

Installation of package sewage treatment plant and soakaway, Stonehenge Campsite, Berwick Road, Winterbourne Stoke, SP3 4TQ: Report on an archaeological watching brief

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AC archaeology

INSTALLATION OF PACKAGE SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT AND SOAK-AWAY, STONEHENGE CAMPSITE, BERWICK ROAD, WINTERBOURNE STOKE, SP3 4TQ

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REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief that was undertaken during groundworks associated with the construction of a new package sewage treatment plant and associated soak-away at Stonehenge Campsite, Winterbourne Stoke, Wiltshire (see Figs. 1 and 2 for site location and details of development).
- 1.2 The monitoring was undertaken by AC archaeology and commissioned by the site owner (Susan Grant), in compliance with the requirements of a condition attached to a planning permission (Application No: 18/06210/FUL). The condition requires that:

No development shall commence within the area indicated (proposed development site) until:

- *A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and*
- *The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

Reason: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest

- 1.3 The Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist (WCACA) had advised that the scheme of archaeological investigations should comprise observation and recording during development.
- 1.4 The site lies on chalk with gravel drift at around 75m OD. The development area was formerly used as a poultry farm. There has been extensive landscaping across the central and east part of the site.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are no records of archaeological sites or finds within the site area.
- 2.2 The site lies adjacent to the former medieval settlement of Winterbourne Stoke, which was recorded in Domesday Book, in AD1086, as *Wintreburnestoch* (Wiltshire & Swindon Historic Environment Record ref SU04SE461).
- 2.3 The site lies in an area designated as an Area of Special Archaeological Significance by Wiltshire Council.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring were:

- To record, during development, any archaeological features and finds which may be revealed or disturbed by the groundworks associated with the new sewage system, and;
- To provide an interpretative report on the results of the monitoring.

3.2 The site investigation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Wiltshire Council (Clark 2018) and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standard for watching briefs (CIfA 2014). Attendance by the site archaeologist was comprehensive: an archaeologist was *present during all relevant ground disturbance*.

3.3 The archaeological monitoring commenced during the excavation of the soak-away area, which is located about 40m to the south of the new sewage treatment plant. The area measured approximately 30m by 20m. A second area, containing the treatment plant itself, was smaller and measured approximately 3.5m by 3.5m. Both areas were monitored, together with a pipe trench that linked the two areas. The monitoring lasted until such time as the site archaeologist was satisfied that no further exposure of deposits was possible. A photographic record is included at the end of the report.

3.4 Site observations were recorded using the standard AC archaeology Ltd. *pro forma* recording system, comprising written and graphic records and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*. A digital photographic record was also made.

3.5 The archive has been prepared using the unique site code ACW1160.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Four visits were made during the excavation of the soak-away, the treatment plant and the pipe trench that connected the two areas. The site visits were undertaken on 15, 23, 25 and 26 April 2019.

Soak-away

4.2 The soak-away area, measuring approximately 30m by 20m, was excavated on 15 April 2019 and contained largely made-ground, with mixed gravels and clays, sitting on chalk natural. The machine excavation stopped at the top of the chalk natural. This area had previously been the location of a poultry building which was demolished at some stage in the 1950s. It is likely that the made-ground was associated with this earlier land-use.

4.3 The southern part of the area did, however, contain some surviving natural stratigraphy. Approximately 0.40m of topsoil sealed a silty clay 0.30m in depth that overlay the chalk natural. There was no evidence for archaeological deposits within this area of undisturbed natural deposits.

Sewage treatment plant

- 4.4 The groundworks associated with installing a new treatment plant were monitored on 23 April 2019. The area measured approximately 3.5m by 3.5m. Monitoring ceased when the machine had dug to a depth of about 1.0m and when chalk natural was encountered. This area contained very mixed deposits. The east-facing section contained further evidence for made-ground which included topsoil with mixed deposits of gravel and chalk interspersed within this redeposited material. A band of original topsoil material was sealed by approximately 0.40m of this overburden. On the west facing section, there was less evidence for re-deposited material. A very dark brown topsoil ranging between 0.30 and 0.40m in depth sealed chalk natural. There was no evidence for sub-soils in this part of the site.

Pipe trench

- 4.5 The pipe trench that connected the sewage treatment plant with the soak-away was approximately 30m in length. The trenching was monitored on 25 and 26 April 2019. A c.0.30m wide trench was excavated to a depth of approximately 0.60m. The trenching contained further evidence for made-ground with bands of gravel within the top-soil.

5. COMMENT

- 5.1 All groundworks associated with the sewage treatment works and the soak-away were monitored. Nothing of archaeological interest was observed, with large areas having been truncated by previous activity across the site area, which included earlier buildings associated with a poultry farm. This activity would have destroyed or severely damaged any archaeological deposits, should they have been present across the site.

6. REFERENCES & GUIDANCE

British Geological Survey. *Geology of Britain Viewer*, © NERC [Online] Available from: <https://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>.

CIfA, 2014. *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Reading.

Clark, R. 2018. *Installation of Package Sewage Treatment Plant and Soakaway, Stonehenge Campsite, Berwick Road, Winterbourne Stoke, SP3 4TQ: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief* AC archaeology Ltd. Document number ACW1160/1/0.

Historic England, 1991. *The Management of Archaeological Projects, Second Edition (MAP2)*. English Heritage, London

Historic England, 2011. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation*, second edition. English Heritage, London.



Plate 1: Soak-away area



Plate 2: General view of groundworks



Plate 3: Excavation of sewage treatment plant area



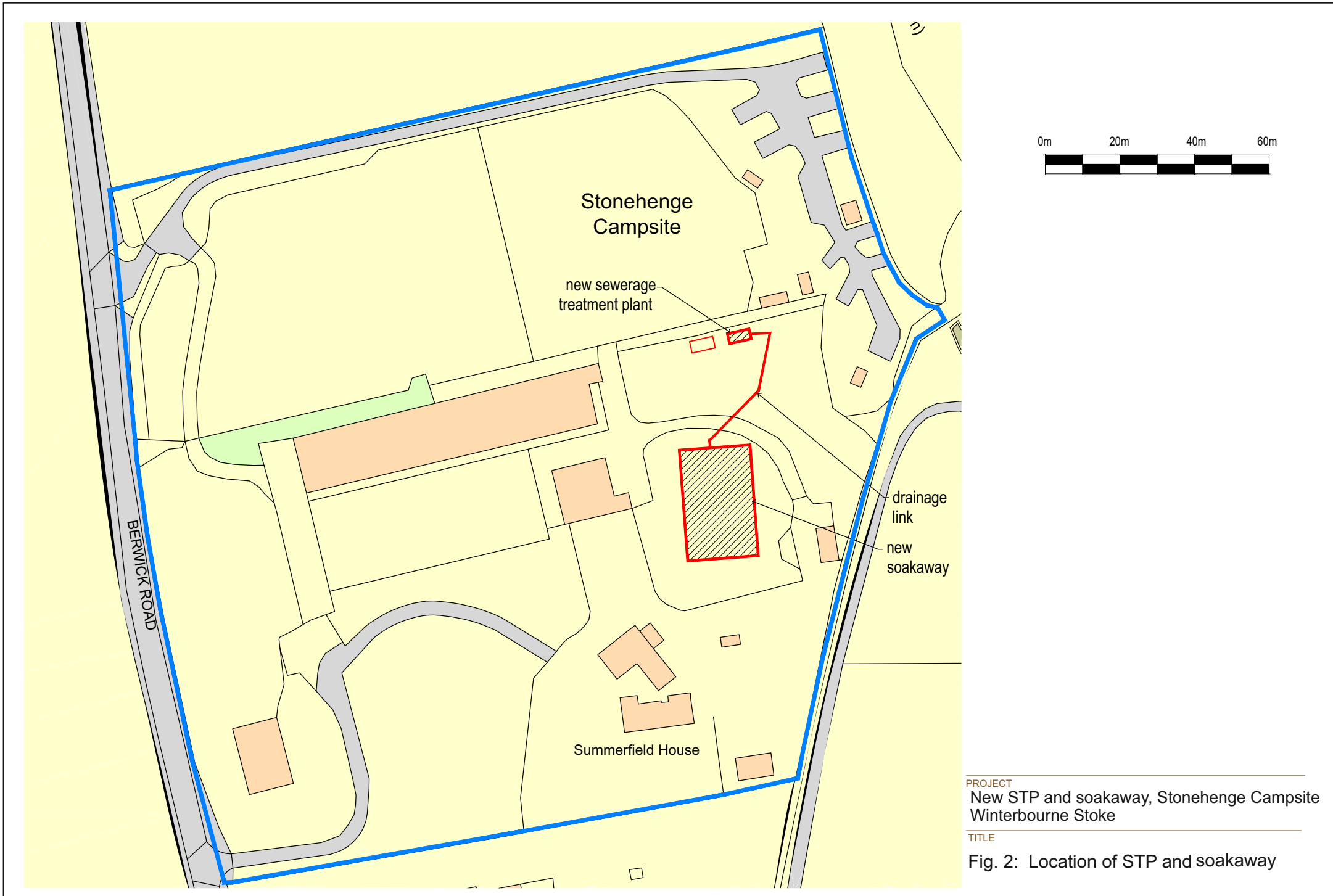
Plate 4: Pipe trench linking soak-away with treatment plant



PROJECT
New STP and soakaway, Stonehenge Campsite
Winterbourne Stoke

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site Location



PROJECT
New STP and soakaway, Stonehenge Campsite
Winterbourne Stoke

TITLE
Fig. 2: Location of STP and soakaway

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