# Archaeological Watching Brief at Ludham Bridge, Norfolk

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**HW Report No. 108** 

Project name Ludham Bridge Pumping Stations

Client Broads Internal Drainage Board

NHER Event No ENF 126401

Grid reference TG 3748 1708 (south of bridge centred)

TG 3730 1730 (north of bridge centred)

Date of fieldwork 12th April 2011 to 23rd June 2011

#### Introduction

Broads Internal Drainage Board has undertaken work constructing two new electric pumping stations at Ludham Bridge. These works have been carried out under their permissive powers.

The works were located on the east bank of the River Ant to the north and south of the main road (A1062) (Fig. 1) and consisted of the laying of new electricity cables and the construction of pumping stations. As the works involved new excavations in the marshes alongside the river an archaeological watching brief was requested.

The construction works were undertaken by the Broads Internal Drainage Board who commissioned the archaeological watching brief.

# **Historical Background**

The area effected by the construction work lay adjacent to the River Ant and is drained and farmed marshland.

The northern pumping station lay close to wind pump (NHER 5236) which was originally built as a tower mill in 1877. It was working in 1912, but was later damaged and by 1934 had been altered to act as a lookout. This was converted into a pillbox during WWII. In the field to the north of this a circular cropmark (NHER 49143) of unknown date and function was observed in 1944.

The southern pumping station was also located close to the site of wind pump (NHER 8455) which was built between 1800 and 1802. This mill was still operating in the 1930s before becoming derelict soon after. The ruins of the mill were cleared away during the 1960s. Oppose this site, on the west bank of the River Ant a Saxon logboat and other timbers were discovered during flood defence works in 2010 (NHER 54221).

Both areas were altered to some degree by flood defence works undertaken in 2004.

### The Watching brief

The main area of impact was the excavation of trenches to carry the electricity cable to the new pumping station. The stations themselves were built upon concrete bases and other associated works were within areas disturbed by flood defence works 2004.

As the trenches were excavated and backfilled in short sections several visits were necessary during the period of the works. The trenches were *c*.0.2m wide and between 1.1 and 1.4m deep. The observations showed that a thin topsoil overlay an orange/brown silty clay, below which was a moist grey/black clayey silt. One area of compacted brick rubble was noted in the trench for the southern cable. It was seen in a small area *c*.1.2m wide and 0.8m deep, and is likely to be a backfilled ditch. The bricks were Norfolk Reds and probably originated from the nearby mill which was demolished in the 1960s. No other variation of soil colour or consistency was observed within the trenches and no evidence of preserved wood was present.

No impact was made of the standing mill near to the north pumping station nor was any evidence revealed relating to the mill site close to the south pumping station.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks are expressed to the Broads Internal Drainage Board for sponsoring these works, and particularly to the construction team for their co-operation throughout.

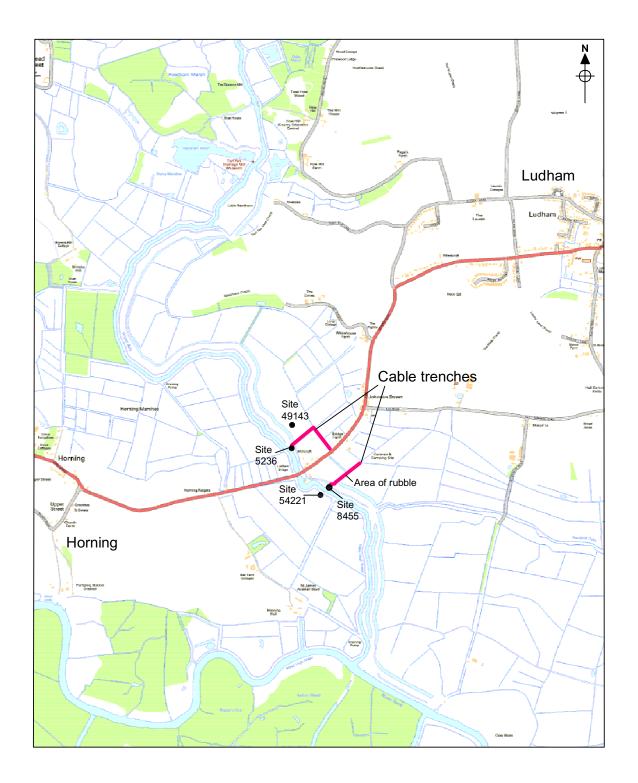


Figure 1. Site location Showing trench location and sites on the Norfolk Historic Environment Record