

Archaeological Observation

Land to the N of
Chew Valley Lake Teashop
Chew Magna
Bristol

NGR: ST 5729 6166

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Report specification

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1. Non Technical Summary

Archaeological observation of groundworks was carried out in relation to service trenching for a water pipe to tearooms adjacent to Chew Valley Lake. The archaeological works were carried out on the 10th August 2009

Trenching measuring approximately 70m in length was machine excavated to a depth of approximately 0.7m. Three contexts were identified, the uppermost of which appeared to relate to alluvial deposition; the third being of natural origin (bedrock).

No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed during the course of the groundworks. Significantly, however, the archaeological observation confirmed that no archaeology was damaged or disturbed during the programme of works without being recorded.

2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Stuart Cleland Esq., Land and Property Manager, Bristol Water plc, to undertake the archaeological observation of groundworks relating to a 70m section of replacement water pipeline located to the N of the Chew Valley Lake Teashop (NGR: ST 5729 6166) (**Fig. 1**). The archaeological programme of work was commissioned in response to correspondence between Bristol Water plc and Richard Sermon Esq., Archaeological Officer, Bath and North East Somerset Council

Copies of this report will be remitted to Bristol Water plc, Richard Sermon Esq. and the Bath and North East Somerset Council Sites & Monuments Record (SMR).

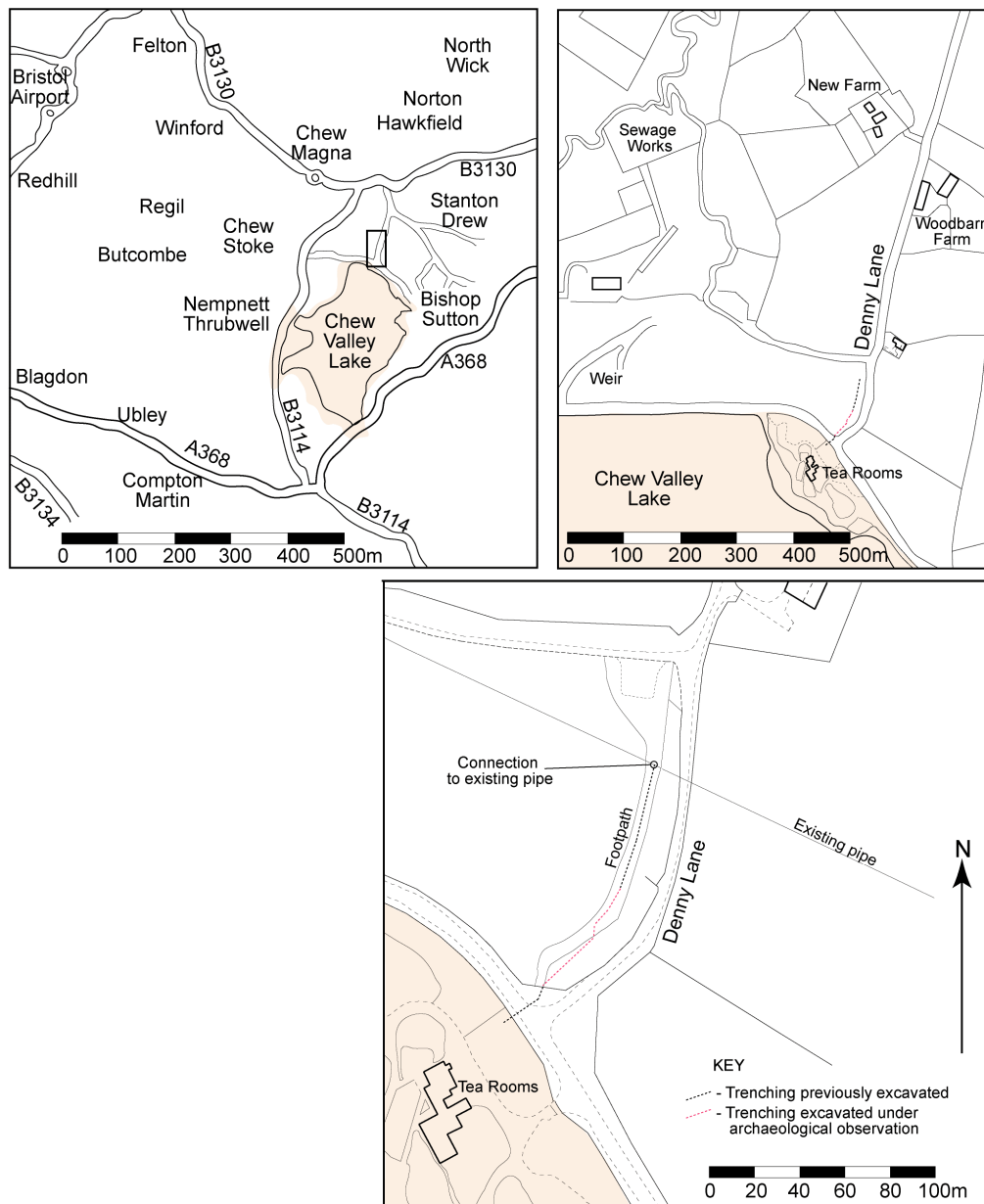


Fig 1: Plan showing location of the site and groundworks

2.1 Soils & Geology

The area is characterised by stagnogleyic argillic brown earths of the HODNET series (572c), consisting of reddish fine and coarse loamy soils, with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, and some similar well-drained reddish fine loamy soils. The underlying geology consists of permo-triassic and carboniferous reddish mudstone, siltstone and sandstone.

3. Brief Historical and Archaeological Background

The study area, consisting of an approximately 70m section of pipeline route (centred on NGR: ST 5729 6166), is located within an area exhibiting evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement.

The pipeline route runs parallel and to the W of Denny Lane (SMR No. MBN5968; NGR ST 5740 6150), which appears to represent the continuation of a Roman road that probably underlies and extends to the S of Chew Magna Reservoir.

Located approximately 200m E of the study area is an Iron Age/Romano-British occupation site located to the W of Knowle Hill (MBN712; NGR ST 5770 6143-NGR ST 5790 6134), which was discovered in 1953 during excavations for the pipeline extending from the Chew Valley Reservoir to the Stowey Treatment Works (Rahtz & Greenfield, 1977).

The features revealed during the excavations consisted of shallow depressions, ditches, hearths, occupation levels and a single cremation burial, associated with a small pottery assemblage dated to the late Iron Age and Roman periods, which appeared to be representative of an 'open', dispersed type of settlement, probably with native origins, rather than a Romanized villa complex. Occupation of the settlement appears to have continued until the 4th century AD.

The precise boundaries of the settlement area have not been established and there is little evidence of visible surface features; consequently, it is possible that evidence of activity associated with this Iron Age/Roman settlement might be found within the study area.

It should also be noted that archaeological observation of trial pits and boreholes for a water main at Chew Magna Sewage Pumping Station, approximately 400m NW of the study area, only identified evidence for alluvial deposits, with no significant archaeological deposits, features or finds identified (McConnell, 2003).

4. Methodology

Archaeological observation of the groundworks was carried out in accordance with *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2001). Border Archaeology adheres to the IfA *Code of conduct* and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology*.

The aim of the archaeological observation was to locate and record any archaeological remains revealed during the course of the groundworks and to confirm that no impact on the archaeological resource occurred without recording.

A service trench measuring approximately 70m × 0.3m was excavated under archaeological supervision by machine and toothless bucket to an average depth of 0.7m. All associated spoil was scanned for artefacts.

Full written, graphic and photographic records were made using *pro-forma* record forms and sheets, in accordance with Border Archaeology's *Field Recording Manual* and archaeological practices set out by the IfA (2001). Any identified archaeological deposits, features and structures were recorded in plan and section/elevation at scales of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50. A photographic record was made using a 10.3 MPX digital camera.



Plate 1: View SW showing sample section of service trenching

5. Results

The approximately 70m section of trenching revealed three contexts, the uppermost of which was a loose mid to dark brown silty sand topsoil (001) containing occasional small angular stones, extending over the trench ($>72\text{m} \times >0.3\text{m}$) to an average depth of 0.1m. Underlying this was a loose to moderately compacted mid reddish-brown sandy clay alluvial subsoil (002) containing very occasional small angular stones, again extending over the entire trench area ($>72\text{m} \times >0.3\text{m}$) to an average depth of 0.45m. Underlying (002) was a pinkish-brown bedrock (003) measuring $>72\text{m} \times >0.3\text{m} \times >0.1\text{m}$.

6. Summary and Conclusion

Although the groundworks were located within an area exhibiting evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement, no finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

This, together with previous evidence from other excavations carried out to the W of Denny Lane (McConnell, 2003), suggests that the settlement identified in this area in 1953 (Rahtz & Greenfield, 1977), may have been concentrated to the E of the (continuation of the) Roman road (Denny Lane).

7. Copyright

Border Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepted 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 Project Specification.

8. References

Bath and North Somerset Council Sites and Monuments Record: SMR Printout

National Monuments Record Centre, Swindon: NMR Printout

McConnell, R., 2003, *Rising Main and Sewage Pumping Station, Chew Magna, North East Somerset: Phase 1 trial pits and boreholes: an archaeological watching brief* (Context One Archaeological Services)

Rahtz, P.A. & Greenfield, E., 1977, *Excavations at Chew Valley, Somerset*, London (HMSO)

SSEW, 1983, *Soil Survey of England and Wales*, Silsoe



9. Appendix: Context Register

Context No	Description
(001)	Loose mid to dark brown silty sand containing occasional small angular stones. Extends trenchwide >72m x >0.30m to an average depth of 0.1m. Overlies (002)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Topsoil deposit.</i>
(002)	Loose to moderately compacted mid reddish-brown sandy clay containing very occasional small angular stones. Extends trenchwide >72m x >0.30m to an average depth of 0.45m. Underlies (001), overlies (003).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Subsoil/alluvial deposit</i>
(003)	Indurated pinkish-brown bedrock measuring >72m x >0.30m x >0.10m. Underlies (002)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Natural bedrock</i>



Document Control

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