



## Land at New Farm, Northington Road, Itchen Abbas, Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**Land at New Farm,  
Northington Road,  
Itchen Abbas, Hampshire**

**WINCM: AY322**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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**Land at New Farm,  
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**Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Winchester City Council (Engineering Services) to undertake an archaeological watching brief as a condition of the planning consent (Planning Reference: 05/00184/FUL) granted by Winchester City Council for land at New Farm, Northington Road, Itchen Abbas, Hampshire, during groundworks in advance of construction of a new sewage treatment works (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on National Grid Reference 453558 133288.

The Site lay to the north of a number of Grade II listed buildings, but more significantly a large Late Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery was located less than 200m south of the Site. The cemetery was not expected to extend north of School Lane. Other archaeological evidence of medieval, possible Iron Age and possible Roman date had also previously been discovered in the area to the south of Itchen Abbas Primary School. In light of previous works in the area there was considered to be a moderate potential for archaeological finds or features to have survived within the development footprint.

No archaeological features were observed nor were any artefacts recovered from within the development footprint.

The watching brief was carried out during September and October 2007.

**Land at New Farm,  
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**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Patrick Aust of Winchester County Council and Wessex Archaeology would like to thank him for his assistance. Thanks are also due to Ron Duff of Winchester City Council and to Tracey Matthews, Historic Environment Officer for Winchester City Council for their advice and assistance.

The watching brief was undertaken by Susan Clelland, Mike Dinwiddy, David Godden, John Milward and Sian Reynolds. This report was compiled by Chloe Hunnisett with the illustrations prepared by Linda Coleman and Will Foster. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Caroline Budd.

# Land at New Farm, Northington Road, Itchen Abbas, Hampshire

## Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Winchester City Council (Engineering Services) (hereafter 'the Client') to carry out an archaeological watching brief on Land at New Farm, Northington Road, Itchen Abbas, Hampshire, during ground works in advance of construction of a new sewage treatment works (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on National Grid Reference 453558 133288.

1.1.2 The watching brief was required as part of the planning permission granted to the Client by Winchester City Council (Planning Reference: 05/00184/FUL, condition 3), the local planning authority, for the proposed development.

1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 65790.01) was drawn up setting out the methodologies and standards to be employed by Wessex Archaeology when undertaking the watching brief. This was approved by Winchester City Council's Historic Environment Officer (HEO) prior to implementation. It was prepared in keeping with the relevant standards and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

#### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The Site is situated just north of the village of Itchen Abbas, on the northern flank of the Itchen Valley. Its western edge is defined by Northington Road, and its southern boundary is marked by School Lane. Its northern limit is defined by New Farm Cottages (**Figure 1**).

1.2.2 Topographically, the Site occupies part of the base and lower eastern slope of a north-south aligned coombe on the northern flank of the Itchen Valley. Modern ground levels fall from east to west, from a maximum elevation of c60m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). A number of small structures occupied the surrounding area, possibly agricultural outbuildings. The extent to which these, or terracing and levelling associated with former use of the Site, had modified the original topography was not known.

1.2.3 Natural bedrock within the Site comprises Cretaceous Upper Chalk, with recent alluvium mapped to the south, on the floor of the Itchen Valley (Geological Survey of Great Britain (England & Wales) 1957. The Site's topographic setting meant that there was also potential for unmapped deposits of soliflucted 'Coombe Rock' and for more superficial accumulations of colluvium.

### **1.3 Archaeological and historical background**

1.3.1 A number of Grade II Listed buildings were noted to the south of the dismantled railway and within the village of Itchen Abbas itself.

1.3.2 Of greater significance regarding the archaeological potential of the Site was a major Late Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery that lies to the south and east of Itchen Abbas County Primary School. Almost one hundred burials have been recorded in several excavations and watching briefs undertaken since the mid-1980s, and a more extensive burial ground has been inferred from this data. The cemetery appears to exploit a slight topographic spur, and a negative evaluation by Southern Archaeological Services suggested that it may be restricted to the area south of School Lane. However, the possibility that elements of the cemetery extended north of the former railway could not be discounted.

1.3.3 Other archaeological evidence from the area south and east of the Primary school included a possible irregular pit (tentatively assigned an Iron Age date) and two linear ditches, both undated but potentially representing Roman land-boundaries. A medieval boundary earthwork and two pits containing Norman pottery and animal bone were also discovered in 1948. In the same locality a scatter of medieval pottery and animal bone was also more recently found.

## 2 AIMS

2.1.1 The aims of the watching brief as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2007) were:

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains and, should remains be found to be present, to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard.
- To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence
- To determine or confirm the approximate extent, condition and state of preservation of the remains.
- To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape, and to economy, status, utility and social activity.
- To determine the potential of the site to provide Palaeo-environmental and/or economic evidence and to determine the forms in which such evidence may be present.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 In accordance with the planning condition, any topsoil stripping and stripping into natural sub-soils or made ground deposits within the development footprint was monitored at all times by a suitably qualified member of Wessex Archaeology staff.

3.1.2 Groundworks were carried out on the Site within two main areas; the location of the proposed sewage works itself (**Figure 1, Area 1**), and an area of sub-irrigation immediately to the north (**Figure 1, Area 2**). Additional service trenches and pipe-work trenches were also excavated in the vicinity.

3.1.3 A constant archaeological presence was maintained on the Site throughout the duration of any groundwork where topsoil or subsoil stripping was involved.

3.1.4 A digital photographic record was created, as well as a full written and graphic record using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording systems where appropriate.

3.1.5 The extent and location of the works were planned by hand as weather conditions and poor signal quality prevented the accurate use of a GPS on the Site.

## **3.2 Sewage Treatment Works**

- 3.2.1 Within the footprint of the proposed sewage works, an area measuring 12m x 3.2m was excavated to the level of the natural bedrock chalk in advance of fitting of a settling tank for the sewage treatment works (**Figure 1**). This tank trench was recorded as Trench 1.
- 3.2.2 Trench 1 was excavated under constant archaeological supervision. Hand drawn sections and plans, digital photographs and a full written record were maintained as work progressed and deposits were exposed. The work took place on 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2007.
- 3.2.3 Groundworks were carried out in advance of a lay-by for access to the sewage treatment works, located at the base of the western boundary of the development footprint, parallel with the road (**Figure 1**). The work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision and a full digital photographic record was maintained throughout the works. The work took place on 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2007.
- 3.2.4 Trenching for the installation of rising mains pipe-work was undertaken within Area 1, in order to connect the settling tank to the irrigation piping area. The work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision, with a full digital photographic record maintained to monitor the progress of the works. The work took place on 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2007.

## **3.3 Sub-Surface Irrigation Area**

- 3.3.1 Immediately to the north of the footprint of the proposed sewage treatment works, parallel with the road and oriented north-south, groundworks for sub-surface irrigation were carried out (**Figure 1, Trenches 2,7,8 and 9**).
- 3.3.2 The sub-surface irrigation area measured 88m x 20m. Within this area 21 narrow trenches were dug in a "herringbone" formation, oriented north-west to south-east within Area 2. Each of these trenches was 0.6m wide and 0.8m deep. After excavation each trench was filled with 0.3m of pipe bed at the base, backfilled with shingle, above which the trenches were backfilled with excavated material and topsoil replaced on the surface.
- 3.3.3 The irrigation trenches were recorded in blocks of 5 as Trenches 2, 7, 8 and 9. The excavation of the trenches was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Sections, plans, digital photographs and a full written record were maintained throughout the works. The work took place on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2007.

3.3.4 A trench was dug running north to south along the length of Area 1 parallel with the road. Rising main pipe-work was then installed to connect the irrigation area to the settling tank of the sewage treatment works. The work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision; a full digital photographic record was maintained throughout the works. The work took place on 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2007.

### **3.4 Service Trenches**

3.4.1 South of the sewage treatment works footprint, Trenches 3, 4, 5 and 6 were dug for the installation of services, located along Northington Road and oriented parallel with it (**Figure 1**).

3.4.2 The excavation of the trenches was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Hand drawn sections and plans, digital photographs and a full written record were maintained throughout. The work took place on 28<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2007.

## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 General**

4.1.1 The deposits within the development footprint were characterised by loose, grey brown topsoil, overlying a thick loose brown clay silt colluvium deposit. Where machining extended to a sufficient depth, namely within Trenches 1, 3, 5 and 6, the colluvium overlay the natural bedrock chalk, characterised in places by a weathered or bio-turbated interface. Where service trenches were excavated into the road surface, topsoil was replaced with a bitumen and hardcore road surface layer. In Trench 6 the chalk natural was overlain by light grey silt subsoil.

4.1.2 No archaeological features were identified nor were any finds recovered during the course of the Watching Brief.

### **4.2 Trench 1**

4.2.1 The trench for the sewage settling tank, located within Area 1, was dug to a depth of 3.2m. A light grey silt topsoil, up to 0.3m deep, which contained occasional modern finds of plastic, glass, metal and ceramic that were noted but not retained overlay a colluvium deposit with a sharply defined boundary.

- 4.2.2 The colluvium deposit was a mid to dark reddish brown clay silt, a loose deposit with horizontal banding of coarser materials. The deposit was a maximum of 1.3m deep, increasing in depth from east to west. The deposit was well drained, with increasing clay content towards the base. The horizon with the underlying natural chalk bedrock was sharp and undulating.
- 4.2.3 The natural chalk bedrock was encountered from a depth of 1.3m onwards. The upper 0.3m of the chalk represented a weathered and bioturbated horizon, which was friable with loose chalk fragments. Below this interface the bedrock chalk was more dense, white and compact.
- 4.2.4 No archaeological features were identified nor any finds recovered from Trench 1.
- 4.2.5 The excavation of trenches for the rising mains pipe was also watched within the Area. No archaeological features were identified nor any finds recovered.

### **4.3 Lay-by**

- 4.3.1 The groundworks associated with the lay-by involved stripping up to 0.45m below the ground level. The stripping extended below the topsoil and into the underlying colluvium deposit however, the top of the chalk bedrock was not reached here.
- 4.3.2 The majority of the lay-by footprint had previously been occupied by a hedge-line which was removed prior to stripping.
- 4.3.3 Topsoil occurred to a maximum depth of 0.4m, and was loose and heavily disturbed by roots. Occasional modern finds were noted but not retained.
- 4.3.4 The base of the underlying colluvium, red brown homogenous loose clay silt, was not reached and no archaeological features were identified nor any finds recovered.

### **4.4 Sub-Surface Irrigation Area**

- 4.4.1 The 21 irrigation trenches, oriented north-west to south-east within Area 2, were grouped into 3 blocks of 5 and 1 block of 6 to improve ease and clarity of recording (**Figure 1**).
- 4.4.2 **Trench 2:** Group comprised the 5 northern-most irrigation trenches within the area.

- 4.4.3 **Trench 7:** Group comprised the 5 irrigation trenches to the south of Trench 2
- 4.4.4 **Trench 8:** Group comprised the 5 irrigation trenches to the south of Trench 7
- 4.4.5 **Trench 9:** Group comprised the 6 southern-most irrigation trenches within Area 2.
- 4.4.6 In Trenches 2, 7, 8 and 9, the topsoil was a grey-brown, loose silty loam. The deposit contained occasional sub-rounded and sub-angular flint inclusions of <0.09m, and occasional chalk fragments of < 0.03m. The topsoil depth ranged from 0.18m in Trench 7 to 0.22m in Trench 8.
- 4.4.7 Below the topsoil a mid brown colluvium deposit was observed in all of the Trenches. Occasional inclusions of sub-rounded and sub-angular flints <0.02m were recorded in conjunction with occasional chalk fragments <0.03m.
- 4.4.8 The irrigation trenches were stripped to a depth of 0.8m and therefore did not extend below the colluvial deposit, consequently natural chalk bedrock was not reached.
- 4.4.9 No archaeological features were identified nor were any finds recovered from any of the 21 irrigation trenches in the sub-surface irrigation area.

#### **4.5 Service Trenches**

##### **Trench 3**

- 4.5.1 Trench 3 (**Figure 1**) was oriented north-south and excavated through the road surface in the eastern verge of Northington Road, located to the south of the sewage treatment works. The trench was dug to a maximum depth of 0.95m. It measured 2.5m long by 1.15m wide.
- 4.5.2 The uppermost road surface layer consisted of bitumen tarmac overlying crushed granite hardcore, 0.15m in total depth.
- 4.5.3 The road surface directly overlay a colluvial deposit of cohesive mid brown silt clay. The colluvium had a diffuse interface with the underlying natural chalk bedrock.
- 4.5.4 A weathered horizon of natural chalk with flint nodule inclusions lay below the colluvium.
- 4.5.5 No archaeological features, ecofacts or artefacts were observed within the trench.

#### **Trench 4**

- 4.5.6 Trench 4 (**Figure 1**) was oriented north-south and excavated into the surface of Northington Road in close proximity to the dismantled railway. The trench was dug to a maximum depth of 0.8m. It measured 2.4m long by 0.8m wide.
- 4.5.7 The uppermost deposit consisted of bitumen tarmac overlying crushed granite hardcore, 0.15m in total depth.
- 4.5.8 The road surface directly overlay a colluvial deposit of cohesive mid brown silt clay.
- 4.5.9 The underlying natural chalk bedrock was not exposed within Trench 4.
- 4.5.10 No archaeological features, ecofacts or artefacts were observed within the trench.

#### **Trench 5**

- 4.5.11 Trench 5 (**Figure 1**) was oriented north-east to south-west and was excavated into the surface of Northington Road on the eastern side, to the south of the dismantled railway. The trench was dug to a maximum depth of 1.05m. It measured 2.3m long by 0.6m wide.
- 4.5.12 The uppermost road surface layer consisted of bitumen tarmac overlying crushed granite hardcore, 0.15m deep.
- 4.5.13 The underlying colluvial deposit directly overlay natural un-weathered bedrock chalk which contained sparse flint nodules.
- 4.5.14 No archaeological features, ecofacts or artefacts were observed within the trench.

#### **Trench 6**

- 4.5.15 Trench 6 (**Figure 1**) was oriented north-east to south-west and was excavated into the western verge of Northington Road opposite the entrance to School Lane. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.65m and measured 1.5m long by 0.44m wide.
- 4.5.16 The uppermost deposit comprised a mid grey brown silt topsoil, with moderately occurring large flint inclusions.
- 4.5.17 The topsoil overlay a very light grey brown silt deposit, containing frequent small flint and chalk inclusions
- 4.5.18 The silt deposit overlay the natural chalk bedrock.

- 4.5.19 No archaeological features, ecofacts or artefacts were observed within the trench.

## **5 FINDS**

- 5.1.1 No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts were collected from within the trenches or stripped areas.

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL**

- 6.1.1 No material suitable for environmental analysis was demonstrated to be present within the excavated areas

## **7 CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1.1 The Archaeological Watching Brief on the proposed Sewage Treatment Works and associated irrigation and service installation groundworks at New Farm, Itchen Abbas revealed no evidence of archaeological remains on the Site.

## **8 ARCHIVE**

### **8.1 Preparation and Deposition**

- 8.1.1 The project archive comprises a ring bound file that contains a watching brief attendance form, the risk assessment, the method statement, site location plans, a written record of the watching brief, nine test pit/trial trench record sheets and a digital photographic record sheet. This archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's office building under the site code 65790.03, but will ultimately be deposited for permanent storage at Winchester Museum.

## **9 REFERENCES**

Wessex Archaeology 2007, *Land at New Farm, Northington Road, Itchen Abbas, Hampshire, Written Scheme of Investigation: Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished Client Report Ref. 65790.01

10 APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARY

<b>Trench 1</b>		<b>Description:</b> Machine dug sewage settling tank trench	<b>Location:</b> Area 1	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 3.2m	<b>Length:</b> 12m	<b>Width:</b> 3.5m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
1	Layer	Topsoil: Light grey silt. Loose, friable deposit. Moderate frequency small and medium angular flints of < 0.1m. Occasional modern detritus including plastic, ceramic, glass and metal, noted but not retained. Sharp, slightly undulating lower horizon.		0 – 0.3m
2	Layer	Colluvium: Mid to dark reddish brown clay silt. Loose friable well drained deposit. Frequent small to large angular flints. Horizontal banding of coarse components. Sharp, slightly undulating lower horizon.		0.3 – 1.3m
3	Layer	Natural: Natural bedrock chalk. Upper 0.3m is a weathered or bio-turbated horizon, being slightly friable and yellow in hue. White compact bedrock chalk is encountered below this.		1.3m +

<b>Trench 2</b>		<b>Description:</b> Machine dug. Block of 5 Northern-most irrigation trenches	<b>Location:</b> Area 2, sub-surface irrigation area	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.8m	<b>Length:</b> 25m	<b>Width:</b> 0.6m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
200	Layer	Topsoil: Mid grey brown loose silt. Occasional sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.1m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.		0 – 0.2m
201	Layer	Colluvium: Mid reddish brown clay silt. Loose friable deposit. Moderately frequent sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.2m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.		0.2m+

<b>Trench 3</b>		<b>Description:</b> Machine dug service installation trench	<b>Location:</b> Oriented north to south, located south of area 1	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.95m	<b>Length:</b> 2.5m	<b>Width:</b> 1.15m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
300	Layer	Road Surface: Road make-up layer. Upper 0.05m composed of bitumen tarmac, with crushed granite hardcore bedding below this.		0 – 0.15m
301	Layer	Colluvium: Compact and cohesive mid brown silt clay colluvial subsoil. Horizontal banding of coarse components, with moderately frequent flints of <0.1m size. Diffuse boundary with deposit (302)		0.15 – 0.62m
302	Layer	Natural: Horizon of weathered natural chalk with flint nodule inclusions.		0.62 – 0.95m+

<b>Trench 4</b>		<b>Description:</b> Machine dug service installation trench	<b>Location:</b> oriented north to south in the locality of the dismantled railway	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.8m	<b>Length:</b> 2.4m	<b>Width:</b> 0.5m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
400	Layer	Road Surface: Road make-up layer. Upper 0.05m composed of bitumen tarmac, with crushed granite hardcore bedding below this.		0 – 0.15m
401	Layer	Colluvium: Compact and cohesive mid brown silt clay colluvial subsoil. Horizontal banding of coarse components, with moderately frequent flints of <0.1m size.		0.15 – 0.8m

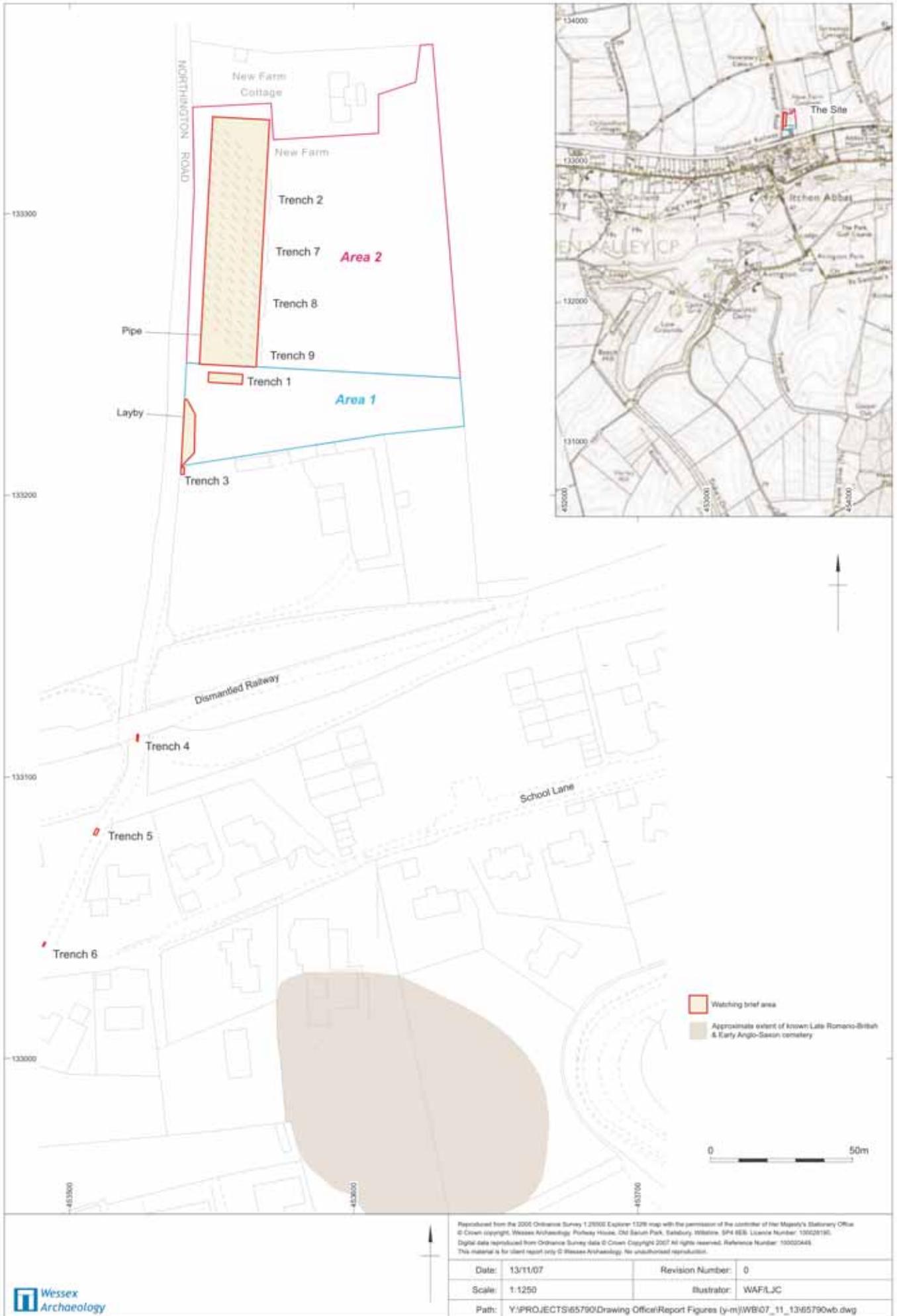
<b>Trench 5</b>		<b>Description:</b> Machine dug service installation trench	<b>Location:</b> oriented north-east to south-west, located south of dismantled railway.	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 1.05m	<b>Length:</b> 2.3m	<b>Width:</b> 0.6m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Depth</b>
500	Layer	Road Surface: Road make-up layer. Upper 0.05m composed of bitumen tarmac, with crushed granite hardcore bedding below this.		0 – 0.2m
501	Layer	Natural: Natural bedrock chalk. White compact chalk with sparse large flint nodules.		0.2 – 1.05m+

<b>Trench 6</b>		<b>Description:</b> Machine dug service installation trench	<b>Location:</b> oriented north-east to south-west, opposite entrance to School Lane.	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.65m	<b>Length:</b> 1.5m	<b>Width:</b> 0.45m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	
600	Layer	Topsoil: Mid grey brown loose silt deposit. Moderately frequent small to large flint inclusions	0 – 0.15m	
601	Layer	Subsoil: Very light grey brown silt deposit. Moderately frequent small flint and chalk inclusions	0.15 – 0.4m	
602	Layer	Natural: Horizon of weathered natural chalk with flint nodule inclusions	0.4 – 0.65m+	

<b>Trench 7</b>		<b>Description:</b> Block of 5 irrigation trenches below Tr 2	<b>Location:</b> Area 2, sub-surface irrigation area	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.8m	<b>Length:</b> 25m	<b>Width:</b> 0.6m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	
700	Layer	Topsoil: Mid grey brown loose silt. Occasional sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.07m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.	0 – 0.18m	
701	Layer	Colluvium: Mid brown clay silt. Loose friable deposit. Moderately frequent sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.2m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.	0.18m+	

<b>Trench 8</b>		<b>Description:</b> Block of 5 irrigation trenches below Tr 7	<b>Location:</b> Area 2, sub-surface irrigation area	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.8m	<b>Length:</b> 25m	<b>Width:</b> 0.6m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	
800	Layer	Topsoil: Mid grey brown loose silt. Occasional sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.07m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.	0 – 0.22m	
801	Layer	Colluvium: Mid brown clay silt. Loose friable deposit. Moderately frequent sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.2m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.	0.22m+	

<b>Trench 9</b>		<b>Description:</b> Southern-most block of 6 irrigation trenches	<b>Location:</b> Area 2, sub-surface irrigation area	
		<b>Max Depth:</b> 0.8m	<b>Length:</b> 25m	<b>Width:</b> 0.6m
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	
900	Layer	Topsoil: Mid grey brown loose silt. Occasional sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.07m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.	0 – 0.21m	
901	Layer	Colluvium: Mid brown clay silt. Loose friable deposit. Moderately frequent sub-angular and sub rounded flints of <0.2m and occasional chalk pieces of <0.03m.	0.21m+	



Site location plan showing watching brief areas

Figure 1

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Plate 1: Irrigation trenches under excavation



Plate 2: Representative section of irrigation trench (Trench 2)



Plate 3: Excavation of settling tank trench

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