

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Woolpit Water Mains Replacement, Suffolk



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



January 2015

Client: Anglian Water

OA East Report No: 1727

OASIS No: oxfordar3- 195170

NGR: TL 984 618

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Woolpit Water Mains Replacement, Suffolk

Watching Brief

Site Code: XSFWOL14

Event number: ESF22526

HER number: WPT 043

Date of Works: November 2014

Report No: 1727

Excavator: Alexandra Scard

Client: Anglian Water

Report Date: 12/01/15

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Summary

In November 2014, OA East carried out an archaeological watching brief at Woolpit main replacement (c. TL 984 618). The monitoring was carried out during the replacement of a water pipeline. No archaeological features or significant finds were identified during the watching brief.

1 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 1.1.1 The pipeline begins at the pumping station to the west of the A14 and to the north of Warren Lane, Woolpit, Suffolk at a height of c. 58m OD. Heading north-westerly from the pumping station, located in the south-east of the first field, the route runs for c.600m, then cuts through Heath Rd (which was directionally drilled), before running for a further c.300m across another, gently rising, flat field to the borehole at c. 62m OD (Figs 1 & 2).
- 1.1.2 Three fields are traversed by the route of the pipeline, all of which are currently under arable. The natural substratum is of sandy gravel, mid orangey-brown in colour.
- 1.1.3 Fields one and two are separated by a ditch/grubbed out hedgerow, whilst the second and third field are divided by Heath Rd. To the north side of the pipeline, in the upper part of the second field, is a drained pond within a wide depression.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The route of the replacement pipeline in Woolpit crosses an area of 'archaeological potential' as defined by information held in the County Historic Environment Record. Finds of Roman date have been found in the vicinity of the scheme (WPT 008, 009, 010, 011). The pipeline works will have caused ground disturbance, potentially damaging archaeological deposits existing below, and hence an archaeological watching brief was called.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The objective of this watching brief was to determine, as far as possible, the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the project area and to preserve these by excavation and record where possible.
- 3.1.2 It was required that provision be made for monitoring the removal of the topsoil (c. 0.25m in depth) along the length of the pipeline route. The trench measurements, starting from the pumping station at the south, can be roughly divided as follows: c. 300m by 0.65m wide (Trench 1); c. 250m by 1.5m wide (Trench 2); c. 50m by 0.65m and c. 300m by 1.5m (Trench 3).
- 3.1.3 Additional monitoring of a test-pit at the start of the scheme in search of the original water pipe, along with two 2m by 2m drill pits was also undertaken.
- 3.1.4 Whilst no archaeological features or pre-modern finds were observed, trench locations and plans were recorded at appropriate scales and digital photographs were taken of all relevant stages of the monitoring process.
- 3.1.5 Generally, the site conditions were good, with limited modern disturbance from arable farming/plough scarring.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Test-Pit

- 4.1.1 A test-pit, c. 0.65m wide by 3m long, was excavated in the south-east of the first field, by the pumping station, in search of the original water pipe (Plate 1). The topsoil was a mid reddish-brown sandy silt, going to a depth of c. 0.1m.
- 4.1.2 The original water pipe was uncovered at a depth of c. 0.80m with an electricity cable slightly above this, both within redeposited natural backfill.
- 4.1.3 No archaeological remains were identified.

4.2 Topsoil Stripping

- 4.2.1 The topsoil (see 4.1.1 for description) was just c. 0.1m in depth in the first c. 300m of trench. Below this, geology varied with subsoil, of a mid greyish-brown sandy silt, inconsistently appearing at a depth of c. 0.1m. Subsoil was non-existent over the remaining length of the trench.
- 4.2.2 For the majority of the first c. 300m of trench, and almost all of the remaining c. 600m (Figs 4 & 5), the topsoil either sat directly on top of the natural substratum, at a depth of c. 0.2m, or was not removed completely to reveal previous deposits. Un-worked flint nodules were frequent throughout both topsoil and underlying natural.
- 4.2.3 In Trench 1, c. 110m north-west of the pump station and test-pit, a small geological test-pit was revealed.
- 4.2.4 In the final c. 40m of the first trench in field one, heading north-west towards the modern ditch, copious amounts of modern finds were present: pottery sherds, glass jam jars, pieces of china, bottle necks and a piece of disused modern pipe.
- 4.2.5 Throughout the remaining c. 600m of trench, the only find was one piece of 19th century stoneware.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 No evidence of Roman, or any other pre-modern, activity was identified during the archaeological works.
- 5.1.2 Modern artefacts were common in the topsoil within one part of Field 2, they represent everyday items, found out of context, and will have been deposited through recent arable activities. The items were not deemed of archaeological significance and were not retained.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1.1 The author would like to thank Andy Moss of Clarets who aided the project and Mike Salcombe of Anglian Water who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Richard Mortimer and completed by Alexandra Scard.
- 6.1.2 The brief for archaeological works was written by Abby Antrobus.

APPENDIX A. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3- 195170		
Project Name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Woolpit Water Mains replacement, Suffolk		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	11-11-2014	Finish	18-11-2014
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XFSWOL14	Planning App. No.	n/a
HER No.	WPT 043	Related HER/OASIS No.	Event number: ESF22526

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt

Please select all techniques used:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Field Observation (periodic visits)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Record
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Excavation (100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Field Walking
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Systematic Metal Detector Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pit Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Open-Area Excavation	<input type="checkbox"/> Salvage Excavation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Watching Brief

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
None	None	Pottery	Modern 1901 to Present
	Select period...	Glass	Modern 1901 to Present
	Select period...	Pipe	Modern 1901 to Present

Project Location

County	Suffolk	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District		Fields between Heath Rd and Warren Lane, Woolpit, Suffolk IP30 9
Parish	Woolpit	
HER	Suffolk	
Study Area	900m	National Grid Reference TL 984 618

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Abby Antrobus
Project Design Originator	Richard Mortimer
Project Manager	Richard Mortimer
Supervisor	Alexandra Scard

Project Archives

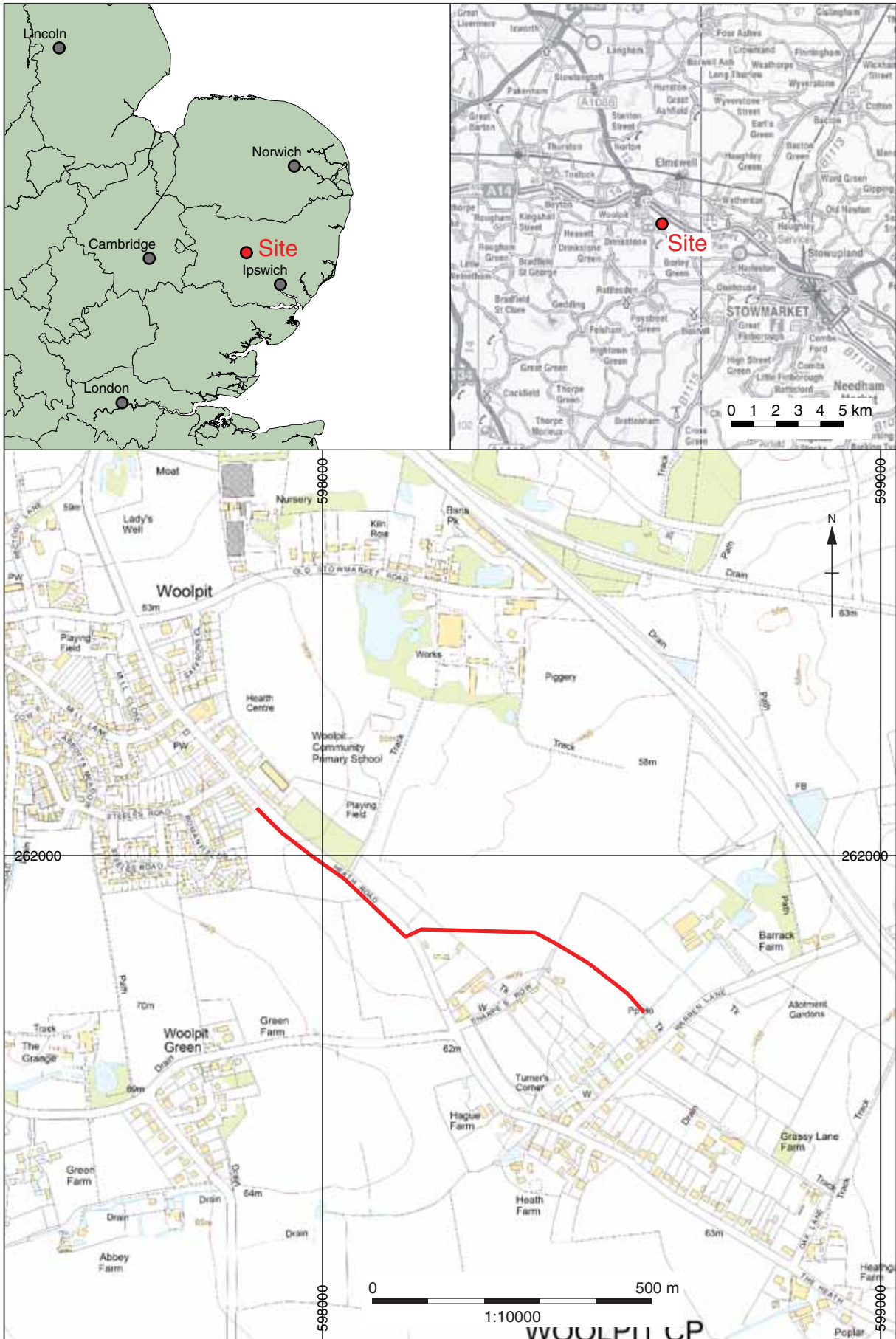
Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Location ...	Location ...	Location ...
Accession ID ...	Accession ID ...	Accession ID ...

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Map
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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Figure 1: Site location showing area of monitoring and recording (red)

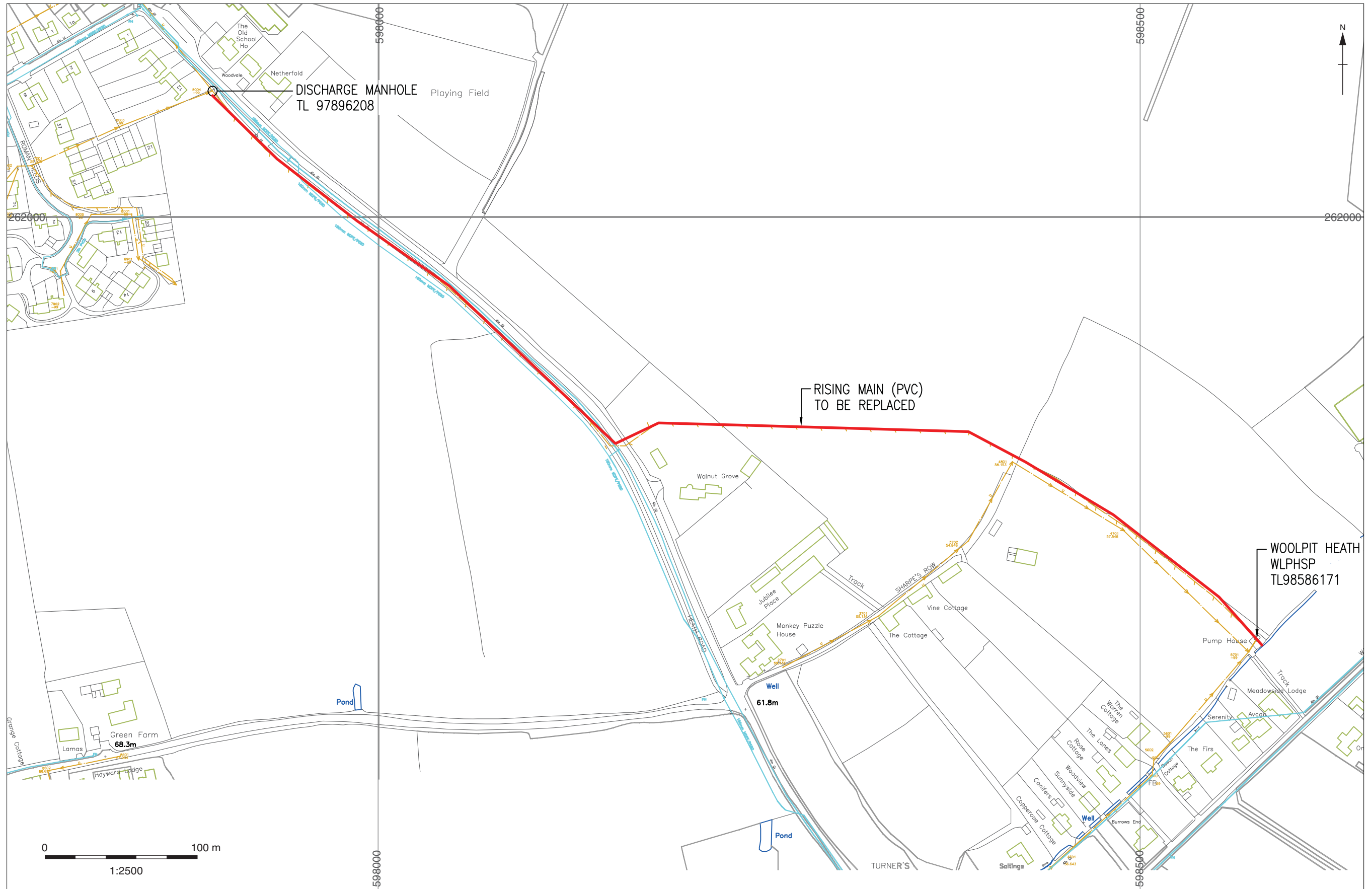


Figure 2: Plan of scheme showing trench location



Plate 1: Test-pit



Plate 2: Trench 1



Plate 3: Trenches 1 & 2



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