

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: WEEDON LOIS REINFORCEMENT MAIN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

on behalf of BSP Associates Ltd for Anglian Water Services Ltd



A. J Hancock BSc PgDip

November 2006

ASC: 829/WLM/1

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Site Data

ASC project cod	de:	WLM	WLM .		iect No:	829	
Event No:		N/A					
County:			Northam	otonshire			
Village/Town:			N/A				
Civil Parish:			Maidford				
NGR (to 8 figs):			SP 6135 :	5225- SP 6	6055 5070		
Present use:			Pasture				
Planning propo	sal:		Reinforcement water main				
Planning applic	cation	ref/date:	N/A				
Local Planning	Autho	rity:	N/A				
Date of fieldwor	rk:		October 2006				
Client:			Anglian Water Services Ltd c/o BSP Associates Ltd 45A High Street Stony Stratford Milton Keynes MK11 1AA				
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Internal Quality Check

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Figure 1: Route of pipeline (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

A watching brief was carried out by ASC Ltd along the route of a 1.5km long reinforcement water main located east of the villages of Maidford and Adstone in Northamptonshire. Topsoil was not stripped from the easement and archaeological monitoring was limited to examination of the 300mm wide pipe trench, directional drilling access pits and upcast. Archaeological finds or features were not observed during the watching brief. However, it is uncertain whether the absence of finds and features truly reflects the extent of past human activity in this area or results from the limited area examined.

1. Introduction

1.1 During October 2006 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief along the route of the Weedon Lois Reinforcement Water Main (NGR SP 6135 5225 to SP 6055 5070: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by *BSP* Associates Ltd (BSP) on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd (AWSL) and was carried out according to ASCs' standard watching brief methodology

1.2 *Planning Background*

The watching brief was commissioned by BSP on behalf of AWSL to comply with their statutory obligations.

1.3 *Location*

The majority of the reinforcement water main ran for c.1.5km along a generalised southwest-northeast alignment through pasture fields. The northern and southern ends of the pipeline were located c.300m and c.1km east of the villages of Maidford and Adstone respectively (Fig 1). Maidford is situated in south Northamptonshire, approximately 9.5km northwest of Towcester and the village of Adstone is located approximately 1.5km southwest of Maidford. The two village are separated by a brook known as either the Maidford or Adstone Brook (Bridges 1791: 230), which also bisected the reinforcement water main.

1.4 *Description*

The reinforcement water main ran eastward along the northern side of Quinbury End Road from the entrance to Glebe House, which is located c.300m to the east of Maidford. Slightly east of the entrance to Blakesley Heath Farm, it turned and crossed Quinbury End Road whereupon it continued on a south-westerly alignment through pasture fields. The pipeline crossed the Maidford or Adstone Brook then traversed further pasture fields and terminated c.1km southeast of Adstone on the southern side of the road leading to this village.

1.6 *Topography*

The route of the reinforcement water main traversed a NW-SE aligned river valley at the base of which flowed the Maidford or Adstone Brook. The northernmost 500m of the route crossed a gentle N-S sloping plateau, which descended from c.160m AOD to 150m AOD, then continued down the slightly steeper northern valley side to the brook flowing at c.125m AOD. The pipeline climbed the valley side south of the brook and terminated at c.150m AOD on the southern side of the road leading to Adstone. The

presence of poorly defined paired terraces may be indicated by flatter areas interrupting the slope of both valley sides at c.140m AOD.

1.5 *Geology*

The pipeline route traverses soils of three different associations. On the high ground at the northern and southern ends of the pipeline lie soils of the Ragdale Association, which are developed on chalky till and are described as 'Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey and fine loamy over clayey soils. Some slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils especially on slopes.' (Soil Survey 1986 712g).

A band of soils of the Banbury Association, which are developed on Jurassic and Cretaceous ironstone, are located on the valley side north of the Brook and are described as 'Well drained brashy fine and coarse loamy ferruginous soils over ironstone. Some deep fine loamy over clayey soils with permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging' (ibid 544).

At the valley bottom either side of the Maidford or Adstone Brook lie soils of the Wickham 2 Association, which are developed on drift over Jurassic and Cretaceous clay and mudstone and are described as '*Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clayey, fine silty over clayey and clayey soils. Small areas of slowly permeable calcareous soils on steeper slopes*' (*ibid* 711f).

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

The aims of the watching brief were:

- to examine the route of the pipeline for archaeological finds or features.
- to carry out appropriate levels of investigation, sampling and recording of revealed archaeological features in order to characterise their form, function and date.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code* of *Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IFA 2001) and also to ASC's pro-forma watching brief method statement.

2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to ASC's pro-forma watching brief method statement at the level of an intermittent watching brief, which requires:

• regular brief visits.

2.4 *Constraints*

ASC Ltd was notified of commencement of the watching brief after the groundwork had started and the northernmost 700m of the pipe trench had been excavated and backfilled prior to the first monitoring visit. Topsoil was not stripped along the route of the pipeline and examination of the remainder of the route for the presence/absence of archaeological finds or features was consequently limited to observation of the profiles of the pipe trench and directional drilling pits, plus the upcast from these excavations.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 Introduction

The local and regional settings of archaeological sites are factors that are taken into consideration when assessing the impact of development proposals on the historic environment. The following sections summarise the findings of a desk based assessment undertaken by ASC Ltd (Semmelman and Hawtin 2006) which examined readily available archaeological and historical sources covering the proposed route of the pipeline and the parishes of Adstone and Maidford.

3.2 Prehistoric and Romano-British (before c.450AD)

Prehistoric or Romano-British (RB) sites or artefacts are not recorded within the parishes of Maidford and Adstone and the neighbouring parishes are equally devoid of sites or finds of these periods. The nearest RB town, *Lactodorum*, (Towcester), was located c.9km to the southeast and a Roman road, later known as Watling Street, passed c.7km east of the pipeline. The lack of archaeology of these periods may result from an absence of archaeological work in the area of the pipeline rather than the absence or sparseness of settlement during the prehistoric and Romano-British periods.

3.3 Saxon (c.450-1066)

It is probable that the villages of Adstone and Maidford have a Saxon origin as they are recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, where they are known as *Atenestone* or *Etenestone* and *Merdeford* respectively (Williams & Martin 1992, 602, 604, 607).

3.4 Medieval (1066-1500)

Maidford had a population of 18 including a priest in 1086. By 1301 there were 32 individuals paying the Lay Subsidy and 63 people paid the Poll Tax in 1377, the highest figure in pre-modern times. Medieval earthworks are located in and around Maidford and include five fishponds within the village, a mound, possibly for a windmill at the north of the parish and a windmill southwest of the village (RCHME 1982, 97).

Medieval earthworks are also present in and around Adstone. An area of earthworks to the southwest of the village has been truncated by later quarrying and further earthworks to the north and east of the village have suffered the same fate (RCHME 1982, 5).

Remnants of ridge and furrow survive in fields around both villages and illustrate that the land surrounding the village was formerly subdivided by this medieval open field system. The only entry in the Northamptonshire SMR (6087/0/2) in the environs of the proposed pipeline is for surviving ridge and furrow in fields immediately north of the northern end of the route.

Adstone was part of the royal manor of Norton at the time of the Norman Conquest and by early subinfeudation was annexed to the honour of Leicester and Winchester (Baker 1836, 17-18). Ashby Priory and the Priory of Bec in Normandy also held land in Adstone, the latter losing its lands in favour of Eton College when the foreign priories were suppressed in the 15th century (Baker 1836, 18).

3.5 Post-Medieval (1500-1900)

The fields in Maidford were enclosed in 1778 and those in Adstone by 1780. There are no enclosure maps for either village. A fulling mill is recorded in Maidford by Bridges (1791) and Baker (1836) mentions two quarries worked for production of lime in 1836. The remains of these quarries lie west of the northern part of the pipeline route. The population of Maidford rose from 228 in 1801 to 373 in 1831.

It is unclear whether the ruined fulling mill mentioned as being in Adstone by Baker (1836, 17) is the same one as that reported as being in Maidford by Bridges (1791) some years before. An extant fulling mill located slightly east of the southern end of the pipeline could locate the site of the aforementioned $18^{th}/19^{th}$ century mill and the Adstone Field Name Map of 1932 shows that the field crossed by the pipeline immediately south of the brook was named Fully Field.

Quarrying also contributed to the economy of Adstone, but in this case, it was for building stone rather than the raw material for lime (Bridges 1791, 230). Adstone appears to have always been the smaller of the two villages, having a maximum pre-modern population size of 185 in 1811 (Baker 1836, 19).

4. Results

- 4.1 The section of the reinforcement water main that ran east along the northern side of Quinbury End Road was directionally drilled and three *c*.2m x *c*.1m access pits (Plate 1) excavated to a depth of 1m through the surface of the road were observed. The natural stratigraphic succession was truncated, *i.e.* top and subsoil had been removed prior to laying the road surface. The stratigraphic succession observed in all three pits was identical and consisted of:
 - (100) *c* 0.1m of asphalt
 - (101) *c*.0.02m of hardcore
 - (102) c.1m of natural mid brown calcareous clayey silt

No archaeological finds or features were observed in this section of the pipeline.

- 4.2 The *c*.1m deep section of pipe trench that turned southwest to cross Quinbury End Road had an identical stratigraphic profile to that described above until it met the southern verge of the road. The grass of the verge was growing on the surface of *c*.0.2m of top/subsoil, which overlay (102) into which the trenches of two modern services had been cut. Exposed beneath (102) was the surface of a natural yellowish white calcareous sandy gravel. This section of the pipeline crossed a shallow extant roadside ditch associated with a boundary hedge delimiting the road from pasture fields to the south (Plate 2). A shallow darker organic deposit was evident partially filling the base of the shallow ditch. The thinness of the organic deposit could suggest that accumulated material has been periodically removed to maintain drainage. No archaeological finds or features were observed in this section of the trench.
- 4.3 The majority of the pipe trench on the gently sloping plateau south of the boundary hedge had been backfilled for a distance of c.700m prior to ASC's initial watching brief visit (Plate 3). The surface of the backfill and the few open areas of trench indicated that the natural deposit underlying the top/subsoil was a mid brown calcareous clayey silt with occasional patches of small chalk/limestone and flint nodules. A slightly darker brown deposit with a greater clay content was evident for the first c.50m south of the hedge. It was impossible to determine whether archaeological finds or features had been disturbed by this section of the pipeline because of the backfilling.
- 4.4 The pipe trench descended the northern valley side and was excavated to a depth of c.1.5m through thin (c.0.1m) mid brown topsoil and subsoil and into a deep deposit of mid reddish brown calcareous clayey silt (Plate 4). Occasionally revealed at the bottom of the trench was a deposit of mid brownish grey clay although at the base of the slope, the deep calcareous clayey silt was absent and the brownish grey clay lay immediately below the thin topsoil and subsoil. No archaeological finds or features were observed in this section of the trench.
- 4.5 At the valley bottom the pipe trench was excavated to a depth of c.1.5m through c.0.1m of top and subsoil and into a deep and uniform mid orangeish red calcareous clayey silt. A mid grey clay was occasionally revealed at the base of the pipe trench and alluvial sediment consisting of dark brown clayey silt was present where the pipe

trench crossed the brook (Plate 5). A natural aquifer was intercepted c.50m south of the brook and quickly filled the downslope section of trench on the southern side of the brook with water. The section of the pipe trench in the field immediately south of the brook cut through relatively well preserved ridge and furrow. Other archaeological finds or features were not observed in this part of the trench.

- 4.6 The trench subsequently climbed the southern valley side (Plate 6) and eventually terminated on the northern side of the road leading to Adstone. The revealed strata consisted of *c*.0.2m of mid reddish brown calcareous top/subsoil overlying a mid orangeish red calcareous clayey silt containing discrete areas of rounded chalk/limestone and flint nodules. A mid brownish grey clay was occasionally revealed at the base of the trench and a large quantity of ironstone was present in the upcast from the trench where it crossed a flatter area that may suggest the location of a river terrace. No archaeological finds or features were observed in this section of the trench.
- 4.7 The remainder of the trench was directionally drilled under the road leading to Adstone and it was not possible to determine the presence or absence of archaeological finds or features.







Plate 3: Backfilled section of trench in northern pasture field



Plate 2: Trench through southern verge of Quinbury End Road



Plate 4: Pipe trench on northern valley side, facing south



Plate 5: Pipe trench crossing brook, facing north



Plate 6: Pipe trench on southern valley side, facing north

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Topsoil along the easement of the reinforcement water main was not stripped and examination of the surface of the subsoil/natural for archaeological features was thus impossible. The constraints imposed on the watching brief by the method used to insert the pipe make conclusions about the archaeological potential of this area difficult.
- 5.2 It is unfortunate that the section of pipe trench on the flatter plateau above the northern valley side was excavated and backfilled prior to ASC's first monitoring visit as this area may have provided favourable conditions for past human settlement in contrast to the valley bottom. It is unknown whether archaeological features were encountered along this part of the reinforcement water main although examination of the surface of the backfill of the pipe trench suggested that noticeably different stratum which could indicate the existence of subsurface archaeology was not encountered.
- 5.3 The majority of the remainder of the reinforcement water main crossed the gently sloping valley sides of the Adstone or Maidford Brook. The absence of topsoil stripping along that part of the easement running through pasture fields was unexpected and made determination of the presence/absence of archaeological finds or features problematic. The profiles of the 300mm wide pipe trench were visually examined for archaeology and none was observed. However, it would be foolish to extrapolate the true scale of past human exploitation of this area from the limited information obtained during the watching brief.
- 5.4 Denuded remnants of north-south aligned ridge and furrow may be present on the southern valley side and well preserved and similarly aligned sections of this medieval open field system were crossed by the pipe trench in the field at the valley bottom on the southern side of the brook. The presence of the remnants of this open field system suggests that the pasture at the southern side of the brook has been in agricultural use since the medieval period.
- 5.5 Ridge and furrow or the denuded remnants of it were not observed on the northern side of the brook. This may suggest that the medieval exploitation of the land on this side of the brook was of a different character to that on the southern side although a more probable hypothesis could suggest that ridge and furrow in this area has been destroyed by subsequent agricultural activity.
- 5.6 The three directional drilling pits on Quinbury End Road showed that natural sediments underlay the road surface and no evidence of any human activity prior to metalling of the road was observed.
- 5.7 The observed strata generally confirm the locations of the soil associations and underlying geology noted and described by the Soil Survey (1983). However, the presence of ironstone in the upcast from the pipe trench on the southern valley side suggests that soils and underlying solid geology of the Banbury Association may exist on the southern side of the brook.

6. Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to BSP Associates Ltd for commissioning this project and to Anglian Water Services Ltd for funding it.

Fieldwork was carried out by the author and the report was edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The project archive will comprise:
 - 1. Initial Report
 - 2. Clients site plans
 - 3. Site Monitoring Sheets
 - 4. List of photographs/slides
 - 5. CDROM with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be held at ASC's offices in Milton Keynes until a Northamptonshire depository becomes available.
- 7.3 Details of the excavation will be entered in the on-line "OASIS" database maintained by ADS at <u>http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis</u>

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition.* English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds).

Secondary Sources

- Baker, G. 1836 *The History and Antiquities of the County of Northamptonshire* Nicholson & Son (London)
- Bridges, J. 1791 The History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton Vol. 1 (Oxford)
- RCHME 1982 An Inventory of the County of Northamptonshire: Southwest Northamptonshire Vol. 4 HMSO (London)
- Semmelmann, K and Hawtin, T 2006 Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Weedon Lois Reinforcement Main, Northamptonshire. Unpublished client report. ASC Ref: 829/WLM/1.
- Soil Survey 1983 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend (Harpenden).
- Williams, A and Martin, G.H. 1992 Domesday Book: A Complete Translation. (Penguin Books).

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

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Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Weedon Lois Reinford			s Reinford	cement Water Main	SITE NO/CODE: 829/WLM		
Shot	B&W	Slide	Digital	Subject			
1			✓	Access pit on Quinbury End Road			
2			✓	Trench through southern verge of Quinbury End Road			
3			✓	Backfilled section of trench in northern pasture field			
4			✓	Pipe trench on northern valley side, facing south			
5			\checkmark	Pipe trench crossing brook, facing north			
6			\checkmark	Pipe trench on southern valley	side, facing north		

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

		PROJEC	T DETAILS						
Project Name: Watching Brief, Weedon Lois Reinforcement Water Main, Northamptonshire									
Short Description:	A watching brief was carried out by ASC Ltd along the route of a 1.5km long reinforcement water main located east of the villages of Maidford and Adstone. Topsoil was not stripped and archaeological monitoring was limited to examination of the 300mm wide pipe trench, access pits and upcast. No archaeological finds or features were observed.								
Project Type:	DBA	FW	Geophys Survey		Bldg Rec	Post-Exc			
	WB	Strip&Rec	Trenching	Test pits	Exc	Other			
Site status: (eq. none, SAM, Listed)	None		Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)		DBA				
Current land use:		Future work: (yes / no / unknown)		No					
Monument type:	na		Monument period:		na				
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None								
PROJECT LOCATION									
County:	ounty: Northamptonshire			OS reference: (to at least 8 figures)		SP 6135 5225 to SP 6055 5070			
District:			Parish:		Maidford				
Site address: (with postcode if known)	na								
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	450 sq m		Height OD: (metres)		160m – 125m				
PROJECT CREATORS									
Organisation:	Organisation: Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd								
Project brief originator:	roject brief originator: na		Project design originator:		na				
Project Manager:	anager: D Fell		Director/Supervisor:		A J Hancock				
Sponsor / funding body: Anglian Water Servic		Services Ltd	d						
	-	PROJE	CT DATE						
Start date:			End date:						
PROJECT ARCHIVES									
	Location (Accession no.) Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)								
Physical:			na						
Paper:		Monitoring sheets and DBA							
Digital:	ASC Ltd		Photos and reports						
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)									
Title:	Unpublished client report								
Serial title & volume:									
Author(s):	A J Hancock		Dete:9/11/00						
raue nus			Date.0/11/00	Date:8/11/06					

Appendix 4: SMR Summary Sheet

SMR Record Number	Parish Maidford		Site Name Weedon Lois Reinforcement Water Main				
Date of Fieldwork Oct 2006	Grid ref. SP 6135 5225 to SP 6055 5070		Fieldworker A J Hancock				
Sponsor Anglian Water Services Ltd	Activity Watching Brief	F					
Landowner name/address: Unknown							
Finds location N/a		Finds Destination N/a					
Records location ASC Ltd		Records Destination ASC Ltd					
Finds Quantity N/a		Records Quantity 1 Box					
Summary of Results							
A watching brief was carried out by ASC Ltd along the route of a 1.5km long reinforcement water main located east of the villages of Maidford and Adstone. Topsoil was not stripped and archaeological monitoring was limited to examination of the 300mm wide pipe trench, access pits and upcast from them. No archaeological finds or features were observed.							