

BW102: Whaddon Lane, Hilperton, near Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording



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A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

for

Wessex Water plc

by



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Non-technical summary

Context One Archaeological Services (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during limited groundworks relating to the replacement of an existing water main at Whaddon Lane, Hilperton, near Trowbridge, Wiltshire (the 'Site') on the 3 and 29 April 2013. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc, under a Term Agreement with COAS.

The monitoring programme was requested by Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS)), following a consultation request from Ms Rebecca Howell (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc). The Site is within an area of significant archaeological potential relating to Prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval occupation including the former medieval settlement of Whaddon, a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Despite this, no visible archaeological features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during development excavations and no artefacts were observed. This is perhaps not surprising given the limited nature of groundworks.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during limited groundworks relating to the replacement of an existing water main at Whaddon Lane, Hilperton, near Trowbridge, Wiltshire (the 'Site') over two days on the 3 and 29 April 2013. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc, under a Term Agreement with COAS.
- 1.2 The monitoring programme was requested by Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS)), following a consultation request from Ms Rebecca Howell (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc) as the proposed route involved passing through an area of significant archaeological potential including the former medieval settlement of Whaddon, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no. 30425). In a consultation email dated 20 August 2012 Ms King stated that:

“With regard to the SM (scheduled monument), all decisions with regard to this will have to be made by English Heritage, as they will need to decide whether Scheduled Monument Consent is needed for any works that lie within the scheduled area. They may also wish to comment on any effect that the works may have on the setting of the SM.

In addition to the scheduled site, we have evidence from other fields along the proposed route that there is significant potential for both Romano-British and medieval settlement to be present. There is also evidence for prehistoric activity, which was also seen on the Watching Brief along the Holt to Semington Water Main Replacement that took place just to the north.

Given the above, it is clear that this is a sensitive route. English Heritage’s opinion should be sought at the earliest opportunity with regard to the Scheduled Monument, with consideration given as to whether this area can be avoided completely. I would recommend that the rest of the route, along with any compounds and haul roads, should be subject to an archaeological watching brief.”

- 1.3 Scheduled Monument consent was granted to Wessex Water by English Heritage on 27 November 2012 but only to use a temporary aluminium trackway to cross the site during development works, if required.
- 1.4 The requirement followed advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).
- 1.5 The programme of archaeological works comprised five elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy; walkover survey; monitoring and recording during development groundworks; post-excavation and report production; and archive deposition. The WSI was approved by Ms Rachel Foster (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Council) on 24th January 2013 prior to the commencement of any site works.

2. Site location and topography

- 2.1 The route of the pipeline (centred on NGR ST 88137 61325) was located in the hamlet of Whaddon between the towns of Trowbridge and Melksham (**Figure 1**). The pipeline measured c. 1.1km in length, ran in a north-easterly to south-westerly direction and bounded to the north by a dismantled railway and to the south by the Kennet and Avon Canal. It passed through agricultural farmland and the medieval settlement of Whaddon (Scheduled Monument 34205). The north end of the route is c. 30m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) rising to almost c. 45m (aOD) at c. 435m along its southerly course. The remainder of the pipeline gently undulated between c. 40m aOD and c. 36m aOD.

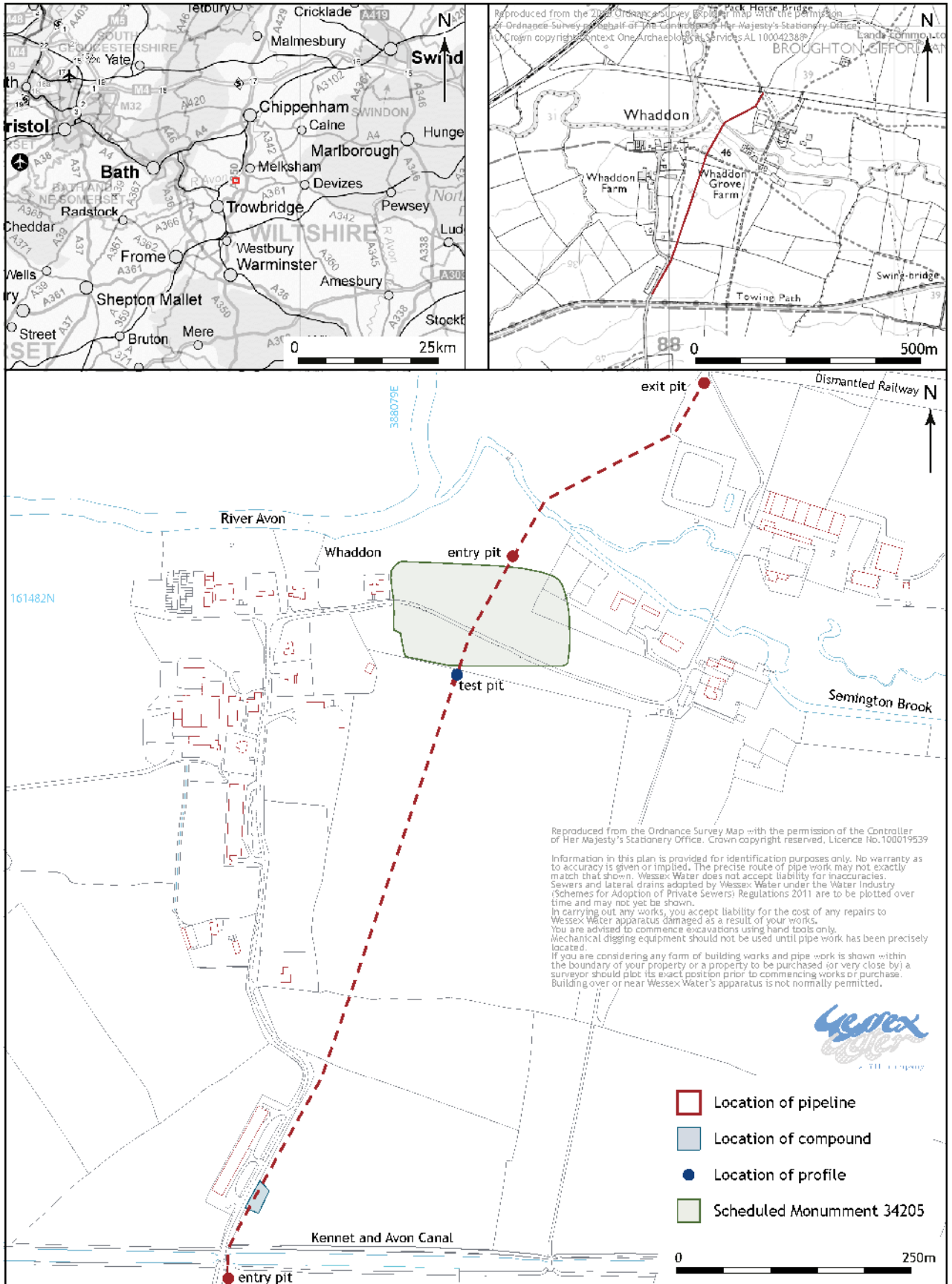


Figure 1. Site setting

3. Methodology

Wessex Water groundworks methodology

- 3.1 Removal of topsoil was first undertaken to create a site compound measuring 30m x 30m. The location coincided with the position of a previous compound for another scheme. A pit measuring 5m x 2m and 1.5m deep was then excavated to locate the existing pipeline. Construction of the replacement water main involved a trenchless technique of slip-lining and directional drilling. Consequently, this only required the excavation of entry/exit pits and these were confined to three locations (**Figure 1**). Despite the limited nature of the development groundworks, COAS was not given the opportunity to monitor the entry/exit pits and, as such, only the excavation of the test pit and the compound were monitored.

Archaeological methodology

- 3.2 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), 1994, rev. 2001, 2008). COAS staff adhered to the *Code of Conduct* of the IfA (1985, rev. 2000), and *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (IfA, 1990, rev. 2000) Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 3.3 Given the limited nature of the groundwork programme, access was not required across the monument (**Plates 3 and 4**). Nevertheless, the extent of the Scheduled area was marked out during the walkover survey to serve as an exclusion zone during groundworks.
- 3.4 In the absence of archaeological remains, a profile section of the deposit sequence from the test pit was recorded using standard COAS *pro forma* profile sheets to illustrate the soil morphology. The profile was recorded as a graphical representation and accompanied by a brief description. A photograph including a suitable scale was also taken and the location recorded (see **Figure 1**).
- 3.5 All deposits were recorded as individual contexts and ascribed a unique number. Contexts referenced in this report are presented in standard terms, e.g. (100), (203).
- 3.6 A photographic record of the fieldwork comprised digital images in .jpg format. As a minimum, the record included photographs of the profile section, the site setting, development works and the walkover survey.

4. Results

- 4.1 No visible archaeological features/deposits were exposed in the compound area where topsoil was stripped.
- 4.2 The test pit was excavated and cordoned off before archaeological recording was able to proceed however the soil sequence consisted of 0.20m of topsoil (100) overlying 1.3m+ of natural clay substrate (101) (**Plates 1 and 2**).



Plate 1. Test pit profile (from S; 1m scale)



Plate 2. Test pit showing existing pipe



Plate 3. View across Whaddon medieval farm settlement



Plate 4. Whaddon medieval farm settlement

5. The finds

- 5.1 No artefacts were observed.

6. Discussion

- 6.1 Despite the potential for prehistoric activity, Romano-British occupation and a significant medieval farm settlement on the Site, no archaeological features or deposits were identified during the course of development groundworks and no artefacts were observed. This is perhaps not surprising given the limited nature of groundworks.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The project archive is currently held by COAS and consists of the following:

Item	Number	Format
Profile record sheets	1	Paper
Digital images	24	.JPG

- 7.2 The paper archive has been scanned as a single file in .PDF format and will form part of the physical Site archive to be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum.
- 7.3 Copies of this report will be deposited with the client, Wiltshire Heritage Museum, and included as part of the Wiltshire County Historic Environment Record.

8. COAS acknowledgements

8.1 We would like to thank the following for their contribution to the successful completion of this project:

Ms Clare King Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS)
 Ms Rebecca Howell Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water
 Ms Rachel Foster Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS)

9. Bibliography

- | | |
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