An Archaeological Evaluation at Newstead Residential Care Home, Winster, Derbyshire.
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Archaeological Research Services Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2011 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Admiral Building and Civil Engineers to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Newstead Residential Care Home, Winster. The evaluation was carried out prior to development of the site.

Previous work in the 19th century had uncovered the remains of two Iron Age skeletons in the grounds of the property. Grave goods were also discovered at this time.

No features of archaeological significance or buried land surfaces were revealed, and it appears that any features relating to Iron Age settlement or burial may have been either removed during the excavations of 1856 or destroyed during subsequent landscaping. A single piece of unstratified glazed medieval pottery does, however, indicate human activity of an uncertain nature within the general environs at this time.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Location and scope of work

1.1.1. In March 2011 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Admiral Building and Civil Engineers to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Newstead Residential Care Home, Winster (Figure 1). The work was carried out prior to the development and refurbishment of the current residential building.

1.1.2. The site is located at The Manor, Wensley Road, Winster (SK 2427 6058) and the evaluation was focused on the rear garden area.

1.2. Geology and preservation

1.2.1. The solid geology of the site consists of Bowland Shale Formation mudstone (British Geological Survey 1979).

1.2.2. Due to prior development and landscaping of the area during the 19th century and 20th century, the site is much disturbed. However, due to earlier archaeological discoveries in the immediate vicinity by Bateman in the 19th century, it was considered highly possible that Iron Age remains would be uncovered (Bateman 1861).

1.3. Historical Background

1.3.1. In the Domesday Book, compiled in 1086, Winster is called Winsterne and is listed as the property of Henry de Ferrars, a prominent Norman landowner in this area. After this date, Winster appears to have remained a small village with a church and market hall, until the explosion of lead mining in the 18th century, which increased the population from 375 at the end of the 17th century to over 2000 in 1750 (Ford and Rieuwerts 2000, 128).

1.3.2. In October 1856, Thomas Bateman excavated a possible barrow containing the remains of two burials in the garden of the manor house. The burials were Iron Age in date and were found with grave goods, including an iron spear head, a quern, several animal bones, a small amount of pottery and an iron object, possibly part of a fibula brooch (Bateman 1861, 98-101). The remains strongly suggest the presence of an Iron Age settlement in the general area.
2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 The specification required that an evaluation should be carried out in order to identify any archaeological remains, and to assess their significance. This involved the excavation by machine of a total of 70 square metres of land in the form of two six-by-two metre trenches and one L-shaped trench measuring two-by-twenty five metres in total (Figure 2).

2.2 The trenches were excavated by hand and by machine, using a back-acting toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. The machine removed the subsoil in each trench in level spits until the first potential archaeological features were exposed. The surface was then cleaned using hand tools.

2.3 A single context recording system was employed. Each layer encountered was given a unique context number and a full written description (a full context register is shown in Appendix I). Photographs were taken in black and white print and colour transparency in order to record the ground work. Drawings of sample areas of trench sections were drawn at an appropriate scale, and plans were made of trenches where features were present.
3. RESULTS

3.1 RESULTS

3.1 Topsoil
The topsoil was consistent in all three trenches and extended over the entire site. It consisted of a dark greyish-brown clayey-silt with a large amount of root disturbance. The deposit ranged in depth from 0.1m in Trench 2 to 0.35m in Trench 1. The shallow topsoil depth in Trench 1 suggests that the excess topsoil was taken away from this area and used elsewhere, as noted in section 1.2.2. Finds of any kind were rare in the topsoil, although one piece of modern pottery was recovered from both Trench 1 and Trench 2.

3.2 Modern red brick and stone footings
At the eastern edge of Trench 1 the remains of a concrete platform were uncovered (1002). The platform consisted of a layer of concrete overlying a shallow construction of sandstone blocks and frogged red bricks, which were not mortared (Figure 3). This appears to be the remains of a platform constructed for a caravan that stood here during the late 20th century. The cut for this feature, [1003], is straight sided and flat bottomed, suggesting that it was cut by a machine.

![Figure 3: Modern concrete, stone and red brick footing (1002)](image)

3.3 Debris layer
During the excavation of Trench 3 a layer of ashy debris was uncovered between the topsoil and subsoil, with a depth of around 0.3m. The deposit contained ash, charcoal and broken pottery of the Victorian period, suggesting a dump of household debris deposited during the 19th/early 20th century.
3.4 **Subsoil**

The subsoil layer was present throughout the whole site, although in some areas it was much deeper than in others. It consisted of a mid/dark brown clayey-silt with inclusions of natural flint and calcite. The depth of this layer in Trench 1 was very deep, at 0.9m, in comparison to in Trench 2 where the maximum depth was 0.1m. It is possible that during the landscaping of the area of Trench 2, the excess subsoil removed was deposited in the area of Trench 1 in order to create the current bank. One piece of medieval green-glazed pottery was found in (1004) (the subsoil layer of Trench 1), which appears to be part of the base and side of a jar (small find 1). This fragment was found resting around 0.1m above the uppermost level of the underlying natural substrate. As the subsoil had been deposited from elsewhere (probably the main lawn area), it is likely that this is not the primary deposition site of this pot sherd, although it does indicate medieval activity of an uncertain nature within the general environs.

3.5

Below the subsoil the underlying natural substrate was observed in all three trenches. The natural substrate was a mid-dark yellowish orange clay, and contained no archaeological finds.

Figure 4: Trench 2 post-excavation
4. CONCLUSION

4.1. Other than a single sherd of medieval green-glazed pottery, there were no significant archaeological features, deposits, buried land surfaces or small finds located within the evaluation trenches. From the evidence of this evaluation it appears that any features relating to Iron Age settlement or burial have been either removed during the excavations of 1856 or destroyed during subsequent landscaping.
5. PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

5.1. Any publicity will be handled by the client.


6. STATEMENT OF INDEMNITY

6.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7.1. Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved in this project, in particular Keith Roebuck of Admiral Building and Civil Engineers, Steve Savage of Chiverton Investments and Sarah Whiteley of the Peak District National Park Authority.
8. REFERENCES


## APPENDIX I: CONTEXT REGISTER

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<tr>
<th>Context number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1001</td>
<td>Trench 1 topsoil</td>
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<tr>
<td>1002</td>
<td>Stone and brick footings in trench 1</td>
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<td>1003</td>
<td>Cut for (1002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1004</td>
<td>Trench 1 subsoil</td>
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<tr>
<td>1005</td>
<td>Trench 1 natural ground</td>
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<td>Trench 2 topsoil</td>
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<td>Trench 3 topsoil</td>
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<td>Ashy layer in trench 3</td>
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<td>Trench 3 subsoil</td>
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<tr>
<td>3004</td>
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APPENDIX II: PLANS AND SECTIONS
Trench One Plan

Trench One Section