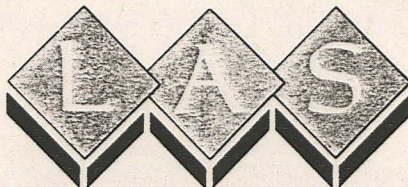


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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

FRANCIS HOUSE SILVER BIRCH PARK GREAT NORTHERN TERRACE LINCOLN LN5 8LG

**Burton, Middle Street and Lincoln, Burton Road
Mains Replacement Scheme:**

Archaeological Monitoring

NGR: SK 9620 7675 - 9705 7265

Site Code: **BVM 95**

LCNCC Museum Accn. No. **199.95**

Report prepared for Anglian Water

June 1996

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Burton, Middle Street and Lincoln, Burton Road

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Summary

A watching brief during trenching along Burton Road between the junction with Yarborough Road and Burton produced no significant archaeological observations. There was no evidence for Roman road metalling which had been anticipated. Archive research suggested that a linear feature, perhaps preserving the alignment of a Roman road, crossed fields to the east of the present road. No artefacts of medieval or earlier date were recovered. The pitched limestone road construction recorded beneath Burton Road closer to the city centre was present and, as elsewhere, dated as post-medieval.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned by Anglian Water in October 1995 to conduct an intermittent watching brief of trenching for a 180mm and 280mm diameter replacement water main along Middle Street from its junction with Main Street, Burton to the junction with Yarborough Road, Lincoln (Fig. 1). The route represented a continuation to the NW of earlier trenching monitored by the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit. The archaeological monitoring had been requested by Lincoln City Council and the Lincolnshire County Archaeology Section because of archaeological remains found at Burton and close to Sobraon Barracks. It was thought that Burton Road might be of Romano-British origin.

Initially the project was intended to include trenching within the medieval core of Burton village but this element of the scheme was deferred indefinitely. The first inspection visit by the author was made on October 31st 1995 and the works were visited intermittently until May 31st 1996; a total of 30 visits were made.

Archaeological Background (Fig. 1)

Air photographs taken in 1930 have been thought to show two ring ditches, indicating the sites of round barrows, near the A15 junction with the A46. Fieldwalking in 1976 (by Naomi Field) and again in 1984 (by the author) failed to locate any physical remains. Five flints identified as being prehistoric tools or preparation waste were found during fieldwalking by LAS in 1995 to the south of the bridle path linking Middle Street and Ermine Street.

Monitoring of construction of the Lincoln Relief Road in 1984 revealed two pits containing late Iron Age shelly pottery east of Burton Road. Roman burials were recorded in new drains excavated adjacent to the roundabout

road junction with the A15 at the south-east corner of the study area (Field 1985).

Ermine Street [SMR 50574] is thought to have been built early in the Roman period and it has been a major land division ever since. Much of its route was used as a parish boundary; Anglo-Saxon and medieval settlement of the limestone ridge is mainly concentrated along the spring lines to the east and west of Ermine Street.

Fieldwalking by LAS in 1995 located a few sherds of Roman pottery in the arable fields east of Burton Road on the site of the demolished Ellis's Farm, and further scatters of material along the side of Ermine Street. A markedly higher density of Romano-British pottery sherds and *tegula* (roof tile) fragments was recorded at about TF 9670 7420; the concentration might denote an occupation site here or close by. Two Roman villa sites are recorded north of the Burton junction: SMR 50556 (close to The Water House) and SMR 50557 on the eastern side of Middle Street (Fig. 1). A cemetery, thought to be Romano-British, is known at SMR 50558.

In 1940 an area of blue clay was recorded close to Sobraon Barracks on Burton Road, containing a quantity of bronze items including buckles; no dating evidence was noted (Vince and Jones 1990, D13: ON 120).

The Watching Brief (Figs. 2a and 2b)

The pipe trench was excavated to a width of about 0.4m and a depth of about 1.1m. North of Yarborough Road the pipe was laid at the eastern side of the carriageway, but it joined an existing diversion beneath the A46 Relief Road and after crossing Burton Road, was laid at the western side of Middle Street.

1. A spur was laid to the west into Main Street, Burton to connect with a future scheme in the village. The present road junction is at the top of a steep slope leading down from Middle Street into the village (Pl. 1). The trench revealed that much of the upper slope has been constructed relatively recently, using up to 0.95m depth of tarmac. Thinner tarmac overlay concrete of unknown thickness, perhaps over an existing culvert (Pl. 2). The machine operator recounted a local tradition that a hump-backed bridge lay beneath the present road here but no evidence was found to support the suggestion.

2. For 100m to the south of the road junction, limestone bedrock was found 0.3m beneath the modern road surface, suggesting that higher deposits had been removed (Pl. 3).

3. Beyond this, the bedrock was overlain by a series of deposits which could not all be satisfactorily explained (Pl. 4). Beneath the tarmac and asphalt road base was 0.25m of yellow limestone which may have been a late post-medieval road foundation (Pl. 5). A layer of buff-coloured sandy clay 0.2m thick separated this from a rocky layer incorporating large blocks and flaky fragments of limestone; this layer may have been a weathered bedrock. These conditions extended to near St. Vincent's House.

4. To the south of St. Vincent's House, the deposits contained much more soil and may all have been disturbed although a natural origin is possible.

5. A localised deposit of gravel close to Lodge Cottage extended 30m, overlying an apparently undisturbed layer of rock pieces within an orange clay matrix. The gravel band was 0.15m thick and lay beneath a mixed stone and soil deposit at 0.37m beneath the modern road surface. The gravel had almost certainly been introduced as aggregate at the junction of Middle Street and the cart track to Burton Hall, presumably as a repair. This implies that cart traffic here had scoured the late medieval or post-medieval road away to natural deposits and that all subsequent layers are later dumped deposits.

6. South of Lodge Cottage the bedrock rose closer to the road surface, mixed with some clay loam.

7. Immediately north of the A46 Relief Road cutting, the trench face revealed disturbed deposits to a depth of 1.02m. Beneath the modern road surface and 0.2m of yellow limestone brash foundation material was a layer of limestone pieces in brown soil, 0.2m thick. This may have been a medieval or later road surface but in places seemed to be a naturally produced soil horizon. Under this stony layer, a layer of light brown soil up to 0.4m thick was suspected to be a buried subsoil.

8. At the junction of Queen Elizabeth Way the tarmac road lay on clean limestone to a depth of 0.55m (Pl. 6). The mixed stone and soil layer beneath this was possibly an earlier road surface founded on the bedrock 0.8m beneath the surface.

9. Opposite Lincoln Lodge the tarmac sealed a layer of pitched limestone pieces, 0.2m thick (Pl. 7). This was identified at intervals along the trench to the SE and interpreted as a post-medieval road construction technique recorded elsewhere along Burton Road by the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit. Pieces of pitched stone thought to be reused flagstones were seen opposite Burton Cliff House, perhaps confirming the suggested date. The stone lay on a dark yellow-brown clay deposit 0.15m thick and beneath that was the mixed layer of soil and rock greater than 0.3m thick. From the greater sequence of deposits here and the better construction of the later stone road, this may have been a wetter patch of land which required consolidation.

10. A small disturbance of the stratigraphy opposite Lincoln Lodge was interpreted as a late post-medieval pit as no service pipes or cables were evident.

11. Outside 313 Burton Road a west-east soil-filled feature 0.5m wide cut the bedrock but was sealed by later deposits. This may have been of glacial origin.

12. The mixed layer of soil and rock above the bedrock extended south to about 358 Burton Road, beyond which the bedrock rose to about 0.25m beneath the modern road surface. This is presumably a geological feature.

13. At the southern limit of the higher bedrock, the mixed stony soil layer was replaced by light brown clean soil (apparently natural) which overlay the bedrock for about 60m. The layer extended to at least the trench base. It may have been caused by ancient surface water creating and eventually backfilling a channel at the edge of the resistant rock outcrop.

14. A feature about 1.2m wide was observed to have cut this soft material and was interpreted as a small pit (Pl. 8). It had been filled with mixed stone and dark brown soil but no datable finds were recovered. A pipe trench had cut the pit fill at a later date.

15. To the south of Sobraon Barracks the underlying limestone bedrock lay close to the surface and overlying deposits seemed to be associated with post-medieval and modern road foundations. No further observations were made south of Dunkirk Road.

Conclusion

This watching brief confirmed the recent conclusion by the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit that the present alignment of Burton Road does not coincide with a Roman road. The road appears to have been carefully constructed during the post-medieval period, using pitched limestone pieces and occasionally re-used broken flagstones. In places the road was laid directly over undisturbed limestone bedrock.

An estate plan entitled "Burton by Lincoln" prepared about 1600 marks a road labelled Broade Gate running parallel to the present B1398 (then Lyncoln Street) about 350m to its east (LAO Monson 17/2). The road or track was respected by the variously aligned parcels of ploughed land. In 1772, after Enclosure, the course of the track remained (LAO Monson 17/24) (Fig. 1). The alignment may now exist as short stretches of field boundary or residential estate blocks almost as far south as Sobraon Barracks.

It is possible that the name Middle Street fossilises the memory of a former road past Burton to its east, perhaps on the alignment suggested. That road might have been of Roman origin, leading to or past the Roman villa sites. It is however likely that Ermine Street was the "High" street.

The confusion is compounded by Armstrong's map (1779) which marks a road leading NW from Newport to Burton, with a cul-de-sac following the natural scarp (Fig. 3). This may be an error by the cartographer, attempting to show the various windmills on the scarp but incorrectly aligning adjacent roads.

The water main in the medieval core of Burton will be replaced at a later date and a separate report will be produced detailing any further observations.

Acknowledgements

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Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
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Archive Summary:

Anglian Water plans

" " " (annotated)

Correspondence

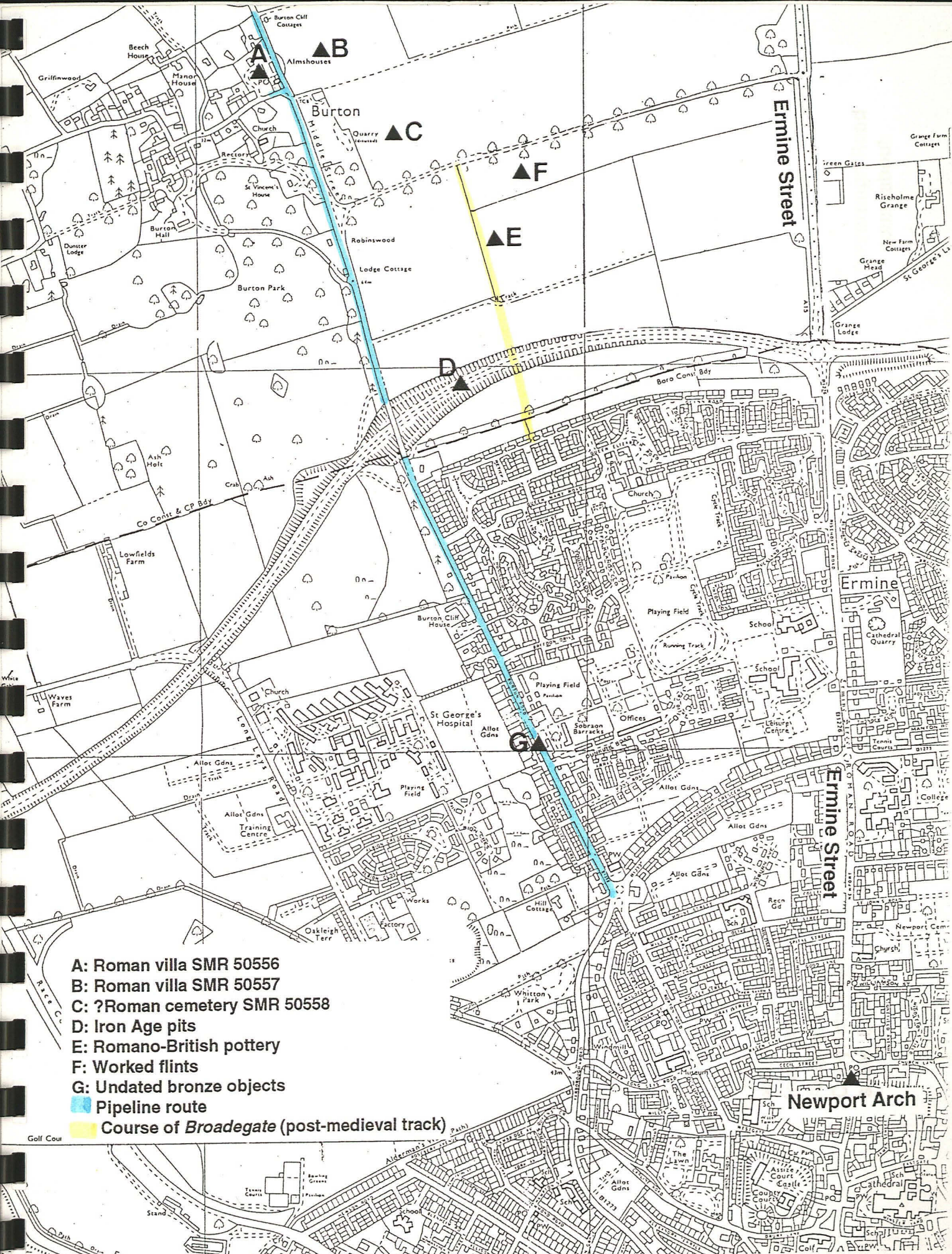


Fig. 1 Location of Burton Road, showing recorded archaeological sites near Burton (based on the OS 1:10,000 map. Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence no. AL 50424A).

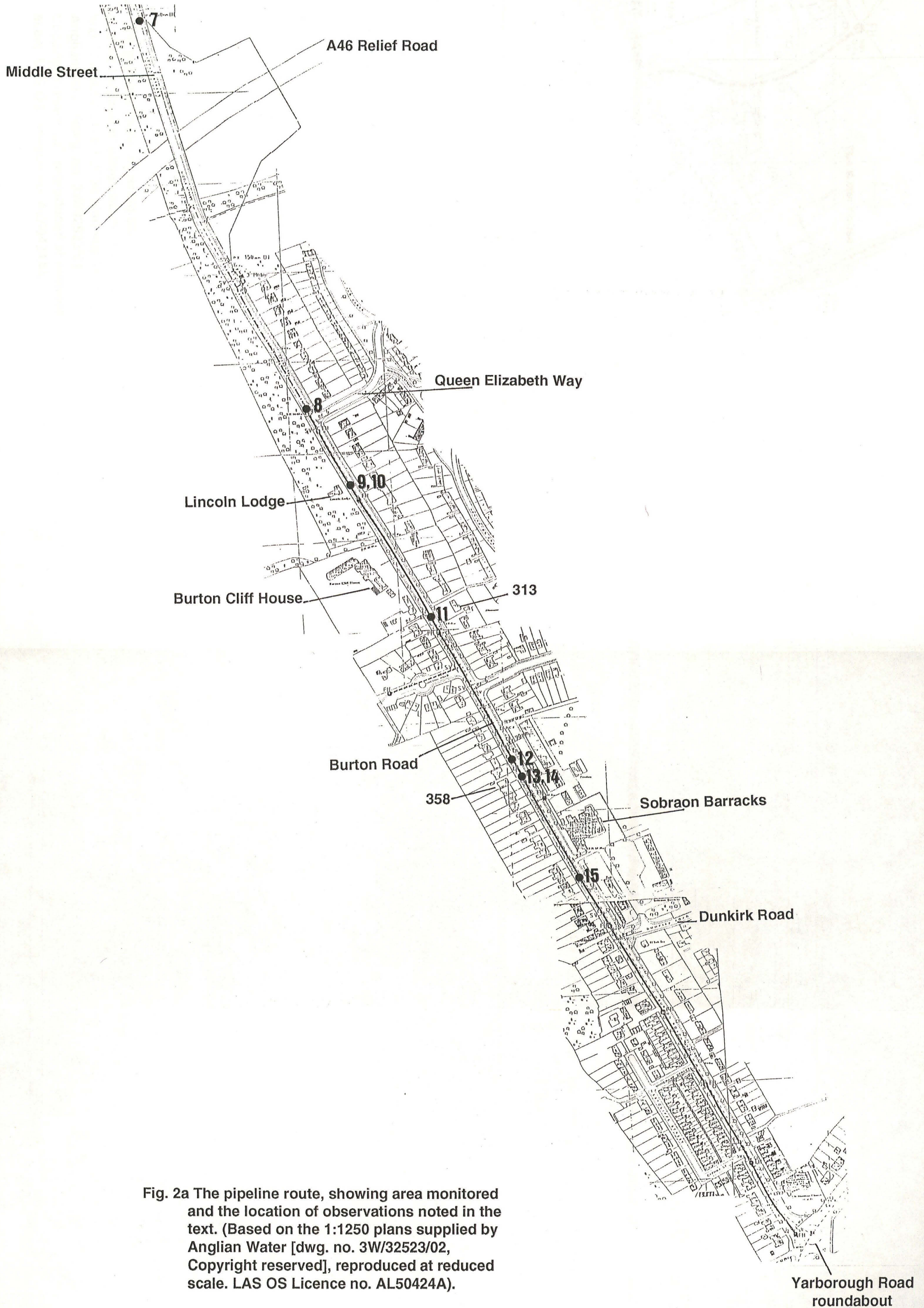


Fig. 2a The pipeline route, showing area monitored and the location of observations noted in the text. (Based on the 1:1250 plans supplied by Anglian Water [dwg. no. 3W/32523/02, Copyright reserved], reproduced at reduced scale. LAS OS Licence no. AL50424A).

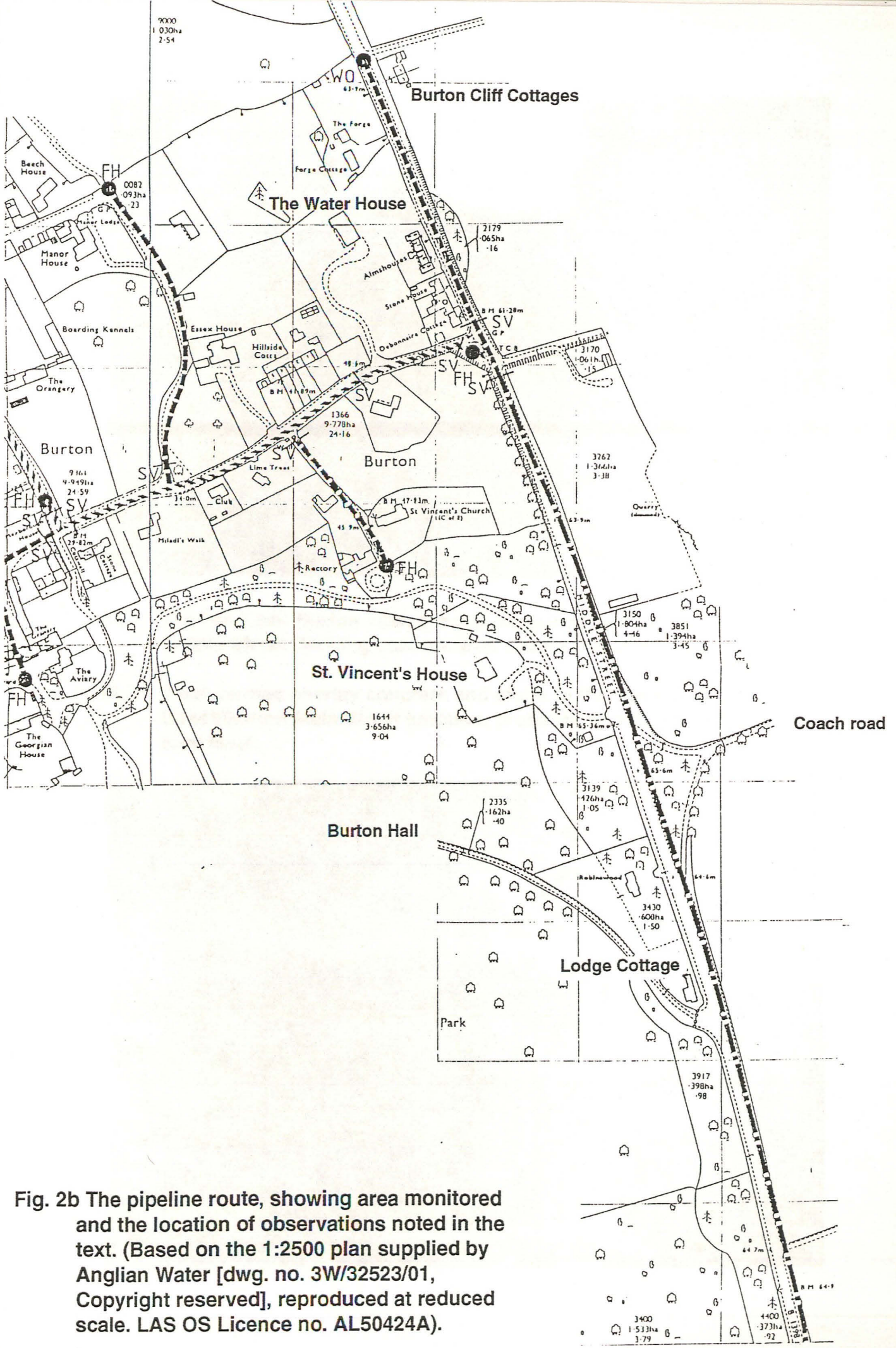


Fig. 2b The pipeline route, showing area monitored and the location of observations noted in the text. (Based on the 1:2500 plan supplied by Anglian Water [dwg. no. 3W/32523/01, Copyright reserved], reproduced at reduced scale. LAS OS Licence no. AL50424A).



Pl. 1 The road into Burton village drops abruptly from the junction with Middle Street (looking east towards Middle Street).

Pl. 2 Thick tarmac overlay concrete and stone to the west of the Middle Street/Burton Main Street junction, probably serving to raise the road level.





PI. 3 South of the Burton junction, the modern road had been built onto bedrock.

PI. 4 About 100m south of the junction, the bedrock dipped lower and was covered by mixed deposits. (Looking north).





PI. 5 Mixed layers of road construction material; at 3 the lowest visible layer may have been weathered bedrock, suggesting that little or no truncation of deposits had occurred.

PI. 6 Road construction layers at the junction with Queen Elizabeth Way (8).





Pl. 7 Pitched limestone pieces close to Lincoln Lodge (9), thought to be the post-medieval road foundation.

Pl. 8 Dense bedrock near Sobraon Barracks (far left) was cut by a pit or similar feature 14, backfilled with mixed soil and rock. The pit was at the interface between the rock and a sandy, almost stone free deposit (right) which may have been fill of a small stream channel. (Looking east).

