THAMES WATER MAINS REPLACEMENT WORKS IN THE LOWER EDMONTON AREA, N9

WOODFORD 70

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

April 2011

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COMPASS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED
5-7 SOUTHWARK STREET
LONDON SE1 1RQ

Telephone: 020 7403 9660
Facsimile: 020 7403 9661

e-mail: mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk

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Abstract

This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during Thames Water mains replacement works in the Lower Edmonton area of the London Borough of Enfield, N9 (Woodford 70 DMA), between 28th October 2010 and 8th February 2011. Following initial monitoring works it was agreed in consultation with English Heritage that no further archaeological monitoring was required during mains replacement groundworks in the area.

Approximately 283m of trenching was observed along Pentland Close, Nile Drive and Congo Drive. Modern road layers and made-ground deposits were observed in all trenches to the full depth of excavation. Trenching exposed woven-plastic mesh ground sheeting at c. 1.1m below the existing ground level. All exposed deposits are considered to date from the 1999 residential development of the area. No archaeological finds or features were observed during the course of the watching brief.

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1. Introduction

1.1 This report details the results of archaeological watching brief undertaken during Thames Water mains replacement works in the Lower Edmonton area, N9, London Borough of Enfield (Woodford 70) between 28th October 2010 to 8th February 2011. The works were approximately located at NGR TQ 3541 9360 (see Figure 1).

1.2 The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in response to recommendations made by English Heritage. Initial monitoring recorded modern road-makeup and made-ground associated with the 1999 development of the area, no archaeological finds or features were recorded. Consequently, it was agreed after discussion with English Heritage that no further monitoring was required in the Woodford 70 area.

1.3 This report was commissioned by Thames Water Utilities Ltd. Mains replacement works were carried out by Murphy Ltd. Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Mick Miles and Gill King of Compass Archaeology.

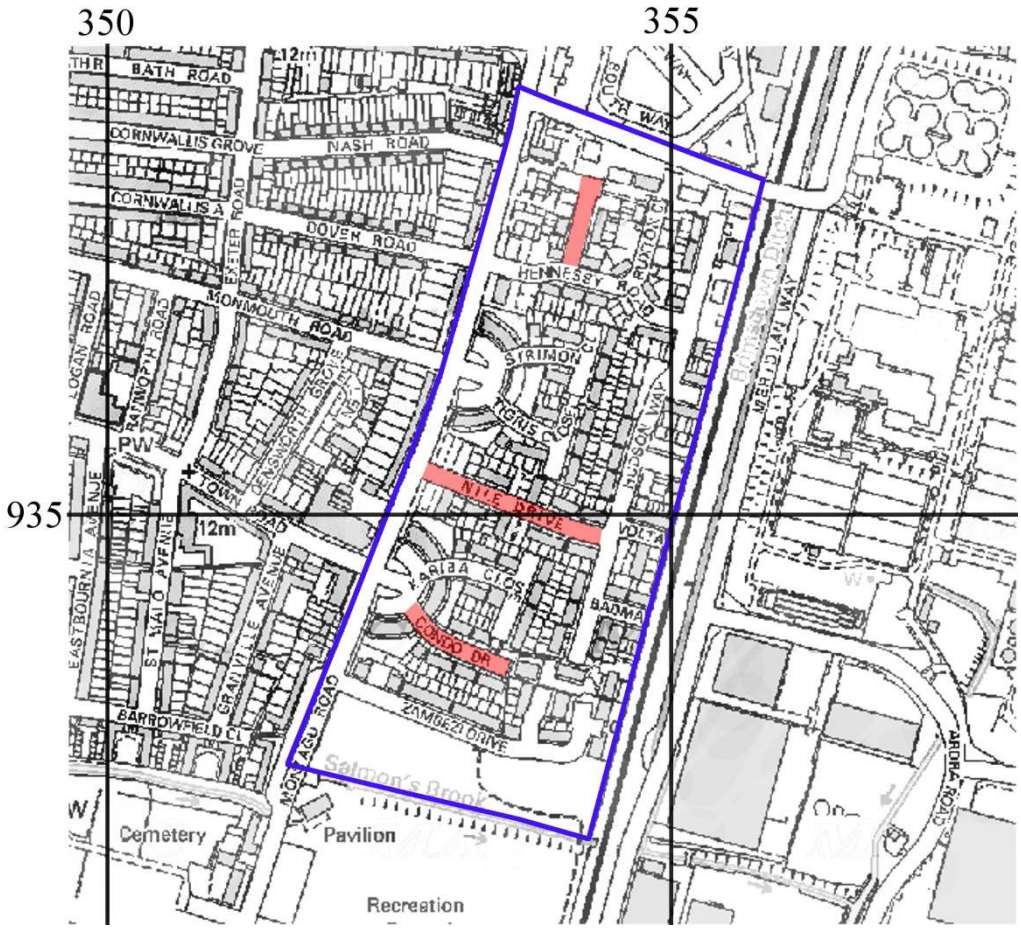

Figure 1: Site location plan showing the Woodford 70 monitoring area (outlined in blue) and the streets recorded during initial monitoring (red) – Pentland Close (north), Nile Drive (middle) and Congo Drive (south). Based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:5000 map.

2. Site Location and Geology

2.1 The Woodford 70 DMA is bounded by Montagu Road to the west, Pickett's Lock Lane to the north, to the east by the Tottenham Hale branch of Lea Valley Lines railway, and to the south by the line of Salmon's Brook at the northern end of the Montagu recreation ground. Archaeological monitoring was undertaken within this area, along Pentland Close in the north, Nile Drive and Congo Drive in the south.

2.2 The eastern half of the Edmonton area is mainly valley brickearth with alluvium forming Edmonton marsh along the eastern border. Flood plain gravel covers the north-east area with outcrops southward along Fore Street and westward along the river valleys.

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Edmonton is a large village, recorded in Domesday, which apparently grew up along the Roman route of Ermine Street. Ermine Street was later known as the Hertford Road (in part the A1010, but running west of the current route of the A1010 through Edmonton). There were probably two Roman roads through Edmonton: Ermine Street, from Bishopsgate, and a route from Cripplegate to Hatfield through Southgate and Chase Side, whose course is uncertain. Ermine Street passed through Edmonton approximately along the line of Fore Street and Hertford Road or to the west of it. Fore Street was parallel to the Lea and far enough west to run on gravel rather than the brickearth and alluvium of the river valley but was crossed by four streams which caused great damage to the road surface. The transport network has always influenced the fortunes of Edmonton and the coming of the railways in the 1840s led to a huge rise in population, with Edmonton changing from a large country village into a sprawling town and suburb with nearly 500,000 residents by 1911. The 1870s saw rapid expansion of the area, with large surburban housing estates being formed in the surrounding countryside. This was a response to the growth of Edmonton as a centre of industry and the late 19th century saw many manufacturing industries located here making furniture, gas appliances, electrical components, *etc*. After WWII Edmonton also became a major shopping centre.

3.2 The Lower Edmonton area is not on Rocque or the OS first edition for London and, such maps as there are, show the area mainly as open marshland, crossed by many streams and largely undeveloped outside of the village core (*cf.* Figs 3-5).

3.3 The LAARC has quite a few interesting references with eleven sites producing a range of results including palaeoenvironmental data and good quality prehistoric deposits. In the western zone (as shown on Fig 2) investigations within the DMA at Acton Close encountered alluvial deposits and possible pond features. At 14^{A} The Green medieval finds included an infant burial, along with a Tudor well and post-medieval brick lined pits. At Chauncey Close just immediately west of the DMA prehistoric finds were recovered as well as post-medieval features. At Edmonton Shopping Centre evidence for quarrying and some residual medieval pottery was discovered. A factory site on Chichester Road revealed a prehistoric scraper and post medieval bones and pottery. To the east of the DMAs investigations at Deepham Sewage Treatment Works have revealed a Mesolithic peat and clay horizon and at Montagu Road palaeochannels and evidence of flint working has been recorded.

There is also evidence for Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age field systems in the form of drainage ditches, containing pottery and flint from Plevna Park.

3.4 Edmonton does have an interesting social history and is noted for its witch and devil, for John Gilpin and its 18th century fairs. The eastern boundary of Edmonton follows the river Lea, whose complex tributaries formed part of the boundary with Enfield. Tottenham mark, just south of the DMA was mentioned many times in the 13th century and was a ditch or hedge dividing Tottenham and Edmonton. Bounds Green and Waterfall Road formed part of the boundaries in the south-west with Tottenham and Friern Barnet but the rest of the western boundary with East Barnet (Herts.) and the northern one with Enfield ran through woodland containing only estate boundaries and the gates of the Chase. Apart from the alluvium forming Edmonton marsh along the eastern border the eastern half of the parish is mainly valley brickearth. Flood plain gravel covers the north-east and pushes tongues southward along Fore Street and westward along the river valleys. At Fore Street, Edmonton, Neolithic features were encountered and it would be interesting to see how the River Lea slopes down into the DMA from this higher land, especially as most of the Edmonton area is flat with a gentle rise from the marshy Lea valley.

3.5 The marshy riverbanks of the River Lea and Edmonton marsh had restricted navigation up the Lea since medieval times. Edmonton marsh formed a band about ½ mile wide, bordered and crossed by innumerable watercourses. An Act of 1571 authorized the City of London to make the Lea navigable as far as Ware. The New Cut, as it was called, was used for barges, mostly transporting grain from Hertfordshire to London and there is little evidence that it benefited Edmonton until the late 18th century and the nineteenth. A new straight canal was begun a little to the west of the meandering river in 1770.The Lee Conservancy Board, which was established in 1868, was taken over by the Metropolitan Water Board in 1904. The course of the river was obliterated by the construction of Banbury reservoir in southern Edmonton and Tottenham in 1903) and by the much larger William Girling reservoir in Edmonton and Enfield in 1951.

3.6 The two main tributaries of the Lea which run eastward through Edmonton are Pymme's and Salmon's brooks. Salmon's brook, the southern boundary of the DMAs, in the 13th century was called Stebbing, enters Edmonton at Bush Hill and flows to Edmonton Green, where it turns south and then east at approximately the site of the former town hall. Almost all the streams have been straightened and often diverted into underground sewers. Pymme's and Salmon's brooks were widened and deepened in 1766 and 1772. After severe flooding in 1881 Salmon's brook, which had formed a pond at Edmonton Green, and Pymme's brook at Montagu Road were confined between concrete walls.

3.7 The New River, which was constructed in 1608-13 to bring drinking water from Chadwell and Amwell (Herts.) to Islington, crossed Edmonton parish from Bush Hill to Bowes. At Bush Hill a wooden aqueduct carried the river across a stream, presumably Salmon's brook. Edmonton was noted in Jacobean literature. Elizabeth Sawyer, married to a local labourer, was suspected of felony in 1615 and apparently hanged for killing by witchcraft. Her story, told to a minister who visited her in prison, was published in a tract in 1621, which immediately became the basis for the play, the Witch of Edmonton, by Ford, Dekker, and William Rowley. Another

popular play, the Merry Devil of Edmonton, was probably written by Michael Drayton and first performed *c.* 1606.

3.8 During its heyday, in the 18th and early 19th centuries, several literary and artistic people lived in Edmonton, where there were good communications and wealthy patrons. Charles Lamb (d. 1834), who moved there from Enfield in 1833, remarked on the frequency and cheapness of coaches to London. John Keats (d. 1821) lived in Church Street from 1805 and from 1810 until 1815.

4. Archaeological Research Questions

The objectives of the archaeological watching brief included contributing to knowledge of the archaeology of the area through the recording of any remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. Particular attention was made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits. The fieldwork presented an opportunity to address the following general and specific research questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity, and what is the nature of this – for example, settlement or agriculture, riverine activity?
- Is there any evidence for Saxon or medieval activity, and what is the likely nature of this?
- What evidence is there for post-medieval activity, and can this be related to the cartographic evidence – in particular for development and occupation up to the early 19th century?
- At what levels do any archaeological deposits survive across the area?
- At what levels do natural deposits survive, and do these accord with the Geological Survey record?
- Can the watching brief works inform on the research questions of the Museum of London and English Heritage's '*A Research Framework for London Archaeology*' publication 2002?

5. The Archaeological Programme

5.1 Standards

The field and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards and Practice in Archaeological Fieldwork, Guidance Paper 3)* and to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists *(Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs)*. Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full member of the Institute.

5.2 Fieldwork

The archaeological watching brief took place during contractors' groundworks, and involved one archaeologist on site as required to monitor works and to investigate and record any archaeological remains. Liaison was maintained with the groundworks team to ensure a presence on site as and when necessary.

The Client and the archaeological representatives of English Heritage and Thames Water were kept advised of the progress of the fieldwork.

5.3 Methodology

Archaeological deposits and features were investigated and recorded in stratigraphic sequence, and where appropriate finds dating and environmental evidence recovered.

Archaeological deposits and features were recorded as appropriate on *pro-forma* context or trench sheets, and/or drawn in plan or section generally at scales of 1:10 or 1:20. The investigations were recorded on a general site plan and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. The fieldwork record was supplemented as appropriate by photography (digital /35mm monochrome).

The recording system followed the procedures set out in the Museum of London recording manual. By agreement the recording and drawing sheets used were directly compatible with those developed by the Museum.

6. Post-Excavation Work

6.1 Finds and Samples

Finds and samples were treated in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's *'Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be permanently retained by the Museum of London'*. Finds and artefacts were retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record, although some material may be discarded following assessment.

6.2 Report Procedure

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of this report, and by ordering and deposition of the site archive. The level of reporting was dependent upon the results of the fieldwork. However, this report includes details of any archaeological remains or finds, an interpretation of the deposits investigated and a site plan located to the Ordnance Survey grid. A short summary of the fieldwork is appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client, English Heritage and Thames Water, and to the local studies library.

7. The Site Archive

The archaeological records will be ordered in line with the MoL *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives* and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. The integrity of the site archive should be maintained, and the landowner(s) will be urged to donate any archaeological finds to the Museum.

8. The Archaeological Watching Brief

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken between 28th October 2010 and 8th February 2011, in the Woodford 70 DMA of Lower Edmonton. Initial monitoring along Pentland Close, Nile Drive and Congo Drive recorded only modern road layers and makeup deposits. Consequently, after discussion with English Heritage, it was agreed that further monitoring in the area was unnecessary. The table below details the location of monitored works, dates of monitoring visits and extent of groundworks recorded, and should be read in conjunction with Figure 1.

Street	Date	Extent of Works
Pentland Close	28/10/10	50m of trench running parallel to eastern kerb 1.1m into the roadway, 0.4m in width to a maximum depth of 1.1m.
Nile Drive	14/12/10	167.7m of open cut trench along southern carriageway for full length of Nile Drive, 0.4m in width to a maximum depth of 1.0m below the existing road level.
Congo Drive	08/02/11	65.5m of open cut trenching and feeder trenches into properties. Trenches were 0.6m in width at an average depth of 0.8m below the existing road level.

8.1 Pentland Close

Tarmac and concrete hardcore were observed to c. 200mm below the existing road level, overlying mixed rubble made-ground deposits laid on a woven plastic mesh observed at c. 1.1m depth. The deposits are likely to represent the 1999 development of the area. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Figure 2: Water mains replacement works on Pentland Close (view north, 1m scale).

8.2 Nile Drive

Tarmac and bitumen rubble base were observed to c. 300mm below the existing ground road level, overlying mixed rubble and made-ground laid on a woven plastic mesh at c. 1.1m depth. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Figure 3: Water mains replacement works on Nile Drive (view west, 1m scale).

8.3 Congo Drive

Tarmac and bitumen rubble base were observed to c. 350mm below the existing road level, overlying rubble made-ground to the full depth of excavation at c. 0.8m. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Figure 4: Water mains replacement works on Congo Drive (view south).

9. Archaeological Research Questions

The fieldwork presented an opportunity to address the following general and specific research questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity, and what is the nature of this – for example, settlement or agriculture, riverine activity? *No prehistoric Roman remains were recorded during the course of the watching brief.*
- Is there any evidence for Saxon or medieval activity, and what is the likely nature of this? *No evidence for Saxon or medieval activity was recorded during the course of the watching brief.*
- What evidence is there for post-medieval activity, and can this be related to the cartographic evidence – in particular for development and occupation up to the early 19th century? *Only modern road layers and made-ground deposits relating to the 20th century residential development of the site were observed.*
- At what levels do any archaeological deposits survive across the area? *No archaeological finds or features were observed.*
- At what levels do natural deposits survive, and do these accord with the Geological Survey record? *Natural deposits were not encountered. Excavations did not extend beyond the woven plastic mesh layer at c. 1.1m below ground level.*
- Can the watching brief works inform on the research questions of the Museum of London and English Heritage's '*A Research Framework for London Archaeology*' publication 2002? *No archaeological finds or features were observed.*

10. Summary and Conclusions

10.1 Archaeological monitoring along Pentland Close, Nile Drive and Congo Drive in the Woodford 70 DMA, Lower Edmonton, recorded only modern road layers and made-ground deposits relating to the 1999 residential development of the area. A woven plastic mesh was observed at c. 1.1m below the existing ground level – the ground in this area is contaminated and the mesh is laid as a 'visual barrier' for groundworks. No archaeological finds or features were recorded during the course of the archaeological watching brief. Monitoring was suspended following these initial monitoring visits as the archaeological potential was considered, on review, to be nil.

11. Bibliography

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APPENDIX I: Oasis Data Collection Form

OASIS ID: compassa1-98762

Project details

Project name	Thames Water Mains Replacement Works in the Lower Edmonton Area, London Borough of Enfield N9, DMA Woodford 70
Short description of the project	Approximately 283m of trenching were observed during Thames Water mains replacement works in DMA Woodford 70, Lower Edmonton area of the London Borough of Enfield N9 along Pentland Close, Nile Drive and Congo Drive. After initial monitoring it was agreed with English Heritage that no further monitoring was required during works in the area. Only modern road layers and made-ground deposits relating to the 1999 residential redevelopment of the site were observed. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.
Project dates	Start: 28-10-2010 End: 08-02-2011
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	TXF11 – Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ENFIELD EDMONTON Thames Water Mains Replacement Works in the Lower Edmonton Area, London Borough of Enfield N9, DMA Woodford 70
Postcode	N9
Study area	0.28 Kilometres
Site coordinates	TQ 3541 9360 51.6244176398 -0.04359851672610 51 37 27 N 000 02 36 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment

Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	Gill King
Type of sponsor/funding body	Thames Water Utilities
Name of sponsor/funding body	Thames Water Utilities

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Map','Photograph','Report','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Thames Water Mains Replacement Works in the Lower Edmonton Area, London Borough of Enfield N9, DMA Woodford 70
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cummings, R
Date	2011
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	5-7 Southwark St, London SE1 1RQ
Description	17-page spiral bound report

Entered by	Rosie Cummings (mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	8 April 2011

APPENDIX II: London Archaeologist Summary

Site Address:	Thames Water mains replacement works in the Lower Edmonton area, London Borough of Enfield, N9 – Woodford 70 DMA.
Project type:	Watching brief
Dates of Fieldwork:	28th October 2010 to 8th February 2011
Site Code:	TXF11
Supervisor:	Gill King
NGR:	TQ 3541 9360
Funding Body:	Thames Water Utilities Ltd

Approximately 283m of trenching was observed along three streets in the Lower Edmonton area during Thames Water mains replacement works. Initial monitoring recorded only modern road layers and made-ground deposits relating to the 20th century residential development of the area. No archaeological finds or features were observed.