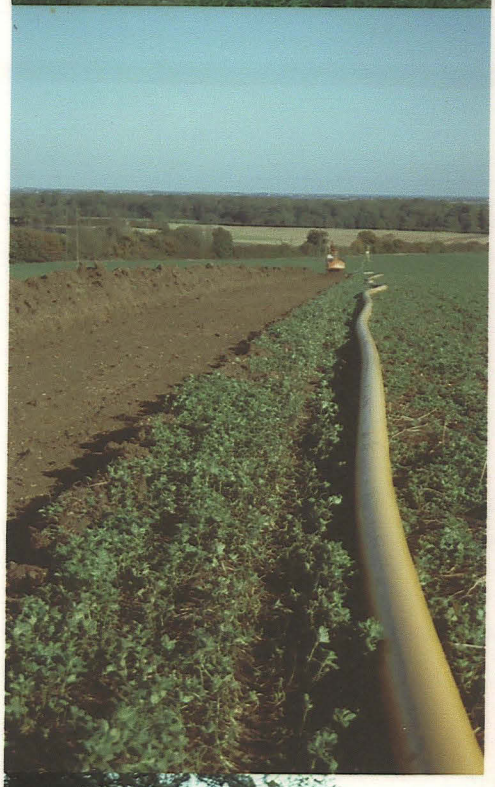
# Candlesby to Trusthorpe Hall Gas Pipeline



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Report by

NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

for

Transco

network ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

99/25

LI1042
LI1043

43817 - Roman
43818 - Prehist
43820 - Med
43819 - Med

# Candlesby to Trusthorpe Pipeline

**Site Code: CBM99**
**Lincoln City and County Museum**
**Accession Number: 290.99**

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Report No 146

December 1999

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## 1 SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out in October and November 1999 on selected sites along the route a new gas main between Candlesby and Trusthorpe in Lincolnshire.

The route crosses the line of the Roman road from Lincoln to Burgh le Marsh near Skendleby (TF 4484 6975). A section through the line of this road was recorded. Two chalk layers beneath the modern tarmac surface probably represent earlier road make-up, one of which may have been the remains of the Roman road.

A diffuse spread of worked flints was found near Grange Farm, Claxby. It includes a knife blade and several other possible tool types. The centre of the spread lies approximately 250m from a cropmark of a rectangular enclosure, seen on aerial photographs. The dateable flints all appear be from the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age periods, and provide evidence for activity in the area at than time.

A small assemblage of medieval or early post-medieval pottery was recovered from the spoil of the pipe-trench immediately to the north of Asserby Lane (TF 4918 7774). Old maps show that there was a field boundary at this point, and the finds probably came from the fill of a ditch running along this boundary. The site of the deserted medieval village of Asserby is nearby (SMR 41479).

## 2 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on a number of sites during the laying of a replacement gas main between Candlesby and Trusthorpe. The line runs for 15.75km and lies within the East Lindsey district of Lincolnshire. The location of the pipeline is shown in Figure 1.

### 2.1 The Pipeline

The pipeline runs from an existing Above Ground Installation (AGI) on the south side of the A1028 Skegness to Louth road, approximately 1km to the west of the junction with the A158 at Gunby roundabout (TF 4566 6832). The pipe initially runs alongside the north side of this road, in a north-westerly direction, following the road as it turns to the right at a sharp bend. The land along this part of the route rises from around 40m OD to more than 70m OD, forming the southern end of the chalk ridge of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

At the point where the road turns sharply left, to resume its north-westerly course towards Ulceby, the pipe route continues in a generally north-north-easterly direction, dropping quite sharply down the scarp slope of the chalk ridge. It crosses the B1196 to the west of Willoughby village and the B1449 between Bilsby and Thurlby. The ground here rarely rises above 10m OD. After crossing the A1111 Alford to Sutton-on-Sea road between Markby and Hannah, the pipe route reaches its northern end near Trusthorpe Hall, approximately 3km south of Mablethorpe (TF 5016 8205).

The new gas main is a 200mm diameter high density polyethylene pipe. Over most of the route, it was laid using either a trenching machine or a mole-plough, depending on local ground conditions. The machines generally worked from the surface of the topsoil, with the working width not topsoil stripped. With the trencher, ground disturbance was limited to the excavation of a 300mm-wide trench, approximately 1.20m deep. The effects of the mole-plough would have extended over a slightly greater width but would have been less disruptive, the soil returning approximately to its original position after the pipe was laid.

### 2.2 Background to the Watching Brief

An environmental assessment of the route corridor, carried out by Glendee Engineering Ltd, identified twenty-five areas of archaeological interest. Ten of these are areas of ridge and furrow, generally identified from old aerial photographs and not necessarily still existing as standing earthworks. In some cases these would have been associated with four deserted medieval villages which were also identified. The remainder of the sites range from an Anglo-Saxon burial ground and a possible prehistoric tumulus to a nineteenth century tramway and a Second World War anti-aircraft searchlight battery. In most cases, these sites were far enough from the pipeline to be unaffected by trenching work. In consultation with Lincoln's Senior Built Environment Officer, four sites were adjudged to warrant an archaeological watching brief during ground-disturbing engineering works. Network Archaeology Ltd (NAL) were commissioned in October 1999 to carry this out.

The four sites are:

- The crossing of the route of the Roman road from Lincoln to Burgh le Marsh.
- The area to the east of a possible prehistoric enclosure south of Claxby House showing as a cropmark on aerial photographs.

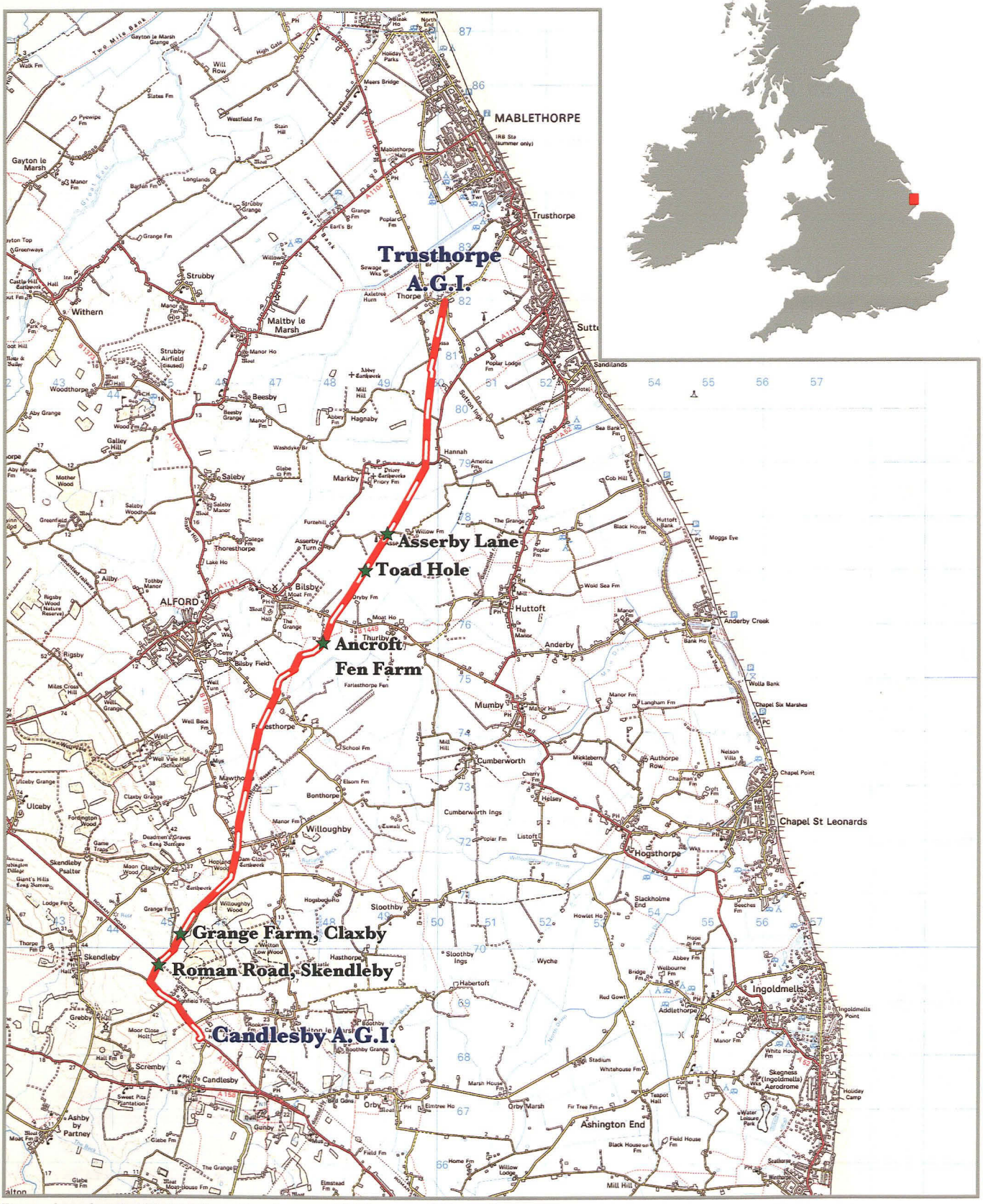




**Figure 1: Location of the pipeline, showing sites mentioned in the text**

- An area of upstanding ridge and furrow earthworks near Ancroft Fen Farm.
- The area to the east of a recorded scatter of Romano-British pottery finds.

In addition to these sites, a scatter of medieval pottery close to the site of the deserted medieval village of Asserby was noted during the course of construction work.

## 3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

**3.1 The Roman Road** (SMR 42944) TF 4484 6975
This road formed part of an important route from Lincoln passing through Burgh le Marsh. It would have terminated at a Roman port near Skegness, but the coast has suffered severe erosion and all traces have now gone. The line of the road continues as Peddars Way on the Norfolk side of the Wash. Near Ulceby, it probably connected with the prehistoric Bluestone Heath Road, which runs along the top of the chalk ridge.

The road is numbered 27 in the standard work of Margary. 'From the inn at Ulceby a fine straight length of road for 2½ miles represents it past Skendleby, raised generally 2-3 feet, and, where the modern road turns off, a lane continues the line with distinct traces of the agger, 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high passing the western edge of Welton High Wood' (Margary, 238-240). In the fenlands to the east of Burgh le Marsh, the route is uncertain, and may have reached the coast at Skegness, or nearer to Gibraltar Point. Margary favoured a route following 'a parish boundary to the coast 1½ miles to the south of Skegness.'

It is at the point where the straight stretch of road from Ulceby turns sharply south that the pipe-trench crosses the line of the Roman road (Figure 2). The farm track, which continues the line of the Roman road, has a tarmac surface 3.20m wide. It is raised above the level of the field, only slightly on the south side but by more than 0.50m to the north because of the slope of the ground. The overall width of this raised surface is just under 5m. It does not extend to the road, but gets lost in the hedge-bank which forms the edge of a wide roadside verge.

The construction work at this site was carried out in two stages. A long stretch of the pipe-trench at the side of the A1028, crossing the farm track and terminating 4m beyond it was inspected on 11th October 1999. The trench was situated 3m to the east of the modern road, within the area of the roadside verge, and was 0.40m wide and approximately 1.30m deep.

A section through the farm track is shown in Figure 3. The modern tarmac surface could be seen to be lying immediately above a layer of crushed chalk, up to 120mm thick (101). A thin layer of reddish silty clay (102), separated this from a second layer of crushed chalk (103), which lay over a thick silty clay layer (104). In the lower part of the section, this became increasingly chalky and the base of the trench was cut into more or less pure chalk (105). The interface between these two lower layers was very irregular, the depth of the chalk varying considerably along the length of the trench. The lower silty clay presumably represents completely weathered-down chalk.

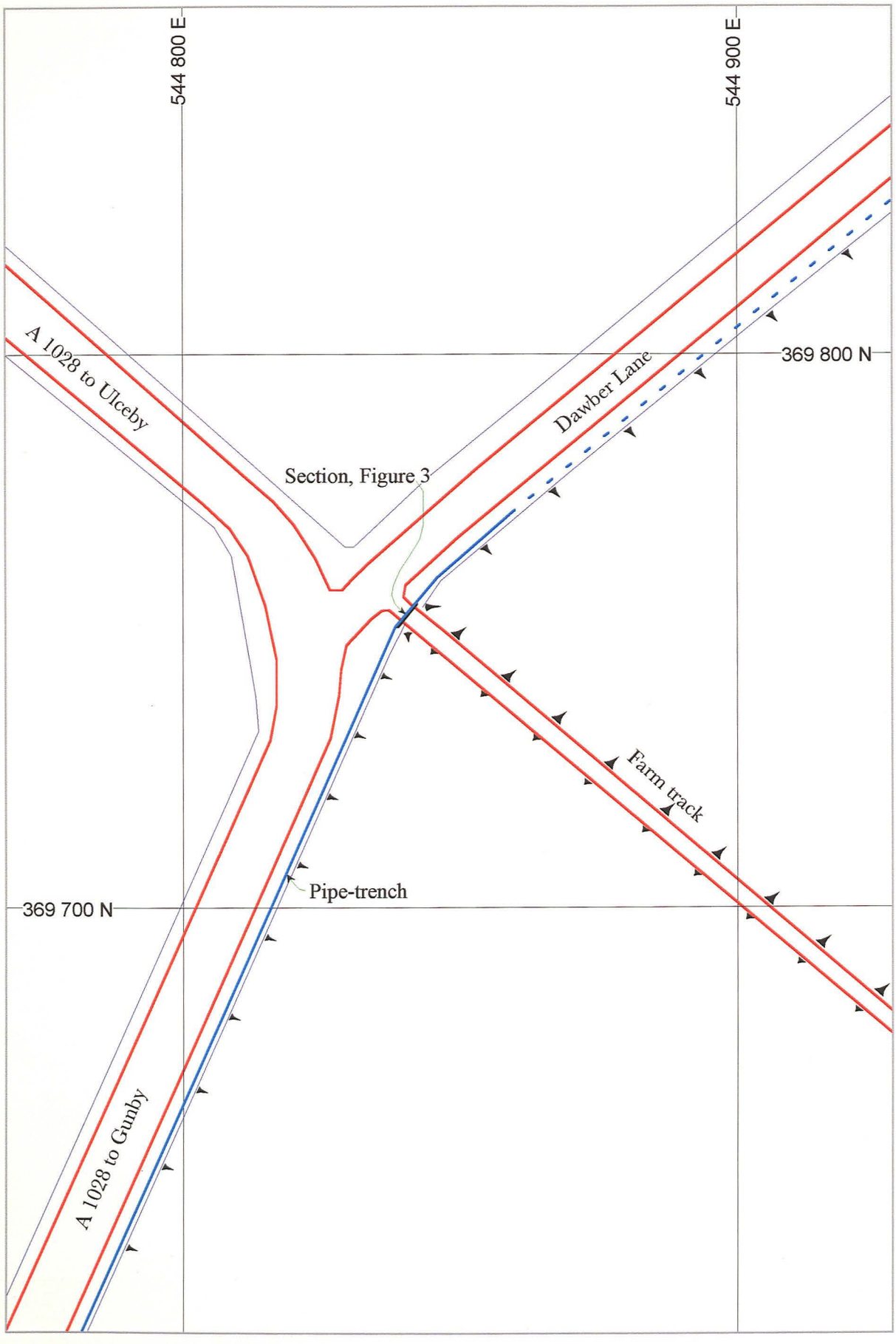


**Figure 2: The road junction at Skendleby, showing pipe-trench crossing line of Roman road. (Line dotted where trench was not seen.) Scale 1:1000**

West-facing section

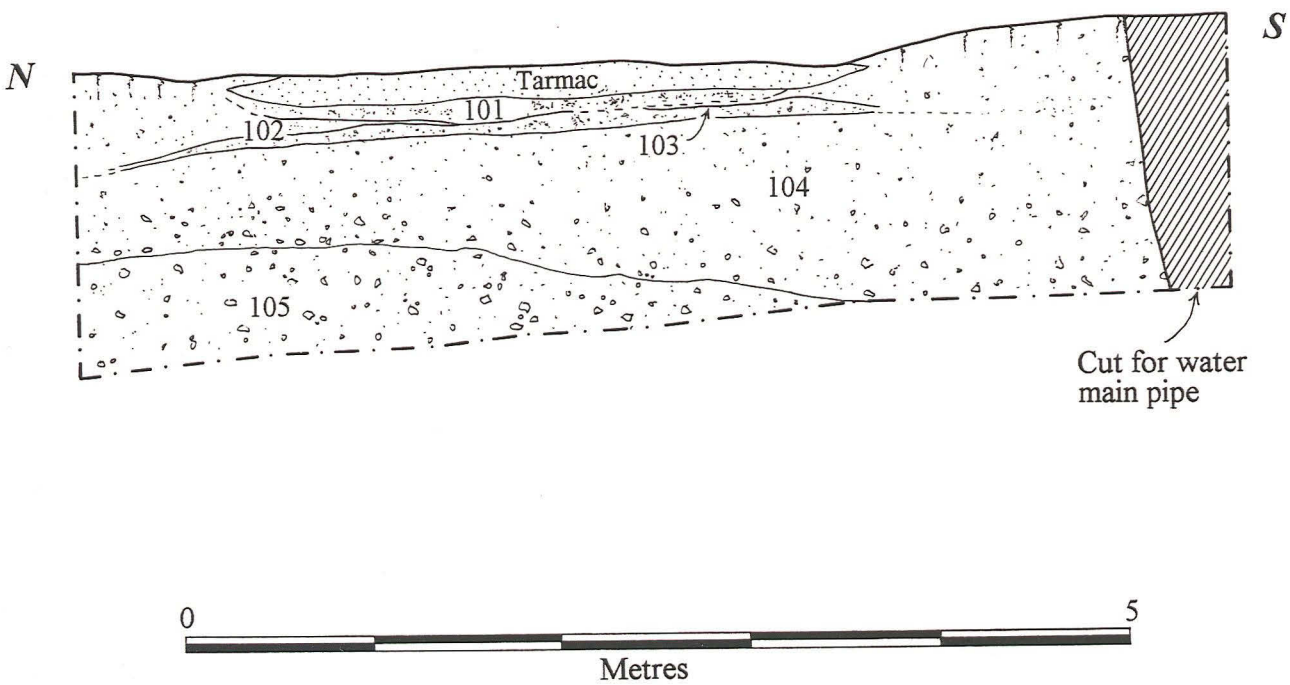


Figure 3: Section through line of Roman Road

Although no dating evidence was found, it is possible that the lower chalk layer (103) is the remains of the Roman road. It is likely to be part of the original road surface, but could be the severely eroded remains of the foundations. The overlying silty layer (102) may have accumulated after the Roman road was abandoned and perhaps robbed, possibly as a ploughed headland as the roadside verge was formed.

No roadside ditches, usually associated with Roman roads, were seen within the pipe-trench. However, the trench was extremely narrow and the trench had been disturbed to the south by the construction of a water pipe.

No archaeology was seen in the 300m of pipe-trench left open for inspection to the south of the farm track. The irregular surface of the chalk bedrock could generally be seen in the base of the trench, overlain by the red silty clay layer. A second visit was made to the site on 25th November when the trench was open for a distance of 23m to the north of the farm track. Again, no cut features were observed. Drainage work carried out on the 1st November allowed the deposits below the surface of the A1028 to be viewed. The tarmac lay directly above a layer of crushed chalk 0.15m thick, overlying the red silty clay.

**3.2 The Possible Prehistoric Enclosure, Grange Farm, Claxby** TF 4521 7037

450m to the north of the Roman road, the pipe crosses beneath Dawber Lane, continuing in a north-easterly direction across a large field to the west of the lane. A regular rectangular ditched enclosure, approximately 60m by 40m, with the longer axis aligned south-west to north-east and following the slope of the ground, shows clearly as a cropmark on aerial photographs in this field (RCHME Print 4570/1, copy held at Lincolnshire SMR). The pipe passes approximately 30m to the east of this feature.

A 4m width of topsoil, centred on the line of the pipe-trench, was stripped along the entire length of this field on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd November 1999, using a 360° back-acting tracked digger, fitted with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket. This allowed inspection of the subsoil surface.

Removal of the 20cm thick chalk-rich silty loam topsoil revealed a reddish-brown silty clay subsoil layer, generally less than 10cm deep. At the south end of the field, this tended to peel away from the underlying chalk, leaving a surface of fractured chalk lumps, typically 6-8cm across. As the ground sloped down to the north, the underlying deposits became more silty, although bands of chalk continued to show up in places, especially at the point where the easement passed a small, deep quarry on the side of the lane. At the bottom of the slope, a regular pattern of land-drains could been seen in the machined surface, but otherwise no cut features were observed.

At the bottom of the slope, centred on a point approximately 150m from the northern boundary of this field, twelve worked flint fragments were found (Appendix 2). These include a broken knife-blade, made from re-touching the edge of a struck flake (Figure 4). Apart from one piece retrieved from the spoil heap, these flints were all found in the top of the subsoil layer. They were spread over more than 100m, and the low density makes it questionable whether they could be considered as a single assemblage, rather than a concentration of background finds. If it is all of a common origin, two pieces typical of the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age provide a general date. The other fragments would be consistent with that

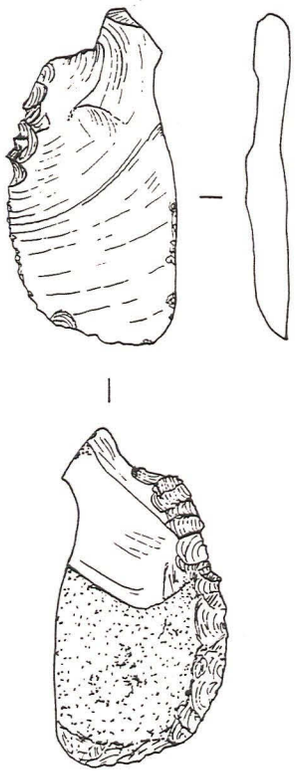

**Figure 4: Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint knife blade**

period but could not be so closely dated. The presence of probable scrapers and piercers suggest a range of tool-types and could have been derived from a domestic settlement nearby.

If it were assumed that the cropmark enclosure is the site of the settlement associated with this flint assemblage, it would provide a Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date for that cropmark feature. However, no flint was recovered from the point at which the pipe is closest to the cropmark, or for a considerable distance beyond. Because of the slope of the ground, erosional creep or plough disturbance might have moved them downhill. It is more likely that they derived from a ploughed-out feature within the area where they were found. This could, of course, have been contemporary with the cropmark feature and be associated with it.

**3.3 Ridge and Furrow Site, Ancroft Fen Farm** TF 4791 7571
The pipe route crosses an area with ridge and furrow earthworks at Ancroft Fen Farm to the south-east of Bilsby village. Trenching took place on 21st October 1999.

The ridges in this field, running parallel to its southern hedge, are clearly visible in the east side of the field, but do not extend to the western edge, where the ground slopes down quite markedly. The farm track along the northern border of the field appears to be an old lane, and may be contemporary with the ridge and furrow earthworks. A curving dip runs south from this track appearing as a distinct 'hollow-way' for a short distance, before becoming assimilated in the general downward slope of the edge of the field. The pipe route, hugging the west side of the field, did not impinge upon the upstanding ridge and furrow, but crossed part of the 'hollow-way' before passing into the field to the north.

The deposits revealed in the sides of the pipe-trench appeared undisturbed, and no cut features were seen. At the northern end of the field, the short stretch that cut through the 'hollow-way' showed nothing of the character of that feature. The two fields to the south have uneven surfaces which are probably partially ploughed-out ridge and furrow earthworks. The open stretches of trench in these fields were viewed, but again no features were visible.

**3.4 Toad Hole Pottery Spread, Bilsby** (SMR 41472) TF 486 771.
The pipeline crosses close to a site where Romano-British greyware pottery was recorded as having been found in 1963. The record of this find is extremely sketchy, but the grid reference appears to be centred on a small circular hill which rises quite prominently from the generally flat landscape. At its closest point (TF 4868 7694), the pipe is approximately 100m from this hill. From the description, it is not clear whether it was a single sherd of pottery or a more substantial spread of finds.

Mole-ploughing was deemed to be the most practical method of pipe-laying, due to the semi-fluid nature of the sub-surface ground. With this method, the ploughed trench closes up immediately behind the pipe-laying machine, offering little opportunity to observe or record any archaeological deposits. In consultation with the County Archaeological Officer, it was agreed not to carry out a watching brief on this site.

**3.5 Asserby Lane Pottery Scatter** TF 4918 7774
The construction project engineer reported finds of pottery at this site, and it was subsequently visited on 11th and 21st October 1999. The topsoil had been stripped from an area to the north of the road crossing and a pit excavated for boring the pipe beneath the road. The stripped topsoil was heaped up on either side of this easement. The exposed sides of

these spoil heaps yielded sixteen sherds of pottery and one tile fragment (Appendix 3). No pottery was noted on the surface of the surrounding undisturbed ground, which suggests that the source of the pottery was quite localised.

With the exception of three sherds of glazed earthenware, dating from the eighteenth or nineteenth century, the pottery was all Toynton or Bolingbroke wares. These typically have a dark blue-grey fabric and green glaze, and were produced from the late fourteenth to the seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries.

The sides of the boring pit showed some disturbance to the subsoil, but no clear cut features could be seen. Heavy, driving rain and flooding of the base of the pit made viewing conditions less than ideal.

The site is close to a partly derelict farm building just to the north of the road crossing. The second edition 6" Ordnance Survey map of 1905 shows this as a cottage, although only outbuildings now survive. A small enclosure surrounded the cottage, the western boundary of which appears to coincide with the position of the pipe-trench. It is likely that the disturbed ground seen in the sides of the pit was the remains of a ditch along this field boundary. The pottery is generally fairly unabraded, suggesting that it derives from a relatively undisturbed primary deposit. It is likely to have originated from a dump of household rubbish into a convenient ditch. Ridge and furrow earthworks are visible in this field on old aerial photographs, but have now been ploughed out. The Deserted Medieval Village at Asserby also lies close by (TF 495 776).

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Part of the make-up for the Roman road may survive as a crushed chalk layer beneath the tarmac and a more recent chalk layer of the farm track.

The flint finds from the Claxby site are evidence for activity in the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age. This activity may have been related to the enclosure which is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs in the same field, or to another unidentified feature nearby. If it is associated with the cropmark, it would provide a date for that feature.

A scatter of pottery found at the Asserby Lane road crossing provides evidence for late medieval or early post-medieval activity in this area, probably the result of dumping of household waste into a convenient ditch, running perpendicular to the lane. The pottery also lies close to the site of the deserted medieval village at Asserby and therefore could have an association with this.

## 5 REFERENCES

Margary, I. D. 1975. *Roman Roads in Britain,* London.

## 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The watching brief was commissioned by Transco. Special thanks are due to Tony Jordan. Thanks also to Jim Bonner (Senior Built Environment Officer, Lincoln), for his consultation throughout the project.

Analysis of the flint finds was carried out by Dave Bonner. Jane Young identified the pottery and tile.

## 7 STATEMENT OF INDEMNITY

Every effort has been taken in the preparation and submission of this report on order to provide as complete an assessment as possible within the terms of the brief, and all statements and opinions are offered in good faith. Network Archaeology Ltd cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for any loss or other consequences arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this report and any supplementary papers, howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived, or as a result of unknown and undiscovered sites of artefacts.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

# Context Summary

*101* White to yellowish white crushed chalk, some flinty pebbles but generally clean. Below topsoil and tarmac farm-track surface. Section drawing 1

*102* Mid-brown to orange-brown clay-silt, occasional chalk flecks and small lumps to 5cm diameter, slightly darker than (104), but barely distinguishable where in contact. Below (101), above (103). Section drawing 1

*103* White to yellowish white crushed chalk, some flinty pebbles, tending to have more silty inclusions than (101) but indistinguishable where they are in contact in the centre of the section. Below (102), above (104). Section drawing 1

*104* Mid-brown to orange-brown clay-silt, occasional to frequent chalk flecks and lumps becoming more common below. Natural subsoil, below (103), above (105). Section drawing 1

*105* White to pale buff, lumps of fractured chalk in a pale orange-brown sandy silt matrix, grading into solid chalk near the base of the section. Natural bedrock, below (104). Section drawing 1

*200* Mid-brown silty clay loam topsoil. Number for unstratified finds from Asserby Lane site.

*301 to 311* Numbers for flint finds from Claxby site, see Appendix 2 for locations.

**APPENDIX 2**

# Flint Finds

| Number | Location | Notes | Description | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **301** | TF 45406 70494 | | Shattered piece. | Unknown |
| **302** | TF 45408 70498 | 4 pieces | Notched flake fragment.<br>Core fragment.<br>Possible scraper fragment.<br>Unworked fragment, not kept. | ?LN/BA<br>LN/BA<br>LN/BA |
| **303** | TF 45414 70508 | 2 pieces | Both unworked, not kept. | - |
| **304** | TF 45418 70517 | | Possible piercer fragment, with blunting re-touch. | ?LN/BA |
| **305** | TF 45420 70519 | | Knife fragment with possible tang. | LN/EBA |
| **306** | TF 45423 70524 | | Possible scraper on non-flake. | ?LN/BA |
| **307** | TF 45433 70542 | | Scraper fragment. | ?LN/BA |
| **308** | TF 45455 70582 | | Possible core with 2 flakes removed. | ?LN/BA |
| **309** | TF 45460 70589 | | Core fragment, possibly utilised as scraper. | LN/BA |
| **310** | TF 45463 70593 | | Miscellaneous blunting re-touch on non-flake, possible piercer fragment. | LN/BA |
| **311** | TF 45466 70599 | | Flake fragment. | ?LN/BA |

**Abbreviations**

LN Late Neolithic
EBA Early Bronze Age
BA Bronze Age

# APPENDIX 3

## Pottery Archive

| context | cname | form type | sherds | vessels | part | date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 200 | BL | bowl | 2 | 1 | base | 18-19th |
| 200 | GRE | bowl | 1 | 1 | base | 18th |
| 200 | PGE | bowl | 1 | 1 | base | 18th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | BS | 16-18th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | base | 16-18th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | rim | 17-18th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | BS | 16-18th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | BS | 16-18th |
| 200 | TB | ? | 1 | 1 | BS | 14-17th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | BS | 16-18th |
| 200 | TB | jug | 1 | 1 | base | 15-17th |
| 200 | TB | jug | 1 | 1 | handle | 15-17th |
| 200 | TB | jug | 1 | 1 | BS | 15-17th |
| 200 | TB | jug | 1 | 1 | BS | 15-17th |
| 200 | TB | ? | 1 | 1 | BS | 15-17th |
| 200 | TB | bowl | 1 | 1 | BS | 16-18th |

## Tile Archive

| context | cname | frags | description | date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 200 | PNR | 1 | flat | late medieval to post-medieval |

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| BL | Black-glazed wares |
| GRE | Glazed Red Earthenware |
| PGE | Pale Glazed Earthenware |
| TB | Toynton or Bolingbroke ware |
| PNR | Peg, Nib or Ridge Tile |