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**REPLACEMENT WATER MAIN  
CHURCH LANE, NORTH THORESBY,  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF REPORT**

Site code: CLNT 06  
NGR: TF 2888 9862 -  
TF 2911 9850  
LCCM Acc No: 2006.137  
PCA Job No: 06-229

Report prepared for  
Anglian Water  
Services Ltd.

by

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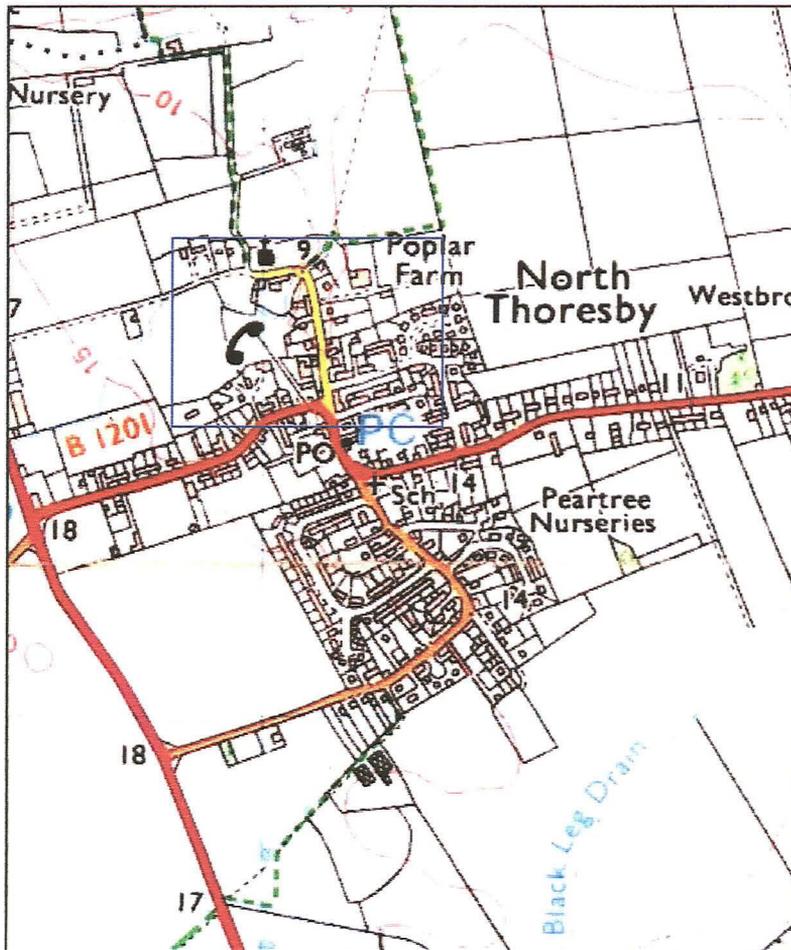
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### Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd. during groundworks associated with the North Thoresby Replacement Water Main Scheme, Lincolnshire.*
- *The replacement route runs the entire length of Church Lane, North Thoresby, running close to the parish church on the north side of the modern village, before turning south and continuing almost to the Market Place at the centre of the village.*
- *The majority of the trenching exposed no features of archaeological significance. In the vicinity of the river, however, its former course was identified, and evidence of a timber structure was observed.*



**Fig. 1:** Location map at scale 1:12 500. The area shown in figure 2 is outlined in blue.

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## **1.0 Introduction**

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Anglian Water Services Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the trenching for a replacement water main on Church Lane, North Thoresby, Lincolnshire.

This report documents the results of the watching brief and is consistent with the recommendations of current national guidelines, including *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA, 1994 as revised)*, and a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln).

Copies of this report will be deposited with the commissioning body, the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record and will also be deposited at The Collection, Lincoln, along with an ordered project archive for long-term storage and curation.

## **2.0 Site location and description (figs. 1 and 2)**

The village of North Thoresby is within the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 11km north of Louth and 12km south of Grimsby.

Church Lane runs north from The Square in the centre of the village for some 230m, before turning to the west and passing to the south of the parish church. The water main was started at the north western end and laid in a trench for a distance of some 260m, before being directionally drilled for the final 115m.

The drift geology of the area is Glacial Till, which overlies a solid geology of Welton Formation Chalk, laid down in the Cretaceous period (British Geological Survey, 1990).

The replacement water main trench began at National Grid Reference TF 2888 9862 (NW end) and finished at TF 2911 9850 (S end), and the ground here lay between the 10m and 15m contours

## **3.0 Planning background**

There was no planning condition attached to this scheme. However, given that the route of the replacement water main was located in the traditional core of the medieval village, and passed close to the church (parts of which can be traced to the Anglo-Saxon period), the commissioning body agreed, in full consultation with Lincolnshire County Council, to fund a programme of observation and recording that would result in the production of an illustrated report and site archive.

## **4.0 Archaeological and historical background**

A Roman road from Cadeby to North Coates runs through North Thoresby, and is believed to have been used for the transport of salt from the coastal salt-pans to *Lindum Colonia* (Lincoln). To the east and northeast of North Thoresby church is a

large, partly artificial depression, which may be associated with salt workings. Lying in this depression is a glacial erratic boulder around which the annual Court Moot was once held.

The church itself is pre-Norman: the tower is Saxon, as is a priest's door, now blocked, in the south wall of the chancel.

North Thoresby's listing in the Domesday Book is together with Autby, indicating that there was always a connection between these villages. Autby became deserted in the late medieval period: the Bishop of Lincoln's visitation in 1416 recorded that Autby church had vanished, and the two parishes were subsequently combined into the parish of North Thoresby-cum-Autby.

North Thoresby was enclosed in 1839. Its tithe barn was still standing when the village history was compiled in 1969, and had been converted to a private house: it stood immediately to the east of the rectory (Toyne, 1969).

## 5.0 Methodology

The groundworks took place between 11<sup>th</sup> April and 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006, and were monitored by the author. The northern part of the replacement main was laid in c.50m stretches in an open trench c. 1m deep, excavated by a JCB 3CX excavator employing a 0.6m bucket. The southernmost 115m was directionally drilled, and only a reception pit was opened at the south end of the area.

Where safe, all exposed plan and section surfaces in the open cut trenches and reception pits were inspected for archaeological deposits and features. Features were located according to contractors chainage: a measurement along the length of the trench beginning at the north western end of the works.

Vertical sections were intermittently cleaned to determine stratigraphic horizons and to establish the shape, orientation and date of any archaeological features, where present. Where no archaeologically significant features were present, a sample section was recorded every 50m to show the general sequence of layers. All deposits observed were recorded on *pro forma* context record sheets: The developers' 1:1250 site plan was annotated to show the location of sample sections (drawn at scale 1:20) and area plans (drawn at 1:100). A colour photographic record of all groundworks monitored was also maintained: a selection of colour plates is reproduced in Appendix 1.

## 6.0 Results (figs. 3 -11)

Over the majority of the area, only natural deposits were recorded in the open cut trench. In the northern leg, ch.0 to ch. 160, the lowest layer exposed was a stiff mid orange brown chalk-flecked clay - context (004). This was interpreted as natural glacial till, and was sealed below an intermittent layer of limestone chippings (003), interpreted as an earlier road surface or road make-up layer.

In the first 90m of trench, the limestone chippings were sealed below a soft mid grey silty clay (002), which lay immediately below the modern tarmac road surface (001).

Between Ch.83 and Ch. 88 a spread of medium sub-angular and rounded chalk and flint pebbles (005), sealed immediately below the tarmac surface (001), represented the line of a track running to the north on the west side of the church, this track is now an unnamed tarmac road giving access to a farm to the northwest of the church. The western edge of this material was 1.3m to the east of the modern western verge, but its full width could not be established as the east side was disturbed by modern services.

The water main trench cut close to the bank of the churchyard, where the topsoil revealed was given context number (006) – a thin very dark brown sandy clay which sealed context (003).

A series of alluvial deposits was revealed where Church Lane turns to the south (south of ch. 160). The lowest deposit in this sequence was context (014), a dark brown fine gravelly clay, containing mid brown sandy lenses. This material was sealed below (012), a mid brown clean silty clay which contained a band of coarse chalk pebbles and gravel (013). Context (012) was sealed below (010) – a further mid-brown gravelly clay which contained some larger cobbles. In this area the road make-up included a layer of coarse road stone (015) below the modern tarmac; this was present within all subsequent trenching to the south. The sequence of predominantly gravel deposits, present between ch. 165 and ch. 191, appears to represent the open course of the river, which has now been culverted (see below). At ch. 184, where context 012 was exposed at the base of the trench, two timber posts were seen [011]. They were in very poor condition, and could not be recovered for sampling/dating as too little structure survived. However, their presence on the south side of the course of the former river channel suggests that they may have functioned as part of a riverbank revetment.

Between ch. 172 and ch. 177, a substantial 5.3m wide cut had been made [007] which contained the brick culvert of the river [008] filled with (009), a very dark brownish grey chalk flecked sandy clay. The brick culvert was 1.4m wide and exposed to a depth of 0.5m within the trench. It was constructed of bricks (9" x 4 ½ " x 3" in size) set in a yellow coarse lime mortar.

To the south of the former river channel, the natural sequence changed to predominantly sandy deposits, probably derived from flood events or localised coarser glacial deposits deposited on the south side of the river valley. The earlier roadbed (015) became thicker (up to 0.4m) and contained occasional cobbles - the remains of an earlier surface. The natural sealed below (015) was a mid brown/mid orange brown sandy clay, with localised patches of pure sand (016).

A brick storm drain [017] was encountered on the east side of the trench at ch. 220. This veered gradually to the west over the next 30m, until it occupied most of the trench, and it was decided to thrust bore the remaining distance, so as not to cause further damage to the storm drain. The trench was widened at ch. 260 to facilitate the thrust-boring.

A reception pit was opened at ch. 375 where a further section was recorded. The exposed sequence here was similar to that seen previously, however a coarse mid orange brown chalk-flecked sand layer (018) was present between (015) and (016).

## **7.0 Discussion and conclusions**

Although the watching brief encountered archaeological features of limited significance - evidence of former road surfaces, a Victorian culvert and associated drainage - it has added something to our understanding of the landscape in North Thoresby, especially concerning the course of the river before it was culverted. The presence of poorly preserved timber posts close to the putative riverbank may represent some form of control, either reinforcement or revetment, and future excavations in this area may reveal better preserved timbers, allowing a potential structure to be dated or a closer interpretation to be made.

## **8.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

The methodology employed has proved adequate to determine that no significant archaeological features were present over the majority of Church Lane. In the vicinity of the river, however, the former course of the river has been identified and located, and evidence of a timber structure observed.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Anglian Water Services Ltd. for this commission, and their operatives for their co-operation during the watching brief.

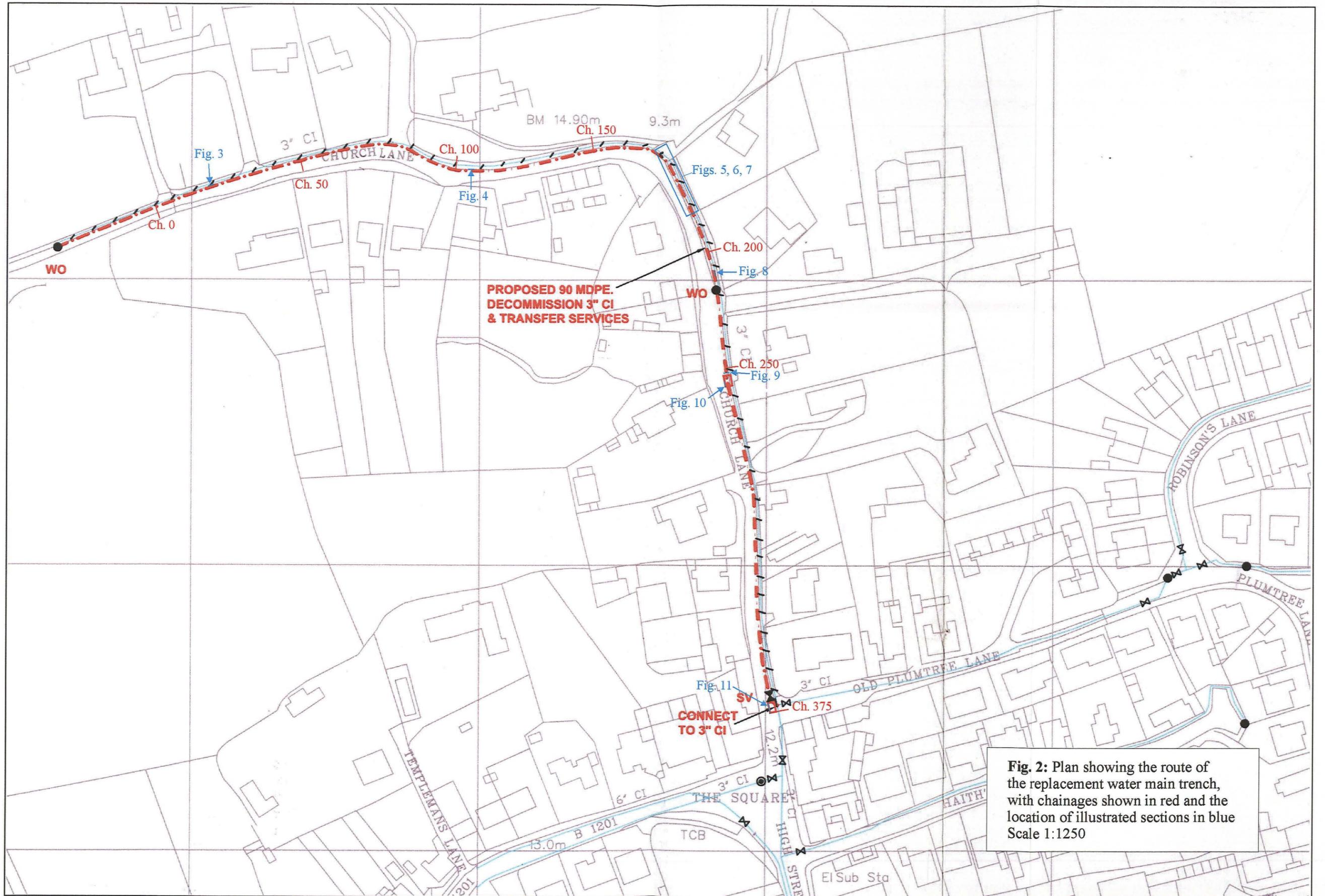
## **10.0 References**

British Geological Survey, 1990, *Grimsby: England and Wales Sheet 90/91, Solid and Drift Edition. 1:50 000 Series*. Keyworth, Nottingham.

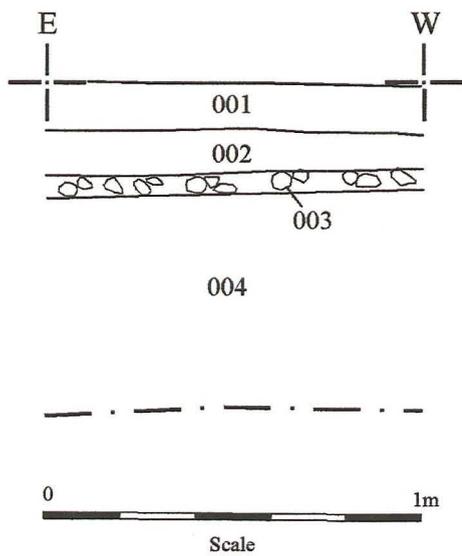
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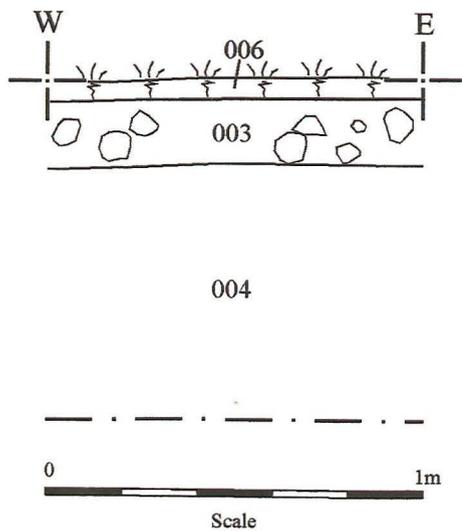
Williams, A. and Martin, G. H. (eds.), 1992, *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. Penguin Books, London.



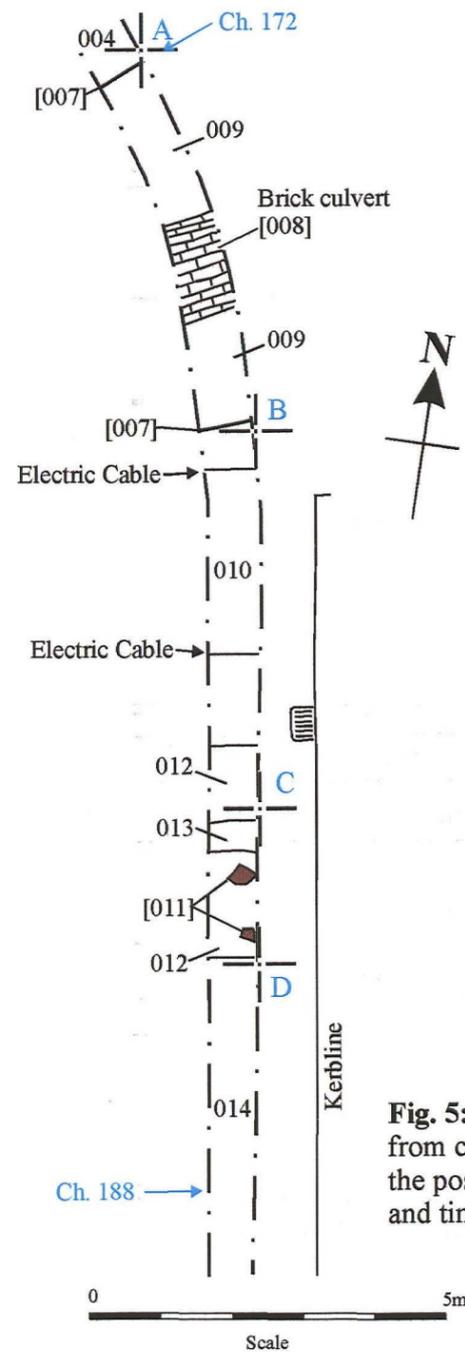
**Fig. 2:** Plan showing the route of the replacement water main trench, with chainages shown in red and the location of illustrated sections in blue Scale 1:1250



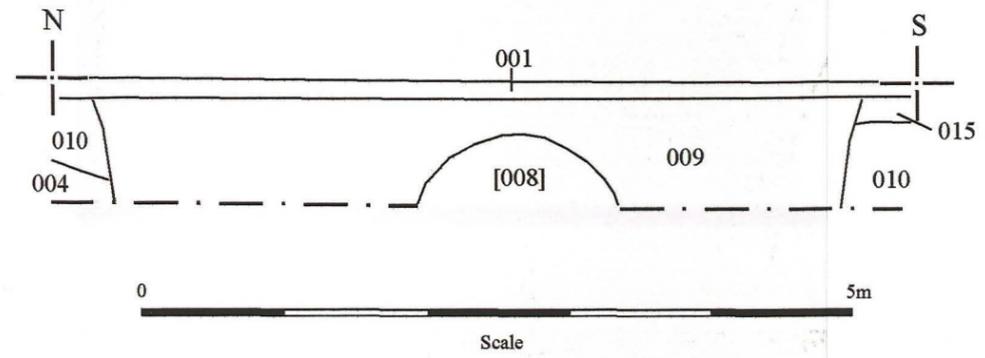
**Fig. 3:** North facing sample section of the pipe-trench, recorded at ch. 20. Scale 1:20



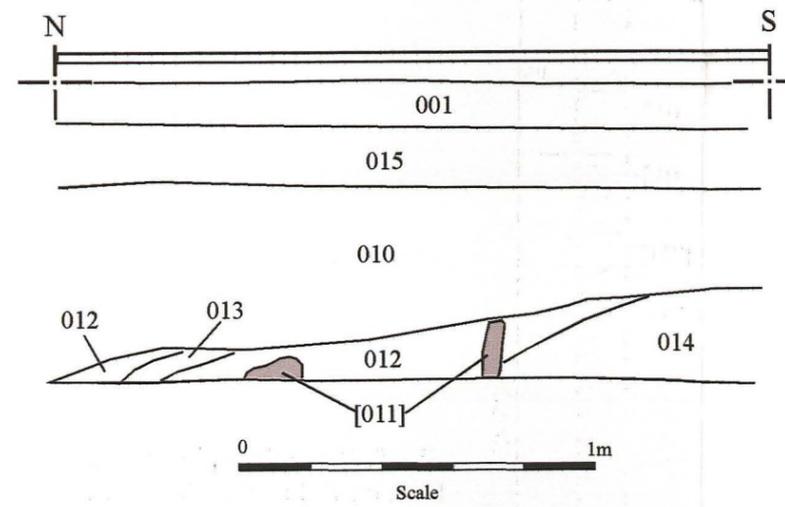
**Fig. 4:** South facing sample section of the pipe-trench, recorded at ch.100. Scale 1:20



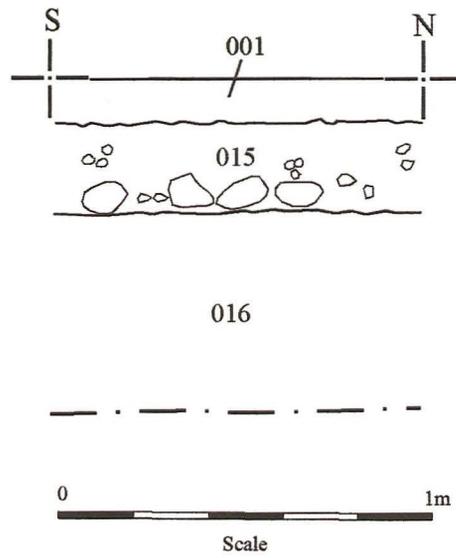
**Fig. 5:** Plan of the pipetrench from ch.172 to ch. 188, showing the position of brick culvert [008] and timber posts [011]. Scale 1:100



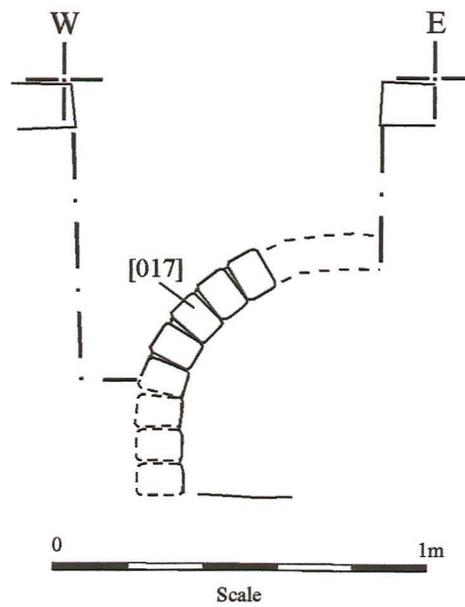
**Fig. 6:** West facing section at ch. 172 to ch. 178, showing brick culvert [008]. Scale 1:50



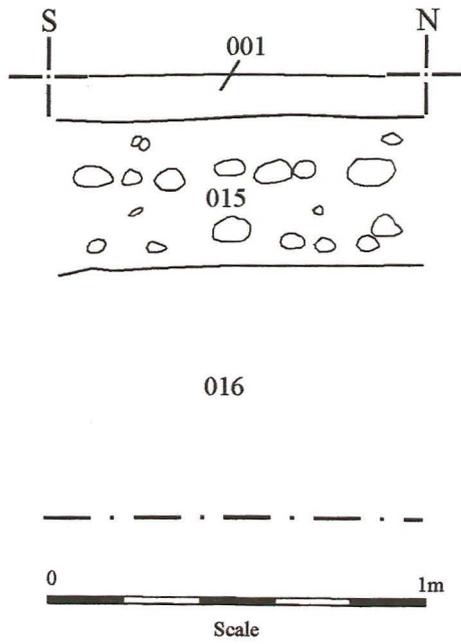
**Fig. 7:** West facing section at ch. 183 to ch. 185, showing timber posts [011]. Scale 1:20



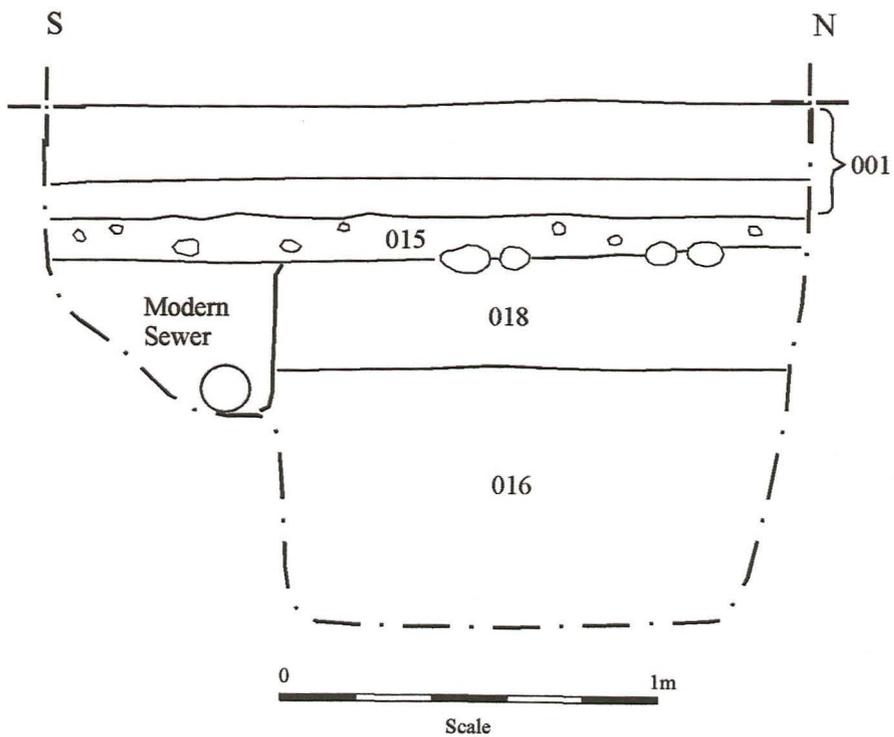
**Fig. 8:** East facing sample section of the pipe-trench, recorded at ch.210. Scale 1:20



**Fig. 9:** South facing profile of the brick storm drain, recorded at ch.254. Scale 1:20

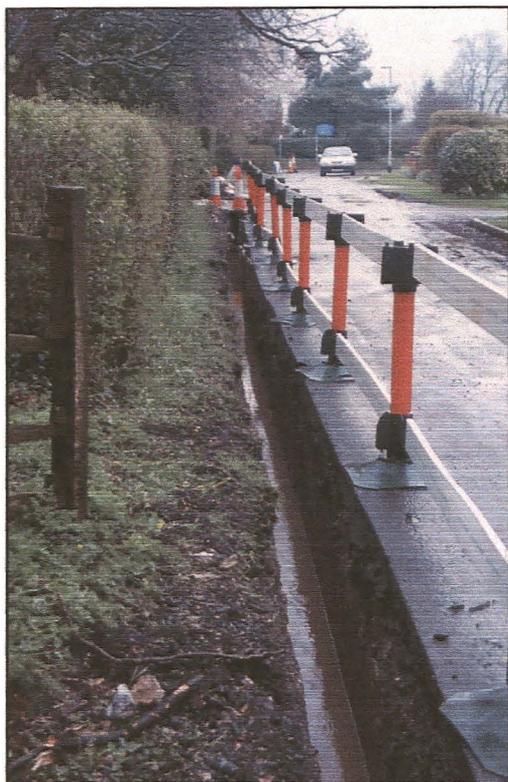


**Fig. 10:** East facing sample section of the pipe-trench, recorded at ch.260. Scale 1:20



**Fig. 11:** East facing section of the reception pit at ch.370. Scale 1:20

## Appendix 1: Colour Plates



**Plate 1 (left):** General view of the first 50m of the pipe trench, from ch. 5, looking east.

**Plate 2 (above):** Sample section recorded at ch.20, looking south.

**Plate 3 (right):** General view of the northern leg of the pipe trench, with the church in the background, looking East



**Plate 4 (left):** Section through road surface (005), looking north east.



**Plate 5 (left):** General view of the pipe trench, as it passed close to the churchyard at ch. 150, looking north west.

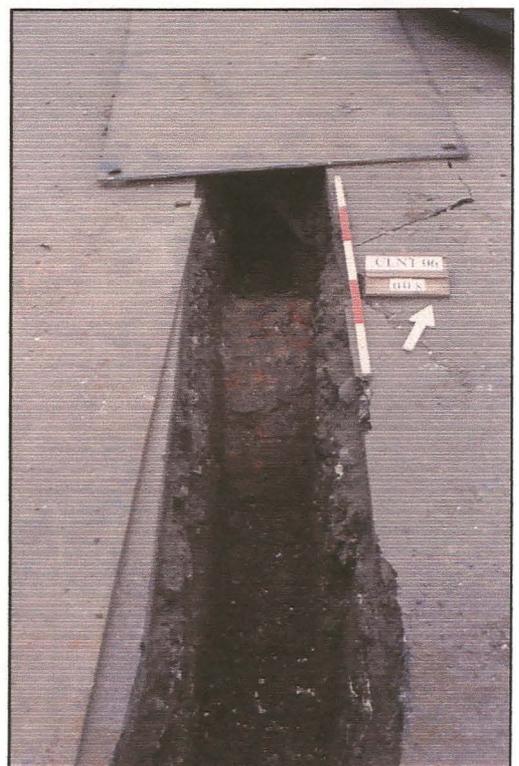


**Plate 6 (right):** Sample section at ch. 100, looking north east.



**Plate 7 (above):** General view of the open trench from the cemetery to ch. 200, looking south east.

**Plate 8 (right):** Brick culvert [008], exposed at ch. 175, looking north.





**Plate 9 (left):** Section at ch. 184, showing (012) and the remains of timber posts [011], looking east.



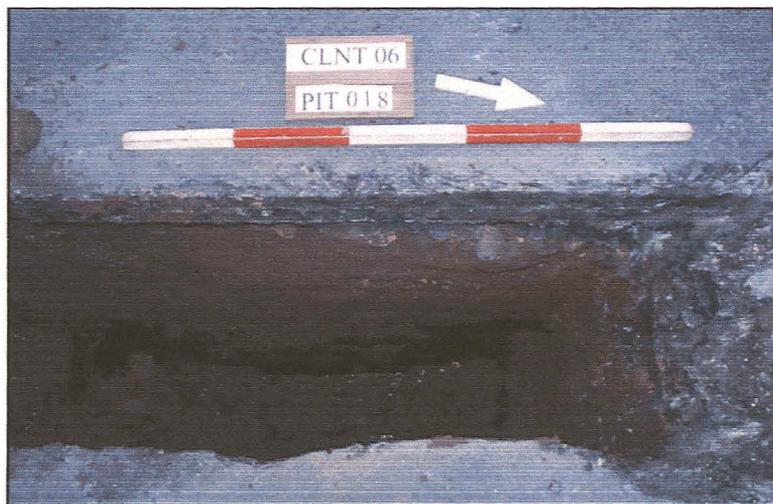
**Plate 10 (right):** General view, looking north along the pipe trench as it reached ch. 250.



**Plate 11 (left):** Sample section at ch. 255, the brick storm drain [017] can be seen at the base of the trench.



**Plate 12 (left):**  
Working shot – the  
reception pit at ch. 375,  
looking north



**Plate 13 (right):**  
Sample section of the  
reception pit at ch. 375,  
looking west.

**Appendix 2: Context summary.**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>
001	Modern tarmac road surface
002	Mid grey silty clay layer below 001 ch.0 – ch.90
003	Light off white sub angular and rounded limestone chippings containing occasional CBM fragments and flecks – make up or earlier road surface. Ch 0 - 150
004	Natural - mid orange brown clay, frequent chalk flecks, occasional small rounded pebbles. Ch 0 – ch.172
005	Mid whitish grey sub angular and rounded chalk and flint layer below 001 at ch.83-88. Surface of earlier track to west of church.
006	Very dark brown sandy clay topsoil – churchyard bank material at ch.90 - 140
007	Steep sided cut of river culvert [008]
008	Brick built culvert at ch. 175. Red brick (9" x 4 ½ x 3") in off yellow lime mortar.
009	Fill of brick culvert – very dark brownish grey coarse sandy clay, frequent chalk inclusions (flecks and rounded chunks), occ rounded pebbles, small CBM frags.
010	Mid/dark brown gravelly clay, frequent pebbles and cobbles – alluvial deposit ch. 165 – 187.
011	Two badly preserved timbers at ch 184 – probably posts
012	Mid brown clean silty clay below (010) at ch. 182-185
013	Mid brown silty clay band in (012) containing medium chalk chunks and pebbles.
014	Dark brown fine gravelly clay, containing mid brown sandy lenses. Ch 184 - 191
015	Coarse road stone layer below 001 south of ch. 178, up to 0.4m in thickness in places, contains occasional cobbles indicative of an earlier surface.
016	Mid orange brown/brown sandy clay natural south of ch.191, has large localised patches of sand within it.
017	3" brick storm drain runs N-S on east side of trench south of ch.220
018	Coarse mid orange brown chalk-flecked sand between (015) and (016) in reception pit at ch.375

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