

# WESSEX WATER, MERE STREAM SUPPORT, MERE, WILTSHIRE: RESULTS OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NGR: 382465 132923

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Prepared by:  
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On behalf of:  
Wessex Water

Document No: ACW1329/3/0

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AC archaeology

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# WESSEX WATER, MERE STREAM SUPPORT, WILTSHIRE: Results of an archaeological watching brief

**NGR: 382465 132923**

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## Summary

*An archaeological watching brief involving the monitoring of a pipeline associated with the Mere Stream Support scheme (centred on NGR 382465 132923), was carried out by AC archaeology Ltd during February 2021. The watching brief comprised the monitoring of topsoil stripping within an area of the pipeline easement located to the north of the A303. No evidence for any archaeological deposits were revealed.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief during the topsoil stripping of pipeline easement within an area north of the A303, Mere, Wiltshire (centred on NGR 382465 132923). The monitoring was carried out by AC archaeology Ltd, on behalf of Wessex Water, during February 2021.
- 1.2 The route of the pipeline runs east to west immediately to the north of the A303, before heading north west past some farming buildings and then extending south of the A303 to an existing Wessex Water treatment facility (see Appendix 1 for Wessex Water route details).
- 1.3 The bedrock geology in the area comprises material of the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation, a chalk sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 94 to 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. There are no records for superficial deposits on the BGS website.

## 2. HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER) holds archaeological and historic information for the study area. The closest HER entry to the pipeline consists of strip lynchets that are considered to date to the medieval period (HER ST83SW631). These earthworks are also a scheduled monument (LEN 1004734).
- 2.2 Further to the north, in the area of Mere Down, there is extensive evidence for prehistoric activity. Apart from undated bowl barrows that are likely to date to the Bronze Age (e.g. HERs ST83SW620 and 621), there have been archaeological investigations that have revealed significant evidence for Beaker and Bronze Age activity. In the eastern part of Mere Down, a small 'U' shaped pit was recorded during pipeline excavations (HER ST83SW115). This pit, excavated in 1990, produced Beaker pottery, burnt and unburnt animal bone and fragments of burnt hazel nut shells.



- 2.3 A Bronze Age barrow, in the same general area, has been excavated both in 1800-1802 and in 1950 (by LV Grinsell). This produced human skeletal material, together with Beaker pottery, a tanged copper dagger and two gold discs (HER ST83SW600).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological watching brief were;
- To record any archaeological features and finds which may be revealed or disturbed by the groundworks, and;
  - To provide an archive and interpretive report on the results of the monitoring.
- 3.2 The site investigation was undertaken during February 2021 in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Clark 2021) approved by the local planning authority. Attendance by the site archaeologist was comprehensive: an archaeologist was *present during all relevant ground disturbance*.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 A digital archive has been prepared using the unique site code ACW1329.

### 4. RESULTS

- 4.1 A maximum depth of 0.3m of topsoil and subsoil was stripped across the length and width of pipeline route (see Plates 1 and 2 for general views along the route of the pipeline). Topsoil comprising up to 0.3m of dark brown silty clay loam containing occasional gravels was recorded across the route of the pipeline. Subsoil, up to 0.2m thick and representing a colluvial horizon consisted of a brown clay-silt with moderate gravels.



Plate1: General view of stripped area from the west

- 4.2** The subsoil was only present in the south-east section of the pipeline route. Where exposed, the natural sub-strata comprised a light yellowish-brown clayey marl. There was no evidence for any archaeological deposits or artefacts along the route of the pipeline.



**Plate 2: General view of site from the south-west**

## **5. COMMENT**

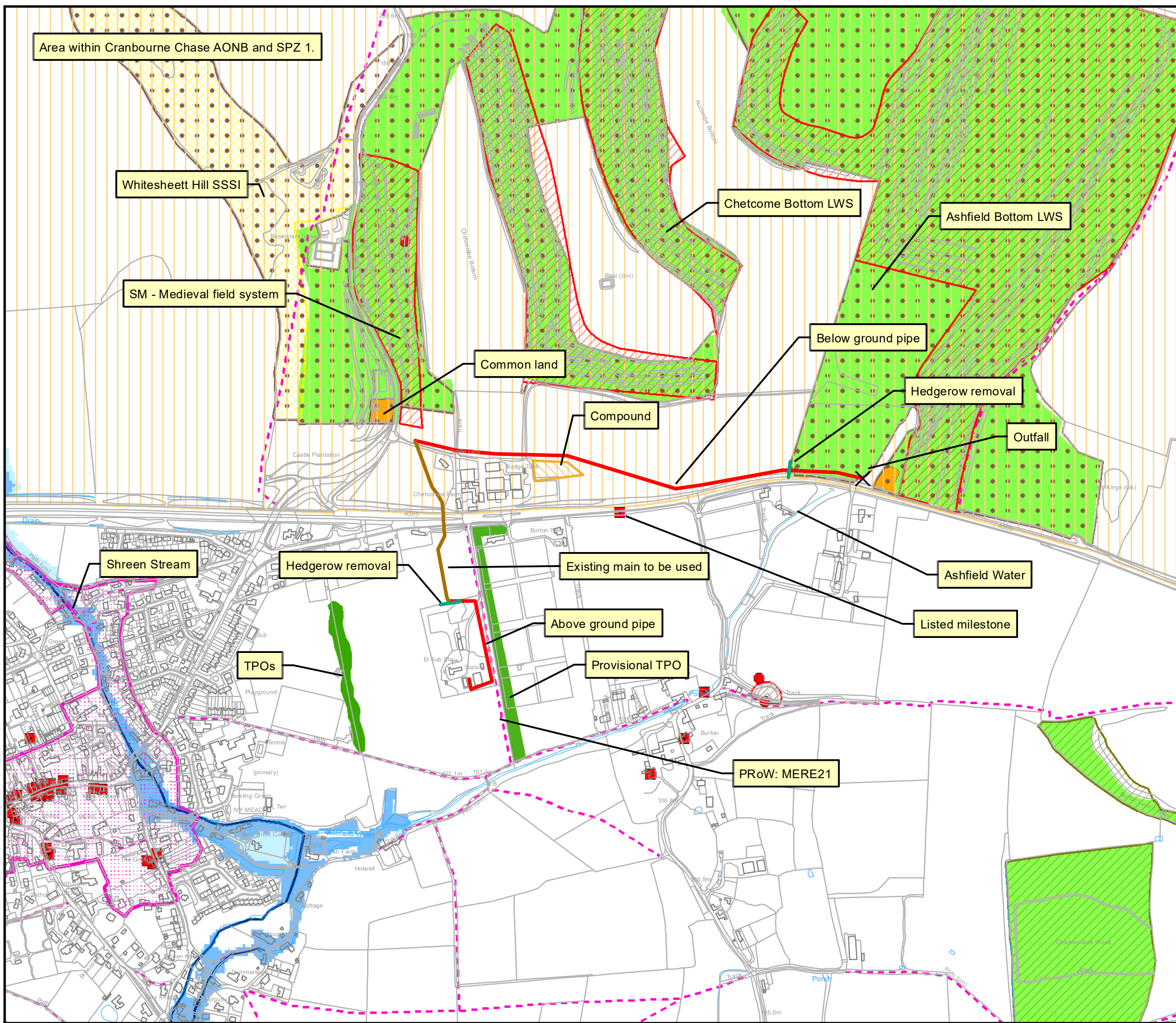
- 5.1** The watching brief revealed no evidence for any archaeological deposits or the presence of any significant artefacts across the route of the stripped area of the pipeline. It is not proposed that a formal archive will be deposited.

## **6. REFERENCES**

Clark, R. 2021. *Wessex Water, Mere Stream Support, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief*. Document ref. ACW1329/1/0

## ***Appendix1: Route of Pipeline***





- ### Legend
- Compound
  - Outfall
  - Hedgerow removal
  - Utilise existing main
  - Proposed works
  - Alternative option
  - Provisional TPO
  - Ancient Woodland (Wessex Water Region)
  - Area TPO
  - Area TPO (North Dorset/Weymouth and Portland)
  - TPO
  - Scheduled Monument (Point)
  - Scheduled Monument (Polygon)
  - Listed Building
  - Conservation Area
  - Reg Cons
  - World Heritage Site
  - Historic Park and Garden
  - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
  - Heritage Coast
  - Public Rights of Way
  - CROW Open Access Land
  - Main Rivers
  - Flood Zone 3
  - Flood Zone 2
  - Flood Defence Structures
  - Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)
  - High Water Mark
  - Aerodromes/Other Constraints
  - Green Belt
  - Registered Common Land
  - Ramsar Site
  - Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
  - Special Protection Area (SPA)
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - National Nature Reserve (NNR)
  - National Park
  - County Wildlife Site (CWS)
  - Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

## Mere Stream Support Environmental Constraints Plan (A3)

<b>Grid Reference:</b> 382131,132615	<b>Date:</b> 20/11/2020
<b>Drawing Number</b> B0699/ENV/100/REV H	<b>Scale</b> 1:6,000



*This map may be used for Wessex Water Projects only*

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County Wildlife Sites: The County Wildlife Site Project is provided by the Environmental Records Centre. Further information on these sites are available from the relevant Records Centre.

Information in this plan is provided for identification purposes only. No warranty as to accuracy is given or implied. The precise route of pipe work may not exactly match that shown. Wessex Water does not accept liability for inaccuracies. Sewers and lateral drains adopted by Wessex Water under the Water Industry (Schemes for Adoption of Private Sewers) Regulations 2011 are to be plotted over time and may not yet be shown. In carrying out any works, you accept liability for the cost of any repairs to Wessex Water apparatus damaged as a result of your works. You are advised to commence excavations using hand tools only. Mechanical digging equipment should not be used until pipe work has been precisely located. If you are considering any form of building works and pipe work is shown within the boundary of your property or a property to be purchased (or very close by) a surveyor should plot its exact position prior to commencing works or purchase. Building over or near Wessex Water's apparatus is not normally permitted.



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