

BZ516 - Bulford Mains Reinforcement, Salisbury Road, Bulford, 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 Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the construction of a new water main at Bulford, Wiltshire, over 7 days between 21 August and 4 October 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) following a consultation request by Mr Phillip Martin (Assistant Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc). The Site is within an Area of High Archaeological Potential relating to the presence of Scheduled Monuments and ring ditches which are considered likely to be the remains of prehistoric barrows.

Despite this, monitoring of the pipeline excavations identified only one archaeological feature which is likely to represent a large ditch or pit. This occupies the same ridge as the Scheduled Monuments and is located c. 50m east of a barrow mound (SAM 1015216) suggesting that it may be associated with this group. However in the absence of any dating evidence a Bronze Age date remains purely speculative and the narrowness of the pipe trench rendered it difficult to identify the form of this feature.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the construction of a new water main at Bulford, Wiltshire (the 'Site'), over 7 days between 21 August and 4 October 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) following a consultation request by Mr Phillip Martin (Assistant Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc) on the potential archaeological impact of the scheme. In an e-mail to Mr Martin on 11 April 2013, Ms King stated:
- “In addition to the SMs, there are also a number of other, non-designated, records on the Historic Environment Record. These include ring ditches, which are the likely remains of more prehistoric barrows. Given the close proximity of these remains, with the added possibility of ‘satellite’ burials associated with them, I would recommend that any open cut works are subject to an archaeological watching brief to ensure any remains are recorded.”*
- 1.3 The requirement followed advice by Central Government as set out in paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).
- 1.4 The programme of archaeological works comprised four elements: the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which set out the project strategy; monitoring and recording during development groundworks; post-excavation and report production; and archive deposition. The WSI was approved by Ms King on 16 July 2013 prior to the commencement of any Site works.

2. Site location and topography

- 2.1 The route of the pipeline (from SU 16818 43380 to SU 16843 42671) was located between the village of Bulford and the town of Amesbury (**Figure 1**). The pipeline measured c. 0.7 km in length, the northern end commencing within residential housing before crossing open agricultural farmland alongside the road or within the roadside verge. To the south of Bulford, the land on the eastern side of the pipeline route has been nominated as Managed Access Land by the Ministry of Defence. The ground rises steadily from c. 77m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the northern end of the scheme to c. 110m (aOD) at the southern end.

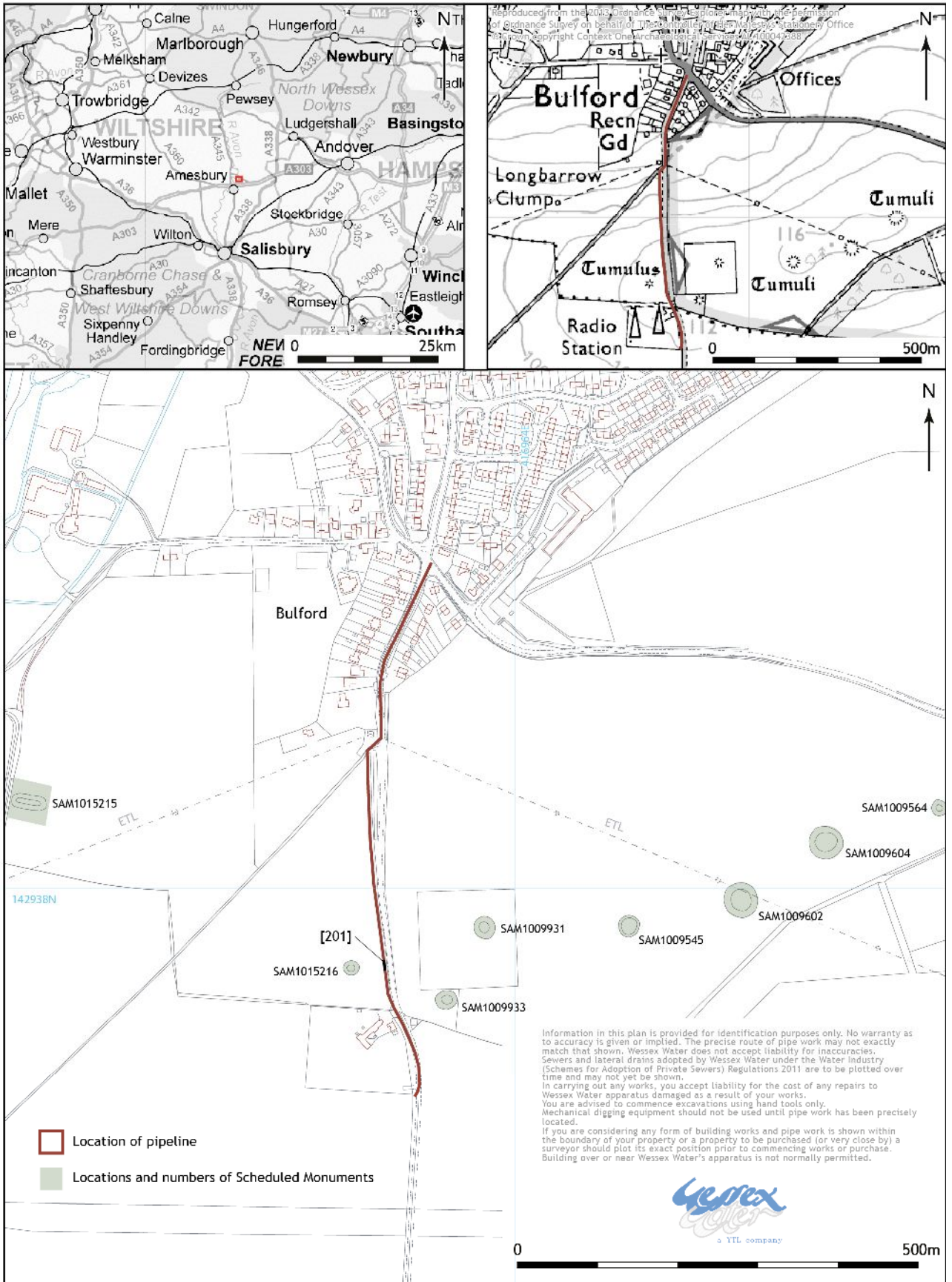


Figure 1. Site setting showing archaeological feature and nearby Scheduled Monuments

3. Methodology

Wessex Water groundworks methodology

- 3.1 A 360 degree tracked or JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket was used to remove all topsoil/overburden along the route of the pipeline and within the Site compound. The groundworks did not include the stripping of an easement prior to trenching. An open cut trench (c. 0.6m wide x 1.8m deep) was excavated along the length of the scheme (**Figure 1**) using a toothless 0.5m wide grading bucket.
- 3.2 Where the route of the pipeline crossed the road, directional drilling was employed to tunnel under the ground. Entry and exit pits measuring 2m by 2.5m and 1.5m deep were excavated within the pipe trench on either side of the section to be drilled.

Archaeological methodology

- 3.4 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* issued by Wiltshire County Council in 1995, and the codes, standards and guidelines set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, rev. 2012; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2008). Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 3.5 Monitoring covered the pipe trenching to the south of Bulford within the roadside verge and across open agricultural land.
- 3.6 All deposits were recorded as individual contexts and ascribed a unique number. Contexts referenced in this report are presented in standard terms, e.g. (200), [201].
- 3.7 A photographic record of the fieldwork comprised digital images in .jpg format. As a minimum, the record included photographs of the archaeological feature, the site setting and development works.

4. Results

- 4.1 Development excavations extended to a depth of 1.80m deep and demonstrated a similar deposit sequence across the Site. This comprised 0.20-0.30m of topsoil and subsoil above natural chalk bedrock.
- 4.2 A wide undated feature [201] cut through the natural chalk [204] measuring 12.6m wide and >1.05m deep with shallow concave sides (**Figure 1 & 2, Plates 1-5**). The feature continued beyond the base of the pipe trench however the lower fill (202) measured >0.45m deep comprising dark brown soft to friable silt with occasional to rare natural flint and occasional chalk flecks and fragments. The upper fill (203) comprised mid-whitish brown firm chalky silt with frequent redeposited chalk material and was sealed beneath the topsoil (200).

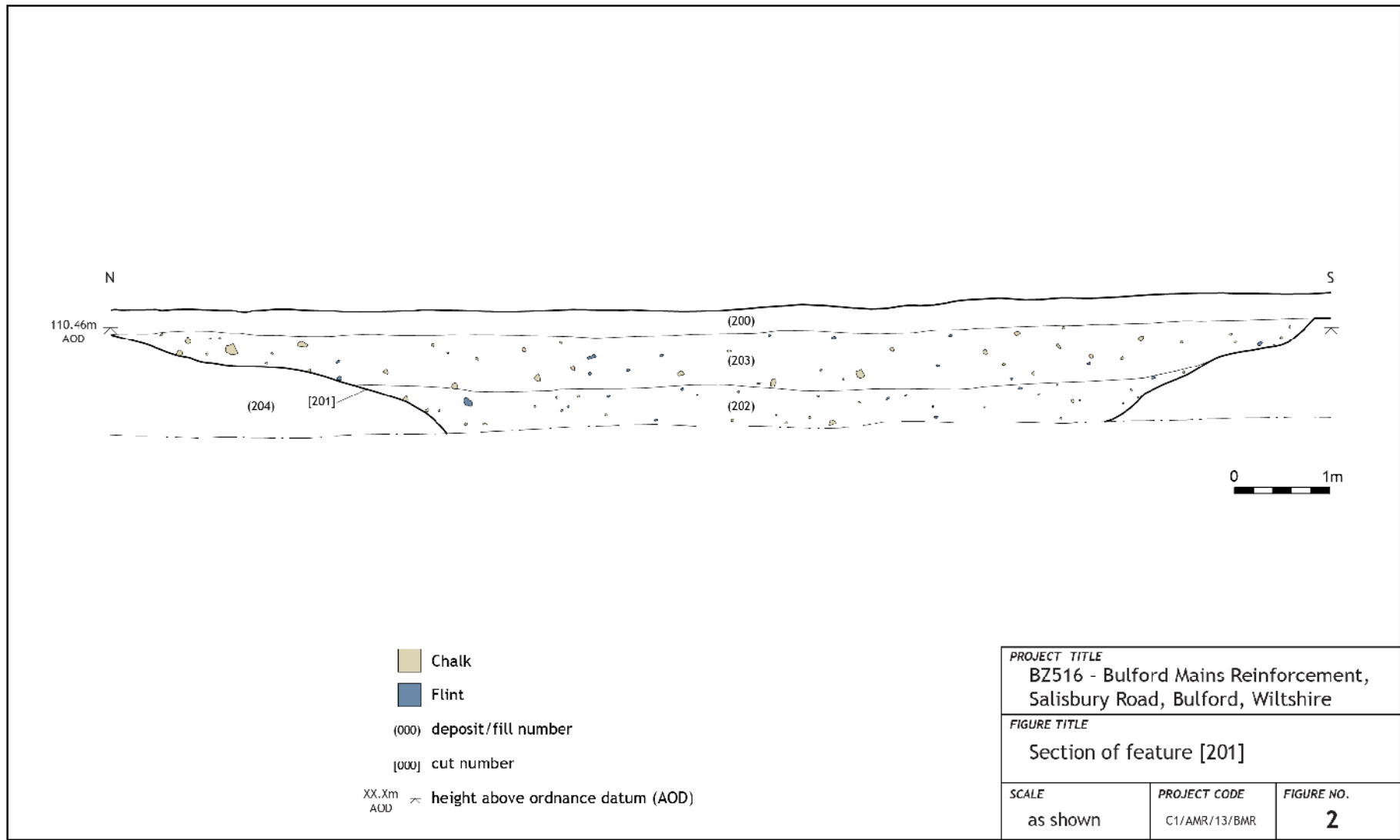


Figure 2. Section of feature [201]



Plate 1. Feature [201] (from S)



Plate 2. North end of feature [201] (from N; 2m scales)



Plate 3. North cut of feature [201] (from W; 1m scales)



Plate 4. South end of feature [201] (from S; 1m scales)



Plate 5. South cut of feature [201] (from W; 1m scales)

5. The finds

5.1 No finds were observed during the course of the monitoring programme.

6. Discussion

6.1 Despite the potential for significant prehistoric activity on the Site, monitoring of the pipeline

excavations identified only one archaeological feature and no finds were observed. At 12.6m wide the feature may represent a wide ditch, perhaps sectioned at an oblique angle which would make it appear wider than it really is, however the narrowness of the pipe trench renders this interpretation uncertain and an alternative suggestion is a large pit. Occupying the same ridge as a number of Scheduled Monuments and ring ditches which are considered likely to be the remains of prehistoric barrows, the feature was located c. 50m east of a barrow mound (SAM 1015216) suggesting that it may be associated with this group.

7. Archive

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

Item	Number	Format
Context sheets	3	Paper
Photographic registers	3	.JPG
Digital images	88	.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 Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum.

7.3 Copies of this report will be deposited with the client/agent 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:

Phillip Martin, Assistant Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc
 Rebecca Howell, Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc
 Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service

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