

NGLA7600 Runnymede to Ashford, Surrey: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

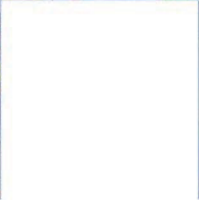
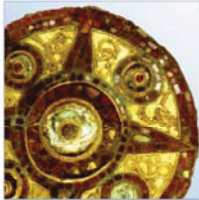
Planning Application: N/A

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 0185 7172 - TQ 0591 7164

AOC Project No: 31042

Site Code: NAG11

Date: January 2012



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

NGLA7600 Runnymede to Ashford, Surrey: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

On Behalf of: **Amec Environment & Infrastructure Ltd**
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National Grid Reference (NGR): TQ 0185 7172 - TQ 0591 7164

AOC Project No: 31042

Prepared by: Ian Hogg

Illustration by: Jonathan Moller

Date of Fieldwork: 2nd September and 10th October 2011

Date of Report: January 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Non-Technical Summary

Between the 2nd September and 10th October 2011 AOC Archaeology Group undertook a watching brief along the route of the Runnymede to Ashford gas pipeline. The watching brief was commissioned by AMEC UK Ltd. This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief, undertaken during the excavation of access pits for the relining of the pipeline.

Modern backfill from the original pipeline excavations was observed and was overlain by topsoil deposits. No archaeological remains were observed.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following document is a report detailing the results of a watching brief undertaken along the route of a gas main referred to as NGLA7600. The route of the gas main is between Runnymede Bridge (NGR 501853, 171742) in the west and Ashford in the east (NGR 505910, 171641) in the county of Surrey. The watching brief was maintained where the route passed through Shortwood Common to the north-east of Staines (Figure 1).
- 1.2 Although the scheme was undertaken under permitted development rights, a best practice approach was considered appropriate.
- 1.3 The proposed works associated with NGLA7600 included the following:
- Excavation of access pits of c. 3 m by 3 m to c. 1.5 m in depth at existing valve locations (Figures 1 and 2).
 - The insertion of a plastic sleeve within the existing iron pipe between the valve locations.
 - If the plastic pipe was halted during the insertion process by a blockage or other form of obstruction such as an angle in the pipe, the excavation of an access trench of 2 m by 1 m to the pipe in order to free it.
- 1.4 There was thought to be potential for sub-surface archaeological remains to survive in key locations along the route of the gas main, including Shortwood Common. Consequently, it was suggested that a watching brief was maintained only on areas of open ground where disturbance is relatively minimal.

2 Planning Background

- 2.1 National Grid was required, under a Health and Safety Executive Enforcement Policy (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/supply/mainsreplacement/irongasmain.htm>) to replace ageing cast iron gas mains nationwide. Together with Skanska, The North London Gas Alliance was formed to undertake this work across the North London and East Anglia Networks.
- 2.2 The scale and nature of the works were determined to constitute permitted development under Part 17, Class G, of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
- 2.3 It was, nevertheless, proposed that good practice was followed in the spirit of local and national planning policies pertaining to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 2.4 The Surrey Heritage Conservation Team considered that a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (watching brief) was appropriate during excavations at key locations along the route of gas main to be repaired.
- 2.5 The methodology for the watching brief was set out in a written scheme of investigation (AOC 2011) that was approved by the Surrey Heritage Conservation Team prior to the start of the work.

3 Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The gas main was located in a landscape composed of built up areas, open common, major and minor roadways and former quarries between Runnymede and Ashford in Surrey (Figures 1). The gas main is situated underground along the majority of the route to be replaced with the exception of the section over the Thames which runs beneath the elevated carriageway of the M25.

- 3.2 Shortwood Common is an alluvial meadow lying close to the junction of the A30 and A308 (Crooked Billet Roundabout), to the immediate north-east of Staines (centred on NGR 504710, 171810).

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 Parts of the route were in sensitive locations in terms of the historic environment. The eastern terminus at Runnymede Bridge was close to a scheduled monument and an area into which archaeological remains related to the monument might have extended.
- 4.2 Approximately 800 m to the north of this, the gas main passes along the edge of a former quarry which is known to have contained archaeological remains.
- 4.3 After following the embankment of the A30, the gas main passes beneath Shortwood Common and thence along the edge of an operational quarry site. Previous archaeological work at this site has recorded extensive Bronze Age and later settlement and land use remains.

5 Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The archaeological monitoring aimed to identify and record the presence, location, extent and pattern of any surviving archaeological remains revealed during the excavation of access pits at valve locations in open areas..
- 5.2 The archaeological monitoring considered the regional context within which any revealed archaeological evidence rests and aimed to highlight any research priorities relevant to understanding the archaeology of the area.
- 5.3 The overall aim of the archaeological monitoring was to provide information sufficient to identify and provide a limited record of the presence, type, date and condition of any surviving archaeological remains where they were encountered during the repair operation.
- 5.4 The investigations necessitated by the proposed works presented an opportunity to address the following research questions:
- The general usage/occupation sequence of the area over time in as much as this is possible to determine through widely distributed small scale excavations;
 - The presence and character of any further surviving remains of Bronze Age and later settlement in the Ashford Park Area; and
 - The presence and character of any settlement remains within Shortwood Common.
- 5.5 All fieldwork and reportage was carried out with these research questions in mind.

6 Methodology

- 6.1 The watching brief was undertaken between the 2nd September and 10th October 2011. It involved the archaeological monitoring of the excavation of access pits where the gas pipeline crossed Shortwood Common; the spoil was also scanned for finds.
- 6.2 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3rd Edition) (MoL 1994).
- 6.3 The monitoring, recording and reporting conform to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:

- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
- English Heritage – Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation Reports (Guidelines) (EH 1992).
- English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998).
- English Heritage – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
- English Heritage – Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (EH 2006)
- Institute for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008a).
- Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (IfA 2008b).
- Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
- Museum of London – Archaeological Site Manual (Third Edition) (MoL 1994).
- Museum of London – A Research Framework for London Archaeology (Mol 2002).
- RESCUE & ICON – First Aid for Finds (RESCUE & ICON 2001).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).

6.4 Archaeological recording consisted of:

- Limited hand cleaning of deposits sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
- A scaled photographic record of representative exposed features, sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
- A record of the levels of deposits with reference to the Ordnance Datum.
- Annotations of existing plans provided by the client and sections of exposed deposits drawn at 1:20 scale.

6.5 A unique site code for the project (NAG11) was used as the site identifier for all records produced.

6.6 The monitoring was undertaken by Ian Hogg and Tara Fidler under the overall direction of Paul Mason, Project Manager, and Dr Stephen Townend, Historic Environment Consultant for Amec UK Ltd. The watching brief was monitored by the Heritage Conservation Team at Surrey County Council.

7 Results

7.1 Access Pit Excavations

7.1.1 The excavation of two access pits was monitored (Figure 2). Both pits measured 3.00m x 3.00m in plan and 1.50m deep. In both pits modern backfill (101) was observed, it consisted of mid orangey brown silty sand with occasional CBM fragments; it was 1.30m thick. The made ground was sealed by a 0.20m thick deposit of mid brownish grey sandy silt topsoil (100). The natural deposits were not observed as the pits were only excavated within the original pipeline cut and only extended to the depth of the pipe itself.

8 Finds and Environmental Samples

- 8.1 No finds were retained from the site; the only finds observed were small modern CBM fragments within the made ground (101). No environmental samples were taken.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The access pits were only excavated within the backfill from the previous pipeline excavations and as a result the natural deposits were not observed.
- 9.2 The modern backfill from the original pipeline excavations was overlain by topsoil deposits. No in situ finds were observed.
- 9.3 No further work is required due to the absence of archaeological remains. Publication will be through the ADS website.

10. Publication and Archive Deposition

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project, publication will be restricted to a summary of results in the Surrey Archaeological Review, and via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).
- 10.2 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, photographs and digital records will be deposited with local museum.

11 Bibliography

- AOC Archaeology Group Ltd (2011) *NGLA 7600 Runnymede to Ashford, Surrey; A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*
- English Heritage (1991) *Management of Archaeological Projects*
- English Heritage (1998) *Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* (English Heritage London Region)
- English Heritage (1992) *Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation Reports*
- English Heritage (2002) *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*
- English Heritage (2006) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*
- Institute for Archaeologists (2008a) *Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work*
- Institute for Archaeologists (2008b) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*
- Institute for Archaeologists (2010) *Code of Conduct*
- Museum of London (1994) *Archaeological Site Manual (3rd ed)*
- Museum of London (2002) *A Research Framework for London Archaeology*
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- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1983) *Conservation Guidelines No 2*
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990) *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice*

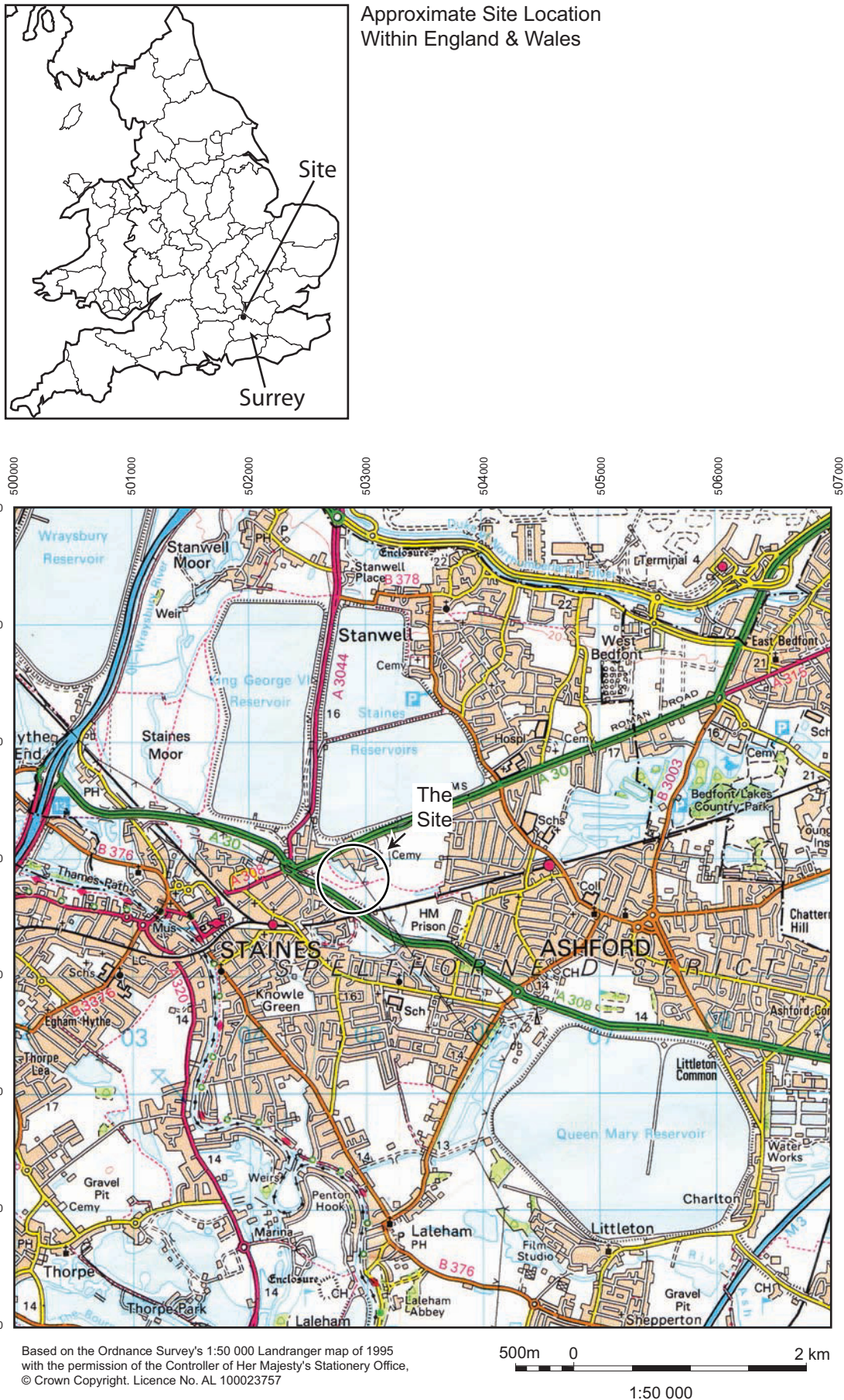
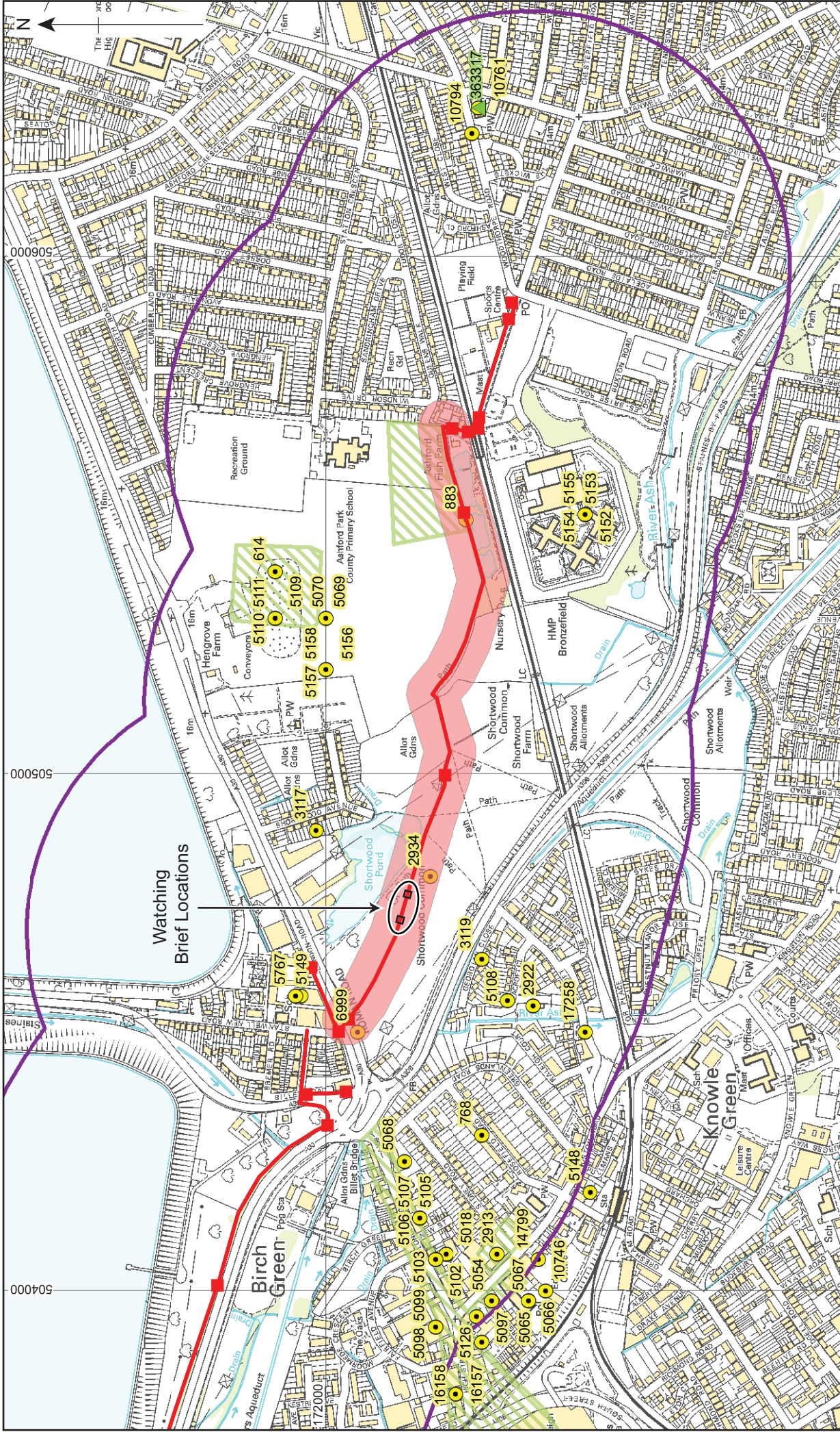


Figure 1: Site Location



Based on the Plan Produced by Entec

— Route of NGLA7600
 Watching Brief Locations (Not To Scale)
Figure 2: Detailed Site / Watching Brief Location Plan



Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Thickness
100	Topsoil	3.00m	3.00m	0.20m
101	Backfill from original pipeline excavation	3.00m	3.00m	1.30m

Appendix B – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-105270

Project details

Project name National Grid, Staines

Short description of the project An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken along the route of a gas pipeline between Runnymede and Ashford, Surrey. The monitoring focussed on the excavation of two access pits. Modern backfill from the previous pipeline excavations was observed and was overlain by modern topsoil.

Project dates Start: 02-09-2011 End: 10-10-2011

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference NAG11 - Sitecode codes

Any associated project reference 31042 - Contracting Unit No. codes

Type of project Recording project

Current Land use Other 15 - Other

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

Project location

Country England

Site location SURREY SPELTHORNE ASHFORD Runnymede to Ashford

Study area 4.46 Kilometres

Site coordinates TQ 0185 7172 51.4348164307 -0.534602815084 51 26 05 N 000 32 04 W
Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation AOC Archaeology

Project brief originator Surrey County Council

Project design originator Entec UK LTD

Project director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Ian Hogg

Type of sponsor/funding body Consultancy

Name of sponsor/funding body AMEC UK

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Physical Archive recipient Spelthorne Museum

Digital Archive recipient Spelthorne Museum

Digital Contents 'none'

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

available

Paper recipient Archive Spelthorne Museum

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper available Media 'Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

Entered by Ian Hogg (ian.hogg@aocarchaeology.com)

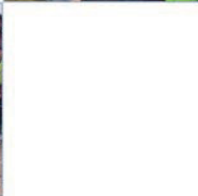
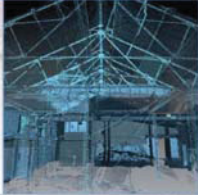
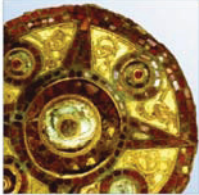
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OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

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