Report 2880

nps archaeology

Archaeological Watching Brief at A140 Sewer Link, The Street, Long Stratton, Norfolk

ENF128345

Prepared for
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Location:	The Street, Long Stratton, Norfolk
District:	South Norfolk
Planning Ref.:	n/a
Grid Ref.:	TM 19685 92645
HER No.:	ENF128345
OASIS Ref.:	120921
Client:	Anglian Water Services Limited
Dates of Fieldwork:	9–17 January 2012

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted for Anglian Water Services Limited during the installation of a new sewer link which crossed part of the A140 in the middle of the town of Long Stratton. The route of the A140 in this part of Norfolk follows the route of the Roman Pye Street.

A large number of service trenches were encountered, truncating any earlier road make-up deposits. The earliest deposit encountered was a deposit of sand and gravel laid directly on top of the natural clay. This deposit was dated to the post-medieval period by tile fragments, but this does not exclude the possibility that this may be the Roman road make-up, with the tile originating from later repairs

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Anglian Water Services Limited constructed a new link sewer across the A140 at Long Stratton, necessitating archaeological monitoring. The works consisted of a new inspection hatch on the west side of the road and an open trench across the road to take the new sewer pipe (Fig. 1).

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Anglian Water and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (CNF43370). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (NAU/BAU2880/DW). This work was commissioned and funded by Anglian Water Services Limited.

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains likely to be affected within the proposed development 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.

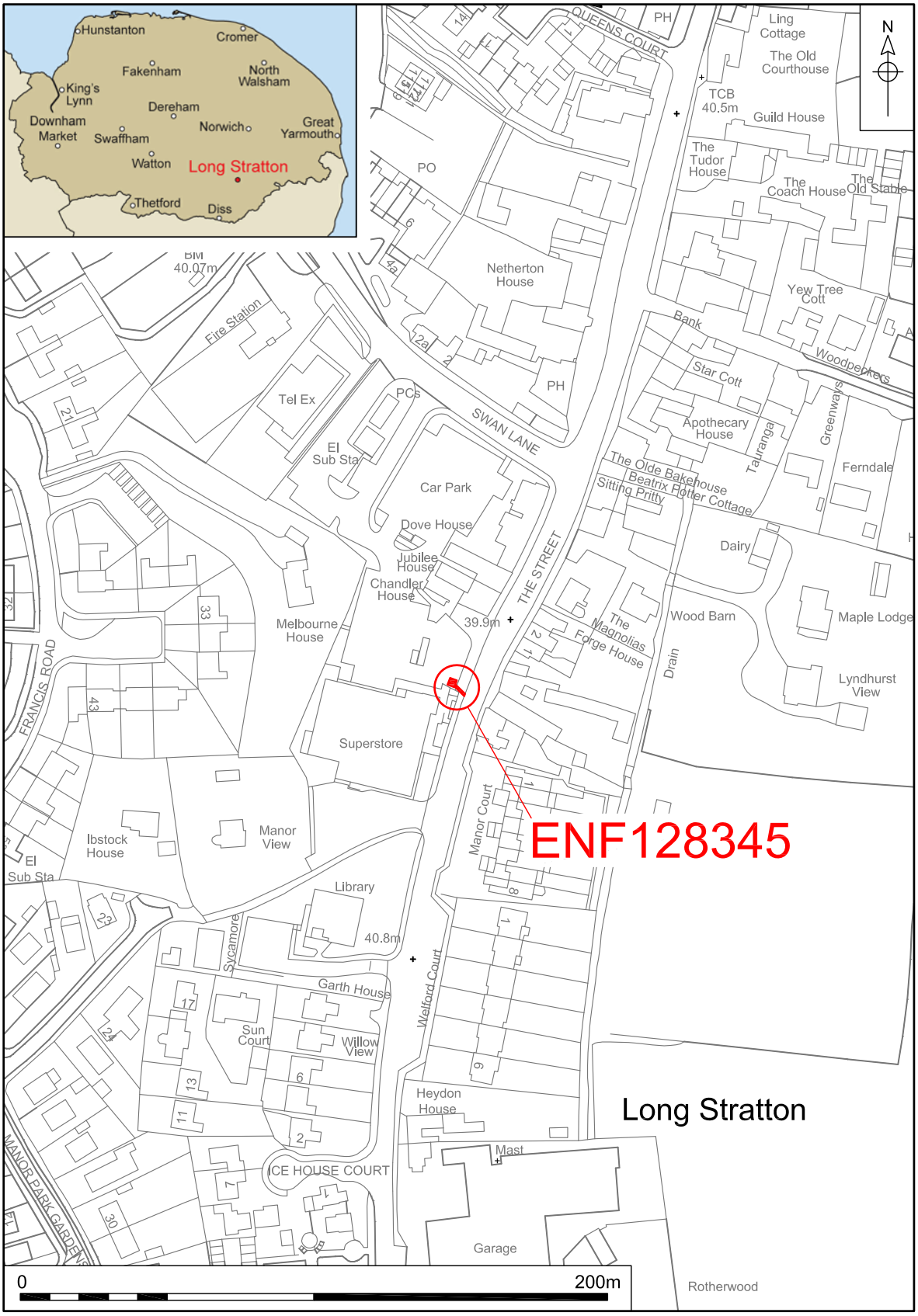

Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2000

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site lies in the centre of the small town of Long Stratton on The Street, at the southern end of an old market place represented by a widening of the main road, the Pye Roman Road (modern A140) at a height of *c.*40m OD.

The underlying geology of this area consists of silts and clays of the Anglian glacial and fluvial till (BGS 1991) above Cretaceous Upper Chalk (BGS 1985).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) and historic mapping sources were consulted in the preparation of this section.

The modern A140 (The Street) is The Pye Roman Road (NHER MNF7947) running between the Roman town of Venta Icenorum at Caister St Edmund and Scole on the Norfolk/Suffolk border, before running south to Colchester and then London.

Roman, Prehistoric and post-medieval artefacts have been found 110m north-west of the present development (NHER MNF17047).

A large number of the houses in the immediate area are of 16th- to 17th-century date, for example The Old Manor House (NHER MNF15336), Ashford and Grimles General Store (NHER MNF15333), Wood Barn (NHER MNF46424), The Retreat (NHER MNF49347) and the former Angel Inn (NHER MNF43547) which may date to the 15th century.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey map (*c.*1885) shows the site as lying at the south end of what appears to be an open market place, adjacent to The Manor House. Property boundaries to the north of the development area suggest a degree of medieval planning in the area of this possible market place, using plot widths of one chain (*c.*21m).

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this watching brief was to mitigate any adverse effects of the groundworks by recording any archaeological remains that may be present

The Brief required that the excavation of the sewer be monitored by an archaeologist.

Machine excavation was carried out with a hydraulic 360˚ excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

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. Colour, monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

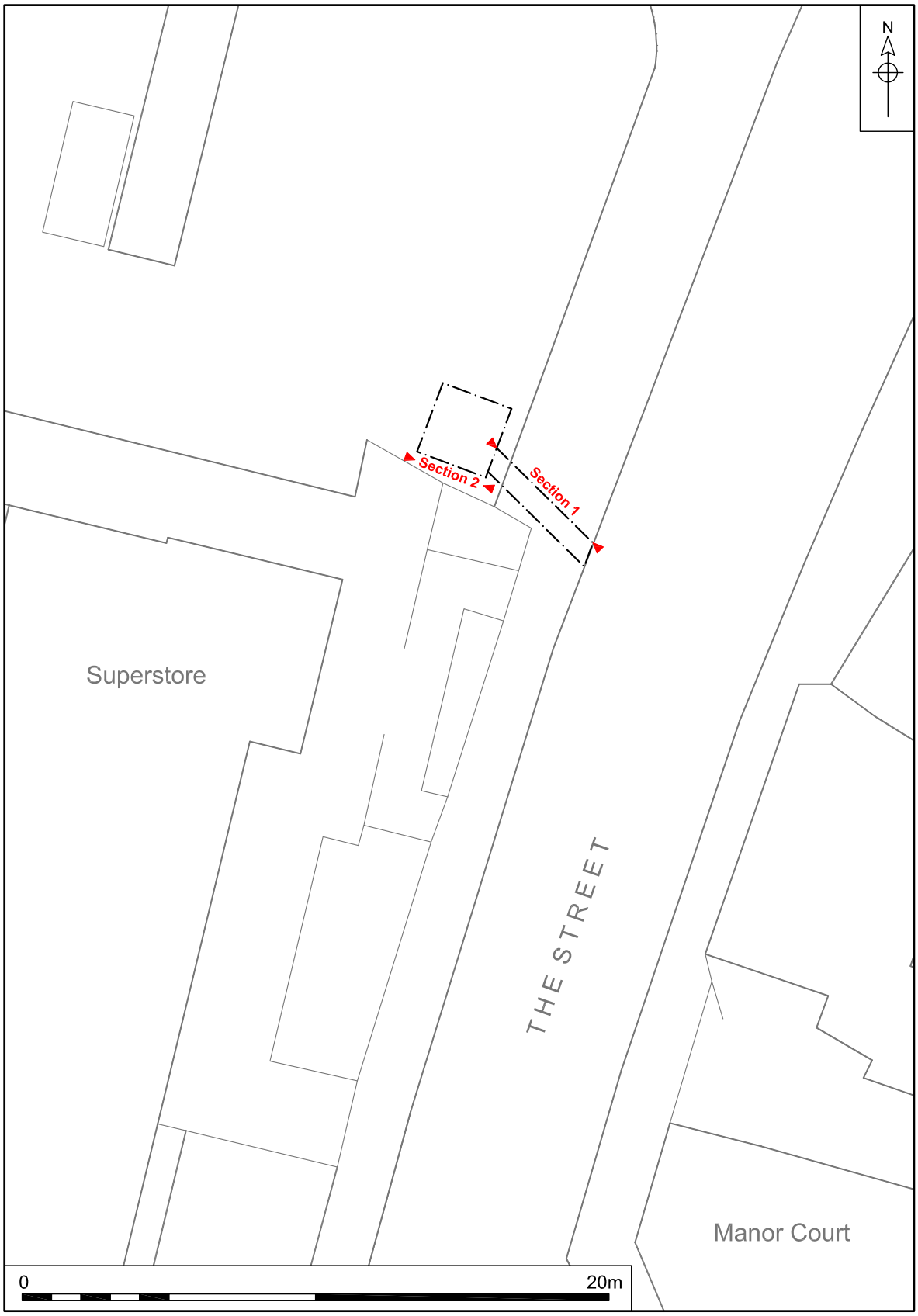

Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:200

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

5.0 RESULTS

Archaeological monitoring took place on the excavation of a large (2.5m x 2.5m square) hole dug down to an existing drain in order to build a junction and manhole, as well as 5m of the pipe trench out towards an existing manhole in the road. The final 1m of the trench was not monitored as it was excavated on a Sunday to minimise traffic disruption. However it is thought likely that this final 1m of trench would mainly contain deposits disturbed by the construction of the existing manhole itself.

5.1 Manhole

The 2.5m x 2.5m trench for the manhole was excavated within a shored trench (Fig. 2; Plate 1). Natural clay subsoil was visible at a depth of 0.5m below modern ground level (bgl) at the western side of the trench. The eastern side of the trench contained the pipe trench [24] holding the sewer pipe that the new pipe would be attached to.

Pipe trench [24] was not fully excavated but was seen to be north-south aligned (parallel to the A140), in excess of 1.55m wide and 1.5m deep with a vertical western side (Fig. 3 Section 2). Its fill ([25]) was a mixed deposit of natural clay and topsoil lumps with occasional broken fragments of tarmac.

Sealing this deposit was a 0.2m thick layer of topsoil ([23]), a dark brown sandy clay with moderate flint gravel. Above this was a 0.18m thick, compacted hardcore layer [20], acting as bedding for the modern tarmac car park surface [19] which was 0.1m thick.

Plate 1. Manhole trench looking south, partially excavated

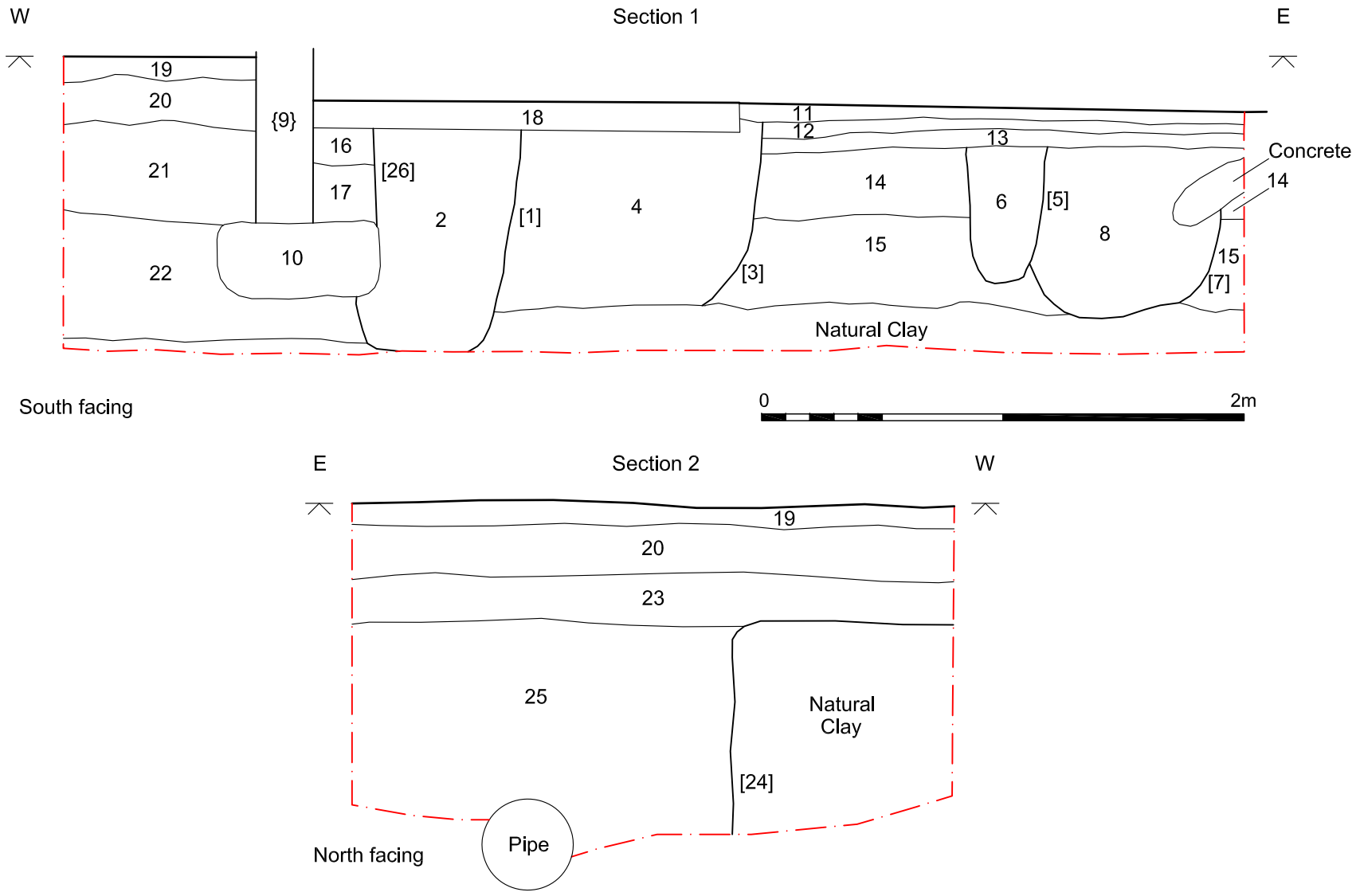

Figure 3. Sections 1 and 2. Scale 1:25

5.2 Pipe Trench

The pipe trench was 4.9m long, 0.6m wide and *c*.1m deep and extended eastwards from the newly-excavated manhole trench towards an existing manhole in the road (Figs 2 and 3, Section 1).

Plate 2. Pipe trench looking east (with the existing manhole at the eastern end of the trench beneath the wheel of the passing car)

The earliest deposit encountered was layer [15], a 0.4m thick, compact mid brownish grey clayey sand with moderate amounts of flint gravel, rare occurrences of charcoal flecks and ceramic building material (CBM) fragments of 18th- to 19th-century date. Although the finds suggest a post-medieval date, it is possible that this deposit formed part of the Roman road make-up, the post-medieval finds being incorporated from later repairs.

Above deposit [15] was layer [14]), a 0.3m thick layer of compacted orange sand containing frequent pieces of flint gravel. This was probably a layer of modern hoggin acting as bedding for tarmac surface [13] above.

Cutting through layer [14] were two service trenches, [5] and [7]. Service trench [7] was the earliest and contained three ceramic pipes. It was aligned north-south, parallel to the A140, 0.72m deep and in excess of 0.8m wide. Its fill ([8]) was mixed material dug from the trench. Service trench [7] was cut by service trench [5] which was 0.56m deep and 0.34m wide, also similarly aligned north-south, parallel with the A140. Its fill ([6]) contained a cable and was backfilled with similar material to deposit [8].

Sealing the two service trenches was tarmac layer [13], an old road surface 0.08m thick. Overlaying this was layer [12], a 0.07m thick layer of compacted hoggin acting as a bedding layer for the tarmac road surface [11] above.

Cutting through layer [12] was service trench [3] which was 0.74m deep. It was aligned north-west to south-east and contained fill [4] - a mixed deposit of the excavated material.

Cutting service trench [3] was service trench [1] which was 0.9m deep, in excess of 0.7m wide and aligned north-south parallel to the A140. It contained a ½ inch diameter active copper water pipe. Its backfill ([2]) was a mid orangish brown sand with frequent flint gravel.

Natural clay in this part of the trench was at a depth of 0.8-0.9m bgl.

At the western end of the trench, the stratigraphy was quite different. The natural clay was present some 0.15m deeper than to the east, perhaps suggesting a small amount of truncation.

The earliest deposit present was layer [22], a 0.54m thick deposit of mixed topsoil and natural clay lumps very similar to deposit [25] in the adjacent manhole trench.

Deposit [22] was cut by foundation trench [26] which was 1m deep and 0.66m wide. It was parallel to the A140 and contained boundary wall [9], separating the supermarket car park to the west from the A140 to the east. Its earliest fill was layer [10], a deposit of concrete which acted as the foundation for wall [9] above. This wall was 0.24m wide and composed of modern hard-fired red brick. Fills [16] and [17]) were the backfilled deposits in the foundation trench, deposited after wall [9] had been built. Fill [17] was a 0.22m thick orange sand with frequent amounts of flint gravel. Above this was layer [16], a 0.14m thick layer of dark brown sand with moderate amounts of flint gravel and CBM fragments.

Layer [16] was sealed by layer [18] which was a modern surface composed of granite setts.

On the western side of wall [9], above layer [22] was a sequence of layers. Layer [21] was a 0.42m thick layer of compact orange sand with frequent amounts of flint gravel, and above this were layers [19] and [20] also recorded in the manhole trench (5.1 above). Hardcore layer [20] was 0.18m thick and formed a bedding layer for the modern tarmac car park surface [19] which was 0.1m thick.

6.0 FINDS

The single artefact recovered was processed and recorded by count and weight, and recorded in an Excel spreadsheet and presented in Appendix 2a.

6.1 Ceramic Building Material

by Lucy Talbot

A fragment of orange coloured, medium sandy, 18th- to 19th-century flat roof tile, weighing 33g, was recovered from road makeup deposit [15].

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

A number of service trenches were encountered which truncated the earlier road make-up deposits.

The earliest deposit encountered was a layer of sand and gravel laid directly on top of the natural clay. This deposit has been dated to the post-medieval period because of the presence of 18th- to 19th-century tile fragments. However the presence of this material does not exclude the possibility that this sand and gravel deposit may represent a make-up layer for Roman road, with the tile being incorporated from later repairs or intrusions.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the contractors on site, Claret Civil Engineering for their cooperation.

Monitoring was carried out by the author.

The finds were washed, recorded and reported on by Lucy Talbot.

The illustrations were completed by David Dobson and the report edited by Jayne Bown.

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Cut	Service Trench		Water pipe	Modern
2	Deposit		1	Hoggin backfill	Modern
3	Cut	Service Trench		Drain	Modern
4	Deposit		3	Soily backfill	Modern
5	Cut	Service Trench		Service trench	Modern
6	Deposit		5	Backfill	Modern
7	Cut	Service Trench		Drain pipe x3	Modern
8	Deposit		8	Backfill	Modern
9	Masonry		26	Modern brick wall	Modern
10	Deposit		26	Concrete foundation for 9	Modern
11	Deposit			Modern tarmac road surface	Modern
12	Deposit			hoggin for 11	Modern
13	Deposit			Old tarmac road surface	Modern
14	Deposit			Hoggin	Modern
15	Deposit			Road makeup	Post-medieval
16	Deposit		26	Mixed soil	Modern
17	Deposit		26	Hoggin	Modern
18	Deposit			Granite setts	Modern
19	Deposit			Tarmac car park surface	Modern
20	Deposit			Hardcore for 19	Modern
21	Deposit			Hoggin	Modern
22	Deposit			Backfill, similar to 25	Modern
23	Deposit			Soil	Modern
24	Cut	Service Trench		Sewer	Modern
25	Deposit		24	Backfill, similar to 22	Modern
26	Cut			Foundation trench	Modern

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Feature	Total
Modern	Service Trench	4
	Foundation Trench	1
	Wall	1

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
15	Ceramic Building Material	1	33g	Post-medieval	Flat roof tile

Appendix 2b: Oasis Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Post-medieval	Ceramic Building Material	1