

**Ware Lock, Priory Street, Ware.**

<b>Site name and address:</b>	Ware Lock, Priory Street, Ware, Herts.		
<b>County:</b>	Hertfordshire	<b>District:</b>	East Hertfordshire
<b>Village/town:</b>	Ware	<b>Parish:</b>	Ware
<b>Planning reference:</b>	n/a	<b>NGR:</b>	TL 35133 14309
<b>Client name and address:</b>	Environment Agency, Broadmeads Pumping Station, Hertford Road, Ware		
<b>Nature of work:</b>	Dredging	<b>Present land use:</b>	n/a
<b>Size of affected area:</b>	n/a	<b>Size of area investigated:</b>	n/a
<b>Site Code:</b>	HN423	<b>Other reference:</b>	HN423
<b>Organisation:</b>	Heritage Network	<b>Site Director:</b>	David Hillelson
<b>Type of work:</b>	Monitoring	<b>Finds location/Museum:</b>	n/a
<b>Start of work</b>	11/06/2003	<b>Finish of work</b>	11/06/2003
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	n/a	<b>Periods represented:</b>	n/a
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b>	n/a		

**Synopsis:** In response to a request by the Environment Agency, the Heritage Network was commissioned to monitor the removal of a substantial quantity of debris from Ware Lock. As this is an archaeologically sensitive area it was considered by the County Archaeology Office of Hertfordshire County Council that there was a possibility of artefacts being disturbed in the course of the dredging operation.

The methodology agreed with the EA was for the accumulated silt, debris and rubbish to be removed using a lorry-mounted grab, and allowed to drain for a short period on the land adjacent to the site. During that time it would have been examined both visually and with the aid of a metal detector.

On site, this methodology was deemed impractical by the EA supervisor. The area set aside was too small and sloped towards the water, and this would have resulted in much of the more liquid material simply flowing back into the part of the river from which it had been dredged. Instead, everything was loaded directly onto the back of the lorry and taken to a local licensed landfill site.

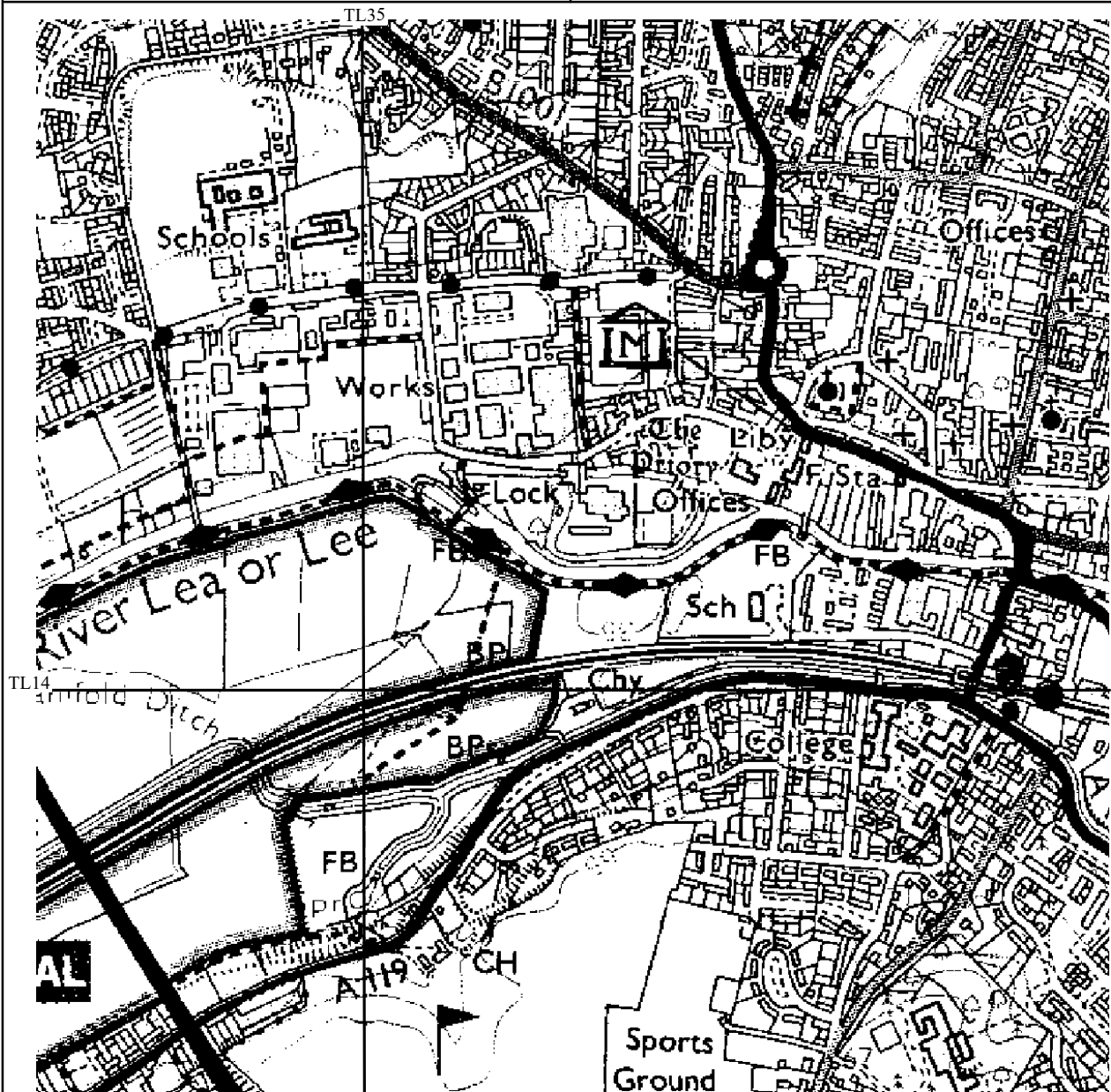
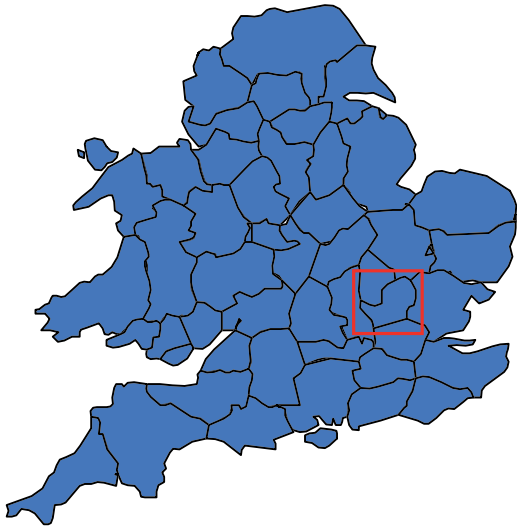
In the circumstances, each scoop was inspected as it emerged from the water and was deposited in the back of the lorry. Each full load was also visually inspected prior to departure from the site.

An estimated 16 tonnes of material was removed in two lorry loads. The vast majority of the first load consisted of vegetative matter, mainly branches and sticks. The second load contained more mud and gravel. It was clear that the limit of the deposit had been reached from the noise the grab made as it scraped the river bed, and from the difficulty the driver had in scooping-up further material.

In the course of the dredging operation no archaeological artefacts were observed or collected. Local information suggests that the area had been dredged at least twice in recent times, once with a dredging barge and more recently with an mechanical excavator.

Although the circumstances of the present monitoring project were far from satisfactory, it seems unlikely that any significant archaeological remains were affected by the works.

David Kaye  
25 July 2003



Site Location

Scale 1:10000