

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: WILLISHAM TO SOMERSHAM WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT SCHEME SUFFOLK

TM 0699 5072 to TM 0724 4928

on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd



Nigel Wilson HND AIFA

April 2008

ASC: 931/WSM/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	WSM	<i>Project no:</i>	931
<i>OASIS ID:</i>	archaeol2-40995	<i>Accession No:</i>	tbc
<i>County:</i>	Suffolk		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Willisham and Somersham		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Willisham		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TM 0699 5072 to TM 0724 4928		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.1.35km		
<i>Date(s) of fieldwork:</i>	11/06/2007 – 14/06/2007		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Open fields		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Water main replacement scheme		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Mid Suffolk District Council		
<i>Client:</i>	Anglian Water Services Ltd Yare House 62-64 Thorpe Road Norwich Norfolk NR1 1SA		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Chris Bretton		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Nigel Wilson	<i>Date:</i>	21 st April 2008
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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Figure 1: General location of water main route (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

During June 2007, a watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a 1.75km section of water main to the south of Willisham. The only possible features were a series of very shallow medieval plough furrows observed along the southern part of the route where the easement was stripped of topsoil. This form of ploughing is locally known as “stetch” ploughing.

1 Introduction

1.1 In summer 2007 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief during the installation of a replacement water main near Willisham, Suffolk. The project was commissioned by *Anglian Water Services Ltd* (AWSL), and was carried out according to a brief (Tipper 2007) prepared on behalf of AWSL by the *Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team* (SCCAS), and a project design prepared by ASC (Rouse 2007).

1.2 *Planning Background*

The watching brief was required to fulfil AWSL’s statutory obligations to the historic environment.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was carried out under the overall direction of **David Fell** BA MA MIFA. Day-to-day site management was undertaken by the author.

1.5 *The Water Main Route*

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The water main route is located within the civil parish of Willisham. It commences just to the north of Willisham Hall at NGR TM 06551 51958, and runs southwards for c.0.7km, running through fields to the immediate east of Barking Road, then crossing to the west side of the road and following it for a further 0.7km to terminate at the junction of Barking Road, Bildeston Road and Ipswich Road at TM 07905 48925, c.0.7km south east of the village of Offton (Fig. 1).

The water main easement runs through agricultural land, mostly in arable use (Fig. 2). It does not directly impact any buildings, but those closest to it are Willisham Hall, c.60m west of the route, Willisham Church, c.20m west of the route, Derrick Hall, c.40m east of the route, and Well Farm, c.100m west of the route.

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the northern section of the water main are of the *Hanslope Association*, described as ‘*slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils. Slight risk of water erosion*’ (Soil Survey, 1983, 411d). The underlying geology is chalky till. The soils of the southern section of the water main are of the *Ludford Association*, which comprise *deep well drained fine loamy, coarse loamy and sandy soils, locally flinty and in places over gravel. Slight risk of water erosion.* The underlying geology comprises glaciofluvial drift (*ibid*, 571x). From Willisham the water main descends a generally south-facing slope, from 65m to c.37m AOD, until it crosses the road, after which it falls more gradually to 35m AOD.

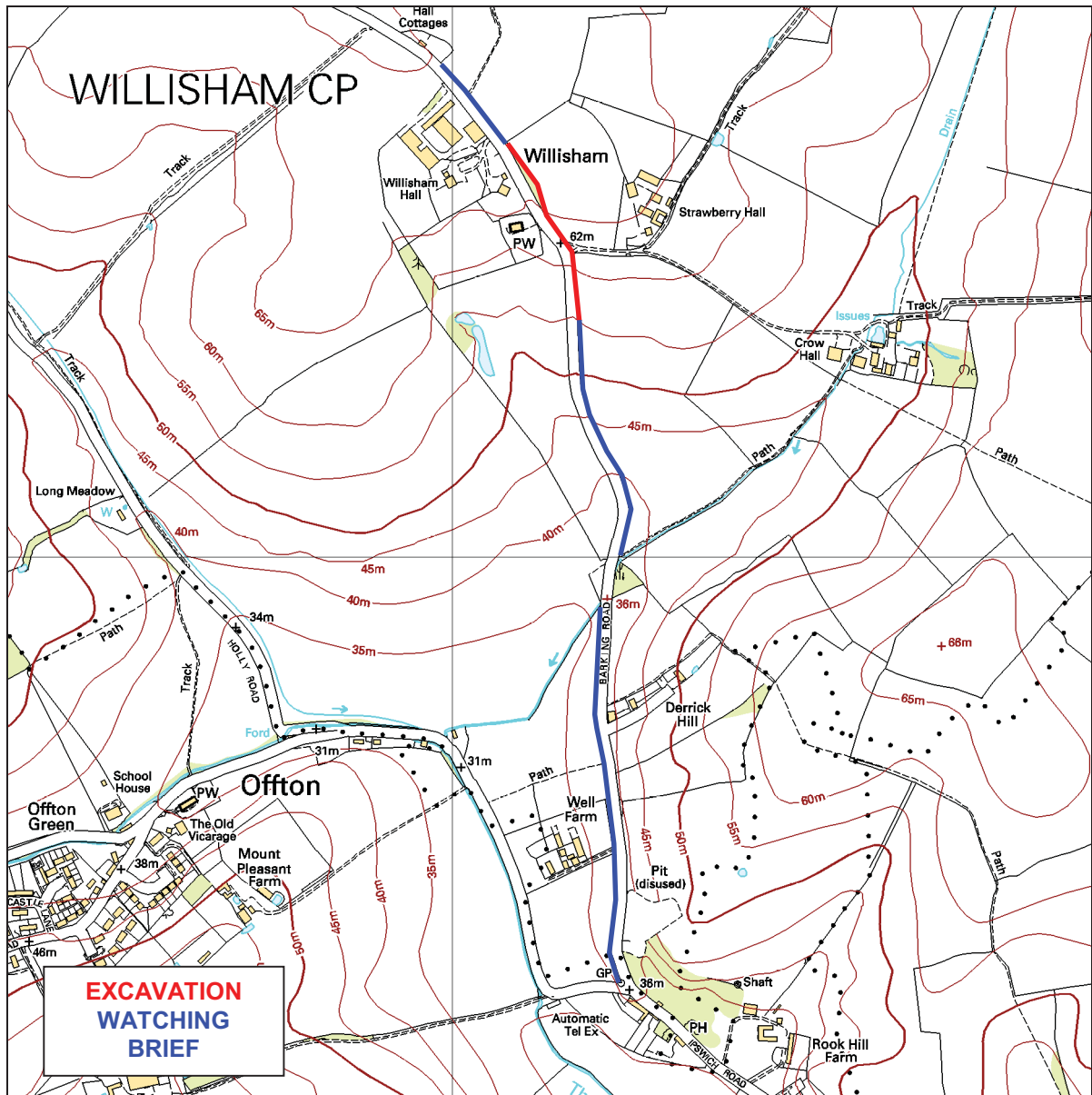


Figure 2: Plan of water main route, showing proposed methodologies (scale 1:10,000)

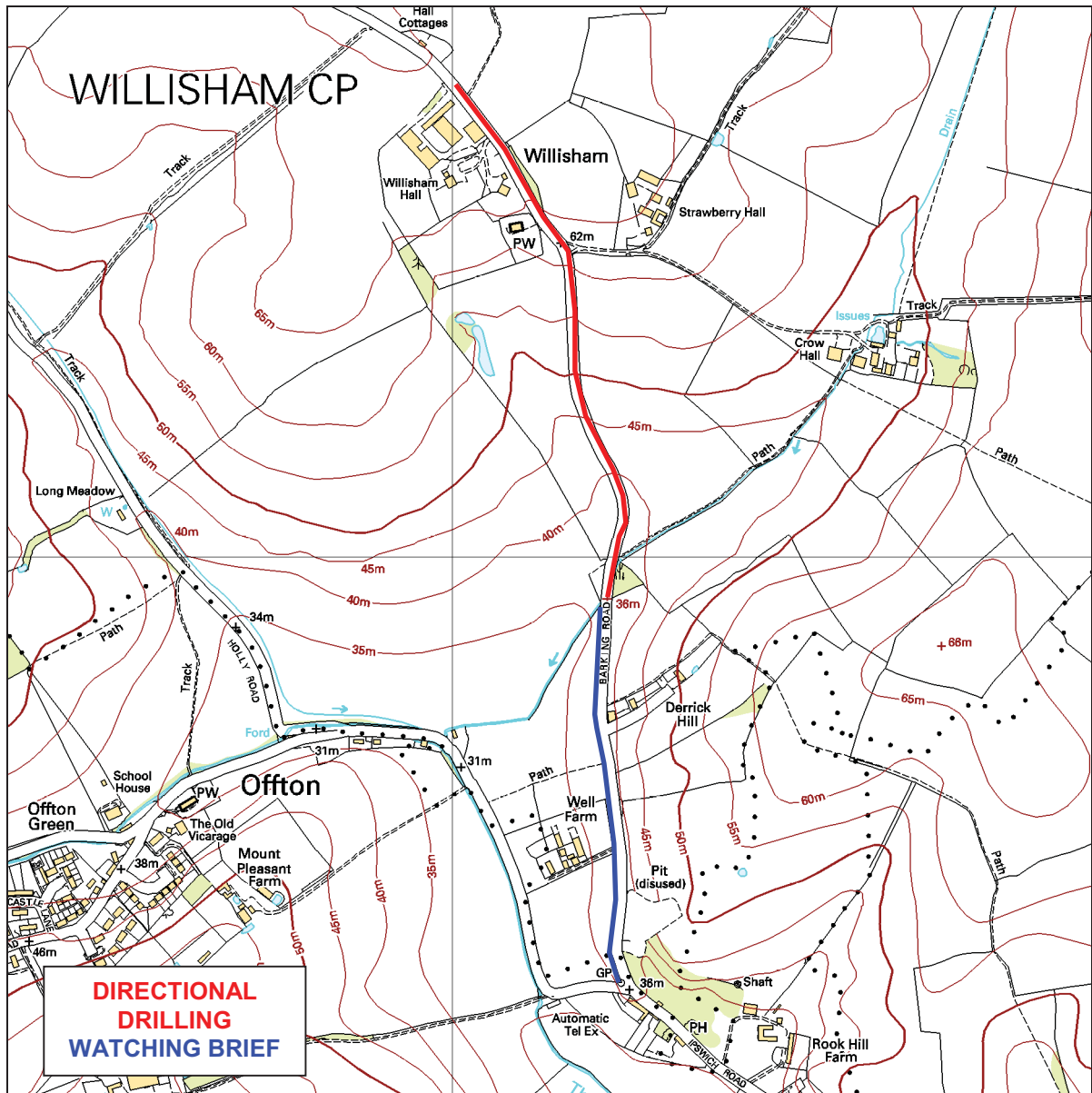


Figure 3: Plan of water main route, showing the actual area watched (scale 1:10,000)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief, the aims of the watching brief were:

- To provide a record of all archaeological deposits which will otherwise be damaged or removed by the development.
- To identify if the site has the potential to produce, in particular, evidence for Roman and medieval occupation, in the form of finds and features.
- To inform the Regional Research Framework in relation to Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval research agendas, as the site passes close to the site of a medieval moated enclosure and a Roman findspot, and has potential for producing other occupation deposits.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The brief required the following:

- **Excavation** – Supervised topsoil stripping, followed by excavation and recording of archaeological features along c.80m of the easement south-east of Willisham Hall (Fig. 2).
- **Watching Brief** – Topsoil stripping under archaeological supervision along the remainder of the easement.

As a result of access problems, AWSL re-routed the section of water main designated for excavation so that it ran along Barking Road instead of to the east of it. Accordingly, archaeological works on the scheme were limited to a watching brief (Fig. 3).

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 General

The route of the water main passes through an area of archaeological and historical interest, and the site had the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods. In line with the project design (para. 1.4), this section provides a description of the known archaeology and history of the landscape through which the water main passes, based on information contained in the Suffolk Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

Because of the rural character of the area through which the water main passes, past archaeological interventions have been limited. Finds of prehistoric, Roman and Saxon date have largely resulted from chance discovery, mainly metal detecting. Evidence for more recent periods has also been provided by these activities, as well as from surviving man-made landscape features.

3.2 Prehistoric & Iron Age (before AD43)

Evidence of prehistoric activity in the area traversed by the water main is slight. A find of a polished flint axe head of Neolithic date is recorded from fields north of Derrick Hill (TM 0734 4947), and a fragment of a flint blade or axe-head, also Neolithic, was found in fields north of Rook Hill Farm (TM 0731 4494: OFF 11). A fragment of a Bronze Age axe blade is recorded from the same general area, though it was too small to determine the type of axe from which it came. No finds or sites of Iron Age date are recorded in the vicinity of the water main route.

3.3 Roman (AD43-c.450)

During the Roman period, the Willisham area fell within the tribal *civitas* (territory) of the *Trinovantes*, with its capital at *Camulodunum* (Colchester). The nearest recorded Roman settlement was *Combretovium* (Baylham House), in the Gipping valley to the north-east of Willisham (OS 1978). Evidence of Roman activity in the vicinity of the water main route comprises three brooches from the field south of Willisham Church (TM 0715 5040: WLS 001), close to which the water main passes, and a number of coins accompanied by a Colchester brooch and pottery sherds, from fields north of Rook Hill Farm (OFF 11).

3.4 Saxon & Medieval (c.450-1500)

In the Saxon period, the lands belonging to Offton and Somersham formed part of the Bosmere Hundred (Page 1907, 571). Both settlements are mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (*ibid.*), and are therefore probably of Saxon origin. Willisham, in contrast, is not mentioned, and so is likely to be a later foundation. No Saxon finds or sites are recorded within the vicinity of the water main route.

It seems likely that the settlement at Willisham was established in the medieval period. The SMR lists two medieval sites: St Mary's Church (WLS 002), and a moated site at Willisham Hall (WLS 003). Pevsner (1974, 490) notes that the present church was built in 1878 by the architect H.J. Green, presumably replacing an earlier building. The moated site of the medieval manor, which dates from at least 1182, is shown on early Ordnance Survey maps, partly infilled, to the north of the later Willisham Hall.

The later house, described in 1674 as having eleven hearths, was destroyed by fire in 1934.

Metal detecting in the vicinity of the water main route has recovered a range of metal artefacts of medieval date. Of particular relevance, from fields to the north of Rook Hill Farm have come two 14th-century silver halfpennies, and copper-alloy strap ends, buckles and vessel fragments.

3.5 *Post-Medieval* (1500-1900)

The earliest map showing the area through which the water main passes in any detail is Hodgkinson's 1783 survey of Suffolk (Fig. 3). Willisham appears as a straggling settlement, spread along Barking Road between the church and Willisham Green (now Willisham Tye), to the north-west. There appears to be a building on the east side of the road, opposite the church, on the original route of the water main. Moving southwards along the water main route, buildings are shown only at Derrick Hill, on the east side of Barking Road. This picture remains largely unchanged into the late 19th century (Fig. 4) and early 20th century (Fig. 5).

The Suffolk SMR makes reference to one post-medieval site along the water main route. This is an extensive chalk pit (OFF 008), located immediately east of the road junction at the southern end of the main. In the early 1900s the south-east end of the pit is shown by the Ordnance Survey as 'lime works' (Fig. 5). Immediately east of the north end of the pit a windmill is shown on Figs 4 & 5: this has since been demolished.

Metal detecting in the vicinity of the water main route has recovered a range of metal artefacts of post-medieval date, including coins and tokens, buckles and strap ends, and a pipe tamper.

3.7 *Modern* (1900-present)

From the available information there appear to have been few changes to the area through which the water main passes in the last hundred years or so.



Figure 4: Extract from Hodgkinson's survey of Suffolk, 1783 (*not to scale*).

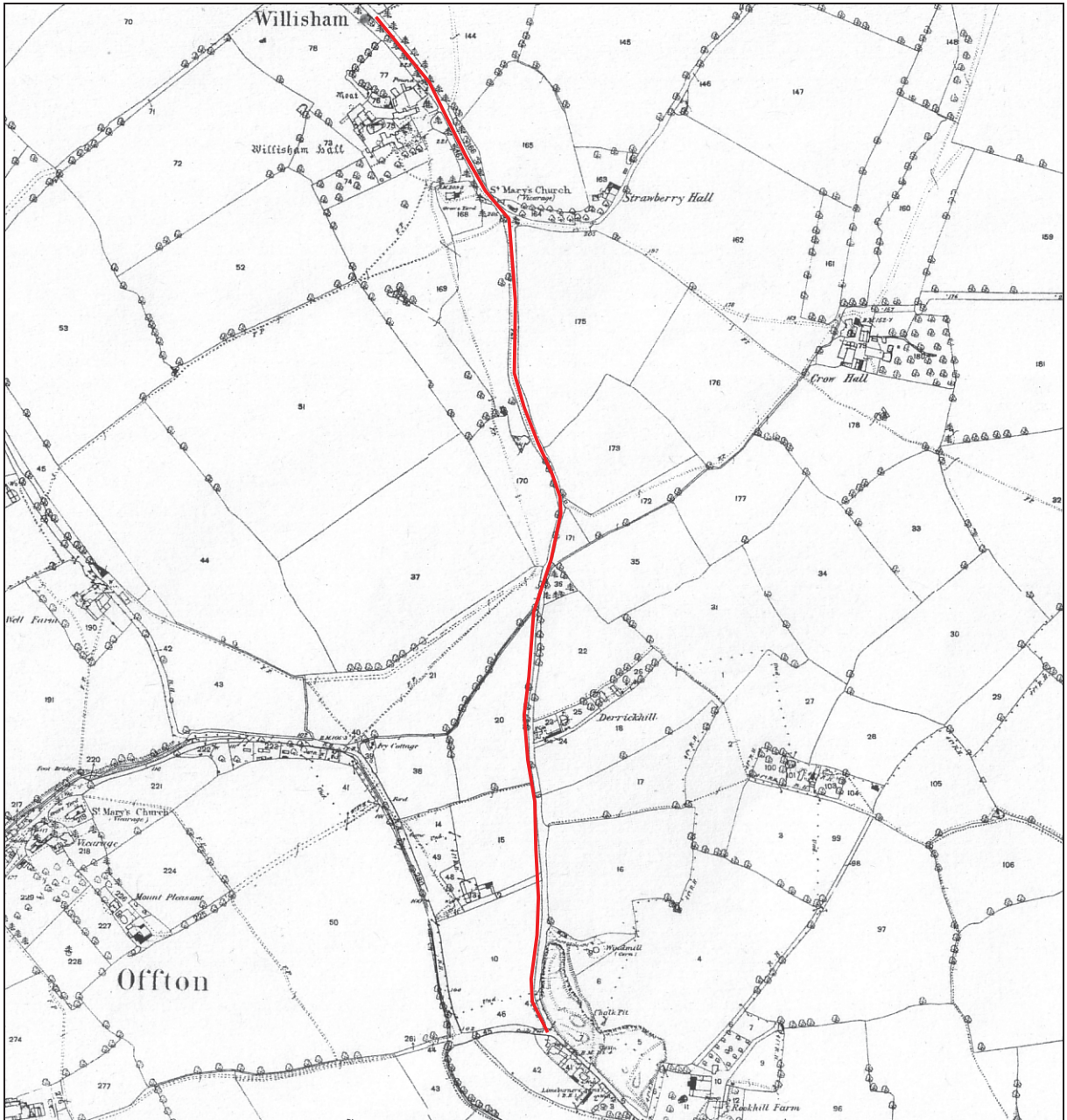


Figure 5: Extract from Ordnance Survey 6" sheet, c.1880

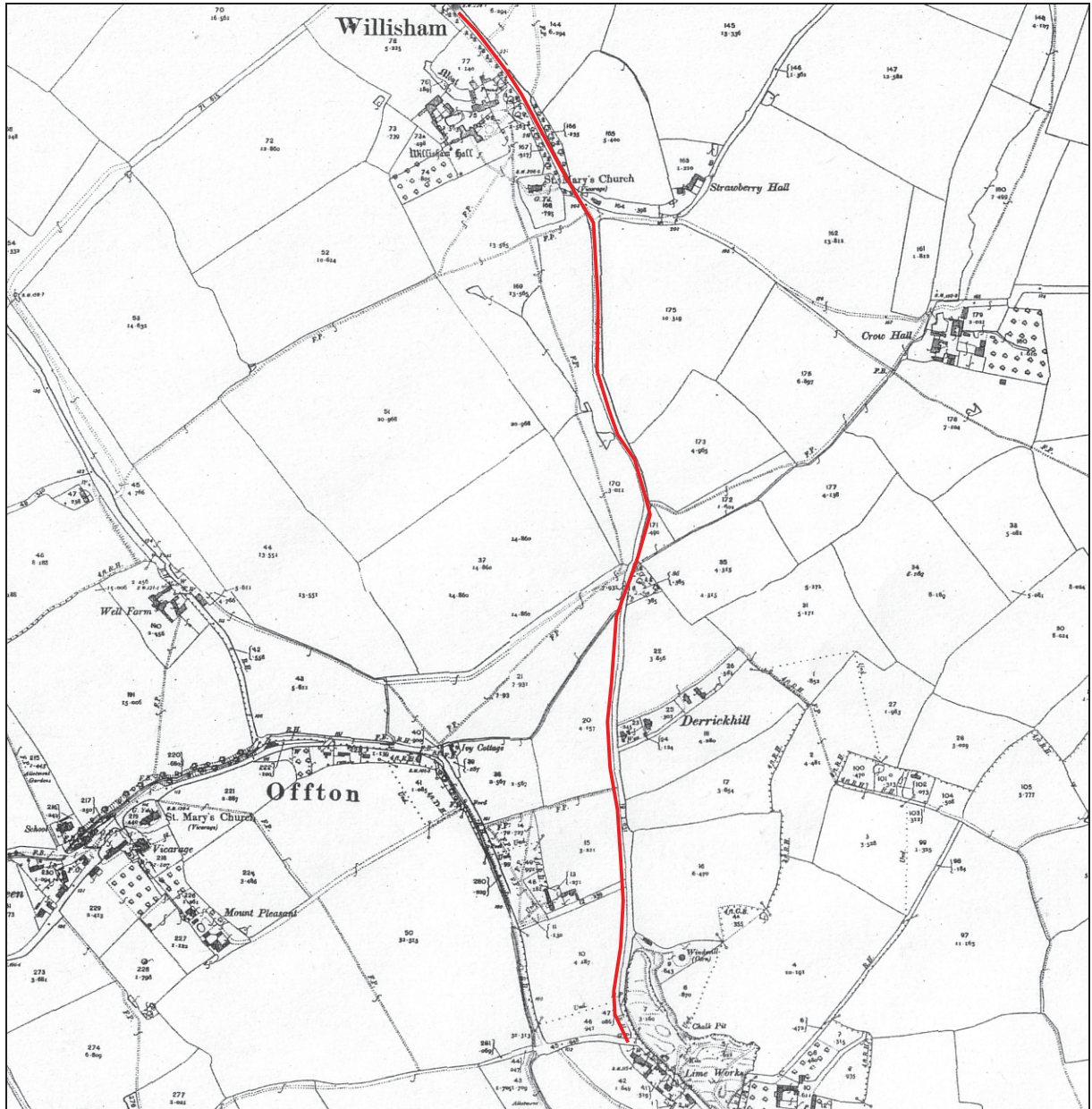


Figure 6: Extract from Ordnance Survey 6"sheet, c.1920

4 Results

- 4.1 As stated above the route of the water main was monitored where it crossed open fields from the Offton Road junction in the south to the Crow Hall farm track south of Willisham village. Northwards of this track the pipe was inserted by directional drilling alongside the road.
- 4.2 Throughout the monitored section the ploughsoil comprised *c.*250mm of mid greyish brown clay loam, overlying the natural light yellowish grey chalky till. A number of modern sectional clay drainage pipes were encountered along the easement during the topsoil stripping.
- 4.3 Along much of the monitored route regular east west orientated bands of slightly darker soil spaced between 4.5–5.0m apart were observed. Though upon excavation these feature were very shallow (50-100mm) it is possible that they represent evidence of medieval “stetch” ploughing a local form of ploughing which produced smaller ridges and furrows than the more traditional medieval ploughing seen across much of the country.
- 4.4 Other than the aforementioned plough furrows, no features or finds of archaeological significance were observed along the route of the water main.



Plate 1: Possible medieval plough furrows to the west of Ipswich Road

5. Conclusions

5.1 The section of the water main route subject to the watching brief runs through gently rolling countryside, where the predominant agricultural activity is arable production. Other than the late 19th-century limekiln at the southern end of the route there were no known monuments or sites prior to the start of the watching brief. The findspots recorded in the Suffolk SMR all seem to represent casual losses, rather than an indication of settlement in the immediate vicinity. . Though very shallow the presence of a series of regular darker bands of soil interpreted as the bases of medieval plough furrows is significant because “stech” furrows are commonly removed by later deep ploughing. The survival of medieval furrows could also be taken as an indication that the area monitored has been in agricultural use from at least that time. The absence of features or finds of archaeological significance from topsoil stripping suggests that no archaeological sites lie on or adjacent to the water main route. However, it is always possible that isolated features may be present elsewhere in the vicinity.

5.2 *Confidence Rating*

The watching brief was undertaken in reasonable conditions and the topsoil was removed sufficiently to enable any underlying features to be observed. It is thus possible to say that the results of the watching brief can be given an overall high confidence rating.

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Chris Bretton for commissioning the watching brief on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd. Thanks are also due to the pipe-laying team who gave their full cooperation during the watching brief. The project was monitored for the SCCAS by Dr Jess Tipper.

The project was managed for ASC by David Fell MA MIFA and the fieldwork was carried out by Chris Swain. The report was prepared by Nigel Wilson HND AIFA and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the Suffolk Sites & Monuments Record.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- 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 for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Reading).
- Rouse C 2007 *Willisham to Somersham Water Main Replacement Scheme, Suffolk: Project Design for Archaeological Excavation*. ASC document ref. 931/WSM/1 (May 2007).
- Tipper, J 2007 *Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Excavation: Willisham to Somersham Anglian Water Replacement Scheme* Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service – Conservation Team.

Secondary Sources

- Hodgkinson J 1783 *The County of Suffolk Surveyed*.
- Page W (ed) 1907 *The Victoria History of the County of Suffolk, vol. II*. Dawsons of Pall Mall (London).
- Pevsner Sir N 1974 *The Buildings of England: Suffolk*. 2nd edition. Yale University Press (New Haven & London).
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: WILLISHAM - SOMERSHAM		Project No/Code: 931 1 WSM		Sheet: 2 of 4	
Client/Developer: ANGLIAN WATER		Date of visit:			
Contact: CHRIS BRETTON			Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 8.00		Finish: 3.00	
Completed by: CHRIS SWAIN					
Development Type:					
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):					
Site & weather conditions:					
Observations:					
WORK STARTED ON TOPSOIL STRIP					
APPROX 350M STRIPPED BY THE END OF					
THE DAY. THIS IS THE POINT WHERE THE					
PIPELINE CROSSES THE ROAD FROM WEST TO					
EAST SIDE OF THE ROAD					
TOPSOIL 0.1-0.3 m MID GREYISH BROWN CLAY LOAM.					
NATURAL LIGHT YELLOW/GREY FRIABLE CHALKY CLAY					
Comments:					
WILL CONTINUE WORK TOMORROW					

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: WILLISHAM - SOMERSHAM			Project No/Code: 931 1 WSM		Sheet: 3 of 4	
Date of visit:						
Client/Developer ANGLIAN WATER						
Contact: CHRIS BRITTON				Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 8.00		Finish: 12.00		
Completed by: CHRIS SWAIN						
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions:						
Observations:						
Comments: NO STRIPPING TODAY DUE TO MECHANICAL DELAYS						

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: WILUSHAM - SOMERSHAM		Project No/Code: 931 1 WSM		Sheet: 4 of 4	
Date of visit:					
Client/Developer ANGLIA WATER					
Contact: CHRIS BRETTON				Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 8.00		Finish: 2.00	
Completed by: CHRIS SWAIN					
Development Type:					
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):					
Site & weather conditions:					
Observations: PROGRESSING NORTHWARDS TOWARDS THE CHURCH. POSSIBLE RIDGE & FURROW NOTED AT RIGHT ANGLES TO THE ROAD. TOPSOIL NOT FULLY REMOVED TO THE NORTH END OF SITE. FURROWS FILLED WITH TOPSOIL. RUNS ROUGHLY E-W APPROX 4.5-5m APART 0.05m DEEP RUNS THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE FIELD. FROM STRAWBERRY HALL / CROW FARM TRACK NORTHWARDS DRILLED ALONG THE ROAD.					
Comments: SMALL AREA AREA 140m N OF WILUSHAM STILL TO BE STRIPPED. CHRIS WILL LET US KNOW WHEN THE CROP IS OFF AND THEY ARE READY TO STRIP.					

For sketch plan, use separate sheet

©ASC 2007

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME:			SITE NO/CODE:
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	General view of the easement to the east of Ipswich Road
2		✓	General view of the easement to the east of Ipswich Road
3	✓	✓	Flattened ridge and furrow
4	✓	✓	Flattened ridge and furrow
5	✓	✓	General view of the easement to the east of Ipswich Road
6		✓	General view of the easement to the east of Ipswich Road
7	✓	✓	General view of the easement to the west of Ipswich Road
8		✓	General view of the easement to the west of Ipswich Road

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Willisham – Somersham Replacement Water Main, Suffolk		
OASIS ID:	archaeol2-40995		
Short Description:	<i>During June 2007, a watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a 1.75km section of water main to the south of Willisham. The only features observed were the eroded remains of ridge and furrow in most of the fields along the route.</i>		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Site status:	none	Previous work:	none
Current land use:	agricultural	Future work:	no
Monument type:	N/a	Monument period:	N/a
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Suffolk	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TM 0699 5072 - TM 0724 4928
District:	Mid Suffolk	Parish:	Willisham CP
Site address:	N/a		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	1.7 km x	Height OD: (metres)	65 – 35m AOD
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Dr Jess Tipper, SCCAS	Project design originator:	Calli Rouse BA PIFA
Project Manager:	David Fell BA MA MIFA	Director/Supervisor:	Nigel Wilson HND AIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	Anglian Water Services Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	11/06/2007	End date:	14/06/2007
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Suffolk SMR	n/a	
Paper:		Field Monitoring Sheets	
Digital:		CD	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Willisham to Somersham Water Main Replacement Scheme, Suffolk		
Serial title & volume:	ASC report 931/WSM/2		
Author(s):	Nigel Wilson HND AIFA		
Page nos	22	Date:	21 st April 2008