



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological attendance  
on the Whitwell Rising Main Replacement  
Whitwell, Rutland  
September-October 2012



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Northamptonshire  
County Council

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### QUALITY CONTROL

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## OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No. 139963</b>	
Project title	Archaeological attendance on the Whitwell Rising Main Replacement, Whitwell, Rutland, September-October 2012		
Short description	Archaeological attendance was undertaken during the replacement of a rising main by Anglian Water, to the north of Rutland Water, at Whitwell in Rutland. Two archaeological features were located at the top of a south facing slope on the north shore of Whitwell Creek. They comprised one gully and one pit, neither contained datable finds. In addition, an undated ditch was observed in section to the west of the grassed boat storage area, beside the access road. Two worked flints were recovered from the topsoil of Test Pit 4. Dark organic silty clay was observed at the head of Whitwell Creek, but no further archaeological features or finds were present.		
Project type	Watching brief		
Site Status	None		
Previous work	Rutland Water excavations (Cooper 2000)		
Current land use	Car park, roads, pathways and grassed areas		
Future work	None		
Monument type and period	Undated ditch, gully and pit		
Significant finds	None		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Rutland		
Site address	Whitwell, Rutland Water		
Post code			
OS co-ordinates	NGR SK 92645 07963 to SK 93041 08593		
Area (sq m/ha)	c1000m long pipe trench		
Height aOD	85-105m above Ordnance Datum		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Project brief originator	Richard Clark, Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	Jim Brown, Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Director/Supervisor	Anne Foard-Colby, Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Project Managers	Jim Brown, Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Sponsor or funding body	Anglian Water Services		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	25/09/2012		
End date	25/10/2012		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	Rutland County Museum OAKRM 2012.24	Flint	
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)			
Title	Archaeological attendance on the Whitwell Rising Main Replacement, Whitwell, Rutland, September - October 2012		
Serial title & volume	12/191		
Author(s)	Anne Foard-Colby		
Page numbers	10		
Date	January 2013		

# Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	
2	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	
3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	
5	WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY	
6	THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE	
7	THE WORKED FLINT	by Andy Chapman
8	DISCUSSION	
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	
	APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY	

## Figures

Front cover: Topsoil stripping at north end of pipeline route, looking north-east

- Fig 1: Site location  
Fig 2: Pipeline route, features and test pit locations 1-11  
Fig 3: Excavated sections  
Fig 4: Ditch 208, looking north-east  
Fig 5: Test pit 10, dark organic layer, looking north

Back cover: Pipe trench, looking north-east

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ATTENDANCE ON THE  
WHITWELL RISING MAIN REPLACEMENT  
WHITWELL, RUTLAND  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2012**

*Abstract*

*Archaeological attendance was undertaken during the replacement of a rising main by Anglian Water, to the north of Rutland Water, at Whitwell in Rutland. Two archaeological features were located at the top of a south facing slope on the north shore of Whitwell Creek. They comprised one gully and one pit, neither contained datable finds. In addition, an undated ditch was observed in section to the west of the grassed boat storage area, beside the access road. Two worked flints were recovered from the topsoil of Test Pit 4. Dark organic silty clay was observed at the head of Whitwell Creek, but no further archaeological features or finds were present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by Anglian Water Services to provide archaeological attendance during the replacement of the Whitwell Rising Main, between September and October 2012 (NGR SK 92645 07963 to SK 93041 08593; Fig 1). The focus for investigation was along Whitwell Creek, situated on the north shore of Rutland Water which has flooded this part of Gwash Valley.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (NA 2012) was prepared in accordance with a *Generic Brief for Archaeological Attendance* issued by the Senior Planning Archaeologist in Leicestershire County Council (Clark 2012). This follows the current *National Planning Policy Framework*, paragraph 141, with regard to archaeology (CLG 2012), and replaced *PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment* (CLG 2010). The work was conducted in accordance with the recognised standards (IfA 2008a; EH 2009).

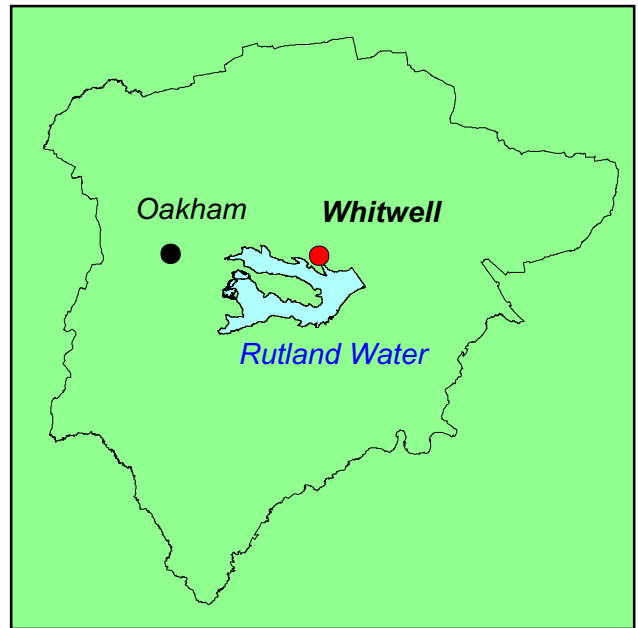
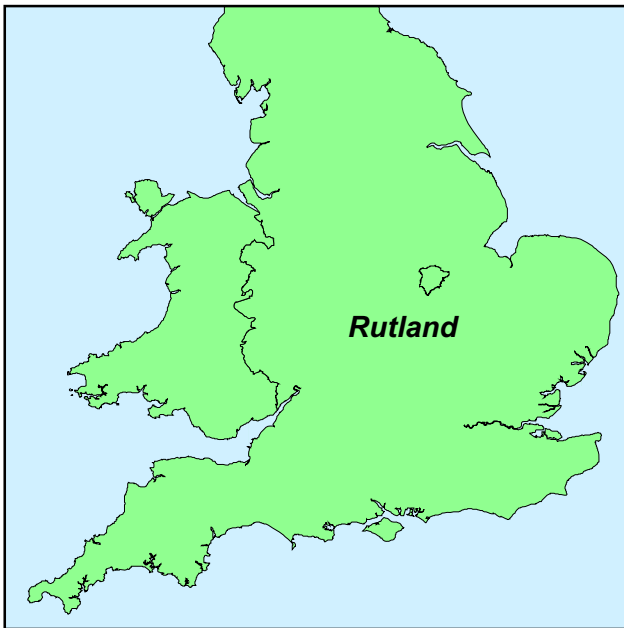
The archive will be deposited with Rutland County Museum under accession code OAKRM.2012.24 in accordance with their deposition requirements (LCC 1998; Pollard 2000).

## **2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY**

The route of the replacement main is situated to the south of the village of Whitwell, Rutland, on the north shore of Rutland Water. The route begins at Whitwell pumping station at the south end of a small peninsular, and ends at the hedge line to the A606, Whitwell Road in the north-east (Fig 1). The route of the pipeline passes through access roads, car parks, footpaths, grass verges and areas of rough grazing.

Topographically the route lies at an elevation of 85-105m above Ordnance Datum, rising from the south to the north-east.

The geology of the site is mapped as clays and silts of the Upper Lias (BGS 2001). Changes in geology were noted during the archaeological attendance. Orange-brown clays were present to the south; however, towards the head of Whitwell Creek the natural substrate was ironstone with clay. At the top of the hill, in the north-east, lay an outcrop of Oolitic Limestone.



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1

### 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the investigation were to:

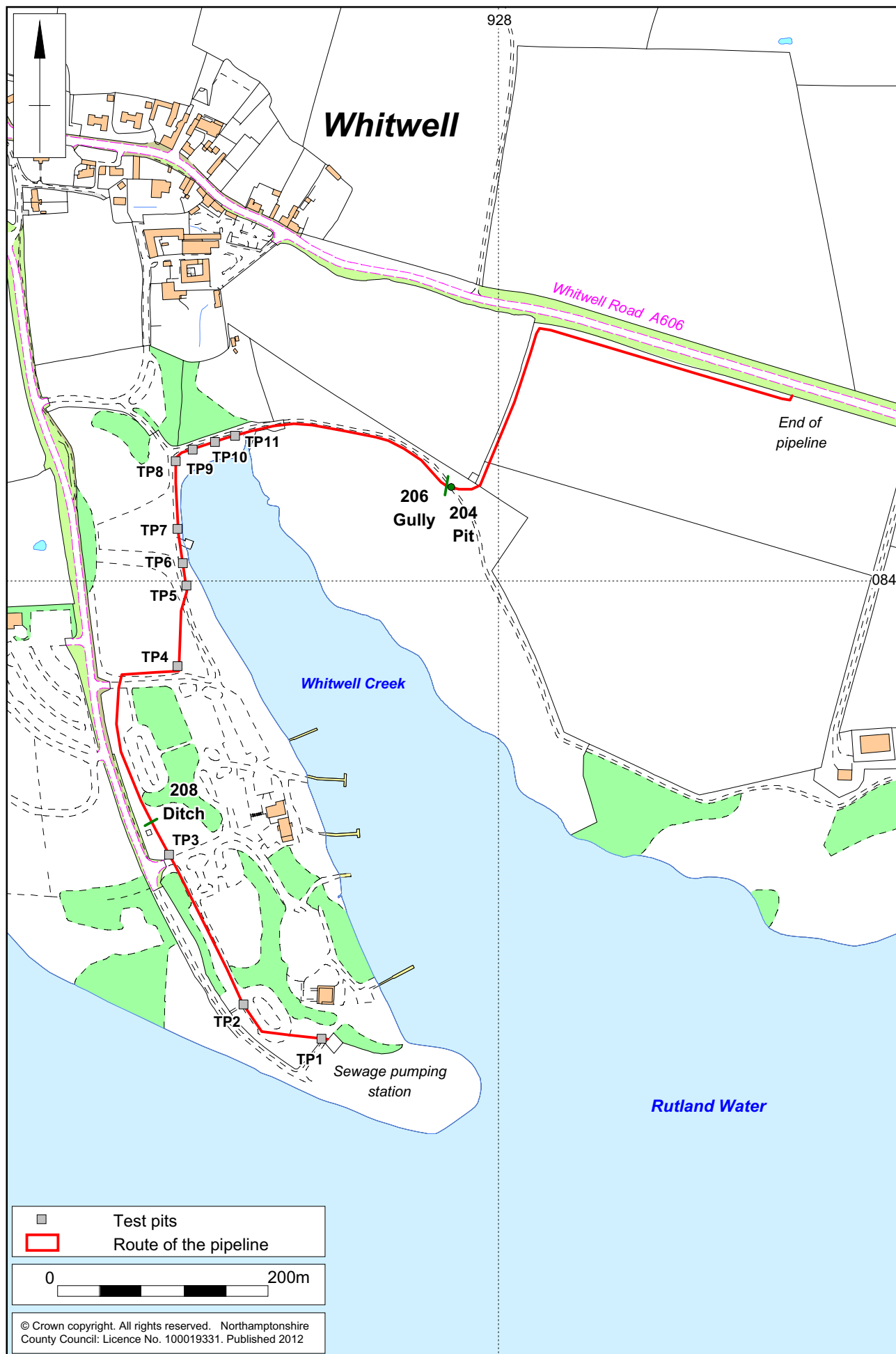
- establish the date, nature and extent of the activity or occupation along the route of the pipeline,
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region,
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions, if present.

### 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Whitwell is situated in an area of known archaeological activity dating from prehistoric times to the present day. The distribution of known Iron Age sites from excavation and from aerial photographic evidence within the Gwash Valley has been depicted topographically (Cooper 2000, fig 64, 145). Three individual roundhouses were excavated at Empingham West in 1971 (Cooper 2000, 46-49). Gully fragments for part of a possible 1st century AD roundhouse were excavated south-east of Hambleton Wood (Jones 1997, 320). The site excavated at Whitwell was of an enclosure with a series of shallow pits, but without evidence for roundhouses (Todd 1981). There are cropmarks that suggest enclosures near to Oakham on the Hambleton Peninsula, at Edith Weston, at North Luffenham and further east near Ryhall and Little Casterton (Cooper 2000, 144-146). All of these are generally sub-rectangular and have never been tested for chronology, although the site near Hambleton contains two circular features that may be roundhouses. Fieldwalking there in 1992 produced two sherds of abraded scored ware together with a wider distribution of late Roman material. This similar typological pattern was exhibited by the fieldwalking evidence from Whitwell together with the postulation that there was a probable break in the occupation of the site (Todd 1981).

Metal detecting, fieldwalking and cropmarks show a moderately dense distribution of potential Roman sites in the Gwash Valley (ibid, 148-149). Maps of settlements recorded as earthworks, cropmarks, find scatters and excavated sites show a low distribution area (Taylor 2007, figs 3.2-3.5, 14-17). Timber buildings were present from the mid-3rd century and in use well into the 4th century at Whitwell, Empingham and Normanton (Cooper 2000). It also suggests that these other sites may have post-dated extensive field systems that were not the subject of the 1970s rescue archaeology.

At Empingham Romano-British farmstead timber sleeper beam structures of the mid-1st to 2nd centuries were replaced in stone from the early 3rd century onwards and occupied until the late 4th century (Cooper 2000, 4-16). They almost certainly would have occupied land associated with extensive field systems. The villa at Empingham, probably part of the same agricultural estate straddling the lower Gwash Valley, exhibited the expansion of a stone aisled building from the mid- to late 3rd century (ibid, 147). Any potential "estate" would certainly have been a part of an extensive managed agricultural landscape. However, these wealthier stone-built domiciles continued to be occupied in the late 4th century, possibly into the early 5th century and were likened to the Roman villa at Great Casterton. The stone-built farmstead at Whitwell had a lack of coinage or pottery belonging to the second half of the 4th century indicating a much earlier abandonment (Todd 1981).



Scale 1:5,000

Pipeline route, features and test pit locations 1-11 Fig 2



## 5 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

The route of the pipeline was originally intended to follow the east shoreline, but was altered to avoid the water sports building, tea rooms and access to their car parks (Figs 1-2).

Various stages of mechanical excavation were undertaken during the replacement of the present rising main. Test pits (TPs 1-11) were machine excavated to locate buried services prior to commencing trenching works and were monitored to inform on the nature of the substrate (Fig 2). Where no buried services or other obstructions were present, a mechanical trenching machine cut the pipe trench, which was 0.20m wide and 1.10m deep. In all other areas, including across roads and paths a tracked 360° mechanical excavator was used, fitted with a 0.50m wide smooth ditching bucket.

In a field towards the north-east end of the pipeline, a corridor, approximately 150m long by 1.20m wide was machine stripped under continual archaeological supervision to the natural substrate, prior to mechanical trenching machine being used.

The site location, area and extent was recorded in relation to the Ordnance Survey using engineering plans and fixed boundaries. Spot heights were taken from the engineering survey and recorded in relation to Ordnance Datum.

Digital photographs form the basis of the photographic record accompanied by *pro forma* watching brief record sheets that contain notes and observations recorded during attendance (NA 2011). All photographs and paper archive records have been compiled in accordance with recognised museum practise (Walker 1990; MGC 1992; IfA 2008b) and the requirements of Rutland County Museum (LCC 1998; 2000).

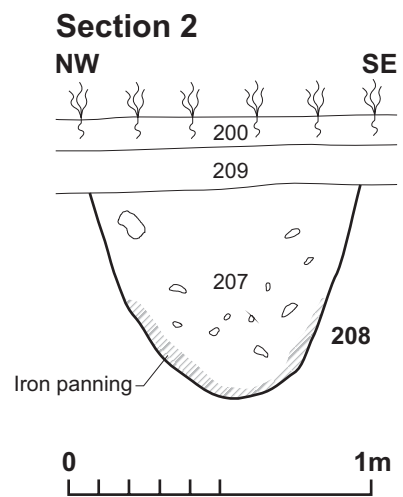
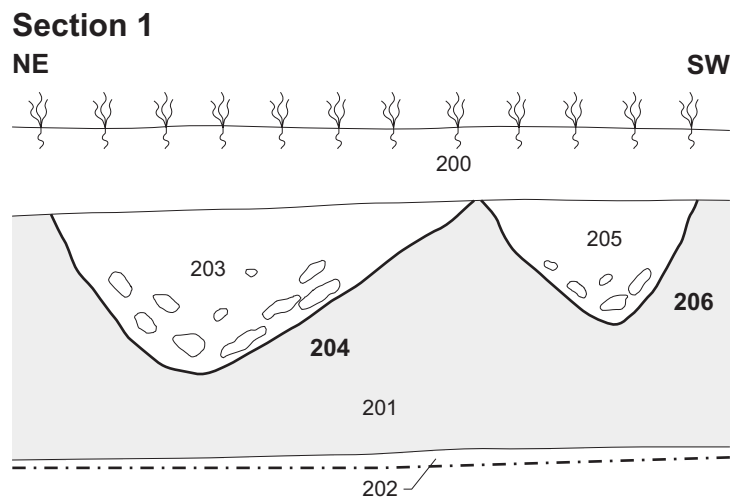
## 6 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Two features were observed during mechanical excavation, both lying south-east of the village (Figs 2-3). Pit 204 was 1.40m wide by 0.55m deep, with a rounded profile that was steeper on the north-east side. The pit was only observed in the south-west side of the trench. The fill was dark brown clayey loam, with limestone cobbles and fragments lying towards the base and sides of the pit. Adjacent was a sharply cut, slightly pointed gully, 206, which was 0.70m wide by 0.50m deep, filled with mid greyish-brown loamy clay and limestone cobbles towards the base. There were no finds present in either feature.

North of the main entrance to the boatyard was a ditch, 208, 0.90m wide by 0.70m deep, with steep, near vertical sides and a rounded base (Figs 2-4). The fill was mid - to dark, orange-brown clay with ironstone inclusions. Toward the base were deposits of iron salts, which may indicate a period of seasonal flooding in the past. There were no finds present. The ditch was sealed by a layer of bluish-grey redeposited clay from an adjacent service trench.

Two worked flints were recovered from the topsoil (40) during the mechanical excavation of Test Pit 4.

The test pits at the north end of the creek (TPs 8-11) contained a rich dark bluish-grey silty clay deposit with fragrant organic materials suggestive of more recent accumulations (Fig 5). No archaeological features or finds were present in these.



Scale 1:25 (A4)

Excavated sections Fig 3



Ditch 208, looking north-east Fig 4



Test pit 10, dark organic layer, looking north Fig 5

At the south end of the pipe trench the mid orange-brown clay subsoil was 400mm thick, thinning out to 200mm in the north-east. In the areas of the car park and access roads this was overlain by a limestone crush and the paths were surfaced with a further layer of asphalt. Grassy areas had a thin layer of topsoil up to 150mm thick.

## **7 THE WORKED FLINT** by Andy Chapman

Two worked flints were recovered from the topsoil (40) in Test Pit 4. There is an elongated flake, 50mm long by 20mm wide, which has been struck, probably as a rejuvenation flake, from a small pebble blade core, perhaps dating to the late Mesolithic or early Neolithic. This piece is in a grey vitreous flint, with a light brown cortex and some pale blue-white patination. There is also a short squat flake, 19mm long by 20mm wide.

## **8 DISCUSSION**

The remains of two undated features, a possible pit and a gully were observed in the pipeline trench, south-east of the village. A further undated ditch was located near to the boatyard entrance.

Two worked flints recovered from the topsoil of a test pit were isolated finds and reflect the area's known prehistoric landscape.

Organic silty clay deposits at the head of the creek are likely to be accumulations since the reservoir was created.



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