

*BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT*

**An archaeological excavation at Grange
Hill Quarry,
Naunton, Gloucestershire: Phase 1**

Interim Statement

B.U.F.A.U.



Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
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By J. Williams

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1. Introduction

This interim statement summarises the results of the first phase of an archaeological investigation in advance of the extension of a building stone quarry at Grange Hill, Naunton, Gloucestershire (NGR SP11502430). It follows an archaeological evaluation which indicated that the area of the proposed quarry extension contained features dated to the Middle Iron Age, as well as post-medieval quarrying (CAT 1998). The work conforms to a phased excavation scheme (BUFAU 1999) agreed with the County Archaeologist for Gloucestershire. The first phase of this work was undertaken over a two-week period in October 1999. The second phase is scheduled for 2001. A full post-excavation assessment will be prepared following the completion of these Phase 2 works. The work was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit and was commissioned by Jefferson Consulting Limited on behalf of The Natural Stone Market Limited.

2. Method statement

The topsoil and other non-archaeologically significant deposits were removed from the Phase 1 area under continuous archaeological supervision using a 360-degree excavator fitted with a wide toothless ditching bucket. The area excavated was 180 metres long and 40 metres wide at its southern end and 15 metres wide at its northern end (Figure 1). Selected areas of the underlying bedrock were hand cleaned. All features of potential archaeological interest were sample excavated at the levels defined in the specification. A full written, drawn and photographic record was maintained during the course of the excavation.

3. Summary of results

Stratigraphy

The topsoil varied in depth from 0.15 metres in the northern area of the site to 0.4 metres in the southern area. It directly overlay weathered limestone bedrock with patches of clay. This was cut by various features (see below).

Postholes

A cluster of four postholes, F1, F2, F4 and F5 were identified on the east side of the site, approximately 80 metres from the northern limit of excavation (Figure 1). All the postholes were cut into the bedrock, and had similar dimensions (approximately 0.5 metres in diameter and 0.4 metres deep). Each posthole contained sherds of

prehistoric pottery (see below) and fragments of bone. The postholes formed an approximate square, 5 metres by 5 metres.

Gully

A narrow and shallow gully, F3, was identified 15 metres from the northern limit of excavation. The gully was 0.7 metres wide and 0.2 metres deep. It was a slightly irregular shape in plan and was orientated east-west. Three equally spaced sections were excavated through this feature. However, no finds were recovered from its fill.

Quarry Pits

Twenty-two quarry pits were identified in the southern half of the site. Five of these pits were sample excavated, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10 (Figure 1). They were generally sub-circular and were filled with loose stone rubble. The pits measured between 1.5 to 6 metres in diameter and were between 0.6 to 1.6 metres deep. F7 and F8 contained small fragments of animal bone, and F8 contained an iron nail.

4. The pottery by Annette Hancocks

The nature of this small assemblage of 28 sherds (151g) is reflected in the average sherd weight of 5g. The material is of probable later prehistoric date and was recovered from four contexts (1001, 1002, 1006 and 1007). Most of the sherds comprise shell-tempered body sherds, although a small amount of shell and igneous tempered and micaceous pottery was also retrieved. No diagnostic rim forms were observed during this phase of work. However, the range of fabrics identified is comparable with other material of later prehistoric date recovered from elsewhere in Gloucestershire (Timby 1998).

All of the pottery derived from the four postholes F1, F2, F4 and F5 discussed above and were quantified by count and weight (g) Table 1.

Context	Description	Pottery		Animal Bone	Fired clay		Charcoal	Iron Nail	
		No	Wgt	Wgt	No	Wgt	Wgt	No	Wgt
Cleaning		1	1g	-	-	-	1g	-	-
1001	Fill of PH F1	5	64g	2g	-	-	-	-	-
1002	Fill of PH F2	8	36g	43g	-	-	-	-	-
1006	Fill of PH F4	2	3g	63g	-	-	-	-	-
1007	Fill of PH F5	12	47g	1g	-	-	-	-	-
1011	Fill of QP F7	-	-	4g	-	-	-	-	-
1012 (Roman)	Fill of QP F7	1	4g	47g	-	-	-	-	-
1013	Fill of QP F8	-	-	49g	-	-	-	1	7g
1015	Fill of QP F8	-	-	32g	2	8g	-	-	-
Total		28g (1)	155g	241g	2	8g	1g	1	7g

Table 1

Key to Table 1

PH = Posthole

QP = Quarry pit

5. Discussion

The prehistoric pottery recovered from the four post holes suggests that these features form an outlying structure associated with the suggested Iron Age activity identified during the evaluation to the west of the excavated Phase 1 Area. Elsewhere, similar square configurations of postholes are thought to be evidence for raised granaries.

The gully in the northern part of the site is of uncertain date. Hopefully, further evidence for this feature will be obtained during future work.

The large pits in the southern part of the site are almost certainly associated with small scale medieval or post-medieval quarrying.

6. Acknowledgements

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7. References

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