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Archaeological Services
University of Durham

**Project SLAM – A7803 Marne SNCO
(Sergeants' Mess), Catterick,
North Yorkshire**

archaeological evaluation

on behalf of
Debut Services Ltd
for
Bovis Lend Lease

Report 1623
February 2007

*Archaeological Services
Durham University
South Road
Durham DH1 3LE
Tel 0191 334 1121
Fax 0191 334 1126*

*archaeological services@durham.ac.uk
www.durham.ac.uk/archaeological.services*

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*(c/o Project SLAM, Defence Estates Kingston Road, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham
B75 7RL)
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1 Summary

The project

- 1 1 This report presents the results of an evaluation conducted in advance of a proposed development at Mame Barracks, Catterick. The works comprised the excavation of three trial trenches
- 1 2 The works were commissioned by Debut Services Ltd on behalf of Bovis Lend Lease, and conducted by Archaeological Services in accordance with a Statement of Requirement provided by Defence Estates and a project design provided by Archaeological Services

Results

- 1 3 Apart from 20th century services (which appear to be disused), the only archaeological feature identified was a ditch in Trench 2. This has been identified as a post-medieval field boundary ditch, shown on maps to have been in existence by 1739 and backfilled some time between 1842 and 1857
- 1 4 A number of redeposited spelt wheat grains, a variety typically grown in Roman times, were recovered from the ditch fill, possibly indicating that Roman features are present nearby. It is possible that such features could extend onto the proposed development area, although any such remains would be heavily disturbed by services and the foundations for the standing building

Recommendations

- 1 5 As archaeological features are likely to be present in this general area, and possibly within the proposed development area, it is recommended that a watching brief be carried out during initial ground clearance works for any development on this site

2 Project background

Location (Figure 1)

- 2 1 The proposed development area is centred on Building 74, Chacksfield Road, at Mame Barracks, Catterick, North Yorkshire To the south of Chacksfield Road are two T-shaped brick-built accommodation blocks, Building 74 (NGR SE 2450 9741) is currently unused while Building 75 forms overspill accommodation for the Sergeants' Mess Both blocks are surrounded by open grass lawns

Development proposal

- 2 2 It is proposed to demolish Building 74 and replace it with a Sergeants' Mess that will occupy some of the grassed area as well

Objective

- 2 3 The objective of the evaluation was to assess the nature, extent and potential significance of any surviving archaeological features within the proposed development area, so that an informed decision may be made regarding the nature and scope of any further scheme of archaeological works that may be required in advance of development

Methods statement

- 2 4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a statement of requirement provided by Defence Estates (Appendix 3) and a project design provided by Archaeological Services (ref DH07 17rev1)

Dates

- 2 5 Fieldwork was undertaken on 12th February 2007 This report was prepared between 13th and 23rd February 2007

Personnel

- 2 6 Fieldwork was conducted by Janet Beveridge and Andy Platell (supervisor) This report was prepared by Andy Platell, with illustrations by David Graham Specialist analysis was conducted by Louisa Gidney (animal bone), and Dr Charlotte O'Brien and Lome Elliott (macrofossil analysis) The Project Manager was Duncan Hale

Archive/OASIS

- 2 7 The site code is MSM 07, for Mame Barracks, Sergeants' Mess 2007 The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services and will be transferred to the Richmondshire Museum in due course Archaeological Services is registered with the Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS project (OASIS) The OASIS ID number for this project is archaeol3-24229

Acknowledgements

- 2 8 Archaeological Services is grateful for the assistance of the Quartermaster and service personnel of Mame Barracks in facilitating this project

3 Landuse, topography and geology

- 3 1 At the time of the evaluation the proposed development area comprised two T-shaped standing buildings, surrounded by ornamental lawns. The exact location for the proposed development has not yet been determined so the trial trenches were placed on the lawns surrounding the western building (Building 74), wherever the ground was free from existing services
- 3 2 The land in the base is predominantly level with a mean elevation of c 55m OD. The solid geology of the site comprises Carboniferous Millstone Grit which is overlain by river gravels

4 Historical and archaeological background

- 4 1 The historical and archaeological background to Mame Barracks has been extensively covered by an assessment report (Archaeological Services 2001a) carried out in response to the Establishment Development Plan (EDP) for the base (GVA Grimley 2000). Archaeological investigations carried out since this report was written have added further to our knowledge of the archaeology of the area (see below)

The prehistoric period (up to AD 70)

- 4 2 A Mesolithic knapping floor containing over 1100 chert flakes was excavated to the northeast of the runway in 2004 (Archaeological Services 2005b). Limited quantities of flint and chert of similar age have also been found outside the base at Brough St Giles (Cardwell & Speed 1996) and in fieldwalking as part of the A1(M) evaluation (Makey 1994). A late Neolithic palisaded enclosure overlay the knapping floor at the eastern end of the runway and has been part-excavated (Archaeological Services 2005b). Further Neolithic and Bronze Age ritual monuments are known from the surrounding area: a possible Bronze Age stone-filled ring-ditch to the south of the runway (Archaeological Services 2002), a cursus, ring-ditches and pit alignments at Scorton (Topping 1982), and a huge chambered cairn and possible henge at Catterick Racecourse (Moloney *et al.* 2003, MacLeod 2002). Later prehistoric remains include Iron Age settlements at Catterick Racecourse (Moloney *et al.* 2003) and Brough St Giles (Cardwell & Speed 1996).

The Roman period (AD 70 to 5th century)

- 4 3 A Roman fort was built on the south bank of the River Swale west of Catterick Bridge in c 80AD. This developed into the town of *Cataractonum*, one of the most important Roman settlements in Northern England. Civilian settlement spread to both banks of the river and was also concentrated further south along Dere Street at Bainesse Farm, to the west of the Mame Barracks (Wilson 1984, Wilson 2002). This latter settlement extends slightly into the western perimeter of the barracks and has been scheduled by English Heritage. Romano-British field systems occur to both the north and the south of the runway (Geoquest Associates 1994, Archaeological Services 2002) and also to the west of the A1 (Wilson 1984, Wilson 2002, Archaeological Services 2005a). In addition, a substantial Roman building, possibly part of a villa complex, exists in the centre of the barracks, in the vicinity of the Catholic

Church (Hildyard 1955, Wilson *et al* 1996) This building lies some 150m south of the proposed development area

The early medieval period (5th century to AD 1066)

- 4 4 Documentary evidence indicates that Catterick remained an important site throughout the early medieval period with several royal marriages and baptisms taking place there (Cosgrave & Mynors 1969, Whitelock 1955, Wilson *et al* 1996) It has been suggested that the later medieval motte and bailey on Castle Hills overlies an earlier Anglian royal vill, although evidence for this remains largely conjectural (Wilson *et al* 1996) Anglo-Saxon *Grubenhauser* have been found at four locations in the Catterick area, including under the REME building at Mame Barracks (Geoquest Associates 1994) Numerous burials of this date have been found around Catterick These include some cut into the foundations of the Roman 'villa' 150m south of the proposed development area, as well as several sites just outside the entrance to the Barracks (Wilson *et al* 1996)

The medieval period (AD 1066 to AD 1540)

- 4 5 Castle Hills, immediately northeast of the runway, is thought to be a Norman motte and bailey castle and is a scheduled monument A number of authors (e.g. MacLauchlan 1849, Wilson *et al* 1996) have suggested that it overlies earlier earthworks although this has never been proven A topographic survey carried out by Archaeological Services in 2001 recorded other features which did not appear to be contemporary with the castle, although the date of these is unknown (Archaeological Services 2001a) Ridge and furrow field systems are clearly visible on geophysical survey plans of the airfield although these proved ephemeral during trial trench evaluations (Archaeological Services 2002)

The post-medieval period (AD 1541 to AD 1899)

- 4 6 No records survive for the date of the parliamentary enclosure of Catterick parish Certainly this was carried out before the date of the earliest detailed plan in 1739 as this shows a field pattern little different to that of today, save for the removal of numerous field boundaries to increase the size of fields (Archaeological Services 2001a) A road is shown on this and later maps, running north from Oran House to Catterick village Sometime between 1822 and 1842 it was realigned back to the original course of the Roman Road (*i.e.* to the line of the current A1)

The modern period (AD 1900 to present)

- 4 7 A Royal Flying Corps unit was posted to Catterick in 1916, beginning the development of what would become RAF Catterick (Francis 2001) This development was small-scale at first, since the land was not then owned by the Air Ministry (it was finally purchased in 1924/5) After 1925 the pace of development increased, particularly during the late 1930s as the threat of war increased As part of this development the runway was extended and hardened, involving considerable landscaping of the site Following the war, the airfield became the headquarters of the RAF Regiment until 1994, when the RAF station was closed and the site taken over by Land Command

Previous archaeological works

- 4 8 Numerous archaeological interventions have taken place at Mame Barracks over a number of years. A substantial building, possibly part of a villa complex, was part-excavated in the centre of the base in 1939 (Hildyard 1955). Anglo-Saxon burials were cut into the foundations. Excavation plans were lost during the war so the exact location of this building is uncertain, but it was in the vicinity of the Catholic Church (i.e. 150m south of the proposed development area). Another Anglo-Saxon burial was discovered outside the church in 1964 (Wilson *et al.* 1996, 29-32) and two years later an excavation identified further Roman building foundations in this area (Wilson 2002, 232-4). Excavations in 1994 identified Roman field systems and an Anglo-Saxon building under the REME building 0.6km southeast of the proposed development area (Geoquest Associates 1994) and a second excavation identified a Roman pottery kiln just inside the entrance to the base (Busby *et al.* 1996).
- 4 9 A full description of all archaeological interventions up to 2001 is provided in a report covering the whole of the base (Archaeological Services 2001a), these included geophysical, topographical and auger surveys. Following this, further geophysical surveying was carried out on various areas in the northern part of the base, including the lawn immediately to the west of the proposed development area (Archaeological Services 2001b). This work identified post-medieval field boundaries and former RAF buildings elsewhere, but nothing of archaeological significance in the vicinity of the proposed development. Evaluation by trial trenching was carried out on either side of the runway in 2002 (Archaeological Services 2002) and geotechnical boreholes were monitored in the same area (Archaeological Services 2003). A large open-area excavation was carried out on an 11ha site to the northeast of the runway in 2004 (Archaeological Services 2005b). This identified archaeological features from a number of periods, including a Neolithic palisaded enclosure of national importance.

5 The evaluation trenches

Introduction

- 5 1 Three trenches were excavated in the locations shown in Figure 2. All were machine-excavated to the top of archaeologically significant deposits (or undisturbed natural subsoil where no such deposits were identified) and then cleaned, sampled and recorded by hand. Summary context data are provided in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

- 5 2 This trench was 7.5m by 1.6m in size, and was located to the southeast of Building 74. Natural subsoil, a brown gravel was reached at a depth of 0.6m. Immediately above the natural was a brown silty clay containing frequent pebbles [2.0-3.5m deep] and then the topsoil [1.0-2.5m deep]. A soakaway pit [F4 1.2m square] filled with loose brick and stone [3] was present in the northwest of the trench. Ceramic pipes connected this pit with the surface water drains for the standing building. A sewerage pipe crossed the centre of

the trench in an east-west direction and a water pipe crossed the northern end of the trench in the same orientation. This water pipe ended at a stopcock in the centre of the trench. Both these services are thought to be disused. No archaeological deposits were identified in the trench and no artefacts were recovered.

Trench 2

- 5 3 This trench was 7.5m by 1.6m in size, and was located to the northeast of Building 74 (Figure 3). Topsoil [5.0-6.5m deep] directly overlay the natural gravel in this trench. A ditch [F7] 1.1m wide and 0.45m deep] crossed the trench in a northeast-southwest direction. It was filled with a dark grey-brown silt [6] very similar to the topsoil, suggesting that it was not old enough for the organic material in the fill to have been significantly oxidised. A horse tooth in a very good state of preservation was recovered from the fill. Since animal teeth found elsewhere on the airfield have been poorly preserved unless they were of recent date (see for instance Archaeological Services 2005), this again suggests that the feature is of recent origin. Maps of the Catterick area, from the earliest detailed plan (produced in 1739) until the tithe plan of 1842 (Figure 4) show a field boundary with the same location and orientation as this feature. The boundary had been removed by the time of the 1857 Ordnance Survey plan. These dates are consistent with the organic content of the ditch fill and the state of preservation of the tooth. However, environmental analysis of a soil sample collected from the ditch fill (see below, section 6) produced a significant quantity of charred spelt wheat, a grain variety widely used in Roman times but rarely used since then. The most plausible explanation for this discrepancy is that the ditch has cut through a nearby Roman feature and some spelt wheat grains have been redeposited in the later fill.

Trench 3

- 5 4 This trench was 3m by 1.6m in size, and was located to the north of Building 74. Topsoil [8.0-6.5m deep] directly overlay the natural gravel. A service trench [F10] ran along the southern baulk of the trench in an east-west direction. A second service trench [F12] crossed the excavation of the trench in the same orientation. This latter service consisted of a metal pipe beneath a timber plank. Both are thought to be disused. No archaeological deposits were identified and no artefacts were recovered.

6 The finds

Animal bone

- 6 1 Horse maxillary premolar 2 in a good state of preservation from context [6]

Iron objects

- 6 2 Two tacks, 18mm long with 17mm diameter head, and 6mm long with 22mm diameter head. Both 20th century and from context [11].

Copper alloy objects

- 6 3 Connecting rod, 89mm long, 9mm diameter with a 22mm diameter flat head containing an 11mm square hole, 20th century From context [11]

7 The environmental evidence

Methods statement

- 7 1 A plant macrofossil assessment was carried out on a sample taken from the ditch fill [6]. The sample was manually floated and sieved through a 500µm mesh. The residue was retained, described and scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The float was dried slowly and scanned at x 40 magnification for waterlogged and charred botanical remains. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant taxonomic nomenclature follows Stace (1997)

Results

- 7 2 Low numbers of charred plant remains were present. These included grains of barley, grass, shell fragments of hazelnut, spelt wheat glume bases and indeterminate cereal grains. Charred seeds of cleavers, redshank and sedge also occurred. Uncharred seeds of fumitory, elder and goosefoot were present. Fumitory was relatively abundant in the sample. Unburnt and burnt bone occurred in the float and residue. Charcoal, coal, modern roots, mollusc and insect remains were present in the float. The contents of the residue and float are listed in Appendix 2.

Discussion

- 7 3 A few charred plant remains occurred in context [6], taken from a ditch fill of post-medieval date. These included three hulled and five undifferentiated barley grains, two spelt wheat glume bases, three indeterminate cereal grains, three fragments of hazelnut shell, twenty-one grass seeds and several seeds of cleavers, redshank and sedge. The occurrence of spelt wheat is surprising as studies in northern England have shown that spelt wheat was the dominant cereal during the Roman period (Huntley & Stallibrass, 1995), but was not commonly used after this time. This may suggest the ditch fill contained reworked material, possibly from a nearby feature of Roman or earlier origin.
- 7 4 Uncharred seeds of fumitory, elder and the goosefoot family were present in the sample. In view of the non-waterlogged nature of the site, these seeds are likely to be modern introductions. Modern roots were also present in the float.
- 7 5 Small fragments of animal bone, possibly sheep, were present in the residue.

Recommendations

- 7 6 No further plant macrofossil work is recommended due to the low numbers of seeds present. Material suitable for radiocarbon dating is present in the sample.

8 The potential archaeological resource

- 8 1 Apart from 20th century services (which appear to be disused), the only archaeological feature identified was a ditch in Trench 2. This has been identified as a post-medieval field boundary ditch, shown on maps as being in existence by 1739 and backfilled some time between 1842 and 1857. The size, profile and orientation of this feature have been determined by the work already carried out
- 8 2 A number of spelt wheat grains, a variety typically grown in Roman times, were recovered from the ditch fill. This material is likely to have been redeposited, possibly indicating that Roman features are present nearby, although none were identified by trial trenching. These features may be related to the 'villa' known to exist 150m to the south. It is possible that such features could extend onto the proposed development area, although any such remains would be heavily disturbed by services and the foundations for the standing building.

9 Recommendations

- 9 1 As archaeological features are likely to be present in this general area, and possible within the proposed development area, it is recommended that a watching brief be carried out during initial ground clearance works for any development on this site.

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