

Marches Archaeology

Millham Poat Farm Stanway Gloucestershire

**A report on
an archaeological watching brief**

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Marches Archaeology Series 360

This report is produced by

Marches Archaeology

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Report on a programme
of archaeological works

Summary

A watching brief on footings for a garage and associated drainage did not encounter any significant archaeological remains. No artefacts were present and the findings are consistent with long term agricultural use of the site.

1 Introduction

A planning application has been approved by the local planning authority for permission to erect garages on land at the above site (ref. 008/5315/34/FUL). A condition was applied to the consent that the developer must secure a programme of archaeological works. The site is situated at NGR: SP 041 309 (Fig. 1). Find spots of Roman date are present in the area, including some burials.

Dennis Rayton, on behalf of the client, commissioned Marches Archaeology to provide the archaeological services as related to Garage 1 (Fig. 2). This report relates only to this garage and not to other garages or parking spaces on the site.

2 Scope and aims of the project

The scope of the project was:

- { all ground disturbances to be carried out under archaeological supervision
- { the sequence of soil deposits present and all archaeological deposits and features to be recorded
- { all artefacts to be collected, identified and catalogued

The purpose of an archaeological watching brief is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists as:

‘to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works’

and:

‘to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard’.

3 Methodology

Observations and appropriate recording was undertaken of all ground breaking activity in association with this proposed development.

The recording system includes written, drawn and photographic data. The primary written record will be by means of site notes and trench sheets, accompanied by measured drawings. The photographic record will be made using black and white negative and colour transparency film. No deposits were considered to have environmental, technological or scientific dating potential so no samples were taken.

4 Results of the site investigation

Two trenches were dug (Fig. 3). Trench 1 was for the footings of the new building. This was a U shape 16.8m long, 0.45m wide and 1.0 to 1.2m deep. Trench 2 was dug as a soakaway. It was 1.9m long, 1.0m wide and 1.2m deep.

Both trenches had a similar stratigraphy. The natural yellow brown clay and gravels were overlain by a mid brown clay loam, with 10-20% pebbles. Above this was humic topsoil, covered in Trench 1 by geotextile and gravel forming the present ground surface.

In Trench 1 the topsoil was up to 0.7m deep, whereas in trench 2 it was only 0.25m deep, with a thicker clay loam below. This suggests that historically the area of the new garage was in a different parcel of land that was cultivated more deeply than the field to the east.

No features were identified and no artefacts were observed so all deposits are undated.

The stratigraphy is typical of agricultural land. The depth of topsoil in Trench 1 suggests that this area has recently been cultivated, perhaps as a garden.

5 Conclusions

No significant archaeological remains were encountered. The absence of artefacts, including ceramics, from the trenches tends to suggest that the land has not been intensively occupied, at least during ceramic rich eras, such as the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.

6 The archive

The archive consists of:

- 2 trench recording sheets (A4)
- 1 sheet of drawings on drafting film (A2)
- 1 film of 35mm black and white negatives (A4)
- 1 film of 35mm colour transparencies (A4)
- 2 sheets of photographic recording sheets (A4)
- This report
- 1 CD Rom of the digital archive