



**BLUE BELL VALVE,
CHIRBURY WITH BROMPTON, SHROPSHIRE
(SA308)**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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SITE CODE	73110	ACCESSION CODE	TBC	CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.		NGR		SO 249 932	

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Severn Trent Water to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief on the insertion of a small electrical duct on a verge at Blue Bell Valve, Chirbury with Brompton, Shropshire (Centred on NGR SO 249 932). The work commissioned followed on from monitoring carried out by ARCUS between September and October 2009 (ARCUS 2009)

The Watching Brief consisted of monitoring the excavation of a 0.20m wide duct trench to a depth of 0.7m followed by the re-excavation of an 0.8m square trial hole over the existing valve, as previously monitored by ARCUS.

No archaeological features were uncovered during the groundworks. A mid brown silty loam topsoil covered the site with an underlying mid brown silty made ground.

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Acknowledgements

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Fieldwork was undertaken by Sam Fairhead. The report was researched and compiled by Michael Hartwell. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill.

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 In September 2009 Archaeological Research and Consultancy at the University of Sheffield (ARCUS) were commissioned by Severn Trent Water (STW) to undertake an archaeological Watching Brief on the excavation of two small trial holes located around the Blue Bell Valve, Chirbury with Brompton, Shropshire (ARCUS 2009). In December 2009 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned to monitor further works adjacent to the Blue Bell Valve.

1.1.2 The watching brief was required as a condition of the Scheduled Ancient Monument consent for the Severn Trent work. The site lies within the boundary of SA308 which contains three Roman camps, a tumulus and a section of Offa's Dyke.

1.1.3 The scope of this report is to detail the archaeological findings from works monitored by Wessex Archaeology. All results from work undertaken by ARCUS have been reported by ARCUS (2009).

1.2 The Site, location and geology

1.2.1 The site is located at the junction of the A489 and B4385 (NGR SO 249 932) and consisted of a duct trench which ran for 18.6m to the east of an existing valve (**Figure 1**).

1.2.2 The site lies on a possibly remodelled roadside verge; the underlying geology consists of mudstones of the Bromley shale formation.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and scope

2.1.1 The aim of the watching brief was to identify, record and if possible preserve any archaeological remains relating to the Scheduled Ancient Monument that were uncovered or affected by the groundworks.

2.1.2 The scope of the watching brief was the observation of all groundworks that may interfere with archaeological deposits.

2.2 Watching Brief

2.2.1 In accordance with consultation with English Heritage an archaeological watching brief was maintained by a suitably qualified member of Wessex Archaeology staff on all groundworks.

- 2.2.2 Groundworks on site were carried out by hand and were located by observation of existing inspection covers in conjunction with engineer's plans.
- 2.2.3 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, supported by a photographic record. The photographic record comprised 7 digital images.
- 2.2.4 Archaeological deposits were planed at a scale of 1:20 with cross-sections through features drawn at a scale of 1:10. Drawings were drawn on inert materials and adhered to accepted drawing conventions.

2.3 Best practice

- 2.3.1 All works were conducted in compliance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (Revised 2008).

2.4 Copyright

- 2.4.1 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.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The archaeological background of the site and its location was detailed in the Scoping Advice (ARCUS 2007) commissioned by STW and is summarised below. A desk based assessment was also undertaken by Birmingham Archaeology on a larger pipeline scheme which ran through the site (2008). Further to this a watching brief was undertaken on two small trail holes at the site which uncovered no archaeological deposits (ARCUS 2009).
- 3.1.2 The Site lies within the boundaries of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SA308) containing three Roman camps, a tumulus and a section of Offa's Dyke.
- 3.1.3 It is also close to two other Scheduled Ancient Monuments, a Motte and Bailey castle (Monument No. 19321) approximately 100m to the south east of the site and a section of Offa's Dyke (SA232) which lies approximately 750m north of the site.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Results

- 4.1.1 An 18.6m long trench was excavated to a width of 0.2m and maximum depth of 0.7m, with a box 0.8m by 0.8m over the valve. The site was covered with a 0.15m thick mid brown silty loam topsoil (**001**), this was underlain by a mid

brown clayey silt made ground deposit **(002)** possibly associated with the road junction (**Figure 1**).

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 No archaeological remains were uncovered during the groundworks.

6 ARCHIVE

6.1 Preparation

6.1.1 The project archive, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs, and electronic data, will be prepared by Wessex Archaeology staff in accordance with United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990), Museums and Galleries Commission (1992), English Heritage (1991 and 2006) guidelines and the requirements of the repository museum.

6.2 Deposition

6.2.1 It is anticipated that the physical Site archive will be deposited with Shropshire County Museum Service. The accession number is to be confirmed.

6.2.2 A digital copy of the report will be prepared for the client and additional copies will be submitted to English Heritage, for inclusion in the Site archive and the Historic Environment Record (HER).

6.2.3 An OASIS form will be completed at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> for inclusion in the ADS database. This will include an electronic copy of the report in PDF format.

Table 1: Archive index

Sheet	Quantity
Scoping Advice	1
Risk Assessment	1
Test Pit/Trial Trench Record	1

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APPENDIX 1

Table 2: Sediment descriptions:

Depth bgl	Context	Sediment description	Interpretation
0.00-0.15m	001	Mid brown silty loam with rare pebbles <5cm	Topsoil
0.15-0.7m	002	Mid greyish brown clayey silt with rare pebbles <5cm	Layer