

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT SWINFORD SERVICES, LEICESTERSHIRE

### SUMMARY

*On 4th October 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the site of the proposed new service station, Swinford, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 5643 7890). The work was commissioned by Gifford in advance of enabling works. The watching brief revealed alluvial clay deposits overlain by medieval and post-medieval agricultural soils. No archaeology was encountered.*

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 On 4th October 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief during enabling works on the site of the proposed Swinford Services, Swinford, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 5643 7890). The work was commissioned by Gifford in respect of topsoil stripping for an access road.
- 1.1.2 The site is located 26 km south of Leicester and approximately 500m south-west of the village of Swinford, at a level of approximately 109 m above OD. The site is situated on agricultural land and is bounded to the west by the A 14, to the north by the Swinford Road and to the south and east by open fields with prominent ridge and furrow visible throughout.

#### 1.2 Methodology

- 1.2.1 An area measuring 30 m by 7 m was excavated by mechanical excavator (JCB) using a 1.5 m wide toothless grading bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Excavation proceeded in spits down to an average depth of 0.35 m below the current ground level.

#### 1.3 Description of deposits

- 1.3.1 The undisturbed geology, a tenacious orange-brown sandy clay (3) was exposed throughout the excavated area. This was overlain by a layer of tenacious yellow-brown silty clay (2) up to 0.15 m in depth. This layer contained charcoal flecking and post-medieval pottery and represents a buried plough soil. The uppermost deposit was a layer of friable grey-brown clay loam (1) between 0.1 m and 0.25 m in thick. This produced modern pottery and bottle glass fragments, 18th century clay pipe stem fragments and fragments of brick, and represents the current agricultural soil.

### 2 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 2.1.1 The stratigraphy observed is indicative of post-medieval ridge and furrow working overlying alluvial clay.
- 2.1.2 During the course of the watching brief no evidence for occupation or other activity, or of residual finds from periods other than the post-medieval were encountered.

- 2.1.3 The shallow linear feature noted within Trench 10 of the ULAS Evaluation was not seen to continue within the stripped area.

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.1 m - 0.15 m	Topsoil and turf	Pottery, glass, clay pipe stems, brick	C19th-C20th
2	Layer	0.15 m	Earlier agricultural soil	Pottery	C19th
3	Layer	> 0.05 m	Natural clay	-	-

