

**SEDGEFIELD CRICKET
CLUB,
HARDWICK PARK,
SEDGEFIELD,
CO. DURHAM**



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT
CP. No: 1462/11
28/05/2012**



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Quality Assurance

This report covers works as outlined in the brief for the above-named project as issued by the relevant authority, and as outlined in the agreed programme of works. Any deviation to the programme of works has been agreed by all parties. The works have been carried out according to the guidelines set out in the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Standards, Policy Statements and Codes of Conduct. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance set out by WA Archaeology Ltd on the preparation of reports.

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SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Sedgfield Town Council to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Sedgfield Cricket Club, Sedgfield, County Durham (NGR NZ 34871 28526). The work was required as the site lies within the south western fringe of the English Heritage registered Hardwick Park. Excavation work carried out between 2005 and 2008 uncovered an extensive Romano-British roadside settlement along the line of the 'Cade's Road', which runs north-south through the East Park. Enclosures, containing evidence for small scale household activities and some industrial processes, were found to be present on either side of the roadway (HER 15887). In the vicinity of the proposed development area an enclosure has been identified on a former geophysical survey. No previous archaeological excavation has taken place within this area so it was considered there was high potential to uncover previously unidentified features dating principally to the Roman and earlier periods.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken over three days between the 21st and 23rd of May 2012 and. The evaluation involved the excavation of four trenches, providing assessment of 128m² of the total 1900m² development area. No archaeological remains were recorded.

As this archaeological evaluation was conducted as part of a condition in association with the development of a new bowling green, no further work is deemed necessary. However, given the high archaeological potential of the area, it is recommended that any future work be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Sedgfield Town Council for commissioning the project, and to Liz Hughes of G and L Hughes for all assistance throughout the work. Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd would also like to thank Clare Henderson, Assistant Archaeology Officer, Durham County Council, for all her assistance throughout the project.

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Mr Thornton of P. Jackson Plant Hire for his help during this project.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Angus Clark and Sue Thompson. The report was written by Angus Clark and the drawings were produced by Adrian Bailey. The project was managed by Matthew Town, Project Manager for WAA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town, Project Manager for WAA Ltd.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In May 2012, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd were invited by Sedgfield Town Council to undertake an archaeological evaluation prior to the construction of a proposed bowling green on land at Sedgfield Cricket Club, Hardwick Park, Sedgfield, Co. Durham (NGR NZ 34871 28526; Figure 1). The proposed works lie within the English Heritage registered Hardwick Park and as no previous excavation has been undertaken within the proposed development area the potential to uncover archaeological deposits was considered high. As a result, Clare Henderson, Assistant Archaeology Officer of Durham County Council, requested that all ground reduction be subject to a programme of archaeological observation and investigation. This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken following approved standards and guidance (IfA 2008), and was consistent with the specification provided by Durham County Council (Henderson 2011) and generally accepted best practice.
- 1.1.3 This report outlines the evaluation works undertaken on-site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design was submitted by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd, in response to a request by Sedgfield Town Council, for an archaeological evaluation of the study area. Following acceptance of the project design by Clare Henderson, Durham County Council, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the client to undertake the work. The project design was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 THE FIELD EVALUATION

2.2.1 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of four trenches covering 128 m² of the proposed 1900m² development area. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity, the evaluation trenches being located within the footprint of the proposed development. All work was conducted according to the recommendations of the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the field evaluation were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.3.3 Turf and topsoil was removed by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. The trial trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand and all features were investigated and recording according to the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (Giecco 2012).

2.3.4 All finds encountered were retained, including those from excavated topsoil, and were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines, and recorded under the supervision of Teresa Gilmore, WAA Ltd Finds Officer.

- 2.3.5 All deposits encountered were deemed unsuitable for environmental sampling, and therefore no samples were retained.
- 2.3.6 The four evaluation trenches were scheduled to be backfilled following excavation and recording.
- 2.3.7 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the Management of Archaeological Projects (2nd Edition, 1991).

2.4 THE ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and in line with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage Guidelines (1991) and according to the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be deposited within the Bowes Museum, with copies of the report sent to the County Historic Environment Record at Durham available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier WAA12, SCS-A, CP 1462/11.
- 2.4.2 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd, and Durham County Council, support the **Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS)** project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made available by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology Ltd, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION AND GEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 The town of Sedgfield lies within County Durham, approximately 15 miles south-east of Durham and 13 miles north-west of Middlesbrough. The cricket club itself lies to the western side of the town just off Station Road. The proposed development area lies along the southern boundary of Hardwick Park, an undeveloped area of open green fields. The site lies at a height of approximately 110m AOD.
- 3.1.2 The underlying geology is Permian sedimentary bedrock of Dolomitised Limestone and dolomite (British Geological Survey North Sheet, Third Edition Solid 1979) with overlying superficial glacial sands and gravels. (British Geological Survey North Sheet, First Edition Quaternary, 1977). The overlying soils are known as Dunkeswick soils.

3.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PREVIOUS WORK

- 3.2.1 *Introduction:* this historical background is compiled mostly from secondary sources, and is intended only as a brief summary of historical developments specific to the study area. References to the County Historic Environment Record (HER) are included where known.
- 3.2.2 East Park, Sedgfield, was first identified as being of importance in the mid 1990s, as a metal detectorist had found more than 100 Roman artefacts in fields around the settlement – a place where no Roman evidence had previously been recorded. Aerial photographs have also indicated significant crop marks. Fieldwalking survey, a co-ordinated metal-detecting scan, geophysics and a landscape survey were undertaken of the site by Archaeological Services University Durham (ASUD). The geophysical survey of the field between Sedgfield and Hardwick Park revealed a series of large enclosures defined by ditches, with smaller roads leading towards the modern settlement. The settlement extended east under the modern village, but not as far west as Hardwick Park, and continued into the fields to the north and south (Mason 2006).
- 3.2.3 Excavations were undertaken to investigate geophysical anomalies and these identified industrial areas, evidenced by burning and metalworking slag. Further trenches identified a large Roman settlement, known as a ladder settlement, comprising a central north-south roadway with rows of adjacent enclosures; the road runs parallel with the road between Hardwick Park and Sedgfield. Within the enclosures were identified evidence for timber beams and posts for timber framed buildings perhaps agricultural

and domestic structures (Mason 2006), and an intact Roman pottery kiln producing grey coarsewares.

- 3.2.4 In 2005, a joint community excavation project between ASUD and Durham County Council Archaeology Section was undertaken at the site. A large enclosure adjacent to the main Roman road was selected. The boundary ditches were 1.5m wide and 1m deep, with an entrance on the side adjacent to the main road. Probable votive deposits, perhaps placed when the settlement was going out of use, were recovered from the ditches. These included: two carved bone toggles; a complete small pot from the ditch terminal at the entrance; and a fine bronze jug of 1st century AD date, which had been deliberately gashed (Mason 2006). Excavated evidence from within the enclosure included quarrying pits, fence lines possibly demarcating areas for corralling animals, and in the north-east corner two phases of timber building, possibly low-status domestic structures. The earlier phase comprised a small structure of wattle-and-daub construction, which was replaced by a later much larger aisled building, comprising widely spaced post-holes. To the northwest were the remains of six ovens, and the foundation cuts for several other ovens, probably representing small scale industrial activity. Mason (2006) suggests the enclosures were planned and probably occupied by family groups conducting low-key trade or craft activities, attracted to the Roman road and the commercial possibilities presented by its traffic.
- 3.2.5 In 2006, ASUD extended the geophysical survey south to the cricket pitch, and the current proposed development area, and confirmed the settlement extended to the south and under modern housing. A further enclosure was excavated on the eastern side of the survey area, this one being smaller than the larger roadside enclosures previously identified, lying adjacent to one of the side roads. The enclosure included a second internal ditch on the north south and east sides, with a gap on the east side representing a very small entrance. The enclosure appeared to contain a form of public or religious building, comprising an aisled hall, and the enclosure included little room for anything other than this building. The enclosure was later remodelled through several phases of recuts. The finds indicated also that this was probably not a domestic site, and included pieces of glass bangles, silver coins and a copper alloy bracelet probably deposited in the 2nd or 3rd centuries (Carne 2007).
- 3.2.6 In 2007, ASUD excavated an L-shaped trench across the front of the east entrance of the enclosure, in area apparently devoid of features on the geophysical survey. The southern end of the trench, in front of the eastern entrance to the enclosure, was empty, suggesting this had been deliberately kept so. On the eastern side of the trench, several series of postholes were

identified, suggesting several wooden buildings in this area, and encircled by a series of wooden palisades, visible as curved narrow parallel ditches, which appear different in character to the previous identified enclosures, and are probably earlier (Carne 2009). The outer ditch defining the outer perimeter was the largest, and appeared to have silted up, and been replaced by a later road. A series of large pits west of this produced most of the finds, including a 3rd century silver coin (Claydon 2008). The geophysical survey was extended east in 2008 confirming the settlement extended in this direction (Carne 2009).

- 3.2.7 To the south of the development area, on the opposite side of the A689 road, an aerial photograph shows a further rectilinear enclosure and associated circular features and trackway. This is potentially evidence that the settlement at East Park extends further south than present work has shown. It may also be evidence of earlier, probably Iron Age settlement, in the vicinity (HER 8222).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The evaluation was undertaken over three days between the 21st and 23rd of May 2012 (Figure 2). The trenches were excavated using a JCB 3cx with a back-hoe.

4.2 RESULTS

4.2.1 **Trench 1:** Trench 1 was located along the eastern boundary of the proposed bowling green on a north south alignment (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.55m revealing a loosely compacted mid brown sandy gravel natural deposit (101) below c.0.35m of dark grey/ brown sandy silt topsoil (100) (Plate 1; Figure 3). No archaeological features were observed.



Plate 1: Trench 1 Looking South

4.2.2 **Trench 2:** Trench 2 was located toward the south west corner of, and aligned east west along the southern boundary of, the proposed development area (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m revealing a varying natural substrate. At the eastern extent of the trench, measuring c.5m in length was mixed sand gravels (101) whereas the

remainder of the trench consisted of a mid brown natural sand deposit (102). The natural substrates were capped by 0.30m of dark grey/ brown sandy silt topsoil (100) (Plate 2; Figure 3). No archaeological features were observed.



Plate 2: Trench 2 looking East

4.2.3 **Trench 3:** Trench 3 was located in the centre of the proposed development area and was aligned north south (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m, again revealing a varying natural substrate. The southern half of the trench consisted of mid brown fine sand (102) and the northern half was mixed sandy gravels (101). A potential feature located at the southern end of the trench was investigated but ruled to be a shallow deposit, measuring 0.10m, of loose sand and black degraded stone (103). The natural substrates were capped by 0.30m of dark grey/ brown sandy silt topsoil (100) (Plate 3; Figure 3). No archaeological features were observed.



Plate 3: Trench 3 Looking North, showing deposit (103) in foreground

4.2.4 **Trench 4:** Trench 4 was located in the north west corner and ran along the northern boundary of the proposed development area on an east west alignment (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.80m revealing a loosely compacted mid brown sandy gravel natural deposit (101) below c.0.35m of dark grey/ brown sandy silt topsoil (100) (Plate 4; Figure 3). No archaeological features were observed.



Plate 4: Trench 4 Looking West

4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING

- 4.3.1 No archaeological finds were recovered, and no environmental samples were retained during the groundworks.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 During the archaeological field evaluation at Sedgfield Cricket Club, four trenches were excavated within the footprint of a proposed new bowling green, covering 128m² of the proposed 1900m² development area. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity, the evaluation trenches being located to provide a representative sample of the development area. All trenches were excavated down to the top of the natural substrate.

5.1.2 The results obtained during the present evaluation, with all four trenches being archaeologically sterile, suggests that the Roman settlement does not extend into the proposed development area.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 As the purpose of this archaeological field evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground remains within the proposed extraction area as specified by Durham County Council, no further work is deemed necessary associated with the present study. However, given the significance of previous archaeological discoveries within the immediate vicinity of the study area, it is recommended that any future invasive work be subject to a similar programme of archaeological investigation.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Natural Gravels
102	Deposit	Natural Sands
103	Deposit	Degraded Stone

Table 1: List of Contexts issued during evaluation

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES
