



Archaeological Field Unit

**Peterborough to Whittlesey Reinforcement Main:  
Archaeological Observation of Test Pits**

Scott Kenney

August 2005

**Cambridgeshire County Council**

Report No. 822

Commissioned by Anglian Water

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## SUMMARY

*Archaeological observation was carried out on 15 test pits along the proposed route of the Whittlesey Reinforcement Main. The pits were dug to determine the presence or absence of services in the locations where boreholes were to be sunk. No services were discovered and no definitively archaeological deposits were encountered.*

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**Peterborough to Whittlesey Reinforcement Main:  
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TL 1913/9588 to TL 2346/9599**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The observation was commissioned by Anglian Water in order to monitor hand dug test pits along the proposed route of the Peterborough to Whittlesey Reinforcement Main. The archaeological potential of this area has been outlined in a previous report (Kenney 2005). The observation was carried out over four days (4-5 and 25-26 July).

The proposed route skirts the southern edge of the development proposals for the southward expansion of Stanground and straddles two local authorities, Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.

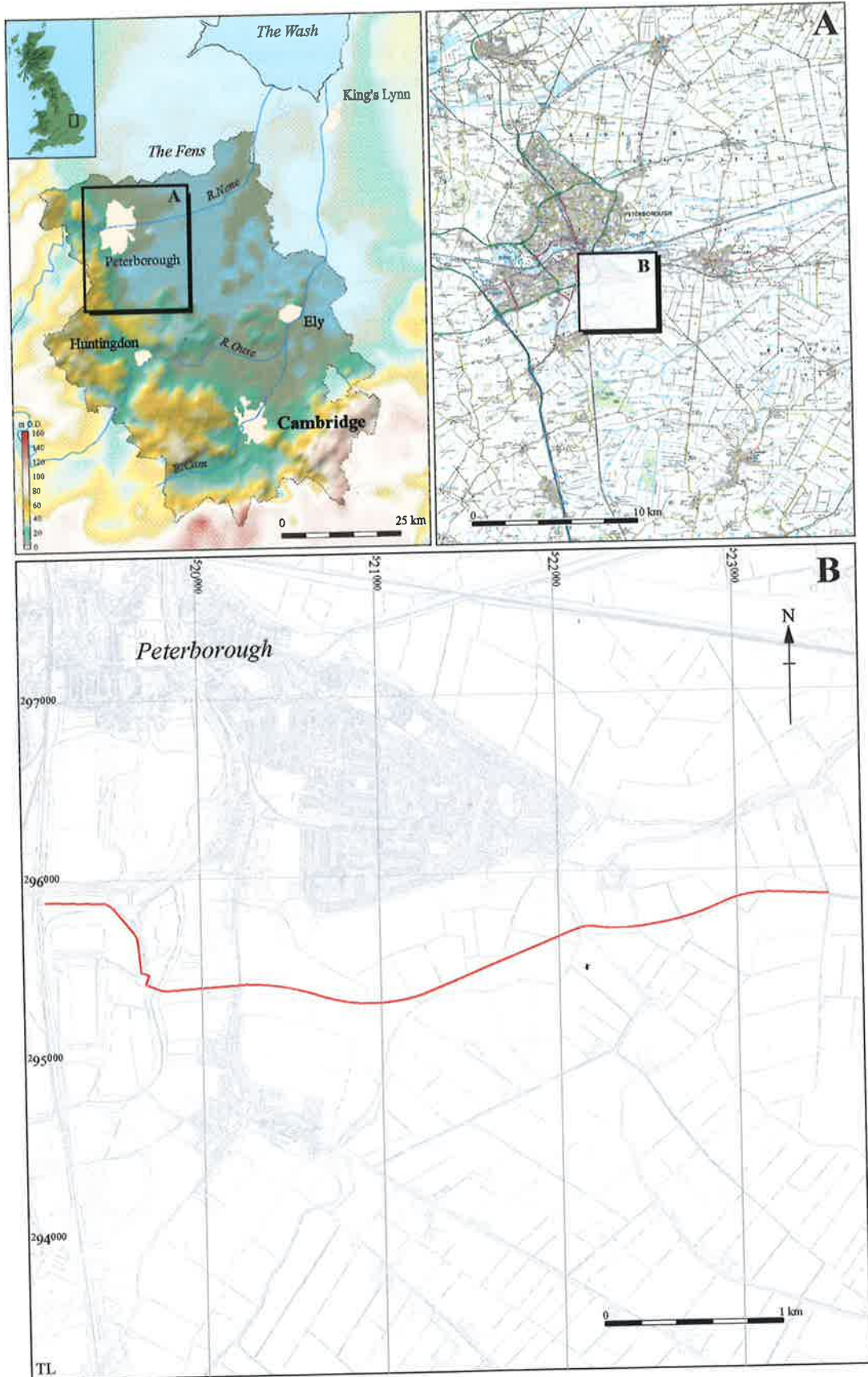
The proposed route begins at TL 1913/9588, just south of the point at which Fletton Parkway crosses the old railway and then passes to the south of Stanground and north of Farcet heading eastwards. It then passes to the south of Horsey Toll and joins the existing main at Narrow Drove, south of King's Delph reservoir, finishing at TL 2346/9599 after a total distance of 4.84km.

**2 GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND USE**

According to the British Geological Survey, at the western end of the proposed scheme, the route is underlain by made ground where Oxford Clay was removed for Fletton brickyards. The route then crosses areas of Alluvium, Glaciolacustrine Deposits and Boulder Clay. Towards the eastern end the route crosses Nordelph Peat, which overlies First Terrace Gravels (BGS 1995, 2004).

The corridor of the proposed route skirts the higher ground of Peterborough to the north and Farcet and Yaxley to the south, continuing through almost flat Fenland. Most of the route is below 3m OD.

At the western end of the route the land has been disturbed by mineral extraction, largely removing Oxford Clay for brickmaking, which occurred on-site. Between Farcet and King's Delph, the land is almost wholly agricultural, classified by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) as Grade 3. Grades 2 and 3 are considered to be the best agricultural lands.



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**Figure 1** Location of route of proposed water main (red)

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The archaeological and historical background can be found in a separate report (Kenney 2005) and will not be reiterated here.

### **4 METHODOLOGY**

Fifteen test pits were dug by hand and the process monitored by an archaeologist. Most were dug to a depth of 1.2m, with the exception of TP5, which was 2.0m deep.

### **5 RESULTS**

#### **Test Pits 1, 3, 4 and 5**

These test pits encountered considerable brick rubble over clays and sandy clays, as might be expected in a former area of brick pits. It is not certain whether the clays were redeposited.

#### **Boreholes 1 and 2**

These test pits encountered disturbed modern deposits over sandy silts, which may be redeposited.

#### **Borehole 3, 4, 5 and 6**

These test pits encountered various post-medieval/modern soils, including ploughsoils, over clays. BH5 and BH6 showed the clay to have some calcareous inclusions.

#### **Window Samples 1 and 2**

These test pits encountered ploughsoils over clays.

#### **Borehole 8**

This test pit encountered ploughsoil and sandy clay over peat



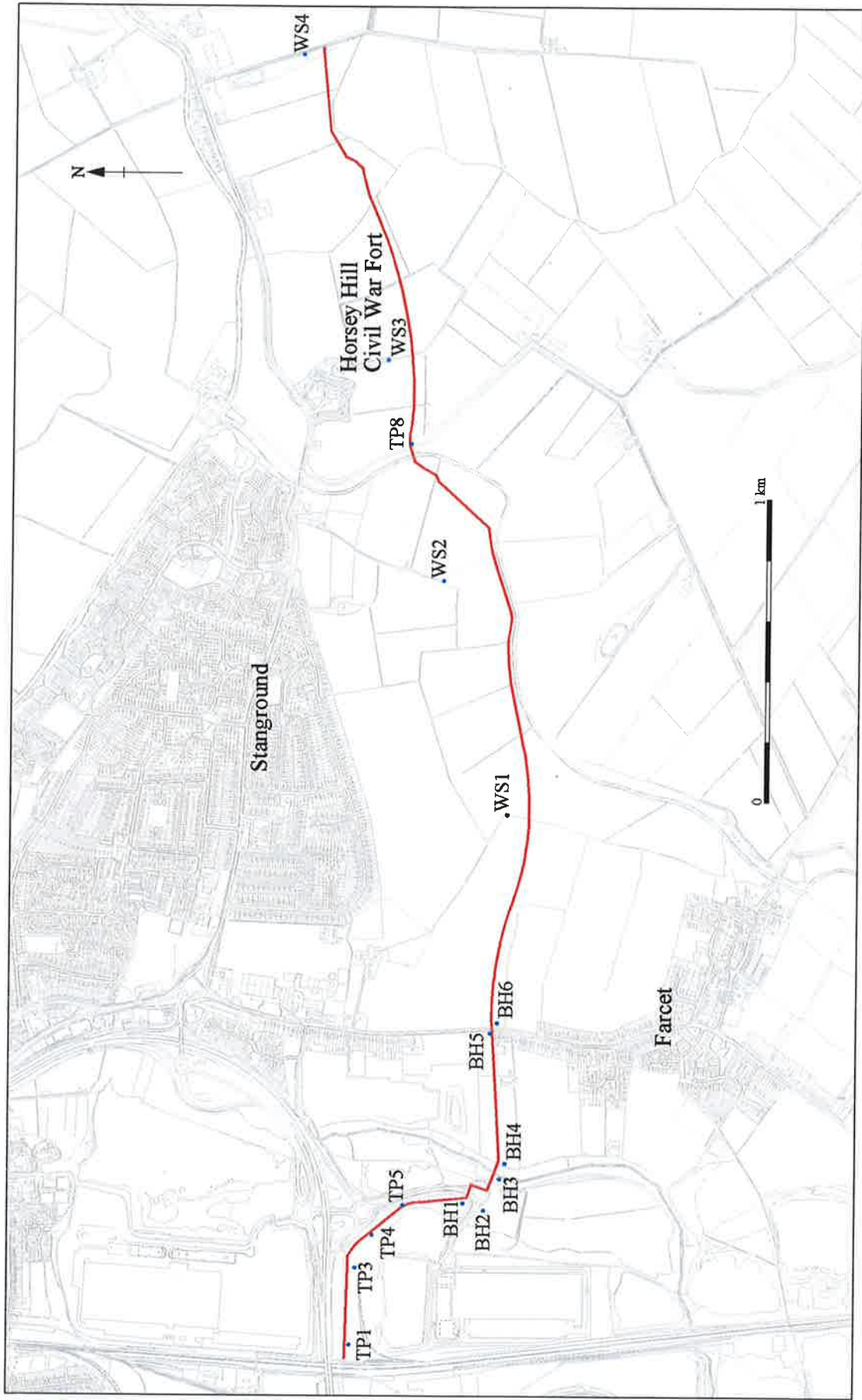


Figure 2 Test pit locations



### **Window Samples 3 and 4**

These test pits encountered ploughsoil and sandy clay over peat.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

No archaeological deposits were encountered during the work, and no finds were recovered other than modern brick fragments from the topsoil in several locations. A range of underlying ground conditions was observed, and the presence of peat was noted towards the eastern end of the route.

## **7 CONCLUSIONS**

Although no definitively archaeological remains were encountered, the sample was very small and does not indicate an absence of archaeological remains in the areas of the route where the test pits were dug.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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The brief for archaeological works was written by Ben Robinson of Peterborough City Council Archaeology Service.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Kenney, S., 2005, *Peterborough to Whittlesey Reinforcement Main: An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment*, Cambs County Council. Archaeol. Field Unit Report No. 791



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