x 0.60m		**Max. depth: 0.70m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
2801	*Layer*	Fairly loosely compact mid grey/brown (orange patches), silty clay. No distinct horizon between a possible 'topsoil' and 'natural'. Ground is disturbed and contains some fine industrial gravel, which is the same as (3002). Sparse angular/subangular flint primarily, also small gravel.		0 – 0.70m

TRENCH : TP30			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.1 x 0.60m		**Max. depth: 0.70m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
3001	*Layer*	Light yellowish brown silty clay. Fairly compact, rare angular/subangular gravel.		0 – 0.30m
3002	*Layer*	Fine gravel backfill poured over service pipe once it had been laid.		0.30 – 0.70m

TRENCH : TP31/32			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.40 x 0.45m		**Max. depth: 0.60m**		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
3101	*Layer*	Light greyish brown clay loam, turfed, heavy root disturbance, sparse stone inclusions, some chalk flecking.		0 – 0.22m
3102	*Layer*	Subsoil. Disturbed ground. Modern brick and tile in section, areas of redeposited natural clay dispersed throughout deposit. Presence of pea grit and stone indicating probable pipe location at depth of c.0.60m.		0.22m+

TRENCH : TP33			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.60 x 0.70m		Max. depth: 0.65m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
3301	*Layer*	Dark greyish brown silty clay loam, turfed, heavy root disturbance, contains modern disturbance and rubbish, no inclusions		0 – 0.22m
3102	*Layer*	Light yellowish brown silty clay, highly disturbed made ground, backfill associated with pipe/cable at base of test pit, some root disturbance.		0.22 – 0.51m
3103	*Layer*	Soft loamy silt, dark greyish brown, deliberate modern backfill around cable.		0.51m +

TRENCH : TP34			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.70 x 0.70m		Max. depth: 0.72m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
3401	*Layer*	Topsoil, mid reddish brown silty clay, turfed, heavy root disturbance.		0 – 0.12m
3402	*Layer*	Thick light reddish brown clay deposit, all redeposited natural clay, contained fragments of modern brick at base, likely to have been disturbed by gas main close by.		0.12m+

TRENCH : TP35			Type:	Hand dug
Dimensions: 0.60 x 0.55m		Max. depth: 0.65m		
Context	**Description**			**Depth (B.G.L.)**
3501	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid greyish brown silty loam, some root disturbance, no inclusions.		0 – 0.15m
3502	*Layer*	Mid greyish brown silt, fairly compact, very few inclusions, mixed deposit, appears disturbed.		0.15 – 0.55m
3503	*Layer*	Light reddish brown clay, redeposited natural, appears to have been disturbed, possibly by gas main nearby.		0.51m +

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381500

382000

382500

151000

150500

150000

TP1/2

TP3/4

TP30

TP28/29

TP31/32

OS Grid
Ref: ST 815 508

STANDERWICK

TP11/12

TP6

TP13

TP7/8

TP14/15

A36

TP16/17

TP18

TP21/22

TP19/20

TP35

0

500m

Plate 1: North-west facing section of TP7/8

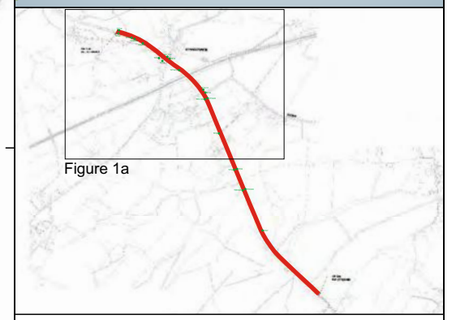

Figure 1a

Watching Brief location

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Watching Brief location: north

Figure 1a

382000
382500
383000
150000
149500
149000
TP35
TP34
TP33
TP25/26
TP23/24
TP27
A36
OS Grid
Ref: ST 830 489
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500m

Plate 2: West facing section of TP25/26

Plate 3: East facing section of TP27

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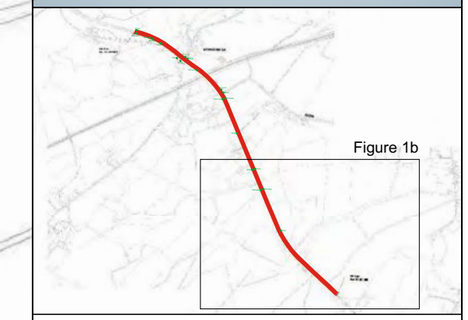

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	\Report Figs\wb\10-04-06\73360_wb2.dwg

Watching Brief location: south

Figure 1b

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