

Report 2557a



nps archaeology

**Archaeological Watching Brief at
Aylmerton S101A Sewerage Scheme, Aylmerton,
Norfolk**

ENF126417



Prepared for Anglian Water
Thorpe Wood House
Thorpe Wood
Peterborough
PE3 6WT



Stuart Calow B.A.

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www.nps.co.uk

PROJECT CHECKLIST		
Project Manager	David Whitmore /	
Draft Completed	Stuart Calow	11/10/2011
Graphics Completed	David Dobson	10/11/2011
Edit Completed	Jayne Bown	10/01/2012
Signed Off	David Whitmore	11/01/2012
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NPS Archaeology

Scandic House
85 Mountergate
Norwich
NR1 1PY

T 01603 756150

F 01603 756190

E jayne.bown@nps.co.uk

www.nau.org.uk

BAU2557

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Location:	Church Road, Aylmerton, Norfolk
District:	North Norfolk
Planning Ref.:	n/a
Grid Ref.:	TG1830 3997–TG1828 4042; TG1857 4129–TG1859 4150
HER No.:	ENF126417
OASIS Ref.:	116945
Client:	Anglian Water Services Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork:	25-29 July 2011

Summary

An archaeological Watching Brief was conducted for Anglia Water ahead of laying sewer pipes in the village of Aylmerton in north Norfolk. The excavation of eight trenches was monitored over a distance of 300m along Church Road, Aylmerton; the route ran north–south, between listed buildings Church House Farm and St John the Baptist Church. Five of the trenches measured 2m x 1m and were 1m deep; the remaining three were 3m x 1m and measured 2m deep.

No archaeological remains were observed in any of these trenches.

The northern section of the route (to the north of the A148) that was subject to a watching brief requirement was not monitored.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

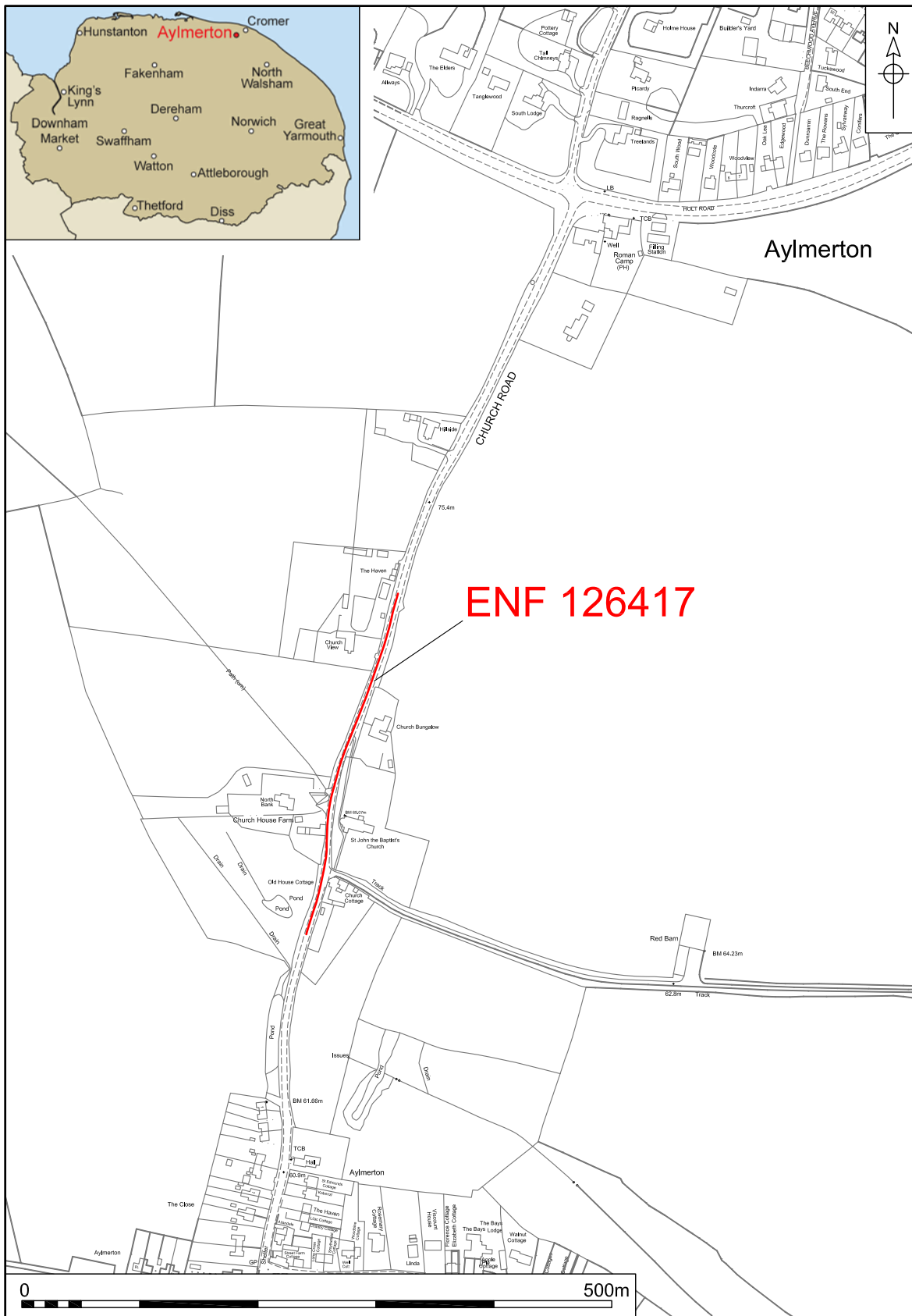
The plan to install a mains sewage system (to replace septic tanks in and to the north of the village of Aylmerton, in north Norfolk required archaeological monitoring of the route as it passed through an area of archaeological potential.

This Watching Brief was undertaken to fulfil a brief set by the Norfolk Historic Environment Service (Ref. CNF42648) The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU 2557a/DW) and was commissioned and funded by Anglian Water Services Ltd.

The Watching Brief monitoring of the pipeline route was divided into two parts. The first section was 300m long and ran north-south along Church Road, passing between listed buildings Church House Farm and St. John The Baptist Church (Fig. 1). The second section was 214m long and ran north-south along Sandy Lane to the north of the A148, passing an area of possibly medieval iron workings.

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010).

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS), following the relevant policies on archiving standards.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000



Plate 1. Excavation of trench in roadway (St John the Baptist's church in the background)

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The bedrock is listed as Wroxham crag formation – sand and gravel, and the superficial geology as Britons Lane sand and gravel member (http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html).

The natural drift geology was orange sand containing occasional medium and large nodular flints. Little variation was observed in any of the trenches.

The southern part of the Watching Brief (TG1830 3997–TG1828 4042) was on land at 63-75m OD whereas the northern part (TG1857 4129–TG1859 4150) was more elevated, at around 103m OD. The site lies two miles to the south of West Runton and less than one mile to the west of Felbrigg Hall on land that slopes downwards to the south. The Scarrow Beck stream rises to the south of the site and flows for seven miles due south where it becomes a tributary of the River Bure.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A search of records held in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) produced a number of results, the most relevant of which were summarised below.

A World War One pillbox (NHER 17111) near the junction of the A148 and Church Road has an unusual form and is dated to 1916–1918. Immediately to the east many metal detected finds of all periods have been recovered (NHER31934) including several early Saxon artefacts possibly derived from an Early Saxon cemetery. As the route of the sewer replacement ran immediately to the west of this, the area was subject to archaeological evaluation in April 2011 (Sillwood 2011). Two evaluation trenches were excavated revealing one undated ditch.

North of Aylmerton village centre are two listed buildings - the 13th-century church of St. John the Baptist (NHER 12210) and Church House Farm (NHER 29155) dated to around 1700.

To the east of Aylmerton is Felbrigg Hall (NHER 6633), Felbrigg Park (NHER29822) and the Great Wood (NHER40183). Felbrigg Hall and Park date from the 17th century. The Great Wood was planted between 1673 and 1687 and covers 520 acres. Within the park is a hollow way (NHER 19027) which is not associated with the park and probably predates it. Aerial photographs show possible medieval ridge and furrow and a trackway (NHER 36430) to the south of the garden in Felbrigg Park. The formal gardens (NHER 51749) at Felbrigg were laid out by William Windham before 1689 and include an Orangery (NHER 51744).

A mesolithic scraper (NHER18418) was found near a road called the Lions Mouth in 1982.

Possible medieval iron workings (NHER38326) are located to the west of the pipeline route located to the north of the A148.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this watching brief was to mitigate the impact of the sewage scheme by recording any archaeological remains that may be exposed by groundworks.

The Brief required that an experienced archaeologist monitor the excavation of the several small trenches necessary to facilitate directional drilling for the laying of sewage pipes at a depth of 2m.

Machine excavation was carried out with a hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothed bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision. The section of the route to the north of the A148 was opened and closed over a weekend and hence was not subject to archaeological monitoring.

No environmental samples were taken.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.

5.0 RESULTS

The locations of the monitored trenches (Trench 1–Trench 8) are shown in Figure 2. The same stratigraphy was visible in each of the trenches i.e. a layer of asphalt 50mm deep at the surface beneath which was a mid brown silty sand that was 150mm deep and contained frequent small and medium flint nodules. Below the silty sand layer was the natural geological deposit of pure orange sand (Plate 2).

No finds were recovered and no archaeological features were discovered in any of the eight trenches observed.

Trench No.	Orientation	Area	Depth
Trench 1	North-south	2m x 1m	1.00m
Trench 2	North-south	3m x 1m	2.00m
Trench 3	North-south	3m x 1m	2.00m
Trench 4	North-south	2m x 1m	1.20m
Trench 5	North-south	2m x 1m	1.20m
Trench 6	North-south	2m x 1m	1.20m
Trench 7	North-south	3m x 1m	1.00m
Trench 8	North-south	2m x 1m	1.20m

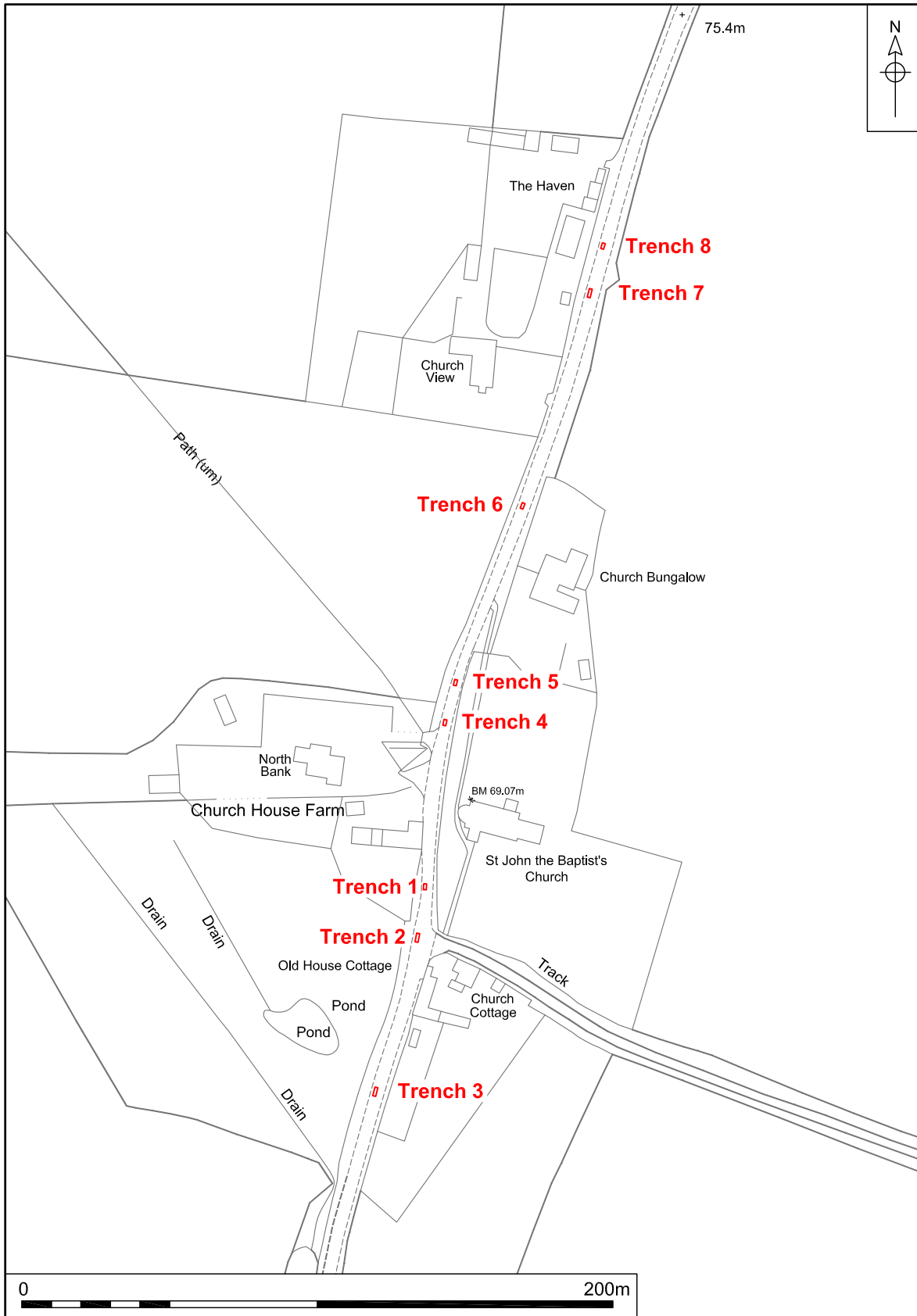
Table 1. Dimensions of Trenches 1-8



Plate 2. Typical sequence of deposits

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological evidence was observed in any of the trenches monitored during the course of this work.



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Figure 2. Trench locations. Scale 1:2000

Acknowledgements

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Bibliography and Sources

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