



Archaeological Watching Brief

IDB Works


St Benet's Pumping Station

ENF 134044

Heather Wallis

July 2014

HW Report No 146



Project name	St Benet's Pumping Station
Client	Broads Internal Drainage Board
NHER Event No	ENF134044
Grid reference	TG 3995 1557
Date of fieldwork	April 2014

Introduction

Broads Internal Drainage Board has undertaken works to improve water management at St Benet's Level, Norfolk. The area of works was located on the west bank of the River Thurne (Fig. 1).

The works consisted of the excavation of a new dyke and the installation of water control structures. In addition pumping controls were removed from St Benet's Level Mill to an external station.

Geology and Topography

The site lay at a level just below 0mOD on the an 'island' formed by the River Ant to the west, River Bure to the south, River Thurne to the east and the Hundred Dyke to the North. The surrounding landscape is flat and is presently a mixture of arable and lowland pasture.

The underlying solid geology is Crag Group Sands and Gravel (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>) with overlying superficial geology of Breydon Formation clay and silt.

Archaeological Background

At the northern end of the new dyke sits St Benet's Level drainage mill. This building is 18th-century in date, built c. 1777 (<http://www.norfolk Mills.co.uk/>) and is shown on Faden's 1797 Map of Norfolk (Barringer 1989). During its life the mill has underwent a number of changes to its upper levels, cap and sails. The Norfolk Historic Environment Record records that it was burnt down in the early 20th century. The mill retains its internal machinery and was restored in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

About 1.5km to the west is the site of St Benet's Abbey, endowed to the Benedictines in 1020. Today the gatehouse, parts of the church and perimeter wall survive as masonry structures. The layout of the remainder of the precinct has been established by earthwork survey and the study of aerial photographs.

Methods

Two visits were made to the site. On these visits the topsoil strip and machining of the new dykes was monitored and the sides of the newly dug channel were observed in order to identify any possible archaeological features.

All works were carried out in full accordance with national and regional guidelines for the treatment of archaeological remains, and in particular the guidance set out in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003) and the *Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2008).

Results

A short stretch of new dyke, c.90m long, 8m wide and 1m deep, was excavated to the south of St Benet's Level Mill between two existing dykes. This cut through natural grey clayey silts. No features were observed within the excavations. At the north end of the dyke a small number of brick fragments were noted in the topsoil. Several of these fragments appeared to have been heavily burn. This material probably originated from alterations to the structure of the mill. The presence of burnt material supports the idea that the mill was once damaged by fire.



View of works

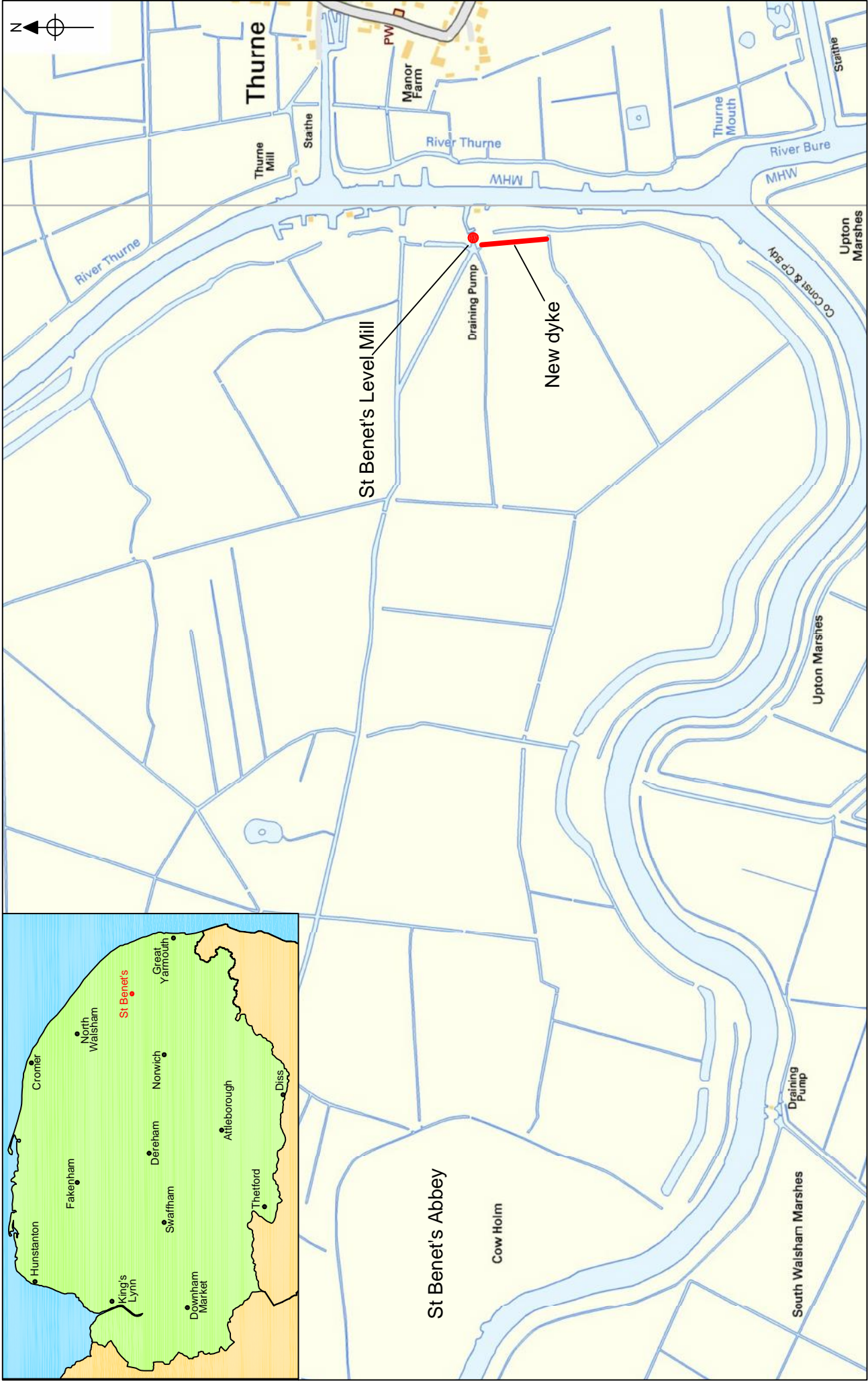


Figure 1. Site location plan

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Project details

Project name	St Benet's Level Pumping Station
Short description of the project	Watching Brief on newly excavated dyke to the south of St Benet's Pumping Mill.. No features recorded. Occasional finds of ceramic bulding material noted close to the mill, including some burnt brick. This thought to originate from structural changes to the mill.
Project dates	Start: 24-04-2014 End: 01-05-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF 134044 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK NORTH NORFOLK HORNING St Benet's Level Pumping Station
Study area	0.90 Kilometres
Site coordinates	TG 3993 1562 52.6844958088 1.55029855628 52 41 04 N 001 33 01 E Line
Site coordinates	TG 3995 1552 52.6835895644 1.55052101534 52 41 00 N 001 33 01 E Line

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Heather Wallis
Project brief originator	None
Project design originator	None
Project director/manager	Heather Wallis
Project supervisor	None
Type of sponsor/funding body	Broads Internal Drainage Board

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Report"

Project bibliography

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