

C9697: Northacre Industrial Park SPS Rising Main, Northacre Industrial Estate, Westbury, Wiltshire

A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

Assessment Report



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C9697: Northacre Industrial Park SPS Rising Main, Northacre Industrial Estate, Westbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Assessment Report

for

Wessex Water plc

by



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COAS reference: C1/AMR/13/NWW

National Grid Reference: ST 85606 52405 to ST 86624 52801

Wessex Water Plc scheme reference: C9697

Wiltshire Heritage Museum Accession Number: C1/AMR/13/NWW

OASIS Reference: contexto1-139673

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April 2013

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Non-technical Summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks relating to the construction of a new rising main from Northacre Industrial Park pumping station (NGR ST 85606 52405) to the rail bridge north west of Westbury treatment works, Westbury, Wiltshire (NGR ST 86624 52801). The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc under a Term Agreement with COAS and was carried out over eleven days from January to March 2013.

The archaeological works were requested by Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service) following a consultation request from Mr Phillip Martin (Wessex Water plc).

No archaeological features or deposits were identified and the presence of a single possibly Bronze Age worked flint flake in the topsoil is insufficient as an indicator of prehistoric activity. The stripping of the easement and subsequent excavation of the pipe trench revealed a broad expanse of undated colluvium resulting from modern cultivation which may obscure archaeological remains.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks relating to the construction of a new rising main from Northacre Industrial Park pumping station to the rail bridge north west of Westbury treatment works, Westbury, Wiltshire (hereafter referred to as the Site). The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc under a Term Agreement with COAS and was carried out over eleven days between 11 January and 14 March 2013.

1.2 The level and scope of archaeological works were requested by Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service), following a consultation request from Mr Phillip Martin (Wessex Water plc). In a consultation email dated 23 July 2012, Ms King stated that:

“There are some archaeological implications for part of the proposed pipeline. The western end is not particularly sensitive, but the central and eastern parts have a number of archaeological remains present. Some of the records relate to a watching brief on a pipeline in the area in 2002.

I would therefore suggest that a watching brief on the pipeline would be appropriate, on the part to the east of Storridge Road which has not previously been examined in 2002 (report ref 2002.013).”

1.3 At the request of Ms King, COAS issued a *Written Scheme of Investigation for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (COAS 2012), which provided a strategy for the archaeological works. This was submitted to and approved by Ms King prior to the commencement of the programme of archaeological works. Ms King was kept fully informed during the project. It was not deemed necessary to make a monitoring visit to the Site.

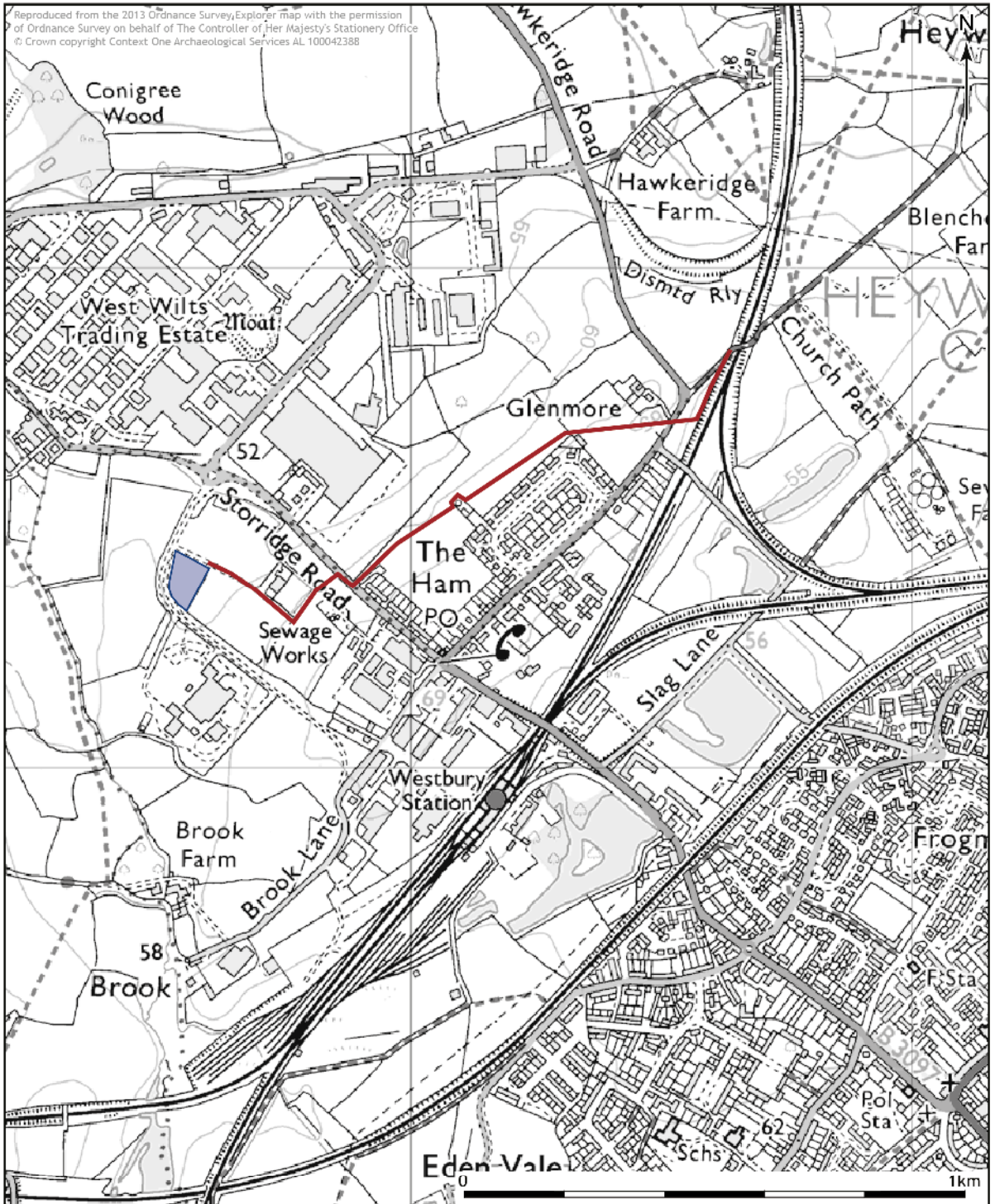
1.4 The request for archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and the *Wiltshire Core Strategy* (2012).




1.5 This assessment report summarises the topographical and geological setting of the site, and presents the results of the archaeological monitoring and recording.

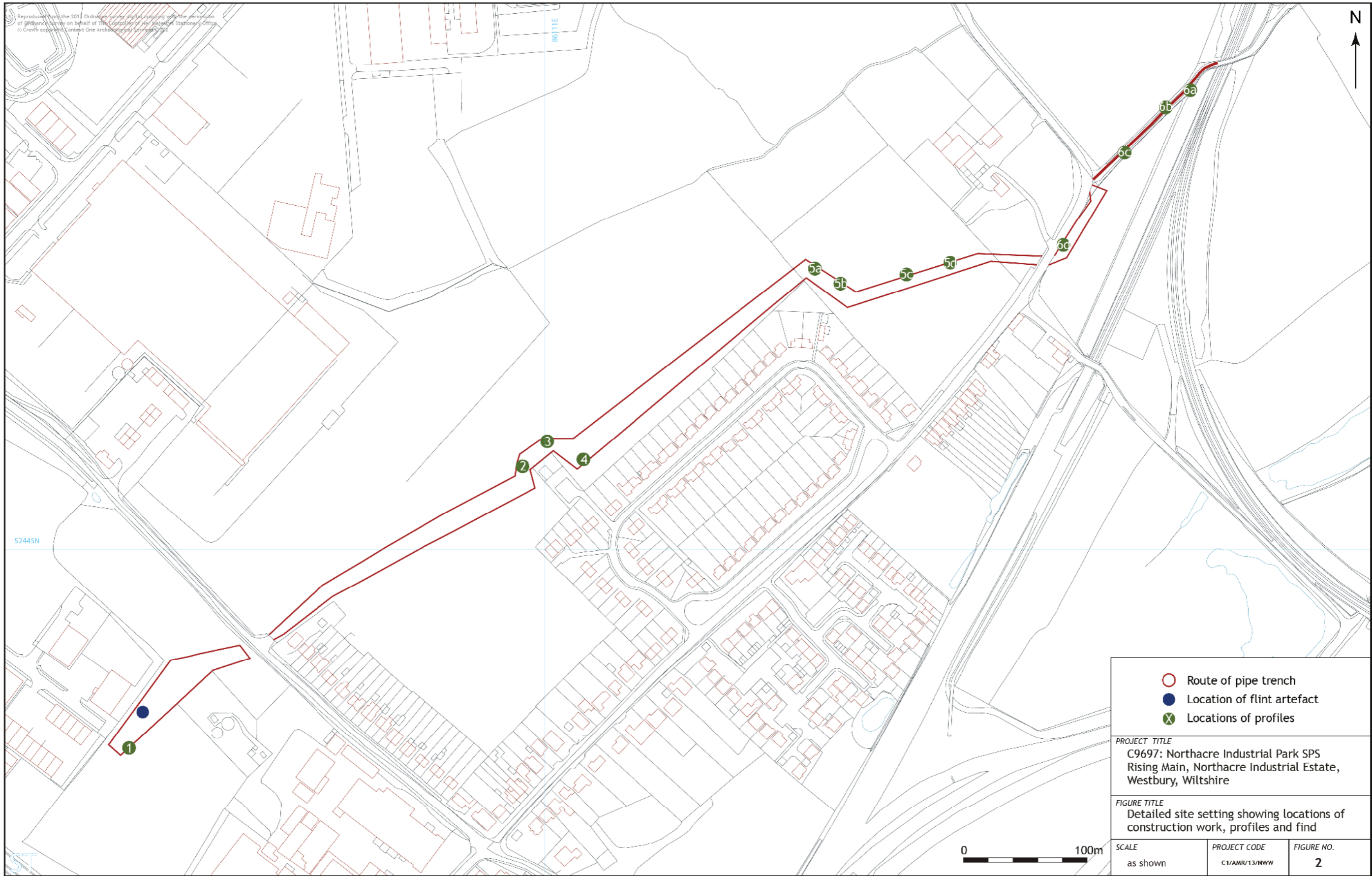
2. Site Location, Topography and Geology

2.1 The full length of the pipeline (NGR ST 99638 52789 to ST 02341 53978) skirted around the north-west and north of Westbury, a small town on the western edge of Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire (**Figure 1**). The sewage plant at the south-west end of the route was c. 500m north-west of Westbury railway station and c. 5km south of Trowbridge. The archaeological work was carried out over c. 1.15km of the route, where it passed through the whole or parts of six fields between industrial areas at the west end and north of a housing estate to the east, terminating on the tarmac-covered lane immediately west of the rail bridge. The pipeline rose from c. 60m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to c. 64m aOD over a distance of c. 1km from south-west to north-east, before dropping by up to 2m at the extreme east end.

2.2 The greater part of the pipeline route passed over Jurassic sedimentary geology of Oxford Clay Formation sedimentary mudstone which gave way to Hazelbury Bryan Formation sandstone at the extreme east end (BGS 2013). The soils in the area are characterised by highly fertile, lime-rich, loams and clays with impeded drainage (NSRI 2013).



	 Proposed works	PROJECT TITLE C9697: Northacre Industrial Park SPS Rising Main, Northacre Industrial Estate, Westbury, Wiltshire	
	 Location of compound	FIGURE TITLE Site setting showing pipeline route and location of compound	
SCALE as shown		PROJECT CODE C1/AMR/13/NWW	FIGURE NO. 1



3. Methodology

Wessex Water Methodology

- 3.1 The total length of the pipeline under archaeological observation was c. 1.15km. The first phase of construction comprised the stripping of topsoil to a depth of up to 0.25m over an easement c. 13m wide by a 360 degree tracked machine fitted with a toothless bucket to provide a working surface (Figure 2). During the second phase a c. 0.80m wide pipe trench was excavated to depths varying from c. 1.8m to c. 4.3m.

Archaeological Methodology

- 3.2 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the codes, standards and guidelines set out by Wiltshire County Council (WCC 1995) and the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, rev. 2010; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2008) at all times during the course of the investigation. Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 3.3 The machine stripping of the ploughsoil and topsoil along the route of the easement was carried out under supervision by COAS staff in Fields 1 to 4. For the purposes of archaeological recording, all areas exposed by stripping were systematically scanned for features/deposits by walking in 'zig-zag' traverses across their width. The excavation of the pipe trench was monitored from fields 4 to 6.
- 3.4 The surface collection of cultural material was also carried out during scanning operations and was bagged according to field unit.
- 3.5 In the absence of archaeological features/deposits, representative profile sections were recorded using standard COAS pro-forma profile sheets to show the deposit sequence and depths across the Site. These were annotated to define the depths of each observed deposit. In addition, context forms summarise the character of each layer with entry fields for the profile locations and photographic references. The frequency with which profile sections were recorded was based entirely on any variation of the deposit sequence or depth of exposure.
- 3.6 A photographic record of the fieldwork comprised digital images in .jpg format. As a minimum, the record included shots of each profile section, the site setting and development works.
- 3.7 The artefact collected was bagged using a combination of the Site code, field and a context number and was retained for processing in preparation for further analysis and archiving.
- 3.8 The location, extent and altitude of the archaeological work, features and deposits were mapped relative to the National Grid and Ordnance Datum using a TopCon GRS-1 Global Positioning System receiving real-time calibrations to produce accuracies of 1-2cm.

4. Results

- 4.1 During monitoring of the easement stripping the weather varied between bright and dry to periods of heavy rain leading to very wet conditions underfoot.
- 4.2 No archaeologically significant deposits or features were encountered during fieldwork. In the text layer numbers appear in standard brackets, e.g. (102).



Plate 1. Field 1, after stripping of the topsoil (from ENE; no scale)



Plate 2. Field 4, after stripping of the topsoil (from E; no scale)



Plate 3. Profile at the entrance to Field 1 (from N; no scale)



Plate 4. Field 4, profile 4 (from NW; 1m scale)



Plate 5. Field 6, after stripping of the topsoil (from E; no scale)



Plate 6. Field 6, profile 6C (from NW; 1m scale)



Plate 7. Field 6, after stripping of the topsoil (from E; no scale)

Soil Sequence and Geology

- 4.3 During the initial strip over Fields 1 to 4, excepting the entrance to Field 1 at the west end, only the topsoil (100) - (400) was removed, its depth ranging from 0.20m to 0.25m. In Field 1 it was topped with turf (**Plate 1**) but in the remaining fields the surfaces had been ploughed (**Plate 2**). The soil was consistently light brown (7.5YR 6/4) loamy clay throughout and sealed a similarly uniform pale yellowish brown (10YR 7/6) colluvial clay (101) - (401) including rare to sparse pieces of gravel. The machine excavation in Field 1 demonstrated that the depth of the colluvium exceeded the limit of the depth of excavation at c. 0.80m (**Plate 3**).
- 4.4 The excavation of the pipe trench confirmed that the deep colluvium reached as far as Field 5 (501), sealing greyish blue Oxford Formation clay, (502) (**Plate 4**). In Field 6, which also included a lane under tarmac and associated make-up layers (**Plate 5**), the sequence varied, reflecting a slight rise towards the east end. At this location, a gravelly head deposit ranged in depth from c. 0.90m in profile 6D, where it was observed to seal the natural clay, to in excess of 1.5m in profile 6C, (601) (**Plate 6**). At the extreme east end of the route the road surface sealed clay (601) which closely resembled the colluvial deposits present over in Fields 1 to 5. This may have been material re-deposited to form a ramp approaching the rail bridge although its homogeneity suggests otherwise (**Plate 7**). It seems more likely to be a colluvial deposit which formed prior to the construction of the railway but is otherwise undateable.
- 4.5 No archaeologically significant deposits or features were identified and a single flint was the only find, recovered from the topsoil (100) in Field 1.

The Find

- 4.6 The single flint (58g) was a large flake struck from a nodule during core preparation with a pronounced hinge fracture from which further broad flakes had been removed. After limited re-cortication coarse ventral retouch had been executed along one edge to fashion a crude scraper. The manner of retouching and the original flaking suggest a date no earlier than Middle Bronze Age.

5. Discussion

- 5.1 No archaeological features or deposits were identified, although the stripping of the easement revealed a broad expanse of undated colluvium which may obscure any such remains. The presence of a single flint in the topsoil should not be regarded as an indicator of significant prehistoric activity. The extent of modern cultivation suggests that the colluvial deposits are of recent formation and head deposits identified towards the east end of the Site were clearly geologically formed.

6. Archive

- 6.1 The Site archive is currently held at the offices of Context One Archaeological Services Ltd and consists of the written paper record of seven COAS *pro forma* profile log sheet, four day record sheets, six sketch plans, 94 digital images in .jpg format and various registers. The archive will be prepared to comply with the appropriate current national guidelines (UKIC 1984, 1990; MGC 1992; EH 1991). Arrangements will be made to deposit the archive with Wiltshire Heritage Museum within 12 months following the submission of this assessment report.

6.2 Copies of the assessment report will be deposited with:

Wessex Water plc
Claverton Down Road
Claverton Down
Bath
BA2 7WW

Wiltshire Archaeology Service
Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre
Cocklebury Road
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 3QN

7. COAS Acknowledgements

7.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd would like to thank Ms Rebecca Howell (Assistant Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc), for her kind assistance throughout the course of the investigation and Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service), for her advice.

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