



Northamptonshire
County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief
during groundworks for the Denton to Brafield
Anglian Water Pipeline,
Northamptonshire,
February 2006



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October 2008

Report 08/165

Northamptonshire Archaeology

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QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the new Denton to Brafield Anglian Water Pipeline, Northamptonshire	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks for the laying of the new Denton to Brafield Anglian Water Pipeline, Northamptonshire. Undisturbed soils were noted within the pasture fields with plough soils presents within those fields currently in agricultural use. No archaeological deposits were present and one un-stratified sherd of Roman pottery was recovered.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Agricultural/pastural land	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Pipeline route between the villages of Brafield on the Green and Denton, Northamptonshire	
OS Easting & Northing	Centred on SP 829 582	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Historic Environment Team, Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J. Leigh	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	Anglian Water Services Limited	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	February 2006	
End date	February 2006	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper	Nottinghamshire Museums	Watching brief forms (8) Colour slides (6) black and white contact prints (6) Digital photographs (23) Pottery sherds (1)
Digital		Report text and figures

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF DURING GROUNDWORKS FOR
THE DENTON TO BRAFIELD, ANGLIAN WATER PIPELINE,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
FEBRUARY 2006**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in February 2006 during groundworks for the laying of the new Denton to Brafield Anglian Water Pipeline. Undisturbed soils were recorded in the pasture fields with plough soils within those fields in agricultural use. No archaeological deposits were present and one un-stratified sherd of Roman pottery was recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in February 2006 during groundworks for the laying of a new Anglian Water Pipeline between the villages of Brafield-on-the-Green and Denton (NGR SP 829 582; Fig 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Anglian Water Services Limited following a specification produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Leigh 2006) in response to a request for archaeological attendance and observation by The Historic Environment Team, Northamptonshire County Council..

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography

The route of the new pipeline runs through fields that are currently pasture and in agricultural use between the villages of Brafield-on-the-Green and Denton, a distance of about 1.5km. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Chalky Till.

2.2 Historical Background

The new pipeline runs through an area of archaeological interest. Aerial photography has identified evidence of two Iron Age or Romano-British settlements in the vicinity of the pipeline (Sites and Monuments Record No: 3399 & 3369; Fig 2). The present A428 which runs between the villages follows the line of an earlier turnpike road running between Northampton and Cold Brafield (SMR Ref: 9305/1). Medieval agricultural activity is evidenced by traces of ridge and furrow in one of the fields (Fig 2).

No previous archaeological work is recorded as having been carried out within the area of the new pipeline. Up to the present application the land through which the pipeline runs has been in agricultural use, with the majority of the land currently in use for crop production, whilst the remainder has been left pasture.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks connected with the stripping of soil cover across the width of the easement and the laying of the new pipeline and associated groundworks, and to record all archaeological deposits uncovered.
- ◆ Determine the date, character, state of preservation and depth of any archaeological deposits observed and to retrieve all datable artefacts.
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

The fieldwork comprised intermittent visits to the site during stripping of the topsoil and subsoil across the width of the easement and the subsequent excavation of the water pipe trench. The topsoil and subsoil stripping was carried out using 360° tracked excavators fitted with toothless ditching buckets. The subsequent pipe trench excavation was undertaken using a combination of both a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 0.70m wide toothed bucket and a dedicated pipe laying machine, which both excavated the trench and laid the new water pipe.

A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept, with supplementary photographs in digital format. The written record used Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma sheets. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the standards and guidelines for an archaeological watching brief (IFA 2000).

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

Examination of the stratigraphic sequence revealed compact grey/brown natural chalky clay extending the full length of the pipeline; this became chalkier towards Denton. Overlying this was mid brown silt loam, varying between 0.28m and 0.37m thick. A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the subsoil from a pasture field in the area of the recorded Iron-Age/Romano-British settlement remains just to the north-west of Denton.

In those areas of pasture the subsoil was overlain by grey/brown topsoil/turf, up to 0.27m thick, containing occasional irregular stones. Just to the south-east of Brafield-on-the-Green, a small

area of ridge and furrow was cut through during the groundworks. This revealed a stratigraphic sequence consistent with that recorded along the remainder of the pipeline.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	8
Colour slides	6
Black and white contacts and negatives	6
Digital photographs	23
Pottery	1

6 CONCLUSIONS

Virtually all of the pipeline route has been subject to agricultural activity, which has produced a plough soil horizon overlying an undisturbed natural substratum. Limited artefactual evidence was present and corresponded with the location of Iron-Age/Romano-British settlement already recorded.

The watching brief was carried out in favourable conditions and the results are considered to be reliable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

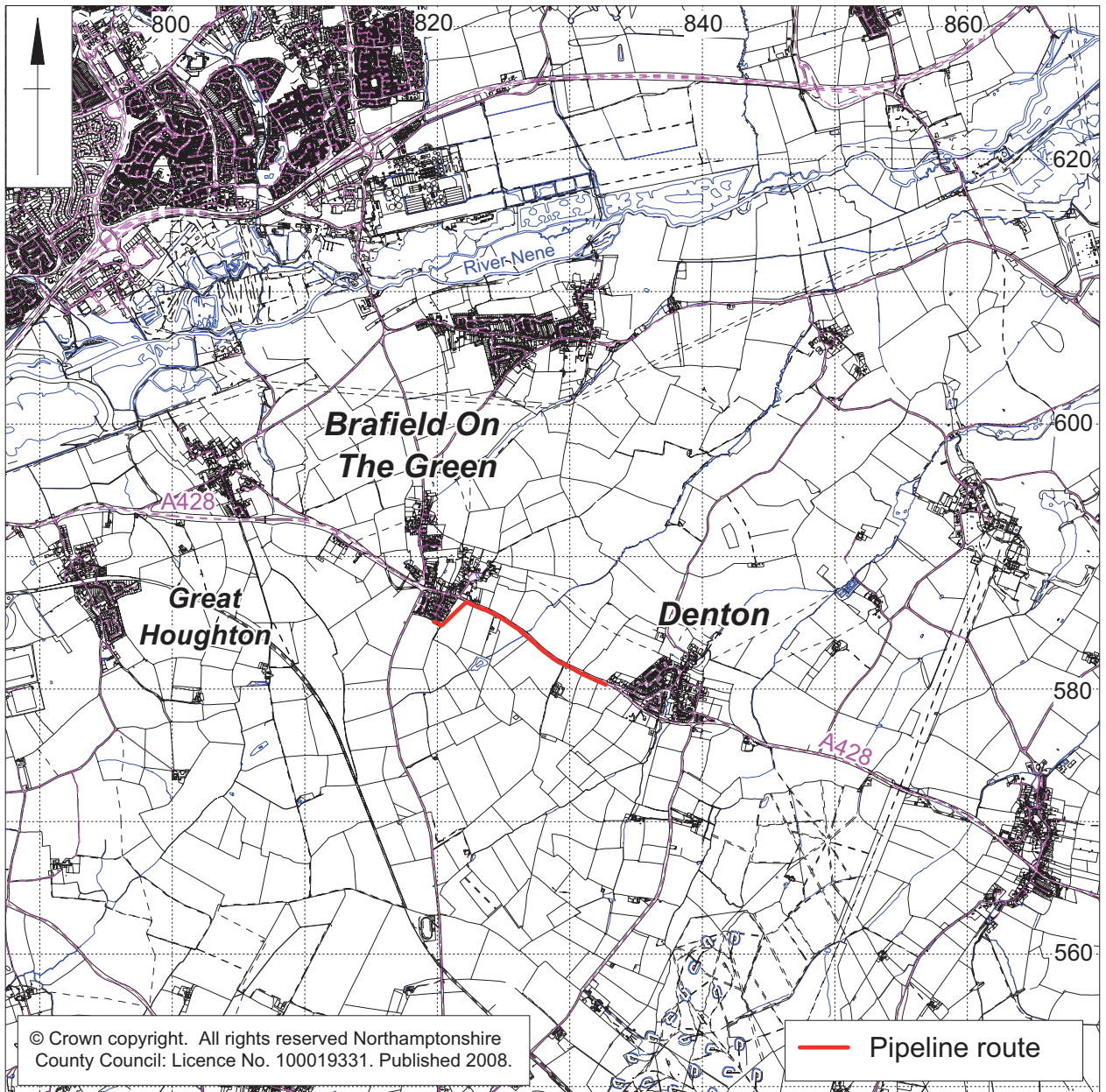
IFA 2000 *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

Leigh, D, 2006 *Specification for an archaeological watching brief on land between Denton and Brafield on the Green*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

RCHME 1979 *County of Northampton, Archaeological Sites, Volume Two, Central*, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England

Northamptonshire Archaeology
a service of Northamptonshire County Council

22nd October 2008



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

Scale 1:7500

The pipeline route and archaeological sites

Fig 2

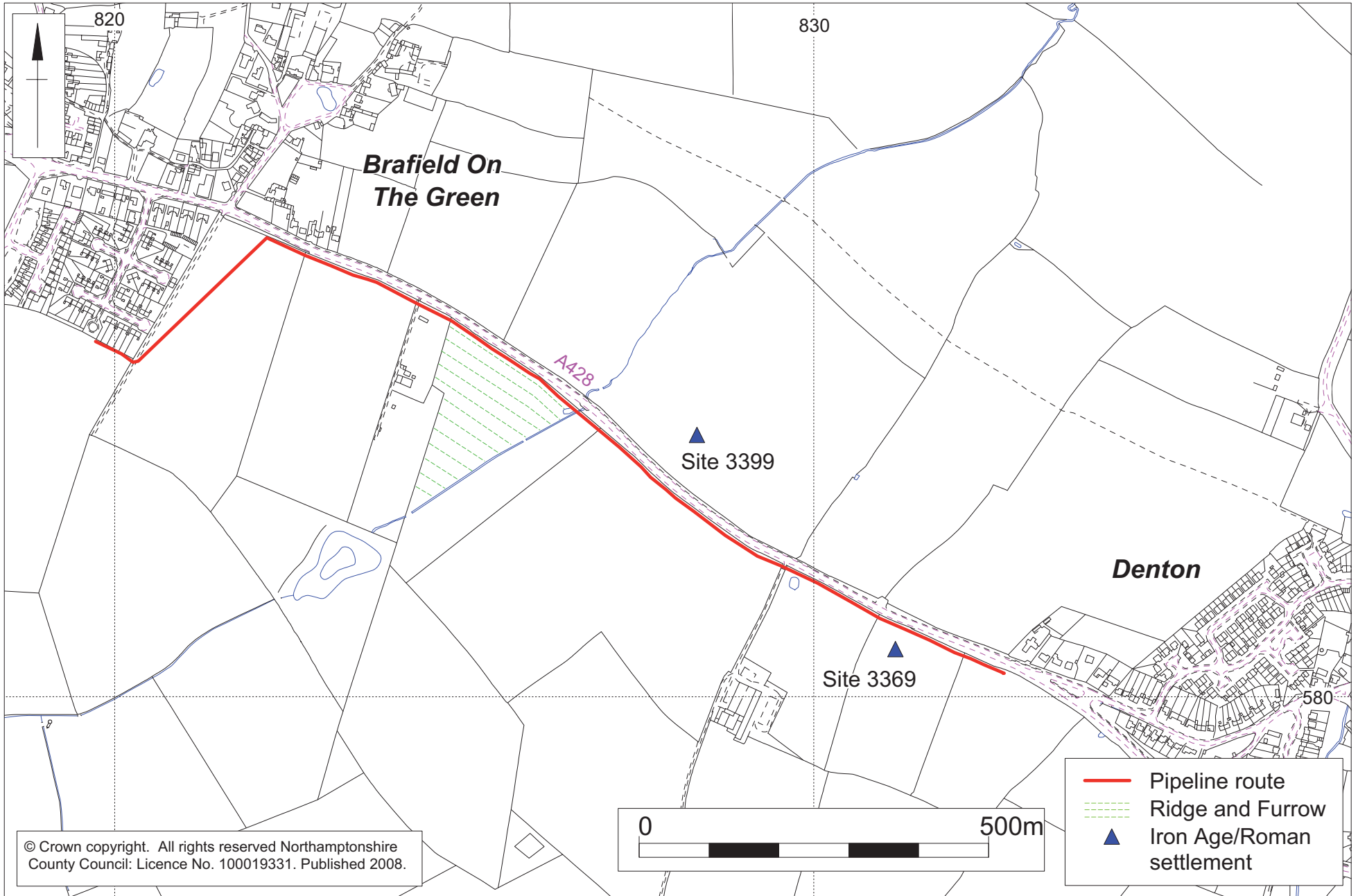




Plate 1: The pipeline route after stripping



Plate 2: The new water pipe prior to pipe trench excavation



Plate 3: The pipe laying machine



Plate 4: The pipe trench during backfilling