

INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title A41 Milton Green Bypass.	Details Archaeological Assessment.
Road Number A41	Date
Contractor Northern Archaeological Associates	
County Cheshire.	
OS Reference	
Single sided <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Double sided	
A3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Colour <input type="checkbox"/>	

# **Northern Archaeological Associates**

**A41 MILTON GREEN BYPASS**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT  
FOR COBHAM RESOURCE CONSULTANTS**

**NAA 93/6**

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## **A41 MILTON GREEN BYPASS**

### **NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

An archaeological desktop study of the A41 Milton Green Bypass identified no scheduled ancient monuments or other archaeological sites of national or regional importance within the road corridor. A number of fields were found to contain ridge and furrow and two trackways were also identified, although none warrant excavation in advance of construction.

Milton Green appears to be a relatively modern settlement, containing 19th and 20th century buildings, which appears to have grown up alongside the Chester to Whitchurch 18th century turnpike road. Aerial photographs of the area show evidence of extensive pre-enclosure arable field systems preserved in many of the present day pasture fields.

The low proportion of arable land has, however, had a masking effect in terms of the visibility of cropmark sites and also the opportunity to undertake fieldwalking surveys. As a consequence there is a possibility of hitherto unknown remains occurring within the road corridor. It is therefore recommended that an archaeological 'watching brief' is undertaken during topsoil removal in order that the trackways and any previously unknown archaeological features can be recorded.

# **A41 MILTON GREEN BYPASS**

## **AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological study of the proposed road corridor for a bypass of the A41 around Milton Green was undertaken by Northern Archaeological Associates on behalf of Cobham Resource Consultants in April 1993. The study consisted of a desktop analysis of Sites and Monuments Records, aerial photographs, documentary evidence and historical maps together with a site inspection. With the exception of two late medieval/post medieval trackways and some areas of ridge and furrow, no archaeological sites were identified within the road corridor.

For the reasons discussed below it is recommended that in the initial phase of road construction there should be an archaeological 'watching brief' during topsoil removal and that contingency is made to allow for the recording of the trackways and any other significant archaeological features which are revealed.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

Milton Green lies approximately 9km to the south of Chester on the A41 road to Whitchurch. The proposed bypass measures approximately 1.5km in length and passes to the east of the existing settlement. The road corridor commences in Golborne David parish, to the south west of Golborne Old Hall and on crossing Golborne Brook the road enters Handley parish. The road passes to the east of Milton Green and rejoins the existing A41 at the northern end of the Handley bypass. The junction with Frog Lane (C825) will be re-aligned to the north of the village.

The settlement of Milton Green lies in gently undulating land 5km to the east of the River Dee, some 52-63m above sea level. The road corridor crosses two small streams, Golborne Brook and Stonyford Brook, which flow through the area from east to west. With the exception of one field south of Golborne Old Hall, the majority of the route is under pasture. The soils along the road corridor consist of argillic stagnogleys, ie. fine loam on reddish tills, although along the margins of the brooks these become pelo-alluvial gley soils.

### **3.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Both Golborne David and Handley parishes were part of the Broxton Hundred. Both formed part of the estates of Osborne Fitz Tezzon after the Norman conquest. These lands were subsequently vested in the Boydells and thereafter became separate. Handley passed to Hugh Reddish and then to the Calveley family in the 16th century who in turn sold them to Peter Legh in 1707. Golborne David passed to David de Malpas, after whom ownership appears to have become fragmented. Milton Green was anciently called Milneton or Mylton and first reference to it was made in 1539/40 when the Calveley estate at Handley was described as Handley and Mylton.

The A41 through Milton Green was formerly the turnpike road between Chester and Whitchurch. Turnpike trusts were granted parliamentary powers in the 18th and 19th centuries to erect toll bars and to charge fees in return for making and maintaining a particular stretch of highway. This turnpike road was certainly in existence before 1830, when the toll bar at Golborne David was sold for £1000, as a George Bramwell contracted to take down and rebuild Golborne Bridge in 1807. There is, however, no record of the date of the earlier bridge which it replaced.

The earliest standing buildings in the area are Golborne Old Hall and Calveley Hall, which are listed grade II and grade II\* respectively, and which date to 1682 and 1684. On the A41 itself, Golbornebridge Farmhouse is thought to be mid 18th century while Milton Green Farmhouse (east of Whitchurch Road) is thought to be early 19th century. The latter building is probably the earliest structure in Milton Green, the majority of buildings belonging to the later 19th and 20th centuries. None appear to be directly affected by the scheme.

#### **4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

There have been relatively few archaeological finds from south-west Cheshire between the mid-Cheshire Ridge and the Dee. What is known is largely derived from chance finds of artefacts or from published references to field monuments which have now vanished or are barely recognisable. Large parts of the area are under pasture and this, together with the clay subsoil, has meant that it is not conducive to cropmark formation. The low proportion of arable land has also meant that there has been little opportunity for fieldwalking surveys.

The Roman road between Chester and Whitchurch, known as Watling Street, ran some distance to the west of Milton Green via Aldford. A number of Roman finds have been recorded from Tattenhall to the east including some pottery and a number of coins dating from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD.

Many of the pasture fields along the road corridor contain traces of ridge and furrow cultivation and one or more marl pits. Ridge and furrow is evidence of earlier arable cultivation, and depending on the size and shape of the rigs can be medieval in date. The practice of marling to improve soils may have begun as early as the 12th century and its widespread use in south-west Cheshire by the early 19th century is reflected in the fact that the area is pockmarked with old marl pits.

In 1989, during construction of the Handley Bypass, traces of a paved trackway were uncovered and recorded by archaeologists from Chester County Council. The trackway appeared to have linked Handley village and Clayley Hall to the north-east.

#### **5.0 PLANNING GUIDANCE**

Both the Cheshire Replacement Structure Plan (ENV 7) and the Chester Rural Areas Local Plan (Policies A1-A3) contain policy statements which seek to protect sites of archaeological importance from development. Both recognise that certain sites may be of lesser importance and that in appropriate circumstances such remains can be preserved by record as a result of excavation.

Planning Policy Guidance 16, "Archaeology and Planning" issued by the Department of the Environment in November 1990, stresses that archaeological remains should not be needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed (para. 6). In appropriate circumstances it also recommends that unscheduled remains of more local importance may also be worthy of preservation (para. 16), but that the excavation and recording of remains can also be an acceptable alternative.

## **6.0 IMPACT**

The road corridor appears to bisect the fragmentary remains of ridge and furrow cultivation in approximately five of the fields crossed by the route. The very northern end of the road corridor clips the line of a trackway leading south-west from Golborne Old Hall towards the A41. On aerial photographs this trackway appears to have been contemporary with the extant ridge and furrow in the field to the south of the hall. A second trackway survives as an upstanding earthwork leading north from Milton Green Farm towards Golborne Bridge. Part of the earthwork will be cut by the western arm of the staggered junction of Frog Lane with the A41.

## **7.0 MITIGATION**

Although none of the features identified warrant excavation in advance of construction, their presence, together with the masking effect of pasture land and the possibility of hitherto unknown remains would warrant monitoring of the initial phase of construction. It is therefore recommended that an archaeological 'watching brief' is undertaken during topsoil removal in order that the trackways and any previously unknown archaeological features can be recorded.

It is also recommended that the contractor should give 14 days notice in writing to the archaeologist monitoring topsoil removal of his intention to commence work. Clauses relating to a written notification procedure and to a contingency provision to allow for minor delays to the contractor (up to 2 working days) in the event that remains are uncovered should be incorporated into the main contract. If appropriate the monitoring of test pits excavated during geotechnical work could also be undertaken.

## **SOURCES**

### **Published sources**

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Cheshire 2001, Cheshire Replacement County Structure Plan (23-1-92)  
Chester Rural Areas Local Plan (7-4-83)  
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Furness PR, Soils of Cheshire. Soil Survey Bulletin No. 6 (1978)  
Hanshall JH, History of Cheshire (1817)  
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Sylvester & Nulty, The Historical Atlas of Cheshire (1958)  
RCHME, Aerial Photographic Assessment, Cheshire (1993)  
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### **Maps & documents**

Golborne David Enclosure Plan 1811 (QDE 1/17)  
Golborne David Tithe Map 1854 (EDT 167/2)  
Golborne Bridge, Contract estimate 1807 (QAR 14)  
Handley Tithe Map 1839 (EDT 185/2)  
Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1872) 1:2500 Map, Sheet 47/9  
Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1872) 1:2500 Map, Sheet 47/13  
Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition (1910) 1:2500 Map, Sheet 47/9  
Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition (1910) 1:2500 Map, Sheet 47/13

### **Vertical aerial photographs**

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Hunting Surveys Ltd 8-7-71 HSL UK 71 111 Run 17 0090  
JA Story & Ptnrs 30-5-85 Run 10 2685/165