



Land off Guntons Road, Newborough, Peterborough

Archaeological Evaluation Report

April 2019

Client: Burmor Construction

Issue: Version 1

OAE Report No: 2306

NGR: TF 20230 05592

Event No: EPB675

oxfordarchaeology



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Land off Guntons Road, Newborough, Peterborough

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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 (red)
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Summary

On Monday the 11th of March 2019 Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) carried out an archaeological evaluation at land just off Guntons Road, Newborough, Peterborough. Three trenches were excavated, and a pair of probable marling pits were discovered. No further archaeological remains were encountered.

Acknowledgements

OA East would like to thank Burmor Construction for commissioning this project. Thank you to Rebecca Casa-Hatton who monitored the work on behalf of Peterborough District Council for her advice and guidance.

The project was managed for OA East by Louise Moan. The fieldwork was carried out by David Browne. Survey was undertaken by Sarita Louzolo and graphics by Gillian Greer. Thanks also to Barry Gregory who provided support during the fieldwork.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 OA East was commissioned by Burmor Construction to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of 88-90 Guntons Road, Newborough, Peterborough (TF 20230 05592, Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. 17/01902/OUT). A brief was set by Rebecca Casa-Hatton of Peterborough District Council outlining the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to inform the planning process. A written scheme of investigation was produced by OA East, (Dearlove 2019), detailing the methods by which OA East proposed to meet the requirements of the brief.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site is located on the west side of No. 90 Guntons Road, at approximately 500m from the centre of the village of Newborough. To the west of the site lie arable fields, with residential buildings and gardens to the north, east and south. The site is currently a residential back garden.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development comprises a rectangular area of 0.42ha, at an average height of 2m OD.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as Oxford Clay formation bedrock geology of the Cambridgeshire Fens, overlain by superficial deposits of peat (British Geological Survey online map, accessed 26/02/2019).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The proposed development site is located in a low-lying area of the Fens, which may have been unsuitable for occupation from the later Bronze Age period until systematic drainage in the post-medieval period. The following outlines some of the findspots and known archaeology in proximity to the site.

1.3.2 A Mesolithic mace head (PCCHER 03030) is recorded as being found fieldwalking approximately 450m to the north of site, with another mace head (PCCHER03029) being recorded as a casual observation approximately 630m to the south. Various other undefined Mesolithic implements (PCCHER 07797 and PCCHER 07607) are also recorded as being found approximately 1km to the north east of site.

1.3.3 A Neolithic axe head (PCCHER 03006) is also recorded as being found approximately 480m to the northwest of site. A Bronze Age spear (PCCHER 03017) is recorded as being found approximately 1.5km to the north east of site. A Bronze Age palstave (PCCHER 07927) is also recorded as being found approximately 700m to the north of site.

1.3.4 There are also four Scheduled Bronze Age bowl barrows located within 1km of the site (SM 1021315, SM 1021316, SM 1021317 and SM 1021318).

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows as laid out in the WSI (Dearlove 2019):

This evaluation sought to establish the character, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains within the proposed development area. The scheme of works detailed below aimed to:

- i. Establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site, characterise where they are found (location, depth and extent), and establish the quality of preservation of any archaeology and environmental remains
- ii. Provide enough coverage to establish the character, condition, date and purpose of any archaeological deposits
- iii. Provide sufficient coverage to evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking deposits
- iv. Provide – in the event that archaeological remains are found – sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables, and orders of cost.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Service plans were consulted before any work was undertaken and all trenches were scanned by a qualified operator using a CAT and Genny with a valid calibration certificate

2.2.2 Three trenches were opened up using a 20 tonne 360° type excavator using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. These trenches were planned to be 40m long by 1.8m wide. However, due to the circumstances of the site several trenches were adjusted. Trench 1 was shortened to avoid existing vegetation (to 36.5m) while Trench 2 was shortened (to 24m) and relocated to avoid an existing hard standing.

2.2.3 All machine excavation was supervised by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist.

2.2.4 Spoil was stored to the sides of the trenches with topsoil and subsoil stored separately to enable sequential backfilling post excavation.

2.2.5 Surveying was done using a survey-grade differential GPS (Leica GS08) fitted with “smartnet” technology with an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.

2.2.6 All archaeological features were hand-excavated. All archaeological features and deposits as well as trenches were recorded using OA’s pro-forma sheets. Trench locations and plans were recorded at appropriate scales and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

2.2.7 Site conditions were exceptional for the time of year, with dry weather and clear bright skies. However, high ground water did cause issues in Trench 2 which was starting to flood within moments of being opened.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches which contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits are within Appendix A.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of clay was overlain by a dark black brown peat subsoil (between 0.15 and 0.25m deep), which in turn was overlain by a pale brown sandy peaty topsoil.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good except for in Trench 2 where ground water immediately started to seep in. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

3.2.3 Archaeological features consisted of two probable marling pits which were present in Trench 2 (Fig. 2).

3.3 Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

3.3.1 Trench 1 was devoid of archaeological features (Plate 1).

3.4 Trench 2 (Fig. 2)

3.4.1 This trench contained a pair of probable marling pits, one of which was investigated (Plate 2). Pit 5 was sub-rectangular in plan, orientated north to south. It was 0.7m wide and 0.4m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with (4) a dark black brown peat. Another marling pit began 0.3m in a direct line to the north of it (unnumbered on Fig.2). The full size of neither of these features was visible within the trench.

3.5 Trench 3 (Fig. 2)

3.5.1 This trench was devoid of archaeological features.

3.6 Finds summary

3.6.1 The site was entirely devoid of artefactual evidence from stratified contexts. While a few pieces of ceramic building material were observed in the topsoil they were not retained as it was considered more likely they were part of the modern hard standing or imported with one of several temporary garden structures which had been present on the site.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 The high groundwater caused problems in Trench 2 which led to difficulties with the recording of marling pit 5, however the rest of the trenches exposed clean natural geology, against which any archaeological features would have shown clearly, and conditions were dry and sunny making the location of features simple.

4.2 Results and interpretation

- 4.2.1 The archaeological works have confirmed the presence of limited preserved archaeological remains across the proposed development area.
- 4.2.2 The pits in Trench 2 confirm the presence of limited marling in the area. The absence of more extensive marling is suggested by the absence of any other such pits in Trenches 1 or 3. Marling is undertaken to spread clay over sandy or peaty soils to enrich the soil and improve water retention (Bush 2014). Marling pits are often dug towards the middle of the field in large quantities in a series of lines and are generally taken to be of 19th century date. It is likely that the relatively late establishment of Newborough and its proximity to residential development meant that the marling did not proceed with the same vigour it did in other areas. This may reflect the use of infields for private gardening or small-scale stock holding, which would not have merited the substantial investment of labour required by the marling process.

4.3 Significance

- 4.3.1 Marling is a common activity within the fenland, meaning that its presence here is not surprising. The peat topsoil and subsoil indicate that this area was wet and unsuitable for habitation between the period of the fenland inundation during the later Bronze Age and the drainage schemes of the post-medieval and modern periods (Dearlove 2019). Therefore, the significance of this site is considered to be extremely low.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay					Length (m)	36.5
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.55
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.25	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.25	Subsoil (Peat)	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench contained two possible marling pits only one of which was investigated.					Length (m)	24
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil (Peat)	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
4	Fill	0.7	0.4	Pit	-	-
5	Cut	0.7	0.4	Pit	-	-
Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of clay					Length (m)	41
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.5
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
1	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	-	0.2	Subsoil (Peat)	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dearlove, P. 2019, Guntons Road, Newborough. Written Scheme of Investigation. Oxford Archaeology

Bush, L. 2014, Post-Medieval marling pits on land off Camel Road, Littleport. Archaeological Evaluation, Oxford Archaeology East Rep. No. 1666.

APPENDIX C OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-345458		
Project Name	Guntons Road, Newborough		
Start of Fieldwork	11/3/2019	End of Fieldwork	12/3/2019
Previous Work	No	Future Work	unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	PETGRN19	Planning App. No.	17/01902/OUT
HER Number	EPB675	Related Numbers	

Prompt	NPPF
Development Type	Residential
Place in Planning Process	Between deposition of an application and determination

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation | <input type="checkbox"/> Grab-sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-core | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch | <input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning | <input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Augering | <input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors | <input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search | <input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking | <input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography | |

Monument Period

Marling pit	Post Medieval (1540 to 1901)
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

Object Period

None	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Address (including Postcode) Land Behind 88 Gunton's Road Newborough Cambridgeshire PE6 7RT
District	Peterborough Unitary Authority	
Parish	Newborough	
HER office	Peterborough Unitary Authority	
Size of Study Area	0.42ha	
National Grid Ref	TF 20230 05592	

Project Originators

Organisation	Oxford Archaeology East
Project Brief Originator	Rebecca Casa-Hatton
Project Design Originator	Peter Dearlove (OAE)
Project Manager	Louise Moan
Project Supervisor	David Browne

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)	N/A	N/A
Digital Archive	Oxford Archaeology East	PETGRN19
Paper Archive	Peterborough Museum	PETGRN19

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
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 Remains	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media

Database	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>

Paper Media

Aerial Photos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Context Sheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Correspondence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further Comments



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Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches (black) within development area (red)



Figure 2: Evaluation trenches. Scale 1:750



Plate 1: Trench 1 looking north



Plate 2: Marling Pits in Trench 2 looking South



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