

West Luccombe Farm
Porlock
Somerset

Archaeological Monitoring and
Recording

REPORT

February 2018



West Luccombe Farm
Porlock
Somerset


for

C1 project code: C1/AMR/17/WPS

Wessex Water plc

REPORT

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Signed	
Date	12/02/2018

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL DETAILS

Client project/scheme ref.	B0547
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Local Planning Authority	N/A
Scheduled Monument Consent ref.	N/A
Historic Environment Record ref.	TBC
Collecting Museum	TBC
Museum accession code	TBC
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Summary

Context One Archaeology & Heritage (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks related to the replacement for a raw water main construction at West Luccombe Farm, Porlock, Somerset during June 2017. The project was commissioned by Wessex Water plc under a Term Agreement with C1.

The monitoring and recording was requested by the Exmoor National Park Authority Historic Environment Service (HES) due to the proximity of the route of the pipeline to heritage assets in some areas.

Whilst a medieval farmstead is recorded in the area of Blackford Cottage, no indication of this was seen in the pipeline route. The potential location of the farmstead is not known, but there was no evidence for it being located to the north of Blackford Cottage in the area affected by the pipeline.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Context One Archaeology & Heritage (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks related to the replacement for a raw water main construction at West Luccombe Farm, Porlock, Somerset (the 'Site') (**Figure 1**) during June 2017. The project was commissioned by Wessex Water plc under a Term Agreement with C1.
- 1.2 The monitoring and recording was requested by the Exmoor National Park Authority Historic Environment Service (HES). In an email consultation request from Mr Andrew Fell (Environmental Scientist, Wessex Water plc), Ms Shirley Blaylock, (Conservation Officer (Historic Environment), Exmoor National Park Authority) stated:

"...I have checked the locations of the 21 small excavations you plan to undertake along this water main to install a replacement water main from Porlock WTW to Blackford Cottage by inserting a new pipe within the existing. Many of these proposed excavations lie near existing tracks or on farmland so as far as I can tell there is no issue with access crossing archaeological sites. The area I flagged up for concern, which you were already aware of, was Doverhay Down. The red polygons on the attached map show where we have sites recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER). There is no reason I can see for these sites to be affected by the works but you should make your contractors aware of their presence as great care should be taken not to cause them any damage. You mentioned that this information would be passed on in your meetings with contractors prior to the commencement of work. As you know, this is especially important as one of the sites is a Scheduled Monument (Scheduled Monument 1006191) but some of the others are archaeologically equally important. You will note that one of your excavations just comes within a polygon of medieval or post-medieval field boundaries (HER MMO1850) as depicted on the map, but I have checked our sources and the excavation comes within a buffer zone around the site, so I am not concerned about the work proposed.

I have also checked your revised planned connections with Buckethole Farm, Pool Bridge, Tarr Ball, Nutscale Mill and Blackford Cottage. As discussed, I recommend that an archaeological watching brief is undertaken of the open trench work to Blackford Cottage as this is a recorded medieval farmstead (HER number MSO11320, mentioned in 1327). We have no precise information on location to further inform the works, but a watching brief should record any archaeological remains if affected.

Regarding the site compound at West Luccombe, I would recommend a watching brief of topsoil stripping of this area as there is a known medieval settlement recorded to the south and west of the proposed compound (HER site MEM23292)."

- 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 (Milby 2017); archaeological monitoring and recording; post-excavation and report production (this document); and archive preparation and deposition.

2. The Site

- 2.1 The replacement pipeline runs from NGR SS 89214 46132 in the east to SS 86278 44037 in the west for approximately 4.5km (**Figure 1**) and included a Site compound. The pipeline is located on Exmoor to the east of Hawkcombe Woods National Reserve c. 500m of Porlock. The Site is surrounded by open moorland and runs across undulating and uneven ground from a low point of c. 100m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at Crawler Hill in the south, to a high point of c. 300m at Blackford Cottage, in the north. The recorded solid geology is Hangman Sandstone Formation, Sandstone (BGS, 2017). No drift geology is recorded for the Site. The soils are recorded as freely draining slightly acid loamy soils interspersed with patches of freely draining very acid sandy and loamy soils (CSAIS, 2017).
- 2.2 The Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that a number of heritage assets have been recorded within a 1km radius of the Site. The table below provides brief details of these assets and are organised by period. The distribution of assets is presented in **Figure 1**.

SM/HER ref.	Description	Period	No. on Figure 1
1014267	Porlock Hill stone setting	Prehistoric	1
1006204	Berry Castle, Iron Age enclosure	Prehistoric	2
1006191	Doverhay Down round barrow	Prehistoric	3

1006228	Horner packhorse bridge	Medieval	4
1006227	West Luccombe packhorse bridge	Medieval	5
1006197	Allerford New Bridge	Medieval	6
MSO7426	Barrow on Doverhay Down	Prehistoric	13
MSO7425	Barrow on Doverhay Down	Prehistoric	14
MSO7317	Two Bowl Barrows, Doverhay Down	Prehistoric	15
MSO7318	Alleged cairn southeast of Buckethole Farm	Prehistoric	21
MSO7382	Modern clearance cairn north of Whitburrow Wood	Prehistoric	22
MSO12257	Cairn west of Woodcocks Ley	Prehistoric	23
MSO7418	Bronze Age burial cairn on Tarr Ball Hill	Prehistoric	30
MSO7352	Possible hillslope enclosure northwest of Blackford	Prehistoric/Roman	28
MEM23292	West Luccombe - shrunken village	Medieval	7
MEM15653	Routeways at Ley Hill med	Medieval	10
MSO7422	Ley Hill medieval settlement	Medieval	11
MSO7370	Field System at Ley Hill	Medieval	12
MSO7321	Square enclosure on Doverhay Down	Medieval	17
MMO1849	Field system north of Lucott Farm	Medieval	24
MSO11349	Little Combe Farm, Luccombe	Medieval	27
MSO11320	Blackford deserted farmstead	Medieval	31
MMO1851	Medieval or post-medieval field boundaries on Pentley Seat	Medieval/Post-medieval	9
MMO1850	Medieval or post-medieval field boundaries on Doverhay Down	Medieval/Post-medieval	16
MMO1852	Bank and ditch	Post-medieval	8
MEM15286	Woodcocks Ley Farm	Post-medieval	18
MSO7440	Water pumping mill at Woodcocks Ley Farm	Post-medieval	18
MMO1839	Water meadow north of Woodcocks Ley Farm	Post-medieval	19
MSO11319	Corn mill in Tarr Ball Wood	Post-medieval	26
MMO2296	Water meadow south of Tarr Ball Wood	Post-medieval	27
MSO11352	Nutscale mill	Post-medieval	29
MEM23196	Buckethole Farm	Modern	20
MMO2295	Water meadow south of Lucott Farm	Modern	25
MSO7378	Group of mounds on Tarr Ball Hill	Unknown	30

- 2.3 There are a number of known heritage assets within 1km of the proposed pipeline route, including six Scheduled monuments. However, only three heritage assets are within close proximity of the pipeline with the potential of being impacted by the works. These comprise medieval or post-medieval field boundaries at Doverhay Down (**MMO1850**), post-medieval Nutscale Mill (**MSO11352**), and the medieval deserted farmstead at Blackford (**MSO11320**).

3. Archaeological aims and research objectives

- 3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring were to:

- identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during groundworks;
- determine the character of the archaeological remains, where present;
- recover environmental information, which may provide further information relating to the local historic environment of the area;
- provide sufficient information to enable further mitigation strategies to be determined, where appropriate

- 3.2 The research objectives were to:

- determine whether there was any evidence specifically relating to the known field boundaries at Doverhay Down
- determine whether there was any evidence specifically relating to Nutscale Mill
- determine whether there was any evidence specifically relating to the deserted medieval farmstead at Blackford

4. Methodology

Wessex Water Methodology

- 4.1 Groundworks comprised the machine excavation of 21 pits to locate and slip-line an existing main sewer (**Figure 1**). The scheme also included the laying of four new open-cut service pipelines, and a stripped compound area at West Luccombe Farm. A 0.5 tonne bobcat machine with 400mm wide bucket was used to carry out all excavation works.
- 4.2 All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (December 2014) and in accordance with the *Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook* (2011). C1 adhered to the *Code of Conduct* of the CIfA (1985, rev. 2000, 2014), and *Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA, 2014, rev. 2015) at all times. The fieldwork methodology is summarised below.
- 4.3 C1 gave notification of the commencement of the works to the HES, but it was not deemed necessary for a representative to visit the Site and monitor archaeological fieldwork. Monitoring will continue until the deposition of the Site archive.
- 4.4 An archaeologist was on Site to monitor groundwork excavations with the aim of identifying and recording any archaeological features/deposits/finds present. By default, core details of the deposit sequence across the Site were recorded on C1 *pro-forma* profile forms in digital format using iPad mini tablets. The frequency with which profiles were recorded was based entirely on variation of the deposit sequence. In the event, manual excavation was not necessary however soil colours were logged using a Munsell soil colour chart. Spoil was examined for the retrieval of artefacts. The Site was levelled to Ordnance Datum with a TopCon GRS1 RTK GPS unit. A photographic record of the monitoring and recording was carried out, and involved the sole use of digital images. This included photographs illustrating in both detail, and general context, the areas subject to monitoring and the profiles recorded within them. The photographic record also included working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5. Results

- 5.1 The deposit sequence was observed in two locations at the southern end of the pipeline, immediately to the north of Blackford Cottage (**Figure 1; Plates 1 & 2; Appendix 1**). The topsoil was friable dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) loamy clay (3-100) and (3-200) with moderate > 25% cobble sized stones 0.30m deep. This directly overlay the natural, a compacted greyish brown (10YR 5/2) sandy gravel (3-101) and (3-201) with frequent >60% large cobble and boulder sized stones.
- 5.2 No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

6. The finds

- 6.1 No archaeological artefacts or ecofacts were observed or collected.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

- 7.1 Whilst a medieval farmstead, first mentioned in the early 14th century, is recorded in the area of Blackford Cottage (HER number MSO11320), no indication of this settlement was seen in the pipeline route. The potential location of the farmstead is not known, but there was no evidence for it being located to the north of Blackford Cottage in the area affected by the pipeline.

8. Archiving and Dissemination

- 8.1 The NPPF requires that an archaeological archive arising from development works is made publicly accessible (para. 141). The archive comprises two parts: the paper/digital archive including site records and images; and the artefact/ecofact assemblage.

Paper/digital archive

- 8.2 Where archaeological features/deposits are recorded, the archive generated from this usually comprises site records, drawings and photographs either in paper format or born-digital data. Within three months of the conclusion of a project this is normally transferred into the care of a Trusted Digital Repository such as the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) as scanned paper records or native born-digital data. The digital archive will be compiled in accordance with the standards and requirements of the ADS, as set out on their website.
- 8.3 In this case, no archaeological features or deposits were observed, and all relevant data has been incorporated into this report, and the paper/digital archive will be stored on the C1 cloud storage server or discarded.

Physical archive

- 8.4 The artefact/ecofact assemblage is the legal property of the landowner (excluding any items that fall under The Treasure Act 1996). However, it is usual practice for the landowner to transfer ownership of this assemblage to a receiving institution (usually a museum) once it has been fully assessed and/or analysed. Receiving institutions store the assemblage and make it publicly accessible. Alternatively, the landowner can choose to keep the assemblage, but arrangements must be made to ensure its long-term curation and public accessibility in accordance with NPPF.
- 8.5 No archaeological artefacts were observed or collected, so there is no physical archive.

Dissemination: report

- 8.6 Copies of the report will be submitted to the following:
- client and/or agent
 - the HES so that it can be included as part of the county Historic Environment Record (HER) the ADS, via OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations – <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>)

Dissemination: publication

- 8.7 By default, a short entry will be prepared for publication in the summary section of the next edition of the county archaeological journal, the *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*.

9. Bibliography

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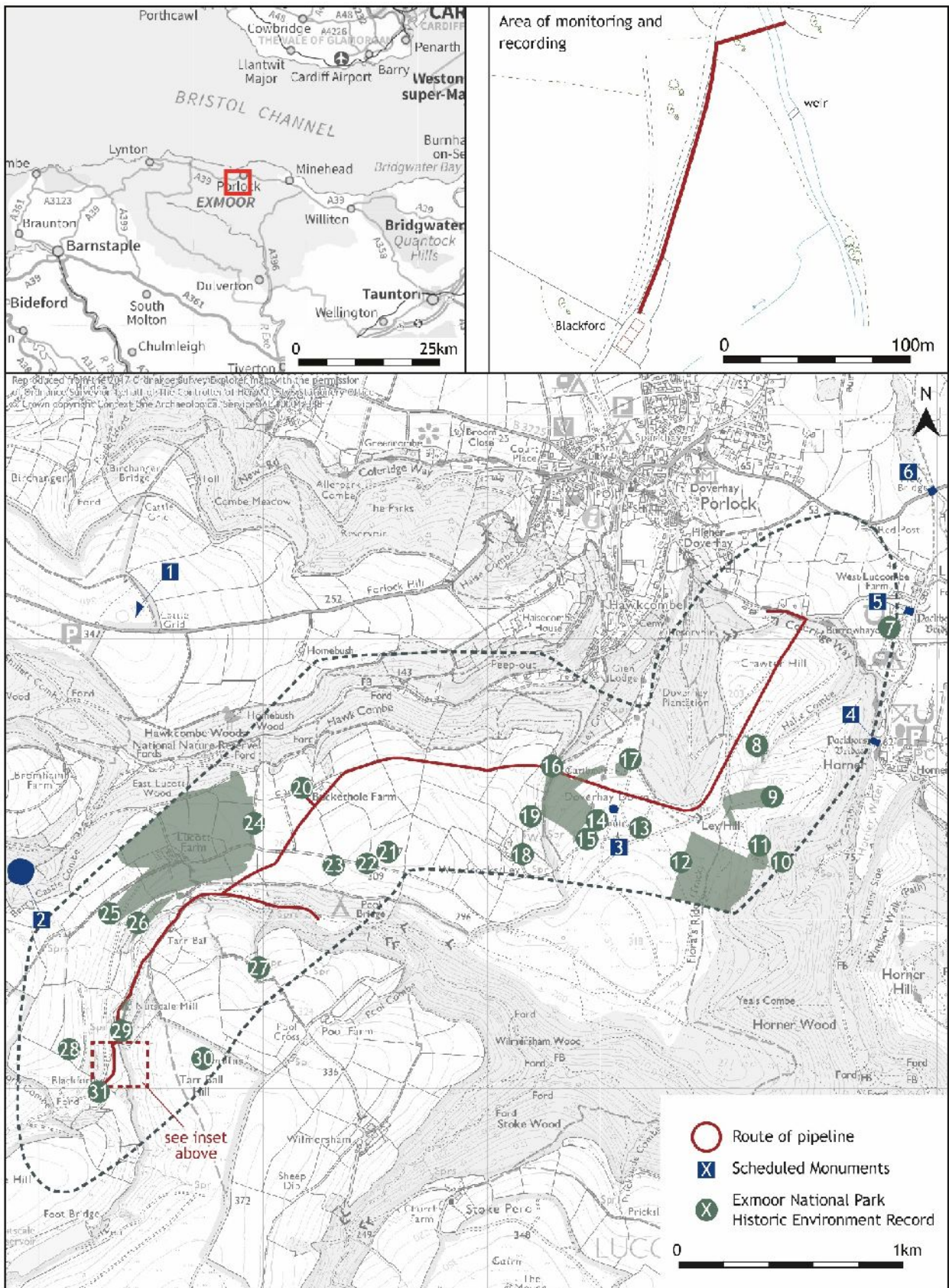


Figure 1. Site setting



Plate 1. Profile 1 (facing SE; 1m scale)



Plate 2. Profile 2 (facing SE; 1m scale)

Appendix 1: Context summary

CONTEXT NO.	PERIOD	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EARLIER THAN	CONTEMP. WITH	LATER THAN	LENGTH	WIDTH/DIAMETER	THICKNESS/DEPTH (m)
Profile 1									
3-100	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - Friable dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) loamy clay with moderate > 25% cobble sized stones	NA		3-101	>300m	0.50m	0.30m
3-101	Geological	Layer	Natural - compacted greyish brown (10YR 5/2) sandy gravel with frequent >60% large cobble and boulder sized stones	3-100		NA	>300m	0.50m	>0.50m
Profile 2									
3-200	Modern	Layer	Topsoil - Friable dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) loamy clay with moderate > 25% cobble sized stones	NA		3-201	>300m	0.50m	0.30m
3-201	Geological	Layer	Natural - compacted greyish brown (10YR 5/2) sandy gravel with frequent >60% large cobble and boulder sized stones	3-200		NA	>300m	0.50m	>0.50m

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