

BF234: Fonthill Bishop Water Treatment Works, Wiltshire.

A programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording



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for

Wessex Water plc

by



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COAS reference: C1/AMR/14/FBW

National Grid Reference: centred on ST 93812 33517

Wessex Water plc scheme reference: BF234

Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum Accession Number: C1/AMR/13/FBW

OASIS reference: contexto1-185331

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July 2014

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Non-technical summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording associated with the construction of new water treatment works at Fonthill Bishop, Wiltshire, over 3 days between 25 March and 01 May 2014. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc.

The monitoring programme was requested by Ms Clare King (Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS)), following a consultation request from Ms Natalie Doran (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc). There are a number of HER records recorded within the vicinity of the Site as well as the potential for prehistoric field systems and features associated with medieval settlement.

Despite this, no visible archaeological features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during development excavations. However, the easement and compound strips did not extend beneath the topsoil and where pipe trenching was observed the topsoil was seen to directly overly colluvial deposits. No finds were collected although modern ceramic building material was observed within the topsoil.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording associated with the construction of a new water treatment works at Fonthill Bishop, Wiltshire (the 'Site'), over 3 days between 25 March and 01 May 2014. The project was commissioned and funded by Wessex Water plc.
- 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 Natalie Doran (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc). In a consultation email dated 2 August 2013, Ms King stated that:

“There are a number of HER records in the vicinity of the proposed pipeline, although the latest route has moved significantly away from the most sensitive ones. There are no records that are affected by this latest route directly (with the possible exception of the compound), however this area has not been the subject of much development in the past and the soil and crops of this area are not particularly conducive to crop marks and so the lack of records may not reflect the actual potential of the area. Fonthill Bishop has been a settlement since at least medieval times. There is therefore some potential for archaeological remains in the northern part of the project- prehistoric field systems- and at the southern end - features associated with the medieval settlement.

Based on the information that I have at this point, I would recommend that an archaeological watching brief is carried out on the compound and on the southern part of the route, where it runs close to Fonthill Bishop. I would consider it reasonable for this to be an intermittent watching brief, rather than an intensive one.”

- 1.3 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 28 March 2014 prior to the commencement of any Site works.

2. Site location and topography

- 2.1 The pipeline (centred on NGR ST 93812 33517) measured over c. 1.5 km long, commencing at a pumping station in the north and partially flanking a lane connecting Fonthill Bishop with the A303 with the final c. 865m traversing agricultural land. Opposite the pumping station at the north end of the pipeline was the compound area (**Figure 1**). The north end of the pipeline commenced at a height of c. 115m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), gently undulating to c. 120m (aOD) before rising sharply to c. 130m (aOD) and finally falling to a height of c. 110m (aOD) at its southern end. The compound area was largely situated on level ground at an average height of 115m (aOD).

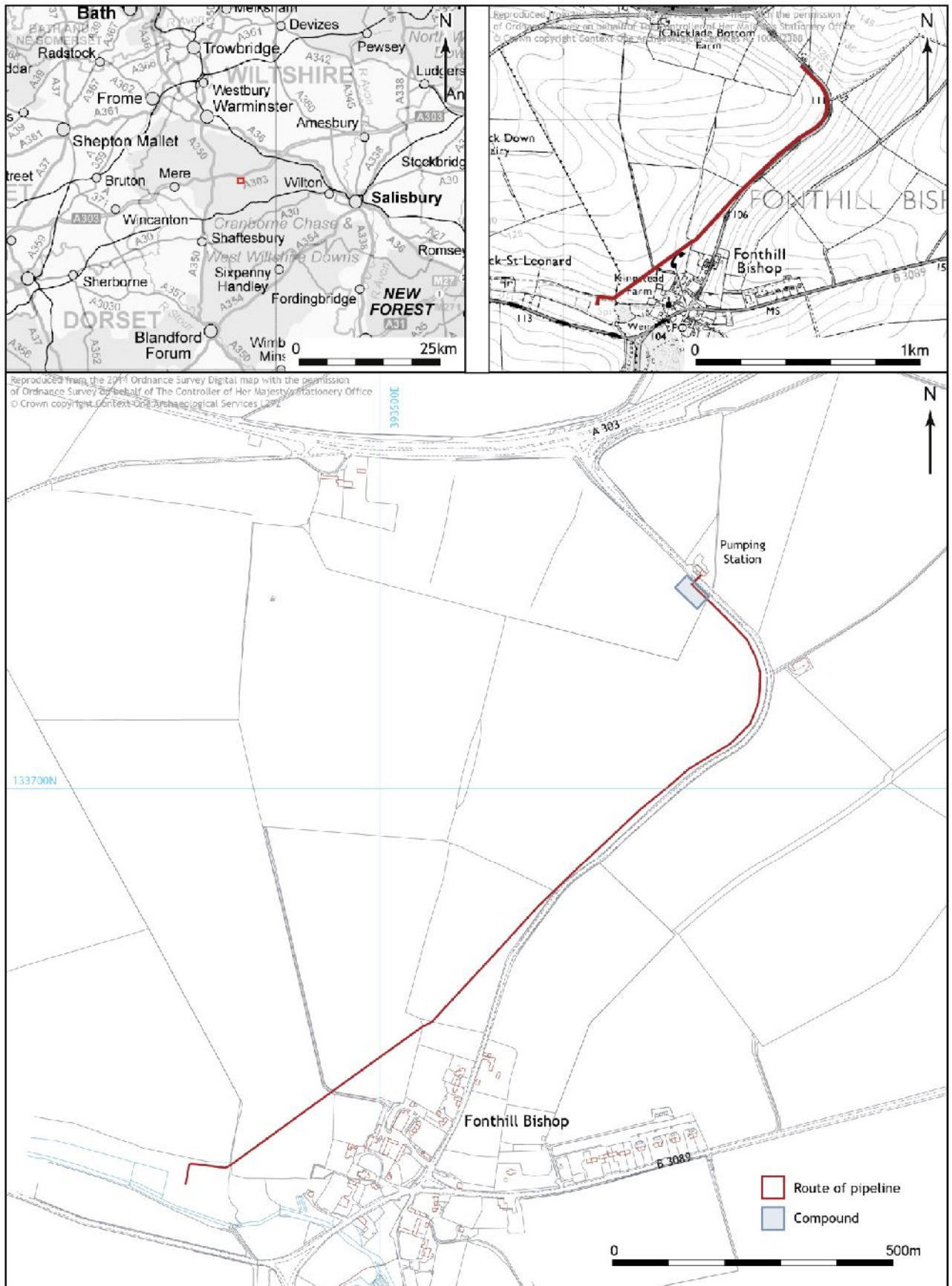


Figure 1. Site setting

3. Methodology

Development groundworks methodology

- 3.1 Easement stripping and open cut trenching associated with the installation of a new water treatment works and water supply main was carried out by a 360 degree tracked or JCB-type machine. Within the compound area the topsoil was stripped to a maximum depth of c. 0.30m (Figure 1).

Archaeological methodology

- 3.2 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with 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.
- 3.3 In the absence of archaeological remains, the deposit sequence across the Site was recorded photographically and comprised digital images in .jpg format. As a minimum, the record included photographs of the easement strip, pipe location, Site setting and development works.

4. Results

- 4.1 No visible features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during the monitoring programme.
- 4.2 Across the easement and compound areas the soil strip extended to between 0.25m and 0.30m deep. The topsoil varied between a mid-brown, soft plough soil containing modern ceramic building material observed at the northern end of the pipeline (Plate 1) to a very dark greyish brown grassland soil with occasional sub-rounded flints towards the southern end (Plate 2). This overlay colluvial deposits.



Plate 1. View along easement (from S)



Plate 2. View along easement (from W)

5. The finds

- 5.1 No finds were collected during the archaeological programme of works, although modern ceramic building material was observed in the topsoil.

6. Discussion

- 6.1 The Site is located in an area where there are a number of heritage assets indicating some potential for prehistoric field systems in the northern area of the scheme and features associated with medieval settlement in the southern area. Nevertheless, archaeological monitoring did not reveal any archaeological evidence. However, the easement and compound strips did not extend beneath the topsoil and consequently any potential earlier deposits or features were not exposed. Where pipe trenching was observed the topsoil was seen to directly overly colluvial deposits, redeposited as a result of naturally occurring processes such as soil creep. Colluvium often contains or conceals

archaeological finds, however no such remains were observed within these deposits. No finds were collected although modern ceramic building material was observed in the topsoil, typical of relatively recent manuring techniques.

7. Archive

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

Item	Number	Format
Photographic registers	1	Paper
Day record	2	Paper
Digital images	10	.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:

Ms Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Archaeology Service
Ms Natalie Doran, Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc

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