

Report 2829



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An Archaeological Watching Brief on the Swanton Morley to East Dereham Raw Water Main

ENF127890



Prepared for
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Figure 1 Site location

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Plate 1 The stripped easement, showing subsoil layer (2)

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Location: | East Dereham, Hoe and Swanton Morley, Norfolk |
| District: | Breckland |
| Planning ref.: | n/a |
| Grid Ref.: | TF 9917 1417 – TG 0035 1618 |
| HER No.: | ENF127890 |
| OASIS Ref.: | 125083 |
| Client: | Anglian Water Services Ltd. |
| Dates of Fieldwork: | 16-18 November 2011 |

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted for Anglian Water Services during the topsoil strip for the easement associated with the installation of a new water main between Swanton Morley and East Dereham.

The absence of archaeological features revealed by this project, despite its close proximity to the deserted medieval village of Hoe (adjacent to the west), is probably due to two factors. Firstly the easement strip only stripped the topsoil, leaving subsoil in place, potentially masking any remains. Secondly, the presence of this subsoil layer suggests that the site was located away from the settlement and was subject to intensive arable agriculture, which helped to form this subsoil layer in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Installation of a water main by Anglian Water Services Limited between Swanton Morley and East Dereham in Norfolk (Fig. 1) necessitate archaeological monitoring along part of the route. Only the open-cut element located close to Swanton Morley was monitored, as the rest of the pipe route was to be installed using a mole plough. Monitoring of the topsoil strip for the easement was necessitated due to its location adjacent to Hoe Hall, which is on the site of a medieval deserted village.

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Anglian Water and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (Ref. CNF42734). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement.

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* (Department of Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

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.

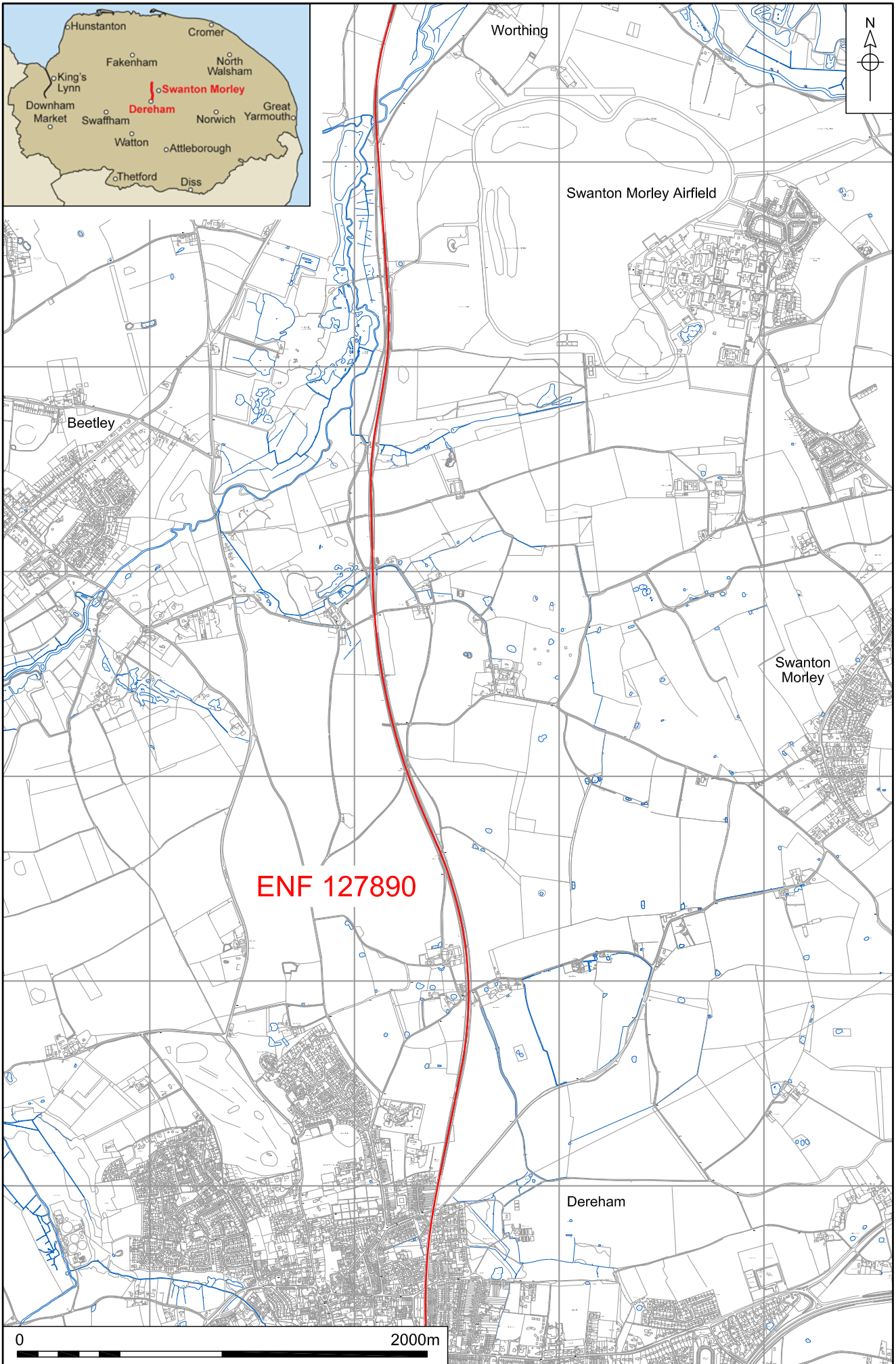


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:25,000

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site was located on flat land in an area of gently rolling terrain, at a height of c.50m OD, to the west of Swanton Morley and to the north of East Dereham.

The pipeline was located in an area of Anglian glacial and fluvial silts and clays (BGS 1991) above Cretaceous upper chalk (BGS 1985).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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

Because only a small part of the whole project was subject to monitoring, only the background of that area is described below.

Medieval and post-medieval finds have been found in one of the fields through which the pipe passed (NHER MNF57085). A Late Saxon strap distributor (NHER MNF57086) has also been found in this field.

Two sites are recorded adjacent to the monitored stretch of pipe route.

Local stories assert that a field immediately to the south of the watching brief area contains substantial building foundations and a well which contained a treasure chest (NHER MNF14243).

Four sherds of medieval pottery (NHER MNF13747) were found in 1978 just to the west of the area monitored. Those four sherds were found within the bounds of a possible landscaped park (NHER MNF48876) belonging to Hoe Hall. Also within the park are earthworks of the deserted medieval village of Hoe (NHER MNF2810). Hoe Hall itself (NHER MNF2832) is a 17th-century brick-built house with later additions, within the site of a medieval moat.

According to the enclosure map (possibly dated to 1814), the watching brief area lies within fields named Colmans Grove and Eighteen Acres, both belonging to Sir John Lambe (<http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/Emap>).

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this watching brief was to investigate and record archaeological remains that were affected by groundworks for the scheme.

The Brief required that most of the route be constantly monitored. The contractors decided to lay the pipe using a mole plough and as a result Norfolk Historic Environment Service amended the requirement to focus on the north-eastern part of the route (the only part subject to open cut techniques).

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.

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

5.0 RESULTS

Only north-eastern part of the pipeline was monitored as this was the only area to be subjected to an easement strip. The rest of the pipeline was installed using a mole plough.

The stripped easement was subjected to a walk-over survey and was metal detected. Two deposits (topsoil and subsoil) were recorded.



Plate 1. The stripped easement, showing subsoil layer (2)

Topsoil (1) was 0.30-0.35m deep and was a pale brown loam with rare flint gravel containing two sherds of medieval pottery, one medieval livery or horse harness pendant and a possibly Bronze Age flint blade.

Subsoil (2) was not stripped, but was visible on the surface of the stripped area. It was a mid greyish brown clayey silt with occasional flints (Plate 1).

The topsoil appeared deepest to the south-east of the stripped area and shallower towards the north and west, where patches of yellow sandy clay natural were exposed. No finds were recovered from subsoil (2)

6.0 FINDS

The finds were processed and recorded by count and weight, and an Excel spreadsheet was produced outlining broad dating. Each material type has been considered separately and is described below ordered by material. A list of the finds in context order can be found in Appendix 2a.

6.1 Pottery

by Lucy Talbot

The site produced two conjoining sherds of pottery weighing 26g. The assemblage was recorded by count and weight, with fabric and form identified.

6.1.1 Medieval

The sherds, recovered from topsoil (1) are identified as local medieval unglazed ware (LMU), dating from the 11th to 14th century (Jennings 1981). The fabric, with frequent quartz inclusions is oxidised internally and, although reduced externally, has, in addition, been exposed to heat and sooting, probably from use as a cooking vessel. The form is a steep sided bowl with a thickened rim and possible trimming marks.

6.2 Flint

by Lucy Talbot

A single worked flint of good quality, local mid to dark grey material weighing 7g, was collected from the topsoil (1). Identified as a possible modified blade with a single dorsal flake scar and possible re-touch along one edge, this artefact also displays a hinge fracture at one end, again with possible re-touch, suggesting a tentative Bronze Age date.

6.3 Metal Finds

by Rebecca Sillwood

Three metal finds were recovered during this watching brief, with only one of the objects in a datable form.

A copper alloy horse harness pendant or livery collar pendant was found in topsoil (1). The piece is much worn but appears to have the form of an eagle with its wings spread either side and its tail and feet at the base, with four open-work apertures between the elements. The loop at the upper edge is incomplete. The piece is similar to an example illustrated in Ashley (2002, 26, fig. 25, no.2), which may be more likely to be a livery pendant rather than horse harness. The piece is medieval, likely to be of 13th- to 14th-century date.

The remaining finds are both undatable and also come from the topsoil (1). These comprise a cast fragment of copper alloy, which does not appear to be modern, although its function and specific date cannot be determined and a fragment of lead strip or sheet, with ragged edges was also recovered.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The absence of archaeological features revealed by this project, despite its close proximity to the deserted medieval of Hoe, is somewhat surprising but is probably due to two factors.

The stripping of topsoil along the easement left the subsoil in place, potentially masking any remains that may have been present. This subsoil layer indicates that the monitored site was located away from the settlement and was in an area subject to an intensive arable agriculture regime in the medieval and post-medieval periods which helped to form the subsoil layer.

Acknowledgements

Thanks must be given to Anglian Water Services Limited for commissioning and funding this project and to James Albone for writing the brief.

The monitoring was conducted by Mick Boyle.

The finds were washed and recorded by Lucy Talbot. The pottery and flint were reported on by Lucy Talbot, whilst Rebecca Sillwood analysed the metal finds.

This report was edited by Jayne Bown and the illustrations completed by David Dobson.

Sources

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ashley, S. | 2002 | <i>Medieval Armorial Horse Furniture in Norfolk</i> . East Anglian Archaeology No. 101 |
| (BGS) British Geological Survey | 1985 | <i>East Anglia Sheet 52N 00 Solid Geology</i> |
| (BGS) British Geological Survey | 1991 | <i>East Anglia Sheet 52N 00 Quaternary</i> |
| Department for Communities and Local Government | 2010 | <i>Planning Policy Statement 5</i> , TSO, Norwich |
| Jennings, S. | 1981 | <i>Eighteen Centuries of Pottery from Norwich</i> . East Anglian Archaeology No. 13 |

<http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/Emap> Accessed 19.01.12

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

| Context | Category | Cut Type | Fill Of | Description | Period |
|---------|----------|----------|---------|-------------|--------|
| 1 | Deposit | | | Topsoil | |
| 2 | Deposit | | | Subsoil | |

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

No features were present

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

| Context | Material | Qty | Wt | Period | Notes |
|---------|----------------|-----|-----|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Pottery | 2 | 26g | Medieval | |
| 1 | Flint – Struck | 1 | 7g | Prehistoric | |
| 1 | Copper-Alloy | 1 | 4g | Medieval | Horse Harness Pendant; H28 W17 |
| 1 | Copper-Alloy | 1 | 13g | Unknown | Cast lump |
| 1 | Lead | 1 | 19g | Unknown | Strip fragment |

Appendix 2b: Oasis Table for Finds

| Period | Material | Total |
|-------------|----------------|-------|
| Prehistoric | Flint – Struck | 1 |
| Medieval | Copper-Alloy | 1 |
| | Pottery | 2 |
| Unknown | Copper-Alloy | 1 |
| | Lead | 1 |