

NYCC HER	
SNY	11202
ENY	3450
CNY	5302
Parish	8020
Rec'd	08/09/2006



ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES  
WYAS

**Canal Crossing  
Selby  
North Yorkshire**

*Archaeological Watching Brief*

*Report No. 1562*

*August 2006*

CLIENT

RSK ENSR Environment Ltd

# Canal Crossing

## Selby

### North Yorkshire

## Archaeological Watching Brief

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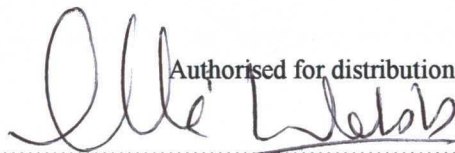
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### Summary

*An archaeological watching brief at Canal Crossing, Selby was undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains in advance of pipeline diversion works. A total of two trenches were excavated on either side of the canal. No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the course of the watching brief.*

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Archaeological Services WYAS

PO Box 30, Nephshaw Lane South, Morley, Leeds LS27 0UG

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) was commissioned by RSK ENSR Environment Ltd (RSK ENSR), to conduct an archaeological watching brief during pipeline diversion works at Canal Crossing, Selby.
- 1.2 The site is located to the south of Selby town centre and is centred at SE 613 308 (Fig. 1). The site is bounded immediately to the west by the Leeds and Selby Railway, to the south by Brayton Lane, and to the east by a wildlife site (formerly the site of brick-quarrying pits).
- 1.3 The underlying geology of the site is recorded as Bunter Sandstone (British Geological Survey 1978), typically overlain by permeable sandy soils of the Everingham association (821a) (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

## **2. Archaeological Background**

- 2.1 There is no direct evidence for prehistoric activity within the site area and the presence of artefacts dating from the Roman period is limited to a number of recorded findspots found within the parish of Brayton. Nothing of Roman date, however, has been noted which can be accredited to the development area. In addition, no Anglo-Saxon archaeological remains or findspots have been identified within the site area.
- 2.2 A total of four cultural heritage sites are situated within close proximity to the area monitored by the archaeological watching brief. Two former field boundaries are of uncertain origin, but were possibly established by parliamentary sanction in the latter half of the 18th century. The Selby Canal is of late 18th-century origin, and the railway dates from the early 19th century (RSK ENSR Environment Ltd 2006).

## **3. Method**

- 3.1 An archaeologist from ASWYAS was present on site to monitor the preliminary landscaping along the route of the pipeline diversion. This consisted of the excavation of the two trenches where the new pipeline would diverge from the current pipeline (HDD launch pit south side of the canal and HDD launch pit north side of the canal). This was undertaken on the 12th, 13th, 14th June and subsequently on the 20th June.
- 3.2 A specification for the archaeological watching brief was produced by the County Archaeology Service, North Yorkshire County Council and is reproduced in Appendix I. The site archive contains all the information gathered during the investigations and is indexed in Appendix II.

## **4. Results**

- 4.1 Trench 1 was excavated over the line of the existing gas pipe where the south-western limits of the new pipe would be connected. Trench 1 was positioned on the southern side of the canal (Fig. 2) and measured 3m in length, 2m in width and was on average 2.7m in depth.
- 4.2 Topsoil to a depth of 0.75m, consisting of a mid greyish brown coloured clayey silt, was overlain by a subsoil deposit 0.15m in depth and consisting of

a dark brownish/grey clayey silt. Directly below this was a light brownish yellow clayey silt of possible alluvial origin. No archaeological features or deposits were noted.

- 4.3 Trench 2 was excavated over the line of the existing gas pipe where the north-eastern limits of the new pipe would be connected. Trench 2 was positioned on the northern side of the canal and measured 12m in length, 6m in width and was on average 2.1m in depth. The major part of the excavation of Trench 2 had already taken place prior to monitoring by ASWYAS.
- 4.4 Topsoil, to a maximum depth of 0.20m, consisted of a mid brown clayey silt. Below this was a greyish orange clay natural. No archaeological features or deposits were noted.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The excavation of the two trenches at Canal Crossing, Selby in advance of pipeline diversion works revealed no archaeological features or deposits.

### ***Bibliography***

British Geological Survey, 1978, Goole. England and Wales Sheet 79 (S). Solid edition 1:50,000 Series

RSK ENSR Environment Ltd 2006, Proposed Selby Canal Bridge Pipeline Diversion. Environmental review. Unpublished report for Utilities Operations working with Northern Gas Networks

Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983, Soils of Northern England (Sheet 1) Scale 1:250,000

## ***Acknowledgements***

### **Project management**

Jane Richardson PhD

### **Report**

Richard Szymanski BSc

### **Graphics/illustrations**

Dave Weston

Mitchell Pollock BA MA

### **Fieldwork**

Antony Brown BSc

Richard Szymanski BSc

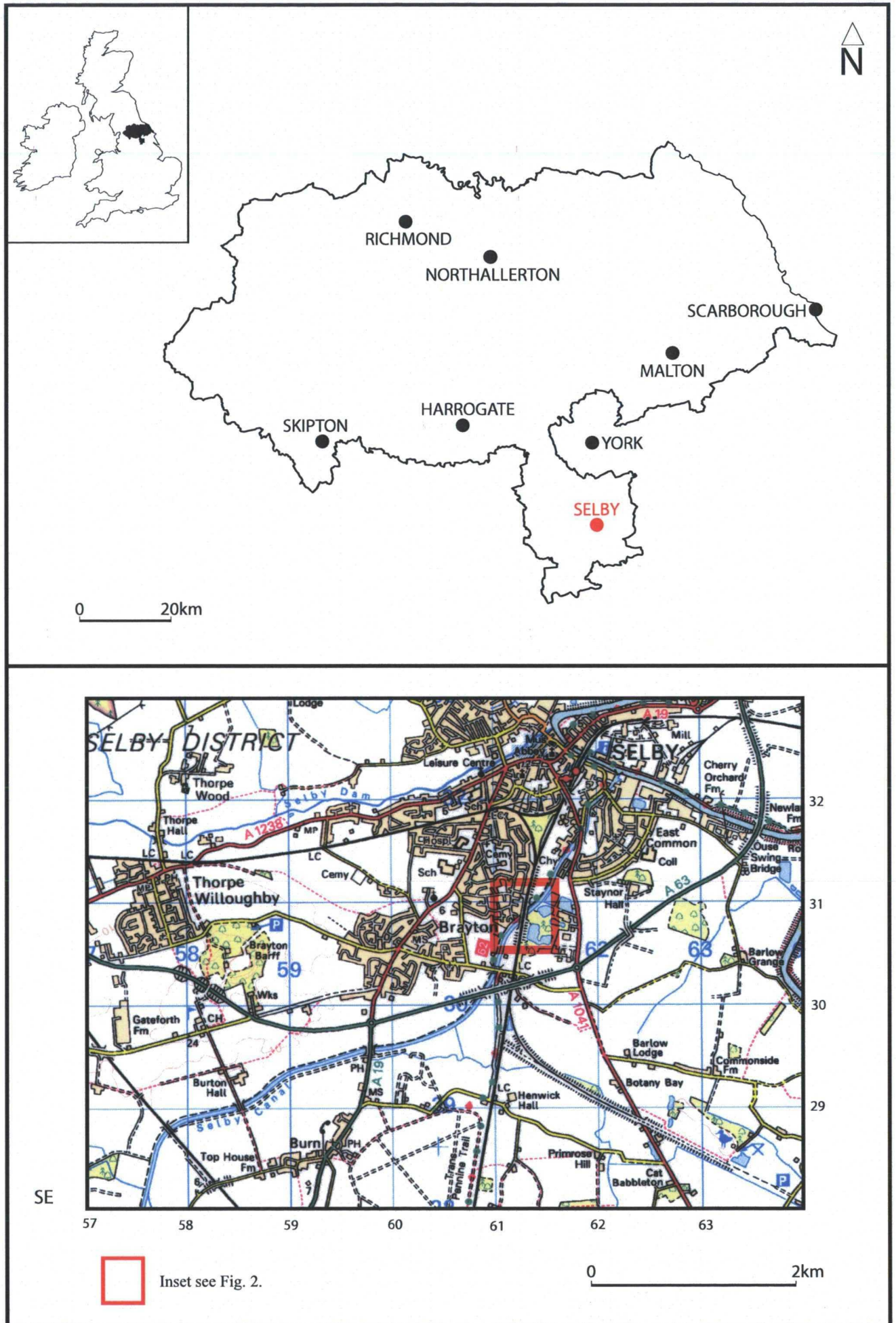


Fig. 1. Site location



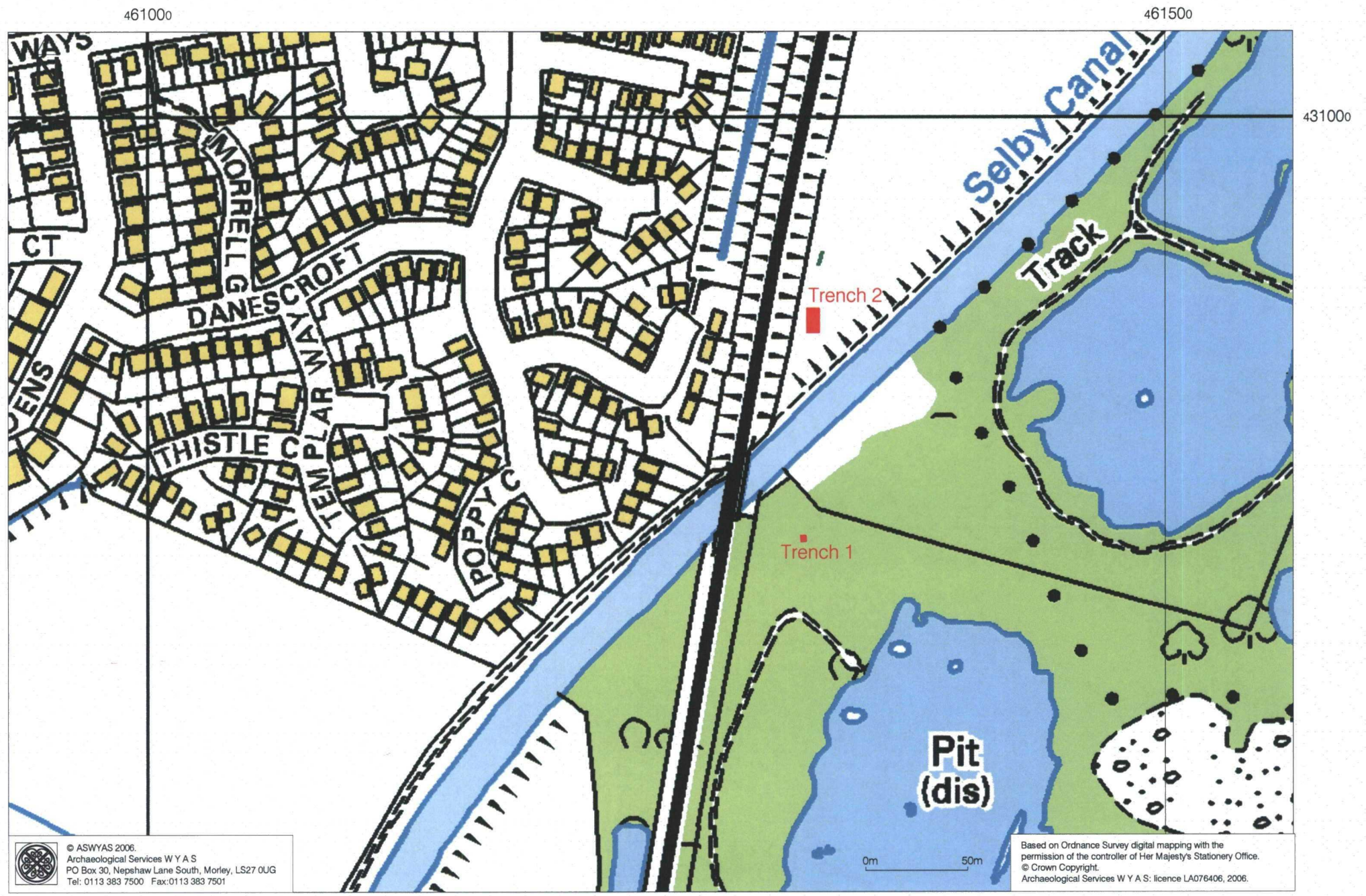


Fig. 2. Location of Trench 1 (HDD launch pit south side) and Trench 2 (HDD launch pit north side) (1:2500 scale)

***Appendix I***

***Standard written scheme of investigation for limited archaeological recording for services works***



**STANDARD WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION (WSI)  
FOR LIMITED ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING ("WATCHING BRIEF")  
FOR SERVICES WORKS**

- 1 The purpose of the work is to enable the recording and recovery of archaeological remains affected to a limited and clearly defined extent by narrow cable, pipe or culvert trenches, electricity pole or lamp standard emplacement, valve or inspection chamber trenches, or access pits for trenchless technology. The archaeological work should not require the emplacement of services to be held up while recording takes place, although some utilities contractors may give such a facility.
- 2 The Archaeologist should notify by letter or e-mail the County Archaeology Service ([archaeology@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@northyorks.gov.uk)) at least 10 working days in advance of the start of work on site.
- 3 The excavation of all trenches should be supervised by the Archaeologist contracted to carry out the WSI. The Archaeologist should be informed of the correct timing and schedule of excavation works. Overburden such as tarmac, concrete, turf, topsoil, made ground, rubble or other superficial fill materials should be removed by machine, using a back-acting excavator fitted with a toothless, ditching or grading bucket. Where surface materials are exceptionally difficult to lift, they should be broken up first, and a toothed bucket used temporarily to open up the materials for lifting.
- 4 Metal detecting of the trenches and spoil should only be carried out subject to archaeological supervision and recording so that metal finds are properly located, identified, and conserved. All metal detection should be carried out following the Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice.
- 5 Where structures, soil deposits and features, or finds of archaeological interest are uncovered or disturbed by trenching, the Archaeologist should be provided with the opportunity to observe, clean, assess, and where appropriate, hand-excavate, sample and record these features and finds. If the contractors or plant operators observe archaeological remains during the course of works, they should immediately notify the Archaeologist. Although most services works may be unlikely to require the application of archaeological science to recovered artefacts and samples, this is a standard requirement for all archaeological investigations and the Archaeologist should make arrangements to ensure that specialist advice and analysis are available if appropriate.
- 6 Heavy plant or excavators should not be operated in the near vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded and the Archaeologist on site has allowed operations to recommence at that location. Subsoils and sterile parent materials below archaeological deposits can be removed without archaeological supervision using a toothed bucket.

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- 7 Upon completion of archaeological field recording work, samples should be processed and evaluated, and all finds identified, assessed, spot-dated, properly stored, and subject to investigative conservation as needed. A field archive should be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and photographs. The Archaeologist should arrange for either the County Archaeologist or an independent post-excavation specialist to inspect the archive before making arrangements for the transfer of the archive to an appropriate museum or records office.
- 8 A summary report shall be produced following NYCC guidelines on reporting. The report should contain planning or administrative details of the project, a summary of works carried out, a description and interpretation of the findings, an assessment of the importance of the archaeology including its historical context where appropriate, and a catalogue of finds, features, and primary records. All excavated areas should be accurately mapped with respect to nearby buildings and roads. All significant features should be illustrated with conventionally scaled plans, sections or photographs. Where few or no finds are made, it may be acceptable to provide the report in the form of a letter with plans attached.
- 9 Copies of the summary report should be provided to the utility company, services provider or highways divisional office, the County Heritage Unit (SMR), to the museum accepting the archive, and if the works were carried out on or near to a Scheduled Ancient Monument, to English Heritage. A licence should be granted to the accepting museum and the County Council to use the documentation arising from the work for its statutory functions and to give to third parties as an incidental to those functions.
- 10 Upon completion of the work, the Archaeologist should make their work accessible to the wider research community by submitting digital data and copies of reports online to OASIS (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>). Submission of data to OASIS does not discharge the planning requirements for the Archaeologist to notify the County Archaeology Service of the details of the work and to provide the Historic Environment Record (HER) with a summary report on the work.
- 11 Under the Environmental Information Regulations 2005 (EIR) information submitted to the HER becomes publicly accessible, except where disclosure might lead to environmental damage, and reports cannot be embargoed as 'confidential' or 'commercially sensitive'. Requests for sensitive information are subject to a public interest test, and if this is met, then the information has to be disclosed. The Archaeologist should inform the client of EIR requirements, and ensure that any information disclosure issues are resolved before completion of the work. Intellectual property rights are not affected by the EIR.
- 12 This WSI represents a summary of the broad archaeological requirements to mitigate the effects of services works on sites of archaeological or historic interest as recognised in the Electricity Act 1989, Gas Act 1995, Pipelines Act 1962 and Water Act 1989. It does not comprise a full specification, and the County Council makes no warranty that the archaeological works are fully or exactly described. The details of implementation must be specified in a standard ICE Conditions of Contract for Archaeological Investigation or similar agreement between the services provider and the selected archaeological contractor. The County Archaeologist should be notified immediately of any unexpected archaeological remains or variations to work.
- 13 If there is a need to remove human remains, an exhumation licence should be obtained from the Department for Constitutional Affairs ([coroners@dca.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:coroners@dca.qsi.gov.uk)), or a faculty obtained where the remains are buried in land consecrated according to the rites of the Church of England.

**Appendix II**  
**Inventory of primary archive**

<b>File no.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
1	Watching brief monitoring forms	4
1	Trench record sheets	2
1	Black and white contacts	2
1	Black and white negative strips	3
1	Photographic register (Film no 7713)	1