

# Sawcliffe Medieval Village and Moated Site: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

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**Prepared for:** Anglian Water

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**TPA Sitecode:** SCE ; **NLMS Sitecode:** RXBY

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<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
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## Summary

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- Trent & Peak Archaeology were commissioned by Anglian Water, in liaison with Historic England to carry out an archaeological watching brief during necessary repair works to a burst water main which runs along the western boundary of the site of Sawcliffe Deserted Medieval Village (SAM LEN: 1017554) in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire (NGR: SE 91099 14442).
- A single stepped trench measuring c.5m x 4.9m was cut over the area of the leak in order to minimise the potential impact of work on the Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- No archaeological features were identified during the course of the watching brief, however a possible buried soil horizon (tentatively dated to the medieval period on the grounds of pottery retrieval) was identified in section at a depth of c.0.75m below ground level.
- The stratigraphic sequence observed within the box trench comprised natural substratum, buried topsoil, subsoil and modern topsoil.
- The results of the watching brief suggest that any below ground archaeological remains within the area of observation suggest are likely to be well preserved beneath the current subsoil layer.
- Monitoring of the water mains repair took place between 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

## Acknowledgements

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Thanks are extended to Anglian Water for commissioning the work, and to Tim Allen with Historic England, and Alison Williams Historic Environment Officer for North Lincolnshire County Council, who monitored the project.

The project was managed by Tom Hooley (TPA); all groundworks were monitored by Senior Project Archaeologist Ioan Epsley (TPA) and Project Archaeologist Harry Towers. Illustrations have been compiled by Marius Ilie(TPA).

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# 1 Introduction

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- 1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology were commissioned by Anglian Water, in liaison with Historic England, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during urgent water main repairs undertaken along the western boundary of Sawcliffe Medieval Village (SAM LEN: 1017554). Necessary groundworks were covered under Class 5 of The Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Act of 1994, which states:

**CLASS 5. WORKS URGENTLY NECESSARY FOR SAFETY OR HEALTH**

*Permitted works:*

*Works which are urgently necessary in the interests of safety or health provided that: —*

- a) the works are limited to the minimum measures immediately necessary; and*
  - b) notice in writing justifying in detail the need for the works is given to the Secretary of State as soon as reasonably practicable.*
- 1.2 The water main sits within the western boundary of the Sawcliffe Medieval Village and Moated Site Scheduled Ancient Monument (designated 1976), centred on National Grid Reference SE 91099 14442. Works undertaken within the boundary of the scheduled monument required consent from the Secretary of State, advised by Historic England. All work was monitored by Tim Allen, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Historic England and the North Lincolnshire HER Officer, Allison Williams.
- 1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance* (2014b), utilising the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Owen, 2018).

## 2 Topography and Geology

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### 2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The site of the burst water main is bounded immediately west and south by Winterton and Risby road, and to the north and east by farmland and associated housing. Rural arable and woodland dominate the wider landscape. The site is roughly rectangular in shape, with the water main located along the western boundary of the scheduled area, which runs along an approximate north by south route.

### 2.2 Geology and Topography

- 2.2.1 The 1:50,000 British Geological Mapping shows that Sawcliffe is situated on bedrock geology of greenish-grey Northampton sand formation Sandstone and Ironstone formed approximately 174.1-170.3 Ma, during the Jurassic Period. This is overlain by superficial deposits of blown light brown, finely-grained sand formed approximately 2.58Ma in the Quaternary period. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).
- 2.2.2 The overlying superficial soils comprise freely draining lime-rich loamy soils. ([www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes](http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes)). It supports mainly lime-rich deciduous woodland, arable land, with grassland at higher altitudes.



- 2.2.3 Topographically, the site sits within a relatively flat plateau, but forms part of a steep incline south to north within the wider landscape. The site is located at a height of c.65m AoD, increasing to a height of 69m AoD to the north.

### 3 Archaeological and Historical Background

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- 3.1 The historical and archaeological background of the proposed works has been supplemented by a search of the North Lincs Historic Environment Record and Historic England listing, on which the following summary is based. References to the Historic Environment Record are abbreviated as “NLHER”. The village of Sawcliffe is thought to date back to at least the Early Medieval period, onto which the medieval settlement grew.

#### *Prehistoric*

- 3.2 No evidence for prehistoric activity has been identified within the site of Sawcliffe Village, however the site is bounded by a number of prehistoric (Mesolithic – Iron Age) occupational sites and findspots as recorded by the North Lincolnshire HER.
- 3.3 Approximately 1km north of the site, an area of Mesolithic occupation known as Sheffield’s Hill, excavated around 1921, is recorded by the HER (NLHER: 1995). The site is recorded as “the latest phase of Creswellian Culture”, which produced a number of flint artefacts, microliths, and blades.
- 3.4 Immediately north-west of the site, additional flint scrapers, blades, cores and burins dating broadly from the Mesolithic to Iron Age periods, have been retrieved (NLHER: 2041). These likely relate to occupational activity within the area of Sheffield’s Hill, however additional sites of prehistoric occupation have been noted to the west and south of Sawcliffe village, possibly focusing around a low lying plateau around Dragonby, and associated waterways.
- 3.5 Excavations to the south of Sawcliffe near Dragonby by Oxford Archaeology in 1993 revealed evidence for a phased settlement landscape dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. The site in its Iron Age phase was characterised by a number of intersecting ditched enclosures, roundhouse gullies, hearths and wells, onto which a flourishing Romano-British settlement had evolved (NLHER: 1851).

#### *Romano-British*

- 3.6 No evidence for Romano-British settlement activity has been identified within the site, however a number of scatter finds are recorded by the NLHER within a 500m radius of the site. These probably relate to the presence of a large phased settlement identified 1km south of the Sawcliffe. Excavations by Oxford Archaeology in 1993 revealed crude street plans, stone buildings, wells, stock management, and local industry.

#### *Early Medieval*

- 3.7 The settlement of Sawcliffe is thought to date from at least the Saxon period. Archaeological works undertaken during the construction of the pipeline in 1981 and additional works along the western boundary of the monument in 1994 revealed a quantity of Saxon pottery. Details of these are currently held at North Lincolnshire Museum. Sawcliffe was named in the Domesday Book as *Saleclif* and was split between three absentee landlords: The Abbot of Peterborough, Roger de Bully and Gilbert de Ghent. These three men also held Risby (now the hamlets of High and Low Risby) and Appleby to the east.
- 3.8 Immediately west of the proposed water main repairs, fieldwalking by Humberside Archaeological Unit yielded fragments of late Saxon pottery sherds (NLHER: 21550). Additional metal detecting surveys within the Elwes Estate, adjacent to the current site boundary yielded

a 9<sup>th</sup> century gilded copper alloy Irish Mount, now on display in the North Lincolnshire Museum (NLHER: 22575).

### *Medieval*

- 3.9 The below description of the medieval historical and archaeological background of the deserted medieval village of Sawcliffe is summarised from the Historic England Monument List (LEN: 1017554). The monument includes the buried and earthwork remains of the medieval village of Sawcliffe and the earthworks of a moated site and later house and garden features, all located to the south and west of Sawcliffe Farm.
- 3.10 Sawcliffe appears to have been badly affected by the Black Death as it was one of several villages granted over 50 per cent relief from taxation from c.1354. Sawcliffe is believed to have been reduced to a single farmstead by 1600. The monument includes two main groups of earthworks. Firstly, there are the remains of the medieval village of Sawcliffe with its main street with house platforms and building remains. Secondly, there is a moated site with other features related to a higher status residence that is thought to have survived the abandonment of the village. The monument includes a number of additional earthwork remains. Towards the centre of the monument there is a rectangular moated island. This measures approximately 80m east-west and 20m north-south and is surrounded by a seasonally water-filled moat with a dry causeway across the east end of the northern moat ditch. The ditch is typically 10m wide with its eastern arm broadened into a pond. Continuing the line of the western moat arm northwards there is a 40m long 'U' shaped depression about 10m wide and 0.5m deep. From the north end of this depression there is an 8m wide ditch running eastwards. These two ditches are interpreted as the unfinished remains of a second larger moated island to the north of the first.
- 3.11 To the south east and slightly downhill from the moated island there is a slightly curving 140m long ditch running eastwards. This is identified as an ornamental canal typical of late Tudor and Jacobean gardens. It is also seasonally water-filled and is about 15m wide and 1.5m deep, with a 10m wide flat bottom. Most of the upcast of this ditch appears to form a broad bank running along the south side. This bank overlies, and thus post-dates, the eastern end of a hollow way that curves across the monument westwards, about 50m south of the south moat ditch. Either side of this hollow way, which was the main street of the village, there are the earthwork remains of house platforms standing up to 0.5m high, many with clearly visible remains of buildings with grassed over stone footings still in situ. Most of these house platforms lie on the south side of the street, forming an almost continuous row extending at least 200m beyond western end of the deep ditch. One of the breaks in this row is for a second hollow way which runs from the main street SSE from a point south of the eastern end of the moated island. Just to the west of this there is a raised trackway that curves from the road and forms the southern boundary of the monument, passing between the moat and the canal. This trackway, which runs towards the modern Sawcliffe Farm, overlies both the main street and a house platform and is therefore of a later date. The monument includes a number of other earthworks. These include at least one small building platform to the north of the canal, an irregular area of hollows to its south and, towards the north west corner of the monument, a slight 7m diameter mound which is considered to be a windmill mound.

### *Post-Medieval and Modern*

- 3.12 The land use does not appear to have change greatly within the site or the wider landscape up to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The village of Sawcliffe disappears from documentary records sometime after the Black Death. Remaining inhabitants appear to have been relocated to nearby Risbys, and the land subsequently became the grounds of a grand Manor house. The seasonally filled, ditched moat and building platforms of houses which once part of the village are still clearly visible as earthworks, however. A large ornamental moat was dug near the manor house, which still survives as a water-filled feature, but the house itself is now gone. The farmhouse that remains has 17<sup>th</sup> century origins.

## 4 Regional Research Objectives

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### 4.1 Objectives

- 4.1.1 The general objective of the fieldwork can be stated as to identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development and to achieve an appropriate level of *preservation by record*.
- Within the 5m x 5m stepped cut to repair the burst water main, the main objectives of the work were to identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development; and
  - To ensure that any archaeological remains which significantly contribute towards an understanding of the Scheduled Ancient Monument are preserved *in situ*.
- 4.1.2 Where practical (within the constraints of the archaeological monitoring and development), this will include an assessment of the overall extent, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains.
- 4.1.3 Any features of geoarchaeological significance will also be recorded and where there is the potential for palaeoenvironmental data, an appropriate level of sampling will be undertaken.

### 4.2 Regional Research Questions

- 4.2.1 The programme of archaeological mitigation proposed herein may reveal evidence that allows research priorities highlighted by regional research frameworks.
- 4.2.2 The *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework* (EMHERF) *Interactive Digital Resource* <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/> hosts a digitised version of Knight, D., Vyner, B. and Allen, C.'s (2012) *East Midlands Heritage and Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*.
- 4.2.3 Any evidence uncovered by the investigations should be considered with the guidance provided by the framework in mind. If the evidence significantly contributes to a research question raised by the framework, this should be stated in the final report and the website may, at the appropriate time, be used to feed this information back via the interactive commenting facility. This allows for the research framework to develop over time and remain relevant.
- 4.2.4 The following research questions are of particular significance to this project:

<b>Early-Medieval (410-1066)</b>
<i>6.4 Rural settlement patterns</i>
4. What factors may underlie the progression from dispersed to nucleated settlement and the growth of settlement hierarchies?
<b>High Medieval (1066 - 1485)</b>
<i>7.2 Rural Settlement</i>
1. How can we elucidate the development of nucleated villages and in particular the contribution of the Danelaw to changes in village morphology?
<i>7.3 Manors and Manorial Estates</i>
3. Can we improve our knowledge and classification of moated sites in the region, and how can environmental data add to our knowledge?

## 5 Methodology

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- 5.1 All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014b) and the *Code of Conduct* (2014a). The work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (Owen 2018), and was carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist selected from Trent and Peak's supervisory staff.
- 5.2 Intrusive groundworks were carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Where mechanical plant was used this was fitted with a toothless bucket where appropriate.
- 5.3 The pipe leak caused a higher than average ground water level which resulted in the western half of the site flooding when excavated. Initial excavation was halted when increased groundwater levels meant that the damaged pipe could not be located. The trench was backfilled, and a 7" trash pump was brought in to facilitate groundworks at a later date (the initial trench and backfill is shown in Figure 2 alongside the final cut).
- 5.4 An additional trench was cut closer to the extant above-ground manhole. The final cut trench was L-shaped in plan, and measured c.5m x 4.9m at its widest points, comprising a total area of 18.7m<sup>2</sup>.
- 5.5 Below-ground stratigraphy was recorded, photographed and interpreted, even where no archaeological finds or features were present, in accordance with ClfA *guidelines* (2014).
- 5.6 Recording was carried out on pro-forma context sheets and standardised drawing methods where appropriate. Spot heights were recorded relative to an Ordnance Datum.
- 5.7 All excavations were recorded at an appropriate scale by photography. Site photography was undertaken with the use of a high resolution colour DSLR camera, which included general site shots, shots of individual features, and groups of features.

## 6 Results

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- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the course of this watching brief. A single sherd of medieval green glazed pottery (c.15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> century) was recovered from a possible buried topsoil layer (1002). Descriptions of the stratigraphic sequences recorded are given below and a table of contexts is included in Appendix 1.
- 6.2 Geological substratum, formed of light orange grey sand and clay was identified at a depth of c.0.75m b.g.l. This was sealed by a c.0.14m thick deposit of loose very dark grey/brown buried topsoil which produced a single body sherd of medieval green glazed pottery. This deposit was overlain by a mid-orange grey sandy silt subsoil c.0.14m thick, into which the cut for the 1994 water pipeline was identified ([1005]) (Figure 2; Dr#01). This was finally sealed by a dark grey brown sandy silty clay topsoil c.0.29m thick.

## 7 Discussion & Conclusion

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- 7.1 No archaeological features were identified during the course of the watching brief. Machine removal of modern top and subsoil revealed an apparent buried medieval soil horizon (1002) (dated by pottery) at a depth of c.0.75m b.g.l. The small size of the intervention and difficulty in the excavation process makes further interpretations difficult.
- 7.2 The natural substratum (1003), where identified, was undisturbed by the existing water works.

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## Appendix 1: Context Register

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Context	Category	Description	Date
1000	Layer	Topsoil – Loose very dark grey brown sand/silt/clay	Modern
1001	Layer	Subsoil – Loose mid orange grey sand/ silt/ clay	Modern?
1002	Layer	Buried topsoil/ possible backfill? Loose very dark grey brown very sandy silt/clay	Med/PM?
1003	Layer	Geological natural - light orange grey sandy clay	Undated
1004	Fill?	Of [1005] Firm light blue-grey orange/black clay	Modern
1005	Cut	Of water main	Modern c.1994



## Appendix 2: Plates

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Plate 1: General site view, no scale.



Plate 2: Initial trench excavation of the repair trench, using a trash pump. No scale.





Plate 3: Final excavation of the steeped repair trench, showing natural (1003). No scale.



Plate 4: Representative section of repair trench, showing topsoil (1000), subsoil (1001) and possible med layer (1002). Scale 1m. Looking west.

## Appendix 3: Figures

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## Appendix 4: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

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<b><i>Field Records</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i>Number</i></b>
Watching Brief Sheets	Record of daily attendance	4
Context sheets	Record of features and deposits	5
Photo record sheet	Record of photographs taken	1
Digital photographs	All views	28
Site drawings	Plan of site	2
<b><i>Documents</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i>Number</i></b>
Written scheme of investigation	Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project.	1
Health & Safety	Safe working statement & risk assessment	1
Report to client	Report of findings of the watching brief.	1
<b><i>Find</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i>Number</i></b>
Artefacts and ecofacts	Pottery, med green glaze	1

The site archive is currently held at the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1, Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 4AB. It will be deposited with North Lincolnshire Museum Services within 6 months' completion of the report.

## Appendix 5: OASIS Data Collection Form

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## Appendix 4: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

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<i>Field Records</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Watching brief record sheets	Record of visit and work carried out	4
Context register	Register of context numbers and descriptions	1
Context sheets	Record of features and deposits	5
Photo record sheet	Record of photographs taken	1
Digital photographs	All views	68
Site drawings	Plan and section of site	2
<i>Documents</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Written scheme of investigation	Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project.	1
Health & Safety	Safe working statement & risk assessment	1
Report to client	Report of findings of the watching brief.	1
Find	Description	Number
Artefact	Pottery; Medieval green glaze	1

The site archive is currently held at the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1, Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 4AB. The paper archive will be deposited with North Lincolnshire Museum Services under **NLMS Entry Form No.: 6679**, within 6 months.

## Appendix 5: OASIS Data Collection Form

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# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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**OASIS ID: trentpea1-334906**

## Project details

Project name	Sawcliffe Medieval Village and Moated Site
Short description of the project	Trent and Peak Archaeology were commissioned by Anglian Water, in liaison with Historic England to carry out an archaeological watching brief during necessary repair works to a burst water main which runs along the western boundary of the site of Sawcliffe Deserted Medieval Village (SAM LEN: 1017554) in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire (NGR: SE 91099 14442). A single stepped trench measuring c.5m x 4.9m was cut over the area of the leak in order to minimise the potential impact of work on the Scheduled Ancient Monument. No archaeological features were identified during the course of the watching brief, however a possible buried soil horizon (tentatively dated to the medieval period on the grounds of pottery retrieval) was identified in section at a depth of c.0.75m below ground level. The stratigraphic sequence observed within the box trench comprised natural substratum, buried topsoil, subsoil and modern topsoil. The results of the watching brief suggest that any below ground archaeological remains within the area of observation suggest are likely to be well preserved beneath the current subsoil layer. Monitoring of the water mains repair took place between 20th September 2018 and 9th October 2018.
Project dates	Start: 20-09-2018 End: 09-10-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SCE - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	1017554 - SM No.
Any associated project reference codes	RXBY - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	DMV Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Necessary Repairs

## Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE SCUNTHORPE Sawcliffe Medieval Village and Moated Site

Postcode	DN15 0BJ
Study area	10 Square metres
Site coordinates	SE 491099 414442 53.866677336713 -1.253102960877 53 52 00 N 001 15 11 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 69m Max: 69m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project brief originator	Anglian Water
Project design originator	Victoria Owen
Project director/manager	Tom Hooley
Project supervisor	Ioan Epsley
Type of sponsor/funding body	Anglian Water

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	North Lincolnshire Museum Services
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	North Lincolnshire Museum Services
Digital Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	North Lincolnshire Museum Services
Paper Contents	"Ceramics"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

### Project bibliography 1

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