



Severn Trent Water Mains Renewal, Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief



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Address Capital and Commercial Services
Raynesway
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Site location Main Street, Cock Lane, Chapel Lane, Orton Lane, Norton Juxta Twycross

County Leicestershire

National grid reference (NGR) Main Street 432318 306795 (SK 32318 06795)
Cock Lane 432204 306873 (SK 32204 06873)
Chapel Lane 432266 306762 (SK 32266 06762)
Orton Lane 432264 307016 (SK 32264 07016)

Planning authority Leicestershire County Council

Museum name Leicestershire County Council Museum

Museum accession code X.A35.2022

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Severn Trent Water to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works relating to the renewal of an existing water mains at Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire, CV9 3PU. The watching brief monitored the excavation of three sections of pipe trench around the village. The areas of trenching centred on NGRs: 432318 306795; 432204 306873; 432266 306762 and 432264 307016.

The watching brief was carried out as part of a programme of archaeological works. Earlier work comprised the archaeological monitoring of eight trenches around the village (Wessex Archaeology 2022). The watching brief was undertaken 1–7 June and 19 September 2023.

No archaeological deposits or features were located in any of the trenches. The geological substrate was reached at 0.23–0.8 m below ground level. The only finds recovered were modern in date. Due to the nature of the deposits encountered, no environmental samples were taken.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Severn Trent Water for commissioning the archaeological watching brief, in particular Meghan Fletcher. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of the Team Manager (Heritage), who monitored the project for Leicestershire County Council.



Severn Trent Water Mains Renewal, Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Severn Trent Water to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works relating to the renewal of existing water mains. The works are centred on Main Street (SK 32318 06795), Cock Lane (SK 32204 06873), Chapel Lane (SK 32266 06762), Orton Lane (SK 32264 07016), Shelford Lane (SK 32400, 07076) and Nob Hill (SK 32405, 06771) at Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire, CV9 3PU (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The watching brief was carried out as part of a programme of archaeological works. Earlier work comprised the archaeological monitoring of eight trenches around the village (Wessex Archaeology 2022).

1.1.3 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed (Wessex Archaeology 2023). The Team Manager (Heritage) for Leicestershire County Council, approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing. The watching brief was undertaken 1–7 June and 19 September 2023.

1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the watching brief, to interpret the results within their local or regional context (or otherwise), and to assess their potential to address the aims outlined in the WSI, thereby making available information about the archaeological resource (a preservation by record).

1.3 Location, topography and geology

1.3.1 The watching brief was located at Main Street, Cock Lane, Chapel Lane and Orton Lane, in the village of Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire, close to the Warwickshire border; 2.2 km north-west of the village of Twycross and 10.4 km south-west of the town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

1.3.2 Existing ground levels lie at 110 m above Ordnance Datum at Cottage Lane, increasing to 117 m at Main Street.

1.3.3 The underlying geology is mapped as Gunthorpe Member – Mudstone, with a band of Gunthorpe Member – Siltstone Dolomitic along parts of Main Street. There are no superficial deposits recorded across much of Norton Juxta Twycross, although superficial deposits of Thrussington Till Member – Diamicton are recorded as being present at the end of Chapel Lane (British Geological Survey 2023).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 A summary of the historical and archaeological background from the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023) is presented below.

2.2 Previous investigations related to the development

Watching Brief (2000–2001)

2.2.1 A watching brief, undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Service during water mains renewal between December 2000 and January 2001, identified sections of undated cobble surface in several places along Main Street and Wood Lane (Smith 2002).

Watching Brief (2022)

2.2.2 A total of eight trenches were monitored around the village of Norton Juxta Twycross (Wessex Archaeology 2022) during earlier works relating to the current project. Natural substrate was observed in seven of the eight trenches, at between 0.1 m and 0.6 m below ground level. No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were located in any of the trenches.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

2.3.1 The village of Norton Juxta Twycross was likely founded by the Anglo-Saxons in the 8th or 9th century. The village was granted a charter in 951 by King Æthelred, recorded as 'Northton'.

2.3.2 Norton is listed in the *Domesday Book* (Open Domesday 2023) as a very small village consisting of just four households belonging to two small holders, a priest and one villager. It is recorded that there were eight acres of meadow and land for at least seven ploughs.

2.3.3 The Hearth Tax of 1664 recorded a total of sixteen families living within Norton.

2.3.4 Previously an independent parish, by 1839 Norton was a chapelry within the Orton on the Hill parish; it currently resides in the parish of Appleby Magna.

2.3.5 There are four listed buildings within the village, both situated on Orton Lane:

- The Moore's Arms public house (Grade II), which was built in the mid- to late 18th century (NHLE ref 1361350).
- the Church of the Holy Trinity (Grade II*), which was built in the early 14th century but underwent heavy restoration in 1841 (NHLE ref 1294757).
- within the ground of the church is the grade II listed, '...pair of recumbent effigies' located approximately 4 m south-east of the chancel (NHLE ref 1074182)
- the Grade II listed William Glen Memorial (NHLE ref 1074181), also located within the church grounds, approximately 10 m south-east of the chancel.

2.3.6 The current street layout in the village, comprising Orton Lane, Main Street and Cock Lane appears little changed since the production of the 1885 Ordnance Survey map.



3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The aims of the watching brief, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023) and as defined in the ClfA *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), were to:

- allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of the development or other works;
- provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and
- guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

3.2 Objectives

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the objectives of the watching brief, also defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023), were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results of the watching brief.

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methodology set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

4.2.1 The watching brief monitored the machine excavation of selected sections of a new water pipe trench along a designated route (Fig. 1). The monitored trenches were numbered 9–11 and were concentrated around the junctions at Cock Lane and Orton Lane, and Cock Lane and Main Street.



- 4.2.2 During the first week, the archaeologist delivered a 'Toolbox Talk' (Wessex Archaeology 2023; Appendix 2) to groundworkers who then monitored their own works for any archaeologically significant features.
- 4.2.3 Where necessary, the surfaces of uncovered archaeological deposits were cleaned by hand to aid visual definition. A sample of archaeological features and deposits was hand-excavated, sufficient to address the aims of the watching brief.
- 4.2.4 Spoil from machine stripping and hand-excavated archaeological deposits was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval. Artefacts were collected and bagged by context. All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained.

4.3 Recording

- 4.3.1 The site record comprises standard Wessex Archaeology trench recording sheets, which were filled out using a digital tablet.
- 4.3.2 All monitored trenches were located on the mains renewal scheme plan (figure 1 in the Wessex Archaeology WSI) provided by the client.
- 4.3.3 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.4 Finds and environmental strategies

- 4.4.1 Strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of finds and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023). The treatment of artefacts was in general accordance with: *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* (ClfA 2014b) and ClfA's *Toolkit for Specialist Reporting* (2022; Type 1: Description).

4.5 Monitoring

- 4.5.1 The Team Manager (Heritage) monitored the watching brief on behalf of the LPA. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with the client and the Team Manager (Heritage).

5 STRATIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

5.1 Soil sequence and natural deposits

- 5.1.1 Descriptions of the stratigraphic sequence in each trench are presented in Appendix 1. Representative sections are shown in figures 2–5.
- 5.1.2 The natural substrate was observed in all three trenches, at between 0.5 m and 0.8 m below ground level. A road bedding layer overlaid the natural substrate in trench 11 and at the northern end of trench 9, while in trench 10 and at the southern end of trench 9 the geology was sealed by a ground levelling or raising layer (made ground). The ground surface comprised a tarmac road surface. A fragment of modern CBM was recovered from the road bedding layer in trench 9, while a modern glass bottle was found in the made ground layer in trench 10.
- 5.1.3 No archaeological features cut into either the levelling layers or the natural.



6 FINDS EVIDENCE

- 6.1.1 The only finds retained during the watching brief consist of a flake (weighing 13 g) of ceramic building material from bedding layer 105 (trench 9) and a complete glass bottle (300 g) from made ground deposit 202 (trench 10).
- 6.1.2 None of the original surfaces survive on the scrap of ceramic building material, making more precise identification of the brick/tile type impossible. However, the very hard-fired, fine-grained nature of the fabric suggest that it is most likely to be of post-medieval or modern date, although this cannot be demonstrated conclusively.
- 6.1.3 The colourless clear, mould-made, crown-topped glass bottle is embossed with the word FREEMANS just beneath the shoulder and ATHERSTONE just above the base, with the letter F positioned centrally on the underside of the base with smaller letters FCC off to one side. It is of early 20th-century date and was used for mineral waters and/or carbonated drinks.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

- 7.1.1 Due to the nature of the deposits encountered, no soil samples of any type were warranted.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1 The aims and objectives of the investigation were met; the absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts and ecofacts within the trial holes was determined and preserved in record.
- 8.1.2 The outcome of this watching brief supports the conclusions of the 2022 works, namely that the historical centre of Norton Juxta Twycross was most likely further to the north and east, along the north/south axis of Main Street and Orton Lane, where previous investigations have uncovered medieval remains (McLeish 2018) and the medieval church of Holy Trinity is located.

9 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

9.1 Museum

- 9.1.1 The archive resulting from the watching brief is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield. Leicestershire County Council Museum has agreed, in principle, to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the accession code 255450/1: X.A35.2022. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

9.2 Preparation of the archive

Physical archive

- 9.2.1 The physical archive, which includes paper records and artefacts will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Leicestershire County Council Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Brown 2011; ClfA 2014c; SMA 1995).
- 9.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code (255450/255451/X.A35.2022), and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:



- One cardboard box of artefacts, ordered by material type
- Two files of paper records

Digital archive

9.2.3 The digital archive generated by the project, which comprises born-digital data (e.g., site records, photographs and reports), will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, in this instance the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by metadata.

9.3 Selection strategy

9.3.1 It is widely accepted that not all the records and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during the course of an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving Museum.

9.3.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; Wessex Archaeology's internal selection policy) and follows ClfA's *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists, external specialists, local authority, museum) and fully documented in the project archive.

9.3.3 In this instance, given the relatively low level of finds recovery, the selection process has been deferred until after the fieldwork stage was completed. Project-specific proposals for selection are presented below. These proposals are based on recommendations by Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists and will be updated in line with any further comment by other stakeholders (museum, local authority). The selection strategy will be fully documented in the project archive.

9.3.4 Any material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by Wessex Archaeology.

Finds

9.3.5 The ceramic building material fragment is unidentifiable, and the glass bottle is a common type of recent date. Neither of the finds offer any potential for further research and their long-term curation is therefore unwarranted. Discard.

Documentary records

9.3.6 Paper records comprise site registers (other pro forma site records are digital) and reports (written scheme of investigation, client report). All will be retained and deposited with the project archive.

Digital data

9.3.7 The digital data comprise site records (tablet-recorded on site) in spreadsheet format; finds records in spreadsheet format; photographs; reports. All will be deposited, although site photographs will be subject to selection to eliminate poor quality and duplicated images, and any others not considered directly relevant to the archaeology of the site.



9.3.8 In line with current best practice (e.g., Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

9.4 OASIS

9.4.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (<http://oasis.ac.uk>) has been initiated, with key fields completed (Appendix 2). A.pdf version of the final report will be submitted following approval by the Team Manager (Heritage) on behalf of the LPA. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

10 COPYRIGHT

10.1 Archive and report copyright

10.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

10.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

10.2 Third party data copyright

10.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g., Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench tables

| Trench No 9 | | Length 45 m | Width 0.50 m | Depth 1 m |
|----------------|-------------------------|---|--------------|-----------|
| Context Number | Interpretative Category | Description | | Depth BGL |
| 101 | Road | Black tarmac. | | 0.0–0.2 |
| 102 | Made ground | Light grey and orange brown loose sand and stone. | | 0.2–0.6 |
| 103 | Natural | Light blue grey silty clay with abundant silt stone. | | 0.6–0.9 |
| 104 | Natural | Dark red orange silty clay. | | 0.9–1.0 + |
| 105 | Bedding layer | Mid-yellow brown sandy clay with very common rounded cobbles, unsorted. | | 0.2–0.5 |

| Trench No 10 | | Length 2 m | Width 2 m | Depth 1.30 m |
|----------------|-------------------------|--|-----------|--------------|
| Context Number | Interpretative Category | Description | | Depth BGL |
| 201 | Topsoil | Dark brown sandy clay with rooting. | | 0.0–0.1 |
| 202 | Made ground | Mid-orange brown mottled sandy clay. | | 0.1–0.8 |
| 203 | Natural | Light blue grey silty clay with abundant silt stone. | | 0.8–1 |
| 204 | Natural | Dark red orange clay. | | 1–1.3 |

| Trench No 11 | | Length 28 m | Width 0.40 m | Depth 0.65 m |
|----------------|-------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| Context Number | Interpretative Category | Description | | Depth BGL |
| 301 | Surface | Tarmac. | | 0.0–0.08 |
| 302 | Bedding layer | Dark grey black silty sand with common gravel and rare cobbles. | | 0.08–0.23 |
| 303 | Natural | Dark reddish brown silty clay. | | 0.23–0.65 |
| 304 | Made ground | Dark brown to black silty sand with abundant gravel. | | 0.08–0.42 |



Appendix 2 OASIS summary

OASIS ID (UID): wessexar1-506257

Project Name: Watching Brief at Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire

Activity type: Watching Brief

Sitecode(s): 255450, 255451

Project Identifier(s): 255450, 255451

Reason for Investigation: Emergency recording

Organisation Responsible for work: Wessex Archaeology

Project Dates: 28-Mar-2022 - 19-Sep-2023

HER: Leicestershire HER

Administrative Areas:

Country: England

County: Leicestershire

District: Hinckley and Bosworth

Parish: Twycross

Project Methodology: The watching brief archaeologist monitored the machine excavation of 11 trenches within the designated area. The first eight trenches measured nominally 2.3 m long x 0.7 m wide and 1.1 m deep, while trenches 9–11 varied in dimension between 4.5–2 x 0.4–2 x 0.65–1.3 m deep. The site record comprises standard Wessex Archaeology trench recording sheets, which were filled out using a digital tablet.

Project Results: Natural substrate was observed in ten of the eleven trenches, between 0.1 m and 0.8 m below ground level. Made ground deposits (trenches 3-7 and 9-11) or subsoil (trenches 2 and 6) overlay the natural substrate in the majority of the trenches. These were themselves sealed by a road surface or topsoil. No archaeological deposits or features were located in any of the trenches. Modern finds were only recovered from two of the trenches (9 and 10).

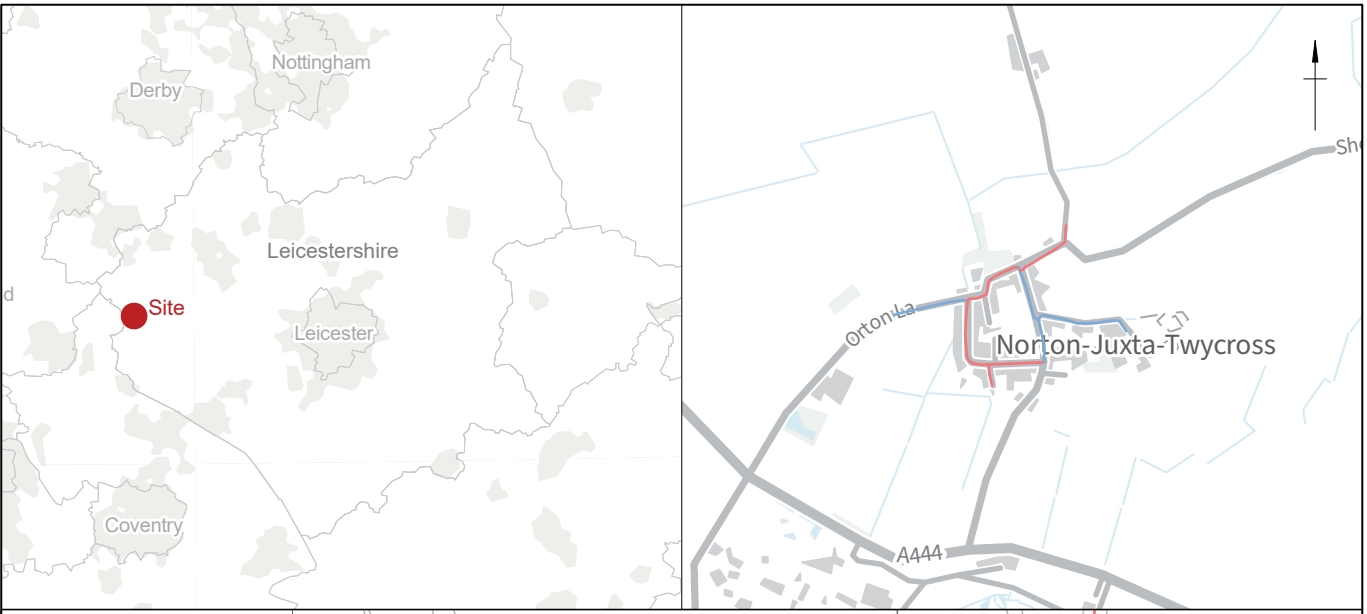
Archive:

Physical Archive - to be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums;

Reports in OASIS:

Swann, A., (2022). *Severn Trent Mains Renewal, Norton Juxta Twycross, Hinckley and Bosworth, East Midlands, England: Archaeological watching brief*. Sheffield: Wessex Archaeology. 255450.02.

Jackson-Slater, C., (2023). *Severn Trent Water Mains Renewal, Norton Juxta Twycross, Leicestershire: Archaeological watching brief*. Sheffield: Wessex Archaeology. 255451.03.



- ▭ Monitored trench
- ◻ Previously monitored trench
- Proposed water main
- Existing water main

Coordinate system: OSGB 1936 British National Grid
 Base map, trial hole and utility information provided by the client. Crown Copyright – Severn Trent Water LTD: 100031673
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| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------|---|
| Date: 03/10/2023 | Created by: IA | Revision: 0 | Scale: 1:2,500 at A4 |  |
| Figure 1: Site location | | | | |



Figure 2: Representative section at southern end of trench 9 (contexts 101–104), 1 m scale



Figure 3: Representative section at northern end of trench 9 (contexts 101, 103–105), 1 m scale



Figure 4: Representative section of trench 10



Figure 5: Representative section of trench 11, 1 m scale



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