

Report 2223



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An Archaeological Watching Brief on the Potter Heigham to Martham Main Replacement Scheme

ENF125305



Prepared for
Anglian Water Services Ltd



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Location: Potter Heigham to Martham, Norfolk
District: Great Yarmouth Norfolk
Grid Ref.: TG 44145 18545 – TG 44405 18585; TG 44905 18555
– TG 45190 18685; TG 45795 18990 -TG45930 18995
HER No.: ENF125305
OASIS Ref.: 90488
Client: Anglian Water Services Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork: 6 October – 23 November 2010

Summary

Three areas located in the eastern half of the route of the Potter Heigham to Martham water main were archaeologically monitored during excavation by Balfour Beatty for Anglian Water Services for a replacement water main.

No archaeologically significant metal-detected finds were recovered from the topsoil, and no archaeological features, deposits or finds were revealed after topsoil stripping or in the pipe trenches.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

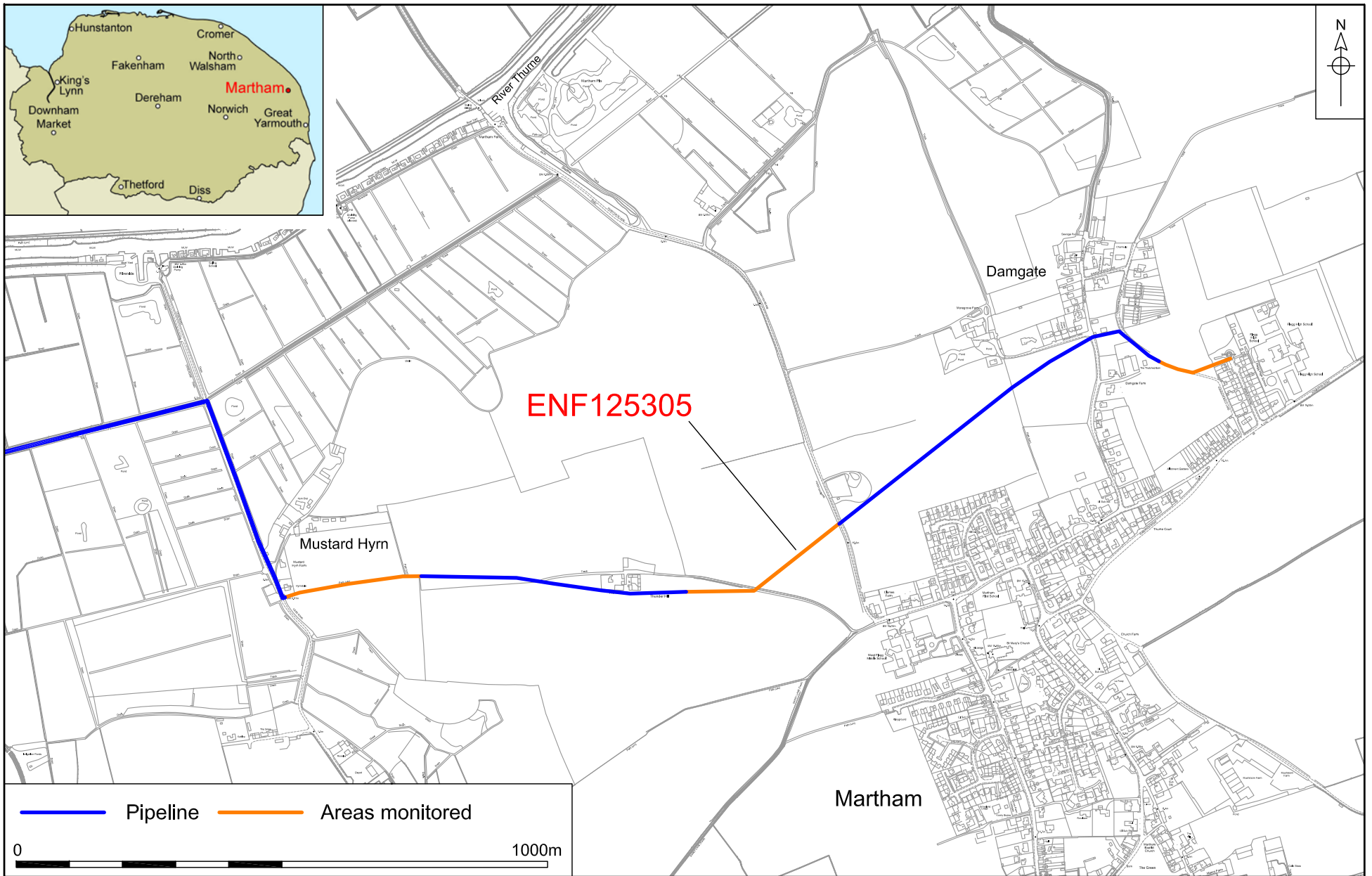
The route of the water main replacement was located between Potter Heigham and Martham in north-east Norfolk (Fig 1). Three sections of the route were considered by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (formerly Norfolk Landscape Archaeology) to be archaeologically sensitive and to require archaeological monitoring (two of the areas were subject to regular monitoring and the other necessitated constant monitoring). The areas were monitored both during the stripping of topsoil and the subsequent excavation of a pipe trench

This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (NHES) (Ref: CNF42276, James Albone) and a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. BAU2223/DW).

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 NAU Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

The project was commissioned and funded by Anglian Water Services Ltd.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:10,000

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The villages of Potter Heigham and Martham are located on level or gently sloping interfluves where the topsoils are Stagnogleyic argillic coarse loamy brown earths. Between the villages are Pelo alluvial gley soils, a marine alluvium comprising clayey coarse silts (www.bgs.ac.uk). Both deposits overlie Norfolk Crag, relatively recent marine sands and gravels. This in turn covers Upper Cretaceous white chalk bedrock.

The topsoil in the monitored areas measured between 0.30m and 0.40m in depth, and the pipe trench itself was excavated to 1.20m depth into pale yellow sand. The same observation was made in each of the three areas monitored (Plate 1 below).



Plate 1. Natural deposits into which pipe trench was cut

The pipeline runs east to west, sloping gently down to the west. The approximate elevations of the three monitored areas (from east to west) were Mustard Hyn Farm at 0-5m OD, Thunder Hill Farm at 10m OD and west of the water tower at 15m OD.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The village of Potter Heigham could have derived its name from two sources: it may have been the site of Roman pottery production and it was later the manor of a 'kings' man' Godric de Heigham (www.domesdaybook.co.uk). The village is located on the River Thurne and has a twelfth-century church and a medieval bridge which crosses the river. The bridge has such a low arch that water traffic is very limited, especially when the river is high and in the past this made Potter Heigham a terminus for water borne trade, as it is today for leisure boats.

Martham has Saxon origins and its name is derived from 'the farm of the marten', or polecat; an animal which was still common in the area until the nineteenth century. There is place name evidence that after AD800 Danes settled nearby (for example Hemsby, Filby and Ormesby). all of which have names of Danish origin but Martham was apparently large enough to absorb the newcomers and retain its Saxon name. After the Norman Conquest in 1066 Martham manor belonged to the bishop of Thetford, Herbert de Losinga, who built Norwich cathedral and priory, to which he gave his lands in Martham.

By the beginning of the 14th century Martham had a population of about 1000 and even after the Black Death was wealthy enough to sustain the building a very large parish church (known colloquially as 'the cathedral of the Fleggs'). After the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century, the manor was leased to a series of (often absentee) landlords. Subsequently Martham was never dominated by any one trade or industry, although bricks were made at several locations in the parish. This gives the older houses a similar appearance, being built of so-called 'Norfolk reds' (www.martham.gov.uk).

An HER search of the immediate vicinity of the route of the water main between Potter Heigham and Martham revealed evidence of all periods, mainly finds recovered by metal detectorists. The finds include worked flint of Upper Palaeolithic, Neolithic, and Bronze Age date; pottery of Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post medieval pottery; Roman coins, a Saxon brooch and medieval sword fittings.

There are four known sites directly affected by the route; NHER 14962 to the south-east of Mustard Hyn Farm, NHERs 42803 and 41693 east of Thunder Hill Farm and NHER 37081 south of the water tower in Martham.

Foundations of a possible building of unknown date located south-east of Mustard Hyn Farm (NHER 14962) were recorded in 1979 having been sighted several years earlier by the farmer. However subsequent cartographic study in 2006 as part of the Norfolk Mapping Programme failed to corroborate this evidence.

The route just crosses the northern corner of site NHER 42803 east of Thunder Hill. A Roman coin, medieval sword chape and buckle and a post-medieval coin were found here during a metal detector survey in 2005.

The water main route continues north-eastwards through site NHER41693 which is another multi-period site discovered by metal-detecting. Finds have been reported in 2003, 2007 and 2008 and include Upper Paleolithic and Neolithic flint implements, Roman coins, a Late Saxon disc brooch, medieval and post-medieval metal finds and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery.

Immediately south of the water tower in Martham is the location of an assemblage of over fifty 3rd- to 4th-century Roman coins (NHER 37081) found in 1975.

Recorded within 500m of the monitored route from west to east (excluding listed buildings) are undated animal remains (NHER 49700), a cannonball (NHER 14963), multi-period finds and possible building foundations (NHER 8528), the site of a possible ring ditch (NHER 45105), a post-medieval field boundary (NHER 45106), two 3rd-century Roman coins (NHER 23165), multi-period objects found in 2004 and 2009 (NHER 40822), a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery (NHER 11798), a post-medieval spoon from Mustard Hyrn Farm (NHER 19374 - presumably an inaccurate grid reference as Mustard Hyrn Farm lies over two km to the west), two horse teeth found during construction of a school extension in 1993 (NHER 49701), the site of a post-medieval brickworks (NHER 16667) and cropmarks of a possible double-ditched boundary or trackway of unknown date.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed during groundworks associated with the replacement of a water main between Potter Heigham and Martham in north-east Norfolk.

The Brief required that three separate parts of the route be monitored all situated in the eastern half of the route, closest to Martham. Running from west to east these areas were located south of Mustard Hyrn Farm (TG 44145 18545 to TG 44405 18585, Regular Attendance), east of Thunder Hill Farm (TG 44905 18555 to TG 45190 18685, Regular Attendance) and along Damgate Back Lane, near to the Water Tower (TG 45795 18990 to TG 45930 18995, Constant Attendance). The lengths of these three areas were (from west to east respectively) 260m, 330m and 150m, giving a total of 740m comprising approximately one quarter of the length of the whole route.

The easement was stripped of topsoil to a depth of 0.30m-0.40m across its entire width (12m) using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. A tapered trenching bucket was used to excavate the pipe trench itself which created a trench 1m wide at the surface and 0.50m wide at its base (Plate 1).

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector.

Due to the lack of suitable deposits, no environmental samples were taken.

Site conditions were occasionally wet and muddy and work was delayed for one day due to flooding of the easement to the east of Thunder Hill Farm.

5.0 RESULTS

In each of the three areas the removal of the topsoil revealed no archaeological features. Spoil heaps were scanned by eye and by metal detector however only obviously modern metal objects were recovered (these were not retained).

Similarly, during monitoring of the excavation of the pipe trench in the three areas, no archaeological features or deposits were seen.



Plate 2. Pipeline easement and spoil heaps

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

Despite finds of Roman coins near the water tower in Martham, and metal detected finds of all periods in the fields to the north and south of the pipeline to the east of Thunder Hill Farm, recorded in the Historic Environment Record, no archaeological features or finds were revealed during this watching brief.

Acknowledgements

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David Dobson prepared the figures and produced the report; it was edited by Jayne Bown.

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