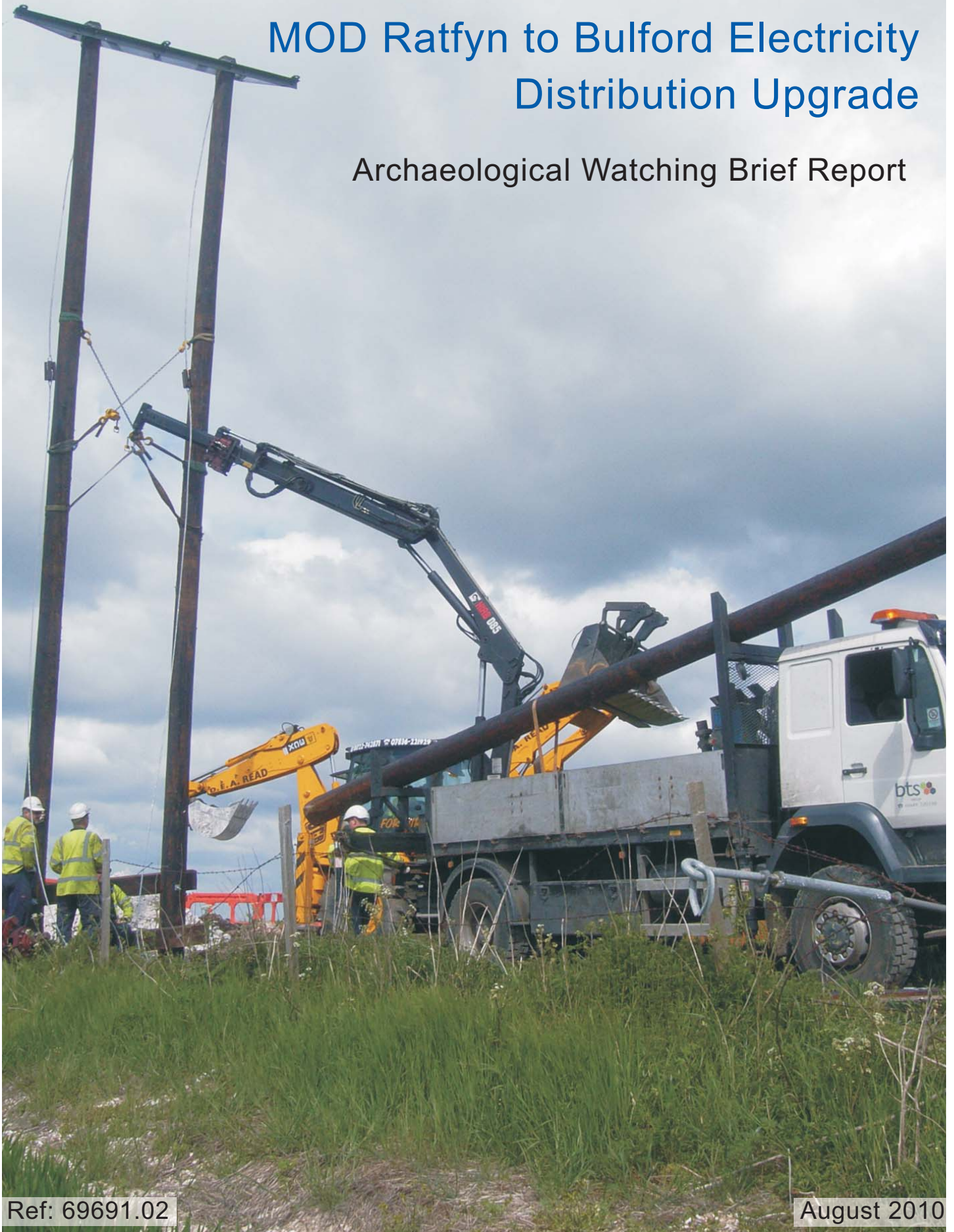




MOD Ratfyn to Bulford Electricity Distribution Upgrade

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**MOD RATFYN TO BULFORD ELECTRICTY DISTRIBUTION
UPGRADE**

Archaeological Watching Report

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	69691	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.		NGR	NGR 415980 14595		

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
1	I	SDT	SF		22/07/10	\\PROJECTSERVER\WESSEX\PROJECTS\69691\POST EX\69691_DRAFT
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* I= Internal Draft E= External Draft F= Final

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING REPORT

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING REPORT

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Utility Consulting, on behalf of EDF Energy to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of a 33kv underground cable and overhead line works running from the Ratfyn Amesbury MOD electricity substation for approximately 2.5km towards Bulford Army Camp.

The site is located immediately east of the UNESCO designated Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) and lies within an area rich in prehistoric archaeology which includes a number of extant Bronze Age barrows and extensive Iron Age or Romano British field systems.

An earlier geophysical survey undertaken by Wessex Archaeology within the easement and immediately south of the barrow group identified several anomalies. The Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council advised a watching brief during the initial groundworks and involved the monitoring of the excavation of the easement for the underground cable run and the excavation of three new pits for double electricity poles and stays and a further 13 screw bore holes for single poles.

Despite the line of the route passing through an area rich in prehistoric activity no archaeological features were revealed. A number of undated tree throws and modern features were identified.

The watching brief took place intermittently during April and May 2010.

MOD RATFYN TO BULFORD ELECTRICTY DISTRIBUTION UPGRADE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING REPORT

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Utility Consulting on behalf of EDF Energy and Wessex Archaeology is grateful for the help and support of Patrick Portch of Utility Consulting and Simon Tapp of EDF Energy. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist for her advice during the project.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Thompson, Vasilis Tsamis and Piotr Orczewski. This report was compiled by Steve Thompson with specialist finds report by Lorraine Mephram. Report illustrations were prepared by Elizabeth James.

This project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

MOD RATFYN TO BULFORD ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION UPGRADE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) has been commissioned by Utility Consulting, on behalf of EDF Energy (the Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief during development on land between the existing Ratfyn Amesbury MOD electricity substation and Bulford Army Camp (**Figure 1**), centred on NGR 415980 14295 (hereafter 'the Site').

1.1.2 The development comprises a 33kv underground cable installation and overhead line works running from the Ratfyn Amesbury MOD electricity substation for approximately 2.5km (hereafter the 'Route').

1.1.3 In line with accepted best practise, the Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council and English Heritage were consulted and a geophysical survey conducted immediately south of two barrows which form part of a larger complex extending north and east. No archaeological features were identified and an archaeological watching brief during construction was agreed.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location, topography and geology

2.1.1 The Site is positioned between Bulford to the north and Amesbury to the south and runs from the existing Ratfyn Amesbury MOD electricity substation c. 2.5km east. The Site is currently under arable cultivation.

2.1.2 The Site lies at the south-western end of a low ridge, approximately 112m above Ordnance Datum, which slopes gently away to the west and south. Immediately to the north of the Site lie a number of barrows, forming part of a larger complex extending to the north and east.

2.1.3 The underlying geology consists of Upper Chalk (BGS, Sheet 298)

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The cable route lies immediately to the east of the UNESCO designated Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS). Both the WHS and the surrounding chalk downland contain a high number of archaeological features and monuments dating from the prehistoric period onwards.

3.1.2 A brief search for archaeological and historical sites within a 500m radius ('the Study Area') of the Site via the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record website (<http://localview.wiltshire.gov.uk/smr/InTheArea.aspx>) indicates the presence of 25 sites, predominantly of a prehistoric date.

- 3.1.3 Immediately to the north of the Site a group of extant barrows (a number of which are Scheduled Monuments) and ring ditches identified from aerial photography form part of a barrow cemetery positioned along the low ridge.
- 3.1.4 To the south a second barrow group comprising a disc and bell barrows alongside further ring ditches are recorded.
- 3.1.5 An extensive late Iron Age or Romano British field system crosses the proposed cable trench. The field system extends into Boscombe Down airfield.

3.2 Previous Archaeological Work

- 3.2.1 A geophysical survey (WA 2008) was conducted over 0.23ha immediately south of a group of extant barrows. The survey was positioned to investigate a 10m wide corridor centred upon an extant field boundary. Several anomalies of possible archaeological potential were identified although their interpretation was made more difficult by the limited survey area and magnetic disturbance resulting from the wire fence demarcating the boundary.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (WA 2010) and provided details of the research aims and methods by which the programme of works would be achieved.
- 4.1.2 The aim of the watching brief is to provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the proposed easement.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1.1 The fieldwork consisted of the monitoring of ground works made beneath the present ground surface. Along the western section of the Route, this comprised the excavation of a 2.5m cable trench undertaken using a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological remains or at natural geology. In the eastern half of the Route, the excavation of 16 wooden pole bases measuring approximately 1m wide and 2m deep to support the overhead cable was monitored.
- 5.1.2 A continuous archaeological presence was maintained during groundworks undertaken within the area of the watching brief.
- 5.1.3 Archaeological remains encountered were investigated and recorded commensurate with the scale of work and using Wessex Archaeology's recording system. Where practical, and without including unreasonable delay to the groundworks programme, excavation included sampling of features and deposits in order to recover artefacts, ecofacts and dating evidence, and in order to determine stratigraphic relationships was undertaken. Areas under archaeological observation were surveyed using a Leica GPS Survey System and tied in to the Ordnance Survey.

- 5.1.4 Excavated material was visually examined for archaeological material and a metal detector may be used to enhance artefact recovery.
- 5.1.5 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (revised 2008).
- 5.1.6 A full photographic record was maintained, using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

5.2 Copyright

- 5.2.1 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.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Details of the excavated sequence are retained in the archive.
- 6.1.2 The results of the Watching Brief will be described with reference to the Areas recorded as **Areas A-K (Figure 1)**.

6.2 Soil Sequence and Geology

- 6.2.1 The watching brief revealed approximately c. 0.23m of overlying topsoil/plough along the length of the Route. The natural geology varied along the Route. Between **Areas D to F**, the plough soil sealed solid chalk natural whereas at the southern portion of **Areas C to D** and the northern portion of **Areas D to E**, the plough soil sealed c. 0.16m of subsoil and degraded chalk natural sealing coombe material and areas of solid chalk with periglacial stripping and solifluction channels.

6.3 Areas C to D

- 6.3.1 No archaeological features were revealed in Areas C to D. Three large undated tree throws were revealed as well as the remains of earlier wooden electricity poles. These were recorded at a distance of 75m apart.

6.4 Area D to E

- 6.4.1 The line of electricity poles continued into **Areas D to E** where a number of tree throws were also revealed, though again these remained undated. A large water pipe trench was revealed which continued into **Area D to F**.

6.5 Area D to F

6.5.1 As well as the continuation of the modern water pipe trench, a number of other modern features were observed in **Areas D to F**, and may be associated with the use of the land by the MOD for training exercises. Two small pits were observed which contained tin cans and a further 6 pits were observed containing small animal bones.

6.6 Areas F to K

6.6.1 Between point F and K, the electricity cable was transferred to an overhead line from the buried cable. This involved the installation of 16 new poles. Three large pits were excavated one at point F and two at point K for the placing of double poles while the remaining pole holes were drilled using a screw boring rig. No archaeological remains were observed in the double pole holes and nothing could be seen in the screw bore holes. The up-cast from the screw bore holes was scanned for artefacts, though none were recovered.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1.1 Despite the line of the Route passing through an area rich in prehistoric archaeology no archaeological remains of note were identified in this programme of works.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1.1 The project archive was prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in MORPHE (Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment) 2006 and in accordance with the Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage (UKIC 1990). The archive, including plans, photographs and written records, are currently held at the Wessex Archaeology offices under the project code 69691. In due course the archive will be relocated to the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum.

9 REFERENCES

9.1 Bibliography

British Geological Survey, sheet 298, 1:50,000 Solid and Drift Series

Wessex Archaeology 2008, Land at Beacon Hill, Bulford, Wiltshire. Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report

Wessex Archaeology 2010, MOD Ratfyn to Bulford Electricity Distribution Upgrade. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

9.2 Internet Sources

<http://localview.wiltshire.gov.uk/smr/InTheArea.aspx> Wiltshire Sites and Monument Record

10 OASIS FORM

10.1 OASIS ID: wessexar1-82199

Project details

Project name MOD RATFYN TO BULFORD ELECTRICTY DISTRIBUTION
UPGRADE

Short description of the project Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Utility Consulting, on behalf of EDF Energy, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of a 33kv underground cable and overhead line works running from the Ratfyn Amesbury MOD electricity substation for approximately 2.5km towards Bulford Army Camp. The site is located immediately east of the UNESCO designated Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) and lies within an area rich in prehistoric archaeology which includes a number of extant Bronze Age barrows and extensive Iron Age or Romano British field systems. The watching brief involved the monitoring of the excavation of the easement for the underground cable run and the excavation of three new pits for double electricity poles and stays and a further 13 screw bore holes for single poles. Despite the line of the Route passing through an area rich in prehistoric activity no archaeological features were revealed. A number of undated tree throws and modern features were identified. The watching brief took place intermittently during April and May 2010.

Project dates Start: 05-04-2010 End: 28-05-2010

Previous/future work No

Any associated project reference codes 69690 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

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

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location WILTSHIRE SALISBURY BULFORD MOD RATFYN TO
BULFORD ELECTRICTY DISTRIBUTION UPGRADE

Postcode SP4 7EB

Study area 2.50 Kilometres

Site coordinates SU 15980 42950 51.1850347183 -1.771333360120 51 11 06 N
001 46 16 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 91.33m Max: 111.76m

Project creators

Name of Wessex Archaeology
Organisation

Project originator brief Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District
Archaeologist)

Project originator design Wessex Archaeology

Project director/manager Sue Farr

Project supervisor S Thompson

Type of Electricity Authority/Company
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Utility Consulting
sponsor/funding

body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Physical Archive Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum
recipient

Digital Archive Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum
recipient

Digital Contents 'Survey'

Digital available Media 'Database','Images raster / digital photography','Survey','Text'

Paper Archive Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum
recipient

Paper Contents 'Survey'

Paper available Media 'Context sheet','Drawing','Microfilm','Notebook - Excavation','
Research',' General Notes','Plan','Report','Section','Survey '

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title MOD RATFYN TO BULFORD ELECTRICTY DISTRIBUTION
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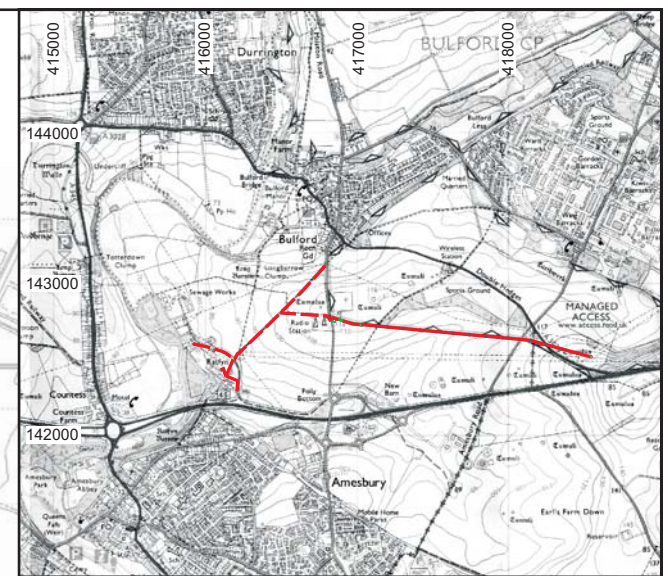
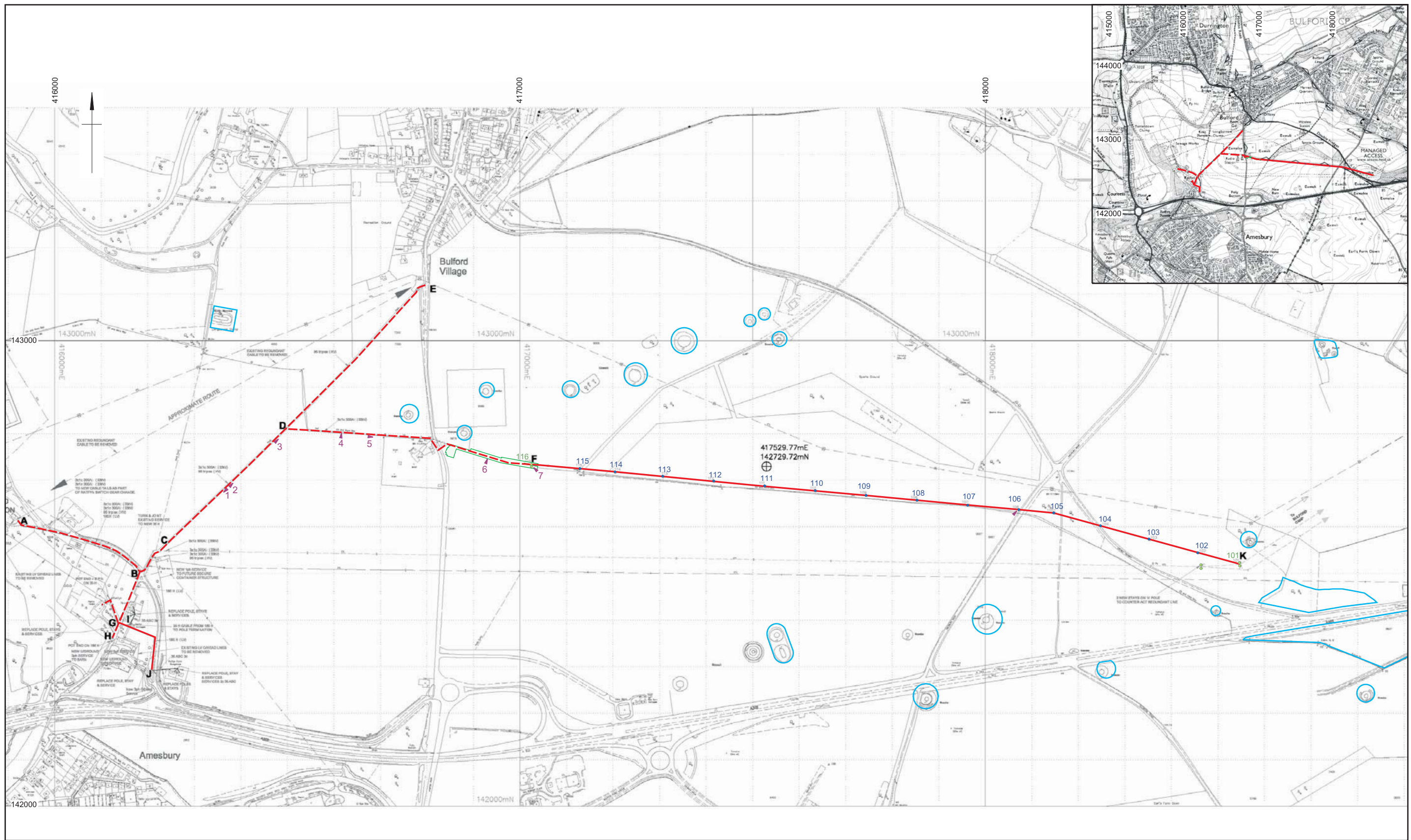
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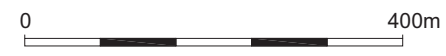
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- - - Proposed cable
- Proposed overhead cable
- Screw-bored pole hole
- Machine-dug double pole hole
- Area of Scheduled Monument
- Area of WA geophysical survey
- 6 Direction and number of photograph



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Site location of watching brief

Figure 1



Plate 1: General view of Area C to D from the north east



Plate 2: General view of Area C to D from the south west



Plate 3: Area D; modern wooden electricity pole from the south west



Plate 4: South facing section of Area D to F



Plate 5: General view towards Area F from the west



Plate 7: Trench for double electricity poles



Plate 6: Modern pit



Plate 8: Screw-bored pole hole 106



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