#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

WELTON TO DUNHOLME WATER PIPELINE

Site Code: WD 97 LCNCC Acc No. 56.97

# Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section

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Site Code: WD 97 LCNCC Acc No. 56.97

Report prepared for the Anglian Water Services by James Albone June 1997

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#### Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during water mains replacement through the village of Dunholme, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

- \* The main was replaced using an open cut trench.
  - A series of eight ditches were recorded in a section of the trench. These corresponded to a previously known cropmark representing a droveway and enclosures. A small quantity of Late Iron Age tradition pottery and animal bone was recovered from two of the ditches: a single sherd of Romano-British pottery, found in association with the native-style pottery implies cultural continuity beyond the conquest of the tribal territory.



Fig. 1: Site location incorporating principal entries from the County Sites & Monuments Record (1:10,000) (OS Copyright Licence No: AL 515 21 A0001)

#### 1.0 Introduction

A widespread programme of water main replacement schemes has been undertaken by Anglian Water Services Ltd. The impact that such developments have on the archaeological resource is considered. As a result of this, and in keeping with their own conservation policy, the clients regularly fund archaeological work.

Information held at the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) indicates that the new main through Dunholme would traverse a cropmark of a possibly prehistoric enclosure and hut circle, and would pass close to the site of a medieval water mill.

A copy of this report will be deposited at the County SMR, and a short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*; effectively placing the information in the public domain. Reports will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, accompanied with an ordered project archive.

#### 2.0 Location and Description

The village of Dunholme is located approximately 9 km. north-east of Lincoln. The central national grid reference is TF023 793. It lies on Middle and Upper Jurassic limestones and clays. The centre of the settlement lies at c.15 m. OD.

#### 3.0 Purpose and Methods

The County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) contains entries which indicate the potential for the disturbance of important archaeological remains within the chosen replacement route. The level of recording considered to be appropriate on this occasion was an archaeological watching brief. This has been defined as follows:

'An archaeological watching brief is defined as a programme of observation and investigation conducted during the destruction of archaeological deposits, resulting in the preparation of a report and ordered archive' (IFA, 1994 Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs)

The use of an open cut trench for the replacement of the water main resulted in potential for the disturbance and destruction of archaeological deposits along its route. Monitoring consisted of the inspection of the excavated trench and the cleaning and recording of exposed soil surfaces. The contractors were most co-operative and made suitable provisions within their own time-scale for the archaeological element.

Recording was undertaken using standard context record sheets (incorporating physical descriptions, interpretations, and stratigraphic relationships). Features were drawn to scale (1:20) in section, and photographic recording was undertaken (some prints are reproduced in this report). A small quantity of pottery and animal bone was recovered and soil samples taken; specialist reports are included in the appendices.

The locations of archaeological features were plotted on a 1:2500 development plan which was provided by the clients. In archaeologically sterile areas, representative column sections were drawn. The plan, and the rest of the paper record, will form the basis for a long-term project archive.

The watching brief was undertaken by Mr C Palmer-Brown, Mr S Johnson and the writer.

#### 4.0 Archaeological and Historic Background

The meaning of the place-name Dunholme is likely to be Old English in origin meaning 'Dunna's village '(Ekwall 1989, 153). In the Domesday Survey of 1086 *Duneham* was divided between four owners; the King, Ilbert of Lacy, Ralph Pagnell and Odo the Crossbowman (Morris 1986). The land owned by the King was transferred to the Bishop of Lincoln soon afterwards (Leach 1964, 3).

The church of St. Chad is mainly Early English with some work in the Decorated and Perpendicular styles. It was restored in the mid and late nineteenth century (Pevsner & Harris 1995, 260). Not far from the church is the site of a medieval water mill. Records show that the mill was in use from the start of the thirteenth century until the late seventeenth century.

In the north of the parish, cropmarks showing a hut circle and enclosures, of probable prehistoric date, were photographed in 1959. A quantity of Roman pottery, of mainly 3rd. and 4th. century date, has been recovered from a site nearby.

#### 5.0 Results

The route of the water main can be divided into four zones A to D (Fig.2). The trench was excavated in the road to a depth of c.1.2m. and a width of c.0.5m. Zone B passed the primary school and the replacement of the water main will not be carried out until the summer holidays to avoid disturbance. This area will not now be monitored, given that no archaeological deposits were exposed in sections observed either side of it.

#### 5.1 Zones A and C

Beneath the modern road surface [100] and make-up [101] was a sandy clay layer of varying thickness [102]. This probably was an earlier soil horizon, the top of which was removed during the construction of the road. Underlying this were natural deposits of limestone and gravel.





#### 5.2 Zone D

In this zone the trench cut through a series of eight ditches which related to cropmarks seen in the field to the south-west of the road (Fig. 3). They all cut through a natural layer [105] which varied from a gravel to a clay-sand. The tops of the ditches were truncated by a grey brown sand-clay [102] and a red brown silt-sand [111]. These layers were, in turn, overlain by the modern road make-up and surface. The ditches can be divided into two groups; single ditches probably representing enclosure boundaries, and a pair of double ditches marking a droveway. All of the ditches were roughly perpendicular to the direction of the trench.

#### 5.2.1 The Single Ditches

Ditch [107] was the largest of the group. It was 3.0m. wide and more than 0.7m. deep, (not fully excavated). The fill consisted of two layers; a grey-brown sandy clay [106] overlying a blue-grey sandy clay containing snail shells [108].

Ditch [110] was 1.2m. wide and greater than 0.2m. deep, with a blue grey sandy clay fill [109].

Ditch [113] was very shallow, only 0.1m. deep and 0.9m. wide. The fill was a dark brown silty sand [112] which contained two small fragments of Late Iron Age tradition pottery.

Ditch [115] was 1.2m. wide and 0.3m. deep with a dark brown coarse silty sand fill [114].

#### 5.2.2 The Droveway Ditches

The droveway was defined by two pairs of double ditches. On both sides the inner ditch was the largest of the pair. There was no evidence, between the ditches, of any surviving surface of the droveway.

On the south-west side the inner ditch [117] was 2.0m. wide and 0.5m deep It contained two fills; a medium brown silty sand [116], overlying a grey clayey sand [126]. The two fills contained Late Iron Age tradition pottery and animal bone. In addition, a single sherd of Romano-British pottery was found in [126]. The outer ditch on the south-west side [118] was 10.m. wide and 0.3m. deep. It contained a medium-brown silty sand fill [125].

The north-west inner ditch [124] was smaller than its counterpart, 1.3m. wide and 0.4m. deep. It also contained two fills; a coarse yellow brown sand [122], overlying a grey brown sand [123]. The outer ditch [121] was 1.2m. wide and 0.3m. deep. Like [124], it was filled with yellow-brown sand [119] overlying grey-brown sand [120].



Fig. 3: Location of archaeological features in relation to a sketch plot of the cropmarks. (1:1250)







Fig. 5: Ditch [110]. Location on Fig. 3.



Fig. 6: Ditch [113]. Location on Fig 3.









#### 6.0 Discussion

Cropmark sites of enclosures with hut circles and droveways are widespread and a characteristic type of Late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement (Whitwell 1982, 20 - 23 ). However, in Lincolnshire sites with hut circles are quite rare. The Dunholme site can be compared with excavated Late Iron Age sites at Grimsby, Lincs. (Sills & Kinsley 1979, 69 ), Gamston, Notts. (Knight 1991, 129 - 132 ) and a Romano-British site at Goltho, Lincs. (Beresford 1987, 15 - 21 ). However, the closest geographical comparisons can be made with two sites near Hackthorn, approximately 3.5 km. north-north-east of the Dunholme site. These two sites were also known from cropmarks and were partly investigated during a water pipeline replacement scheme in 1991. One site was a large polygonal ditched enclosure containing a circular or sub-circular feature. The other was a smaller sub-rectangular ditched enclosure which was considered to be part of a small farmstead. Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fill of ditches at both sites (Field 1991).

From the cropmarks, the Dunholme site, is best interpreted as a small farmstead. This is supported by the environmental evidence. The soil samples contained carbonised plant remains, including cereal grains and chaff. This evidence, along with the presence of cattle, sheep and possibly horse bones, probably indicates agricultural activity in the immediate vicinity of the enclosures. The pottery provides some clue to the dating of the site. The presence of a single sherd of Romano-British pottery with the Iron Age tradition sherds in [126] is highly significant. This would suggest a date sometime after the Roman Conquest of the mid-first century AD.

The development has provided useful dating evidence for the cropmark site whilst causing only a limited amount of damage to the archaeological resource. Although cropmark sites of this type are not uncommon, very few have been excavated. The apparent direct association of Romano-British and 'typically native' pottery types at Dunholme raises an on-going archaeological debate: namely, the continuity of native traditions and customs, possibly well beyond the Conquest. In this context, archaeological curators may wish to maintain close control over further developments likely to affect the site, which may contain key data of relevance to understanding the processes behind Romanization and the loss of, or adherence to, native cultural tradition.

#### 7.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) express their sincere thanks to Anglian Water Services Ltd. for this commission; in particular, Ms K Gilliatt. Thanks also to Mark Bennet and Sarah Grundy (County SMR) for allowing access to the parish file.

#### 8.0 Appendices:

#### 8.1 Pottery Analysis by M.J. Darling

The pottery comprised just 10 body sherds from three contexts, all shell-gritted and hand-made except for a single oxidised wheel-made body sherd [126]. The variation likely in the fabric of hand-made vessels suggests all the sherds could be from a single source, although the sherds from [126], slightly finer shell inclusions, may represent a different fabric. It is not possible to determine the vessel form, but the sherds from [116] and [126] all have burning on the interior surface, suggesting these come from cooking vessels, jars or bowl types, used in an Iron Age cooking tradition. The clue perhaps lies in the single small oxidised sherd, wheel-made, from a Roman vessel [126]. The fabric is standard Roman quartz-gritted, light red-brown, and the sherd is too small to determine the form of the vessel.

The shell-gritted sherds would certainly fit an Iron Age date. On the basis of body sherds alone, these cannot be closely dated but seem more likely to be Late Iron Age than earlier. Such cooking vessels are known to continue in use for a considerable period after the Roman conquest, as in the legionary fortress and later *colonia* at Lincoln, and are likely to be even longer-lived in rural areas. The single wheel-made Roman sherd cannot be closely dated, so there are two alternative interpretations, dependent on the stratification: that the ditches are of Iron Age date and the Roman sherd deposited later, or that they are of Roman date from a community continuing to use Iron Age tradition cooking vessels.

#### Database

Cxt	Fab	ManufV	ess	Details	Shs	g
112	SHEL	HMAD	1?	BSS; LTGRY-BN; F.COARSE SHELL	2	9
116	SHEL	HMAD	1	BSS; DK-GRY FAB; LTBN EXT;		
				F.COARSE SHELL; BURNT INT	5	58
126	SHEL	HMAD	1	BSS; DK-GRY FAB; LTRB EXT; LESS		
				COARSE SHELL; BURNT INT	2	96
126	OX	-	-	SM.BS; GRY CORE LTRB SURFS;		
				FM U/K	1	4

#### 8.2 Animal Bone Analysis by J. Rackham

The bone, deriving from context [126], comprises: the distal part of a cattle humerus (in 2 pieces) whose epiphysis is fused and which shows evidence of dog gnawing; the shaft of a gracile radius of sheep whose distal end shows evidence of dog gnawing; a cattle mandibular incisor with extensive wear; and a fragment (in 4 pieces) possibly from the horizontal ramus of a horse mandible.

The gracility of the sheep radius is typical of Iron Age or very early Roman animals.

#### 8.3 Soil Sample Analysis by J. Rackham

The samples were washed in a basin and light material washed over onto a 300 micron sieve. The residue was sieved through a 1mm mesh and that retained on the sieve dried and sorted for finds. The flot was scanned under a binocular microscope at a magnification of x10.

#### Sample [108]

The sample was a fine sandy silt with some small fractured stone. The flot includes some small charcoal, carbonised cereal grains and occasional chaff, other carbonised seeds and preserved seeds of elder. The sample is extremely shell rich, containing a suite of freshwater snails and a few individuals of terrestrial species. The most abundant species is *Planorbis leucostoma*, a species typically found in marshes and ponds which dry up, and a number of unidentified small freshwater bivalve molluscs occur, probably *Pisidium sp.* Terrestrial genera include, *Succinea* - common, *Columella, Vallonia* and *Cepaea*, the former two of these being found in damp places and marshes.

#### Sample [126]

This sample was a silty fine sand with a greater proportion of fractured stone and sand then context [108]. The flot was much smaller and did not include the anthropogenic elements such as charcoal and carbonised plant remains, other than a few tiny fragments. Mollusc remains were less abundant but the assemblage still included aquatic species such as *Planorbis leucostoma*, along with single shells of the genera *Vallonia*, *Succinea* and *Cepaea*. Ostracods, a small aquatic crustacean, are also present.

The samples indicate that the ditches were at least seasonally water filled, possibly with some elder scrub on their banks and received at least small quantities of rubbish.

#### 8.4 Site archive

The site archive consists of : Paper Element:

- x 1 Project Specification
- x 1 General account sheet
- x 14 Context record sheets
- x 11 Site drawings
- x 2 Development plans
- x 3 Colour print films

#### **Object Element:**

- x 9 Late Iron Age tradition pottery sherds
- x 1 Romano-British pottery sherd
- x 1 Bag of animal bone

Primary records are currently with PCA (Lincoln). An ordered archive of both paper and object elements is in preparation and will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, within six months.

### 8.5 References

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#### 8.6 List of Contexts

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Context	Description
100	Modern road surface
101	Road make-up
102	Layer of sandy clay
103	Limestone bedrock
104	Layer of sand
105	Natural clayey sand and gravel
106	Clayey upper ditch fill
107	Cut of ditch

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108	Sandy clay lower ditch fill
109	Sandy clay ditch fill
110	Cut of ditch
111	Layer of silty sand
112	Silty sand ditch fill
113	Cut of ditch
114	Silty sand ditch fill
115	Cut of ditch
116	Silty sand upper ditch fill
117	Cut of ditch
118	Cut of ditch
119	Coarse sand upper ditch fill
120	Coarse sand lower ditch fill
121	Cut of ditch
122	Coarse sand upper ditch fill
123	Coarse sand lower ditch fill
124	Cut of ditch
125	Silty sand lower ditch fill
126	Clayey sand lower ditch fill

## 8.7 Colour photographs



Pl. 1: Ditch [113] looking north.



Pl. 2: Ditch [115] looking north.



Pl. 3: Ditches [117] and [118] looking north.



Pl. 4: Ditches [121] and [124] looking north.