



Tatton Park Water Main, Tatton Park Cheshire East

Watching Brief: Supplementary Report



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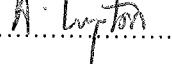
National Grid Reference: SJ 7455 8158

Prepared by: Becky Wegiel
Position: Supervisor
Date: March 2010

Checked by: Alison Plummer
Position: Project Manager
Date: June 2010

Signed.....

Approved by: Alan Lupton
Position: Operations Manager
Date: June 2010

Signed.....

Oxford Archaeology North

Mill 3,
Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1GF
t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606

© Oxford Archaeology Ltd (2010)

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0EA
t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496

w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

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SUMMARY

Following a programme of historical research and a walkover survey (OA North 2008), The National Trust Archaeologist (North-West Region) specified that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the excavation of a series of test pits. The pits were aligned along the route of the proposed United Utilities Water Main, within Tatton Park, Cheshire East (SJ 7455 8158), and were part of the water main renewal works.

Work commenced on the pipeline in February 2010 and, in total, 15 test pits were excavated along the route, in order to allow a drilling rig to tunnel beneath the ground surface to lay the water pipe with a minimum of disturbance to the park land. The test pits were generally spaced 100m apart and were located in positions that would potentially impact on historic fields and boundaries. Only one of the pits (Pit 5) contained archaeological features of interest, being buried soil horizons. It is intended that the following document is intended as a supplement to the earlier reports.

No recommendations are made for further work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank United Utilities for commissioning the project. Thanks are also due to Northeast Pipelines Ltd for facilitating the on site works.

Sean McPhillips and Becky Wegiel undertook the archaeological watching brief and Becky compiled the report. Mark Tidmarsh produced the drawings. Alison Plummer managed the project, and also edited the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCE OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 United Utilities proposed the construction of a water main at Tatton Park in Cheshire (SJ 7455 8158) (Fig 1). Following the desk-based research and walkover survey completed by OA North in 2008 and 2009, the National Trust Archaeologist (North-West Region) specified that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during the groundworks.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The proposed pipeline is located within The National Trust estate of Tatton Park which lies approximately 2.5 miles to the north of Knutsford in East Cheshire. It extended from Tatton Mere in the south (SJ 75279 80860) to Rostherne Lodge in the north (SJ 74918 82765).
- 1.2.2 The Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain, in which Tatton lies, is formed from Triassic sandstones and marls, overlain by glacial deposits of clay, silt, peat, sand and gravels (Countryside Commission 1998, 146). Much of the plain is rolling, with only gentle changes in elevation between 20m and 50m (*op cit*, 145).

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.3.1 This section has been taken from the '*Tatton Park Pipeline, Tatton Park, Cheshire: Desk-based Assessment and Walkover Survey Report*' (OA North 2008) and condensed for the purpose of this supplementary report.
- 1.3.2 ***Prehistoric Period (c 12,800–43 AD):*** Mesolithic activity at Tatton Park includes a 'chipping camp' (Crosby 1996, 16; Higham and Cane 1999), and possibly, a perforated stone hammer (HER 2061/1/1), although this could conceivably be of later provenance. In addition, a pair of unretouched flint flakes, one of which was burnt, were found at Rostherne Mere immediately to the north of Tatton Park (Leah *et al* 1997, 101), but these are equally ambiguous in terms of dating.
- 1.3.3 Neolithic evidence within Tatton Park includes flint tools and a post-hole from part of a small building which were uncovered at Tatton Mere, and these have been carbon dated to 3,500–2,945 cal BC (Higham 1993, 17). Similarly, a rubbish pit yielded hulled six-row barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), which has been carbon dated to 3,370-2,945 cal BC (*ibid*), but no ceramic material was uncovered in either feature (Leah *et al* 1997, 101-102).
- 1.3.4 ***The Historic Period (43 AD –1540):*** the modern placename Tatton, derives from the Anglo-Saxon 'Tata's tun', referring to Tata's Farm (Mills 1998). During the Early Medieval Period, Tatton lay within the Parish of Rostherne in the Bucklow Hundred (Higham 1993).

- 1.3.5 In the Medieval Period Tatton had a pair of manors, recorded under separate ownership in 1086 (Williams and Martin 1992). The larger manor, that of William FitzNigel, Baron of Halton, had seven recorded households consisting of three villans (higher economic status villagers) and four borders (cottagers), with land for three and half ploughs (*ibid*). The smaller manor was Norshaw in the vill of Tatton, which was held by one Ranulph, and had land for half a plough and contained nine recorded households. In the case of the latter, there is a reference to ‘waste’ land, which Crosby (1996, 33) notes, is endemic for the entries relating to the area around Macclesfield, and would suggest that this part of Cheshire bore the brunt of William the Conqueror’s savage oppression during his campaign of 1069-70 (the ‘harrying of the north’). Indeed, in both cases, the new holders of the Tatton manors were Norman, whilst their former owners were Anglo-Saxon (Erchenbrand and Leofwine), indicating that the manors had been confiscated and reallocated as part of that campaign.
- 1.3.6 During the early thirteenth century, the new priory at Mobberley acquired several parcels of land either side of the Knutsford road to the east of the Great Mere (Tatton Mere), and permission was given for fishing rights and the enclosure of this area. This land, which was named Hazelhurst, was passed to Richard de Massey, who made it a park and obtained a royal licence in 1290 to divert the Knutsford Road from the east side of this new parkland to the west side. Through acquiring further land from William de Tatton and Nicholas de Alditheley, de Massey held all or most of Tatton by the reign of Edward I (Crosby 1996, 47-48).
- 1.3.7 The recorded names of fields and furlongs suggests that the estate had an extensive open field system, which would mean widespread clearance of woodland (*ibid*). In addition, the fourteenth century saw a general change in land use from arable to pasture across Cheshire (Carrington 1994).
- 1.3.8 ***The Post-medieval Period (c AD 1540 – 1750):*** enclosure of the open fields had begun in the fifteenth century and continued through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to provide pasture, which sometimes resulted in the loss of hamlets and manors. The enclosure of land in this area was largely complete by the eighteenth century (Crosby 1996, 64).
- 1.3.9 During the 1580s, the Old Manor was expanded to its present size by the Brereton family, but by 1598, the estate was the property of the Egerton family (Cheshire County Council 2005). Although, the Egertons continued to hold Tatton for the next century, it was never used by them, being leased to tenants instead. It was not until John Egerton (1679-1724) moved to Tatton, and built a new hall on the site of the modern one (HER 1298/2; Cheshire County Council 2005), that the Egerton family became permanent residents, whilst the old hall would eventually become the home of estate workers (*ibid*).
- 1.3.10 ***The Industrial Period (c AD 1750 – 1901):*** in this period, the fortunes of the Egerton family flourished and, subsequently, the new hall, which had only been completed in 1716, was extensively rebuilt by a succession of architects including Samuel and Lewis William Wyatt (HER 1298/2; Cheshire County

Council 2005). The estate, which at the time, was ten times larger than today (25,000 acres), was also comprehensively landscaped by several designers of repute, including Humphry Repton, William Eames and John Webb (Cheshire County Council 2005). As the estate became emparked during this landscaping process, many of the small farms that were notable in the early post-medieval period disappeared, leaving only a handful of residual farm and field names, and various boundaries. In order to counteract this, the Home Farm at Tatton Dale (HER 58539 (Dale Cottage)) was expanded to become the administrative centre of the estate, with the workshops of the farm (*ibid*) being situated there. The sites identified by the previous desk-based assessment and walkover within the study area are an eclectic mix of boundary ditches, banks and fences, some agricultural features in the form of a marl pit, ridge and furrow, a pair of fields, and woodland management features.

- 1.3.11 **Modern Period (1901 – present):** there are only a handful of sites from the modern period, of which, the most significant are the separate sets of mooring rings for barrage balloons from the Second World War. In addition, Melchett Mere was inadvertently created during the early twentieth century, following the persistent pumping of brine by salt companies based at Northwich, in order to dissolve the rock salt under, and to the north of, Tatton (Cheshire County Council 2005).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.1.1 In total, 15 test pits were excavated, the majority of which were spaced at 100m intervals along the easement, with the exception of test pits 13 and 14, which were 77m apart. Each test pit measured approximately 2m x 2m though some were slightly longer. The topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits were removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket to a general depth of 1.2m. Each pit was inspected for archaeological remains and recorded on OA North *pro forma* sheets and a digital photography archive was compiled.

2.2 ARCHIVE

2.2.1 The archive and report will be deposited with The National Trust North-West Region Archive, and the Cheshire Record Office.

3. RESULTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 In total, 15 test pits were excavated along the line of the proposed water main. Archaeology was not observed in any of the pits other than Test Pit 5. The site numbers discussed below refer to the Desk-based Assessment (OA North 2008).

3.2 RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF

3.2.1 Test Pit 1 (Fig 2b and 2b; Plate 1) was located at the southernmost end of the easement, adjacent to the Old Hall access road, and it measured 2m x 3m x 1.2m deep. A 0.2m deep layer of made-ground comprising stone and cinder was removed exposing a red sand subsoil. The subsoil was above a grey silty-clay natural deposit. No archaeology was observed within this pit.

3.2.2 Test Pit 2 (Fig 2b; Plate 2) was situated within Site **239**, a post-medieval field, and measured 2m x 1m. The layer of made-ground as seen in Test Pit 1, was present. The subsoil and underlying geology was also present, as in Test Pit 1.

3.2.3 Test Pit 3 (Fig 2b; Plate 3) was located immediately to the north of Site **236**, an Industrial Period track, and within Site **250**, a post-medieval field. The pit measured 2m x 2m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. A 0.1m deep humic topsoil overlay a mottled grey firm clay natural. No archaeology was observed within this pit.

3.2.4 Test Pit 4 (Fig 2b; Plate 4) measured 2m x 2m, and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. It was located within Site **250**, 'The Brickills', a post-medieval field. The topsoil in this area of the easement comprised a 0.2m deep dark greyish brown sandy-clay, overlying a natural reddish brown silty-sandy clay. No archaeology was observed within this pit.

3.2.5 Test Pit 5 (Fig 2b; Plate 5) measured 2.5m x 1.8m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The pit was located near to Sites **231** and **232**, Industrial Period scarps. The topsoil, a mid-grey soft sandy-clay, 0.2m deep, and a mid-reddish brown sandy-clay subsoil, 0.5m deep, were removed. The subsoil overlay a buried soil horizon, **5**, comprising a light grey sandy-clay, 0.03m deep. This in turn sealed a further buried soil, **3**, a dark greyish brown silty-clay, 0.05m deep. This overlay natural light brown sandy-clay.

3.2.6 Test Pit 6 (Fig 2b; Plate 6) was made larger than the other pits, (10m x 1m, 1.4m deep), in order to locate and excavate around an existing water main. It was located close to Site **230**, a post-medieval field. The topsoil, a 0.2m deep dark pinkish-brown sandy-silt, and the subsoil, a mottled orange-yellow-red soft silty-sand, 0.5m deep, overlay natural orange-brown fine-sand. No archaeology was observed within this pit.

- 3.2.7 Test Pit 7 (Fig 2b; Plate 7) was located within Site **229**, a post-medieval field. It measured 2m x 3m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The topsoil, a grey sandy-clay, 0.25m deep, sealed a reddish brown sandy-clay subsoil, 0.3m deep. This was above natural light red sand. No archaeology was observed within this pit.
- 3.2.8 Test Pit 8 (Fig 2b; Plate 8) measured 2m x 3m, was excavated to a depth of 1.2m and located very close to Site **103**, an area of post-medieval ploughed land. The topsoil, a 0.2m thick grey silty-clay, overlay a light red sand with occasional stones. The top half of the pit showed signs of being heavily rooted. No archaeology was observed within this pit.
- 3.2.9 Test Pit 9 (Fig 2b; Plate 9) was located within Site **228**, a post-medieval enclosure. The pit measured 2m x 2m, and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The topsoil comprised a mid-pinkish brown soft sandy-silt, 0.2m deep, and beneath this the subsoil comprised a mid-brown sandy-silt, 0.2m deep. This overlay natural orange/red fine sand. No archaeology was observed within this pit.
- 3.2.10 Test Pit 10 (Fig 2b; Plate 10) measured 2m x 2m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. It was sited within Lambs Acre Enclosure (Site **225**). The topsoil, a mid-greyish brown soft sandy-silt, 0.2m deep, overlay, light brownish orange silty-sand subsoil. The natural geology was a mottled orange, yellow and red soft silty-sand, 0.4m deep. No archaeology was observed within this pit.
- 3.2.11 Test Pit 11 (Fig 2a; Plate 11) was located within Site **220**, a post-medieval enclosure. The pit measured 2m x 2m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The topsoil and subsoil were as observed in Test Pit 10 and sealed the natural geology, which was a mid-orange fine sand with patches of coarse sub-rounded gravel, 0.5m deep. No archaeological remains were observed within this pit.
- 3.2.12 Test Pit 12 (Fig 2a; Plate 12) measuring 2m x 2m, and 1.2m deep, was situated just to the east of Site **117**, post-medieval narrow ridge and furrow. The topsoil and subsoil were also as observed in Test Pit 10 and overlay a mottled pinkish yellow and orange sandy-silt natural. No archaeology was observed within this pit.
- 3.2.13 Test Pit 13 (Fig 2a; Plate 13) was located on the eastern edge of Site **121**, post-medieval ridge and furrow. The pit measured 2m x 2m, and was excavated to a depth of 1.1m. The topsoil and subsoil, as described in Test Pit 10, overlay the natural geology, which comprised mid-pinkish orange sand, and this was excavated to a depth of 0.6m. No archaeology was observed within this pit.
- 3.2.14 Test Pit 14 (Fig 2a; Plate 14) was situated within Site **128**, an area of post-medieval ridge and furrow. It measured 2m x 2m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The topsoil, subsoil and natural geology were as described above (*Section 3.2.10*). No archaeology was observed within this pit.

3.2.15 Test Pit 15 (Fig 2a; Plate 15) was the northernmost pit on the pipeline. It measured 2m x 2m and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The topsoil, subsoil and natural geology were as seen above (*Section 3.2.10*). No archaeology was observed within this pit.

4. CONCLUSION

The test pit methodology employed on the construction of the pipeline was designed to minimise the impact of the water main works upon the parkland and, as a result, the level of impact on the known archaeology was also reduced. Tatton Park has a history of agricultural use, particularly in the Post-medieval Period, and to a lesser extent features from the Industrial Period can be observed across the park. The pipeline traversed a number of these features.

Typically, the test pits were located within post-medieval fields, and it is unsurprising that no features were observed. No traces of field boundaries were detected. Two shallow bands of buried soil were observed in Test Pit 5. The restricted size of the test pit does not allow for any further interpretation.

No recommendations are made for further work during the course of the water main works.

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6. ILLUSTRATIONS

6.1 LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 1: Location Map

Figs 2a and 2b: Test Pits Location Plan

6.2 LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: Test Pit 1, facing North

Plate 2: Test Pit 2, facing North

Plate 3: Test Pit 3, facing North

Plate 4: Test Pit 4, facing East

Plate 5: Test Pit 5, facing West

Plate 6: Test Pit 6, facing West

Plate 7: Test Pit 7, facing West

Plate 8: Test Pit 8, facing West

Plate 9: Test Pit 9, facing West

Plate 10: Test Pit 10, facing West

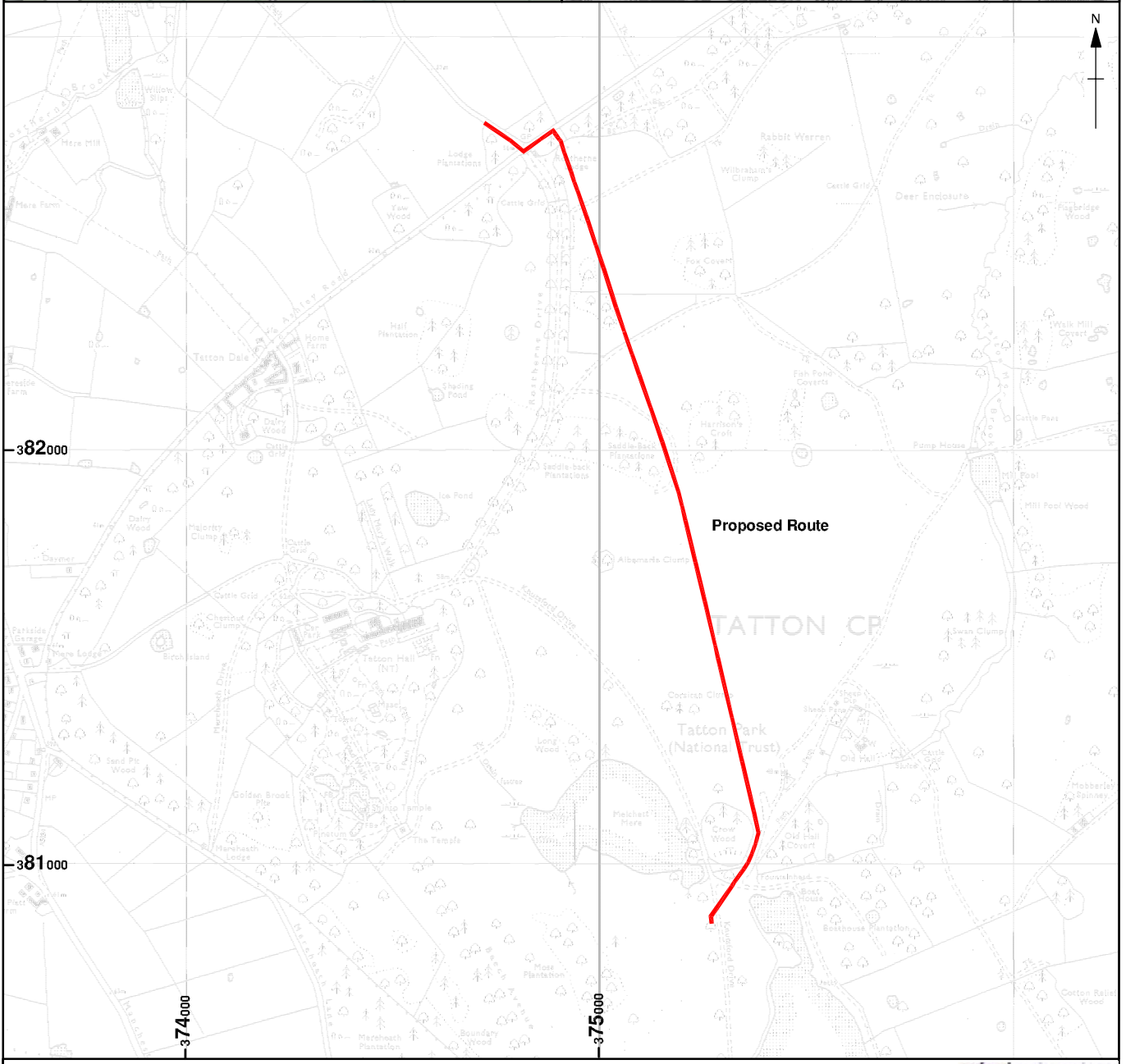
Plate 11: Test Pit 11, facing West

Plate 12: Test Pit 12, facing West

Plate 13: Test Pit 13, facing West

Plate 14: Test Pit 14, facing West

Plate 15: Test Pit 15, facing West



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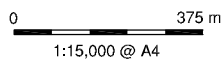


Figure 1: Site location

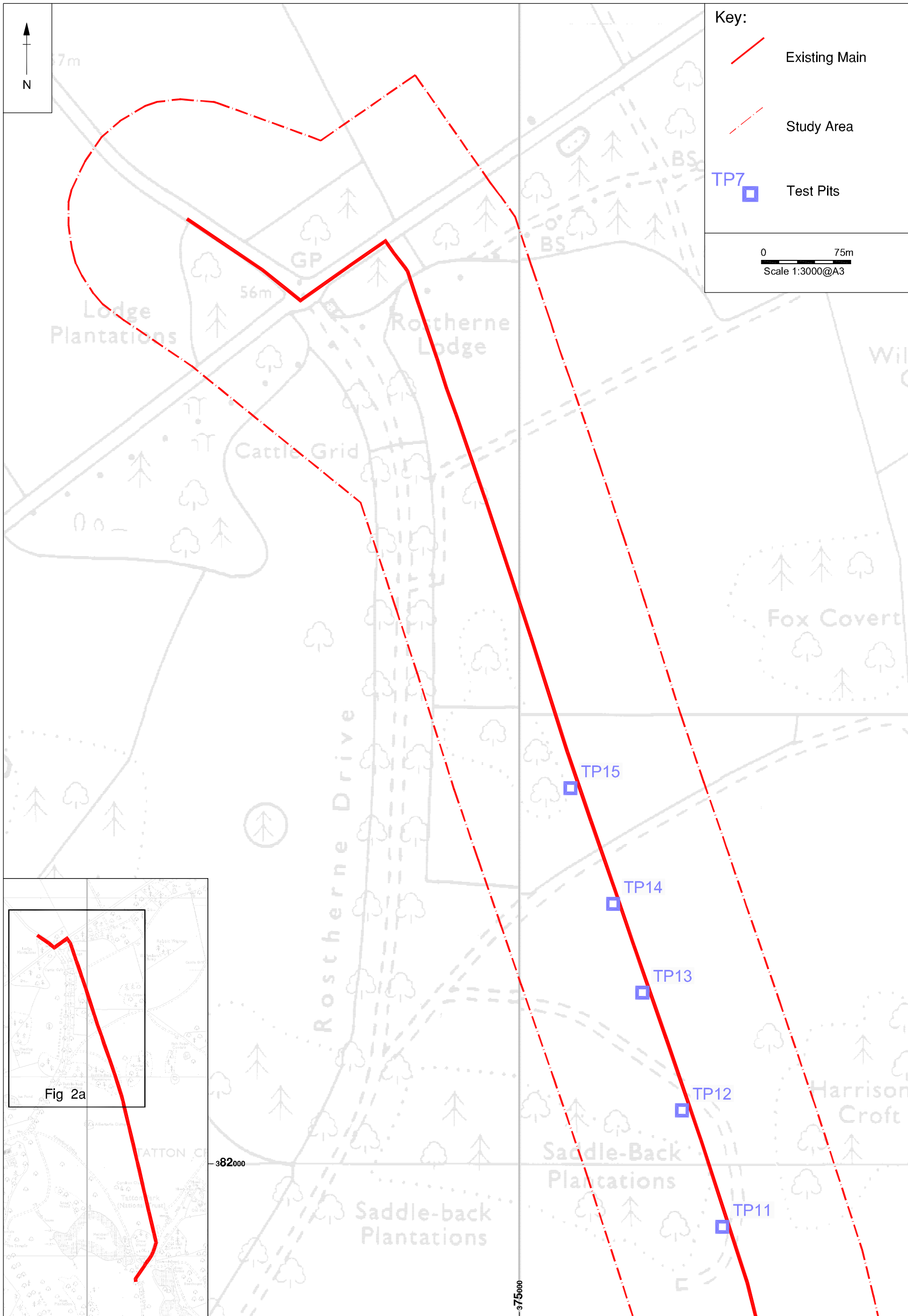


Figure 2a: Test Pit location plan

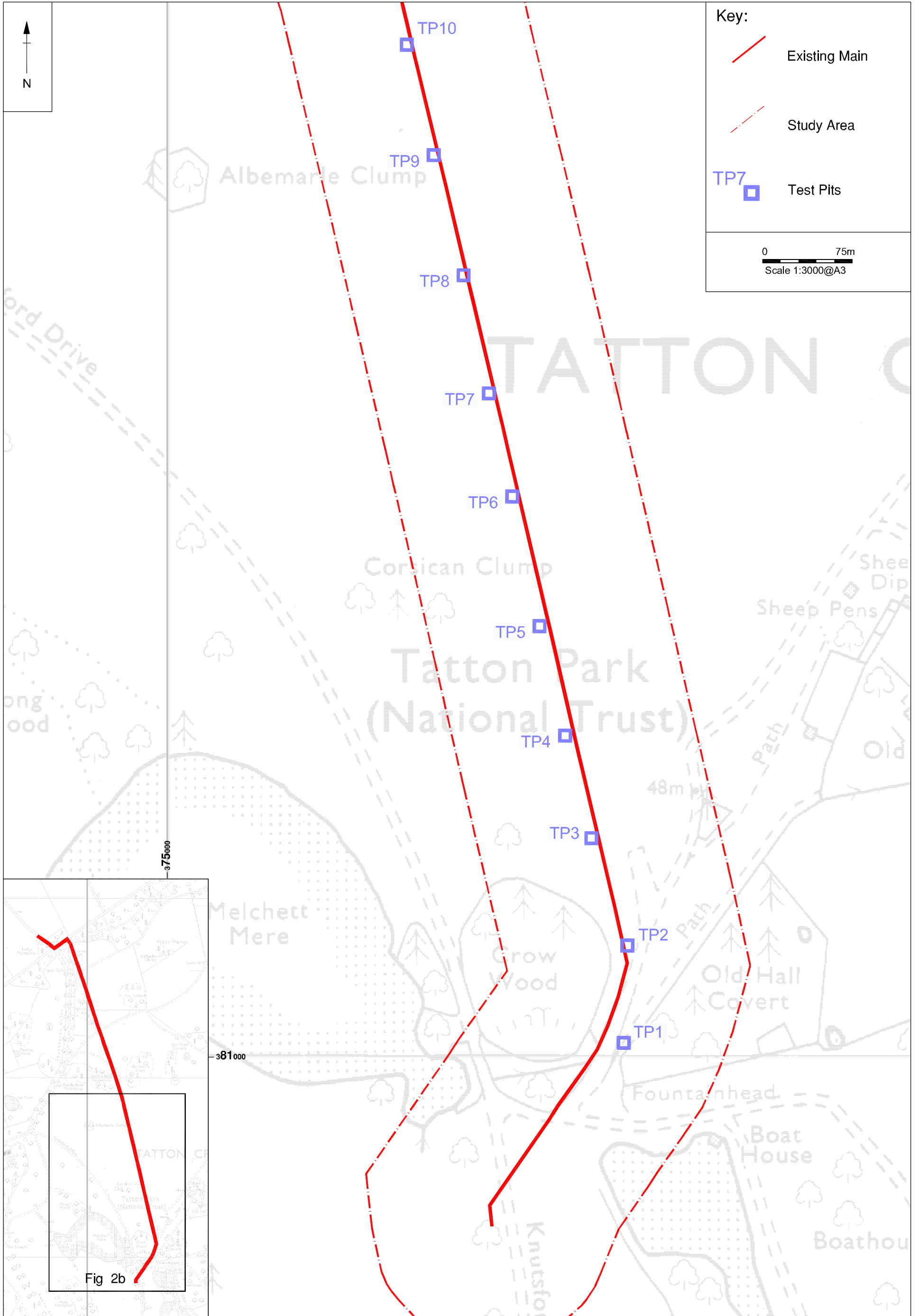


Figure 2b: Test Pit location plan

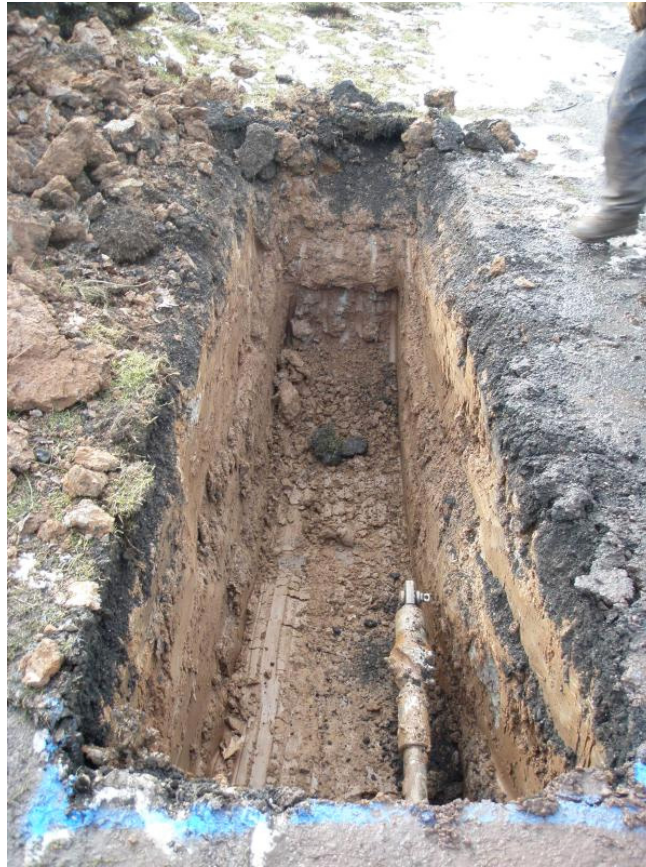


Plate 1: Test Pit 1, facing North



Plate 2: Test Pit 2, facing North



Plate 3: Test Pit 3, facing North



Plate 4: Test Pit 4, facing East



Plate 5: Test Pit 5, facing West



Plate 6: Test Pit 6, facing West



Plate 7: Test Pit 7, facing West



Plate 8: Test Pit 8, facing West



Plate 9: Test Pit 9, facing West



Plate 10: Test Pit 10, facing West



Plate 11: Test Pit 11, facing West



Plate 12: Test Pit 12, facing West



Plate 13: Test Pit 13, facing West



Plate 14: Test Pit 14, facing West



Plate 15: Test Pit 15, facing West