

NEAG/02



LAND AT NUP END, ASHLEWORTH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

commissioned by Bloor Homes Western

15/00965/OUT

October 2015

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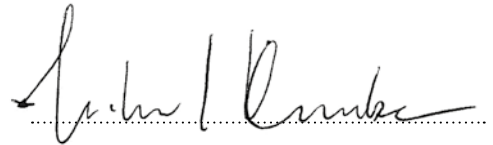
October 2015

project info

HA JOB NO. NEAG/02
HAS NO. 1135
NGR SO 810 259
PARISH Ashleworth
LOCAL AUTHORITY Tewkesbury Borough Council
OASIS REF. headland3-225732

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology undertook a trial trench field evaluation on a plot of land in Ashleworth, Gloucestershire. The evaluation identified evidence for plough furrows of unknown date in the north and east of the site. A small amount of abraded medieval pottery was recovered from topsoil, and a flint scraper dating to the Neolithic period or Early Bronze Age was found within a modern context.

The trial trenching has corroborated the evidence of the geophysical survey in suggesting that the site is of limited archaeological potential.

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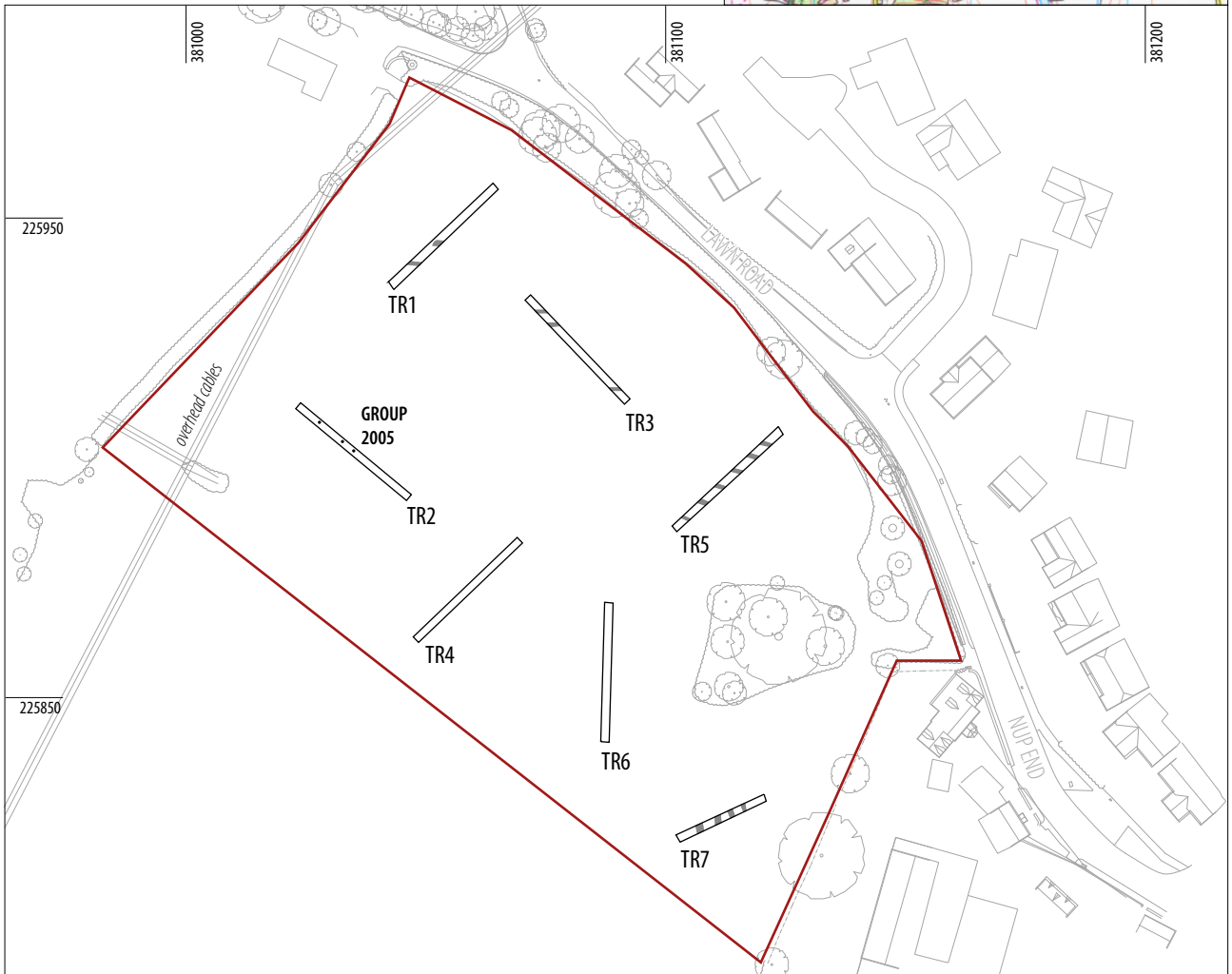
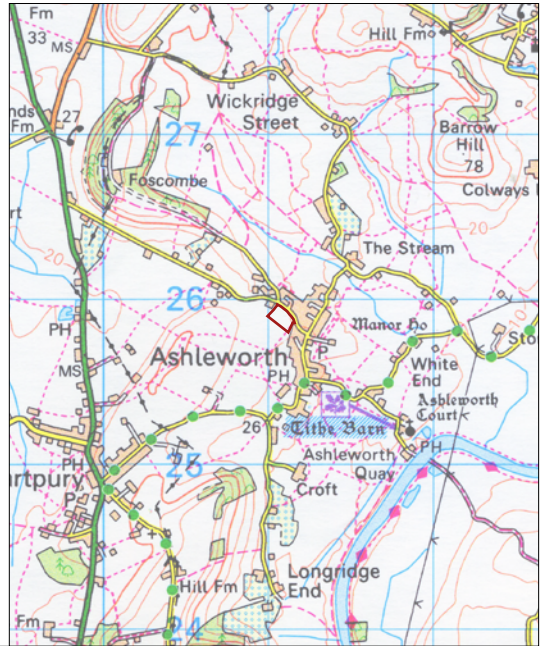
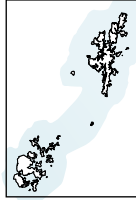
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NUP END (NEAG/02)
 land southwest of Lawn Road
 Nup End
 Ashleworth
 Gloucestershire

0 200km



KEY

- development boundary
- trench location
- plough furrow
- posthole

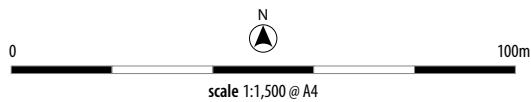


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ILLUS 1
 Site location



LAND AT NUP END, ASHLEWORTH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This report presents the results of an archaeological field evaluation on land off Nup End lane, Ashleworth, Gloucestershire. The archaeological works, commissioned by Bloor Homes Western relate to the submission of a planning application (ref. 15/00965/OUT) for the proposed residential development of the site.

It was agreed with the archaeological advisor to Tewkesbury Borough Council, Mr. Charles Parry, that the site had the potential to include heritage assets of archaeological interest. In accordance with relevant policy and best practice, the archaeological advisor requested that a field evaluation be undertaken in order to provide sufficient information to allow the consideration of the planning application.

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Bloor Homes Western to undertake the required works in accordance with a project design agreed with the archaeological advisor (Kimber 2014).

1.2 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

The proposed development site (**ILLUS 1**) comprises an area of land located at NGR SO 810 259 (site centre). The development site occupies the northern part of a single field located to the south-west of Nup End/Lawn Road in the village of Ashleworth, Gloucestershire. The development site measures 1.6ha in total.

The site is bound to the north and east by Lawn Road, and to the south and west by further agricultural land.

The north of site is located at approximately 33m above Ordnance Datum (AOD), falling gently to 30m AOD in the south of the site.

The site lies on or close to the boundary between the Wilmcote Limestone member and Penarth group mudstones. There are no mapped superficial deposits within the proposed development area (BGS 2015).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Some prehistoric activity is thought to occur in the general vicinity of the site in the form of earthworks and cropmarks. Romano-British pottery and archaeological features have been found at Ashleworth Quay to the south-east (Craddock-Bennett 2013) and the presence of a Roman settlement is suspected close to the Severn.

Ashleworth may have Saxon origins, and a medieval grange complex was centred on Ashleworth Quay. The site itself was probably cultivated in the medieval period. The Ordnance Survey first edition (1884) identifies a field boundary bisecting the site on a northwest-southeast alignment.

A gradiometer survey was carried out by the Bartlett-Clark Consultancy in April 2014 (Bartlett & Mayes 2014). The survey did not detect any magnetic anomalies suggestive of the presence of archaeological features, but identified a change in background noise level which appears to correspond with the location of field boundary identified on the OS first edition map.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent, nature and importance of any buried heritage assets within the proposed development area.

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

- Provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of any proposed development to be assessed;
- Assess the impact of previous land use on the site;
- Produce a site archive for deposition with Gloucester City Museum and to provide information for accession to the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record.



ILLUS 2

General view of Trench 1, facing SW



ILLUS 3

View of SE facing section in Trench 5

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The recorded contexts were assigned unique numbers and recording was undertaken on Headland Archaeology pro forma trench and context record sheets. Digital photographic images and black and white photographs were taken of all trenches with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital surveying was undertaken using a Trimble dGPS system.

3 METHOD

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

- *Code of Conduct* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014)
- *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014)

The evaluation comprised the excavation of approximately 2% of the proposed development area by means of 7 trenches totalling 200 linear metres.

The evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision, with topsoil/upper subsoil being removed by machine and excavation terminating at the uppermost significant archaeological horizon or when geological deposits were encountered.

The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.

4 RESULTS

The location of features discussed below can be found on ILLUS 1. A full trench and context register is included in Appendix 1.

4.1 GENERAL SITE STRATIGRAPHY

Deposits were generally consistent across the site (ILLUS 2 & 3). A mid-dark brown silty loam topsoil deposit e.g. [1001, 2001] between 0.20m and 0.35m in depth overlay a light orange/brown clay silt subsoil deposit of between 0.05m and 0.20m in depth e.g. [1002, 2002]. Geological deposits were encountered at a depth of between 0.30m and 0.55m and

consisted of an orange/yellow silty clay with limestone bedrock present in patches e.g. [1003, 2003].

Two sherds of pottery (Appendix 2) dated to the medieval and post-medieval periods were recovered from the subsoil [1002] deposit within Trench 1. The sherds were abraded and are likely to be the product of secondary deposition.

4.2 TRENCHES CONTAINING AGRICULTURAL FURROWS

Evidence for regularly spaced agricultural furrows was identified in four trenches (1, 3, 5 & 7, (ILLUS 4)) located in the north and east of the proposed development area. The furrows measured between 0.9m and 1.6m in width and were spaced at 3.0m–4.0m intervals. Furrows were excavated in Trenches 3 and 5 where the impact of the furrows into the underlying geological deposits measured 0.20m.



ILLUS 4

General view of Trench 7, facing NE (furrow visible in foreground)

The furrows identified in Trenches 1, 3 and 5 were orientated on an east-west alignment, whilst those in the south of the development area (Trench 7) were orientated northwest-southeast. The change in orientation appears to respect the line of the field boundary visible on the first edition OS map and still present on OS mapping dating to 1970. The relatively close spacing of the furrows and respect for the field boundary is suggestive of features dating to the post-medieval or modern periods.

4.3 TRENCHES CONTAINING MODERN DEPOSITS

A northwest-southeast alignment of three post holes [2005] was identified within Trench 2. The post holes each measured 0.30m in diameter and were cut through the subsoil [2002] and into the underlying natural [2003]. The remains of the wooden posts were still in situ. The line of post-holes is located to the north of the previously discussed field boundary and considering its orientation (crossing the former boundary) is likely to be later in date. A distal end scraper dated to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age was recovered from one of the post-holes. Given the likely modern date of the post-holes the find is considered to be residual.

4.4 BLANK TRENCHES

With the exception of stone-filled land drains, no features or significant deposits were identified in Trenches 4 or 6.

5 DISCUSSION

Undated agricultural furrows were identified across the northern and eastern parts of the site. The differing orientation between the furrows identified in Trenches 1, 3 and 5, and those present in Trench 7 is likely to be a factor of the northern trenches previously being located within a different field to Trench 7 (as defined by the fence line identified in Trench 2).

A distal end scraper dated to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age was recovered from a modern post hole in Trench 2. Although it appears to have been redeposited from elsewhere, the find supports existing evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site.

Sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery recovered from a subsoil deposit in Trench 1 are likely to be the product of secondary deposition and indicative of manuring of the site during the medieval and/or post-medieval periods.

6 CONCLUSION

The trial trench evaluation identified the presence of undated agricultural furrows in the northern and eastern parts of the site. The furrows respect the former presence of a post-medieval field boundary and are not considered to be of archaeological significance.

The trial trenching has corroborated the evidence of the geophysical survey in suggesting that the site is of limited archaeological potential.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bartlett, A & Mayes, S 2014 *Land at Nup End, Ashleworth, Gloucestershire: Geophysical Survey* Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd (NEAG14).

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APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER

Trench 1 30m x 1.6m

Located on the highest part of the field, evidence of ploughing activity in the north-east section and along the trench base. Occasional 'sterile' natural solution hollows identified. Surface find of probable medieval pottery in this area.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
1001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.30m
1002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments; (0.05-0.14), and chalky pebbles	0.30 – 0.45m
1003	Natural: orangey yellow silty clay, pure clay in places, occasional reddish colour. Bare limestone outcrop protruding up through base of trench.	0.45 – 0.50m+

Trench 2 30m x 1.6m

Remains of modern fence line [2004/2005] identified. Occasional fragments of modern pottery found on surface.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
2001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.20m
2002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments and chalky pebbles	0.20 – 0.30m
2003	Natural: yellow grey plastic silty clay.	0.30 – 0.60m
2004	Group number for fills of 3 modern shallow circular features, measuring 0.04 deep x 0.3m wide. Brown silty clay, containing straw and fragments of timber	0.30 – 0.34m
2005	Group number for cuts of 3 modern circular features.	0.30 – 0.34m

Trench 3 30m x 1.6m

Plough feature one of several aligned east to west, and which are seen running across the site in this direction.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
3001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.30m

Trench 3 30m x 1.6m

Plough feature one of several aligned east to west, and which are seen running across the site in this direction.

3002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments and chalky pebbles	0.30 – 0.50m
3003	Natural: orangey yellow silty clay, pure clay in places, occasional reddish colour. Bare limestone outcrop protruding up through base of trench.	0.30 – 0.50m
3004	Group number given to plough activity/features.	0.50 – 0.70m

Trench 4 30m x 1.6m

Two stone filled land drains at south-west end of trench. This trench lies across the lowest part of the site, identified on the geophysics plot as a corridor with virtually no natural anomalies, running north-west/south-east towards the copse of trees.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
4001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.30m
4002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments and chalky pebbles	0.30 – 0.42m
4003	Natural: orangey yellow silty clay, pure clay in places, occasional reddish colour. Bare limestone outcrop protruding up through base of trench.	0.42 – 0.50m
4004	land drain	0.50m+
4005	land drain	

Trench 5 30m x 1.6m

Traces of plough activity in the form of linear bands running east to west across the trench.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
5001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.35m
5002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments and chalky pebbles	0.35 – 0.55m
5003	Natural: orangey yellow silty clay, pure clay in places, occasional reddish colour. Bare limestone outcrop protruding up through base of trench.	0.55m+
5004	Plough activity	0.55m+

Trench 6 30m x 1.6m

No features of interest identified.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
6001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.35m
6002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments and chalky pebbles	0.30 – 0.35m
6003	Natural: Orange clay silt	0.35-0.70m+

Trench 7 20m x 1.6m

Traces of plough activity running across the trench NW/SE. Differing alignment to furrows in other trenches.

Context	Description	Deposit depth (BGL)
7001	Topsoil: mid to dark brown, rich silty loam, fine, crumbly, damp. Inclusions of straw, roots, modern pottery, glass and slag.	0.00 – 0.25m
7002	Subsoil: light orangey grey brown, clay silt with pockets of silty clay. Occasional yellow sandstone/limestone fragments and chalky pebbles	0.25 – 0.45m
7003	Natural: Silty clay varying in colour – yellow/grey/brown/red.	0.45m+

APPENDIX 3 FINDS ASSESSMENT

JULIE FRANKLIN, JULIE LOCHRIE, PAUL BLINKHORN

The assemblage amounted to two sherds (34g) of pottery and one flint find. The pottery sherds were both found in the same context (1003). They were classified using the coding system of the Gloucester City type-series (eg. Vince 1984; Vince unpub) (see TABLE 1).

Fabric Code	Fabric Name	Dating	Sherds	Weight
TF40	Unglazed Malvernian Ware	late 12th – 15th century	1	20g
TF52	Oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware	14th – early 17th century	1	14g

TABLE 1

Pottery fabric type series

Both fabric types are common finds at sites in the region. The two sherds were both slightly abraded, and are likely to be the product of secondary deposition, and could possibly be residual. The sherd of TF40 is from the rim of a bowl. Both types were current in the 14th and 15th centuries.

The flint was found in context (2005). It is a distal end scraper, possibly deriving from a bipolar core. It can be dated to the Neolithic or early Bronze Age.

The small size of the assemblage limits its interpretive value. They cannot be used as secure dating evidence for the features in which they were found.

Finds catalogue

TR	Context	Qty.	Weight (g)	Material	Object	Description	Spot Date
1	1003	1	20	Pottery (Medieval)	TF40	Unglazed Malvernian Ware	L12th-15th
1	1003	1	14	Pottery (Medieval)	TF52	Oxidized glazed Malvernian Ware	14th-E17th
2	2005	1	7	Lithics	Scraper	Flint. Distal end scraper from possible bipolar core.	Neol-EBA

References

- Vince, A G 1984a *The Medieval Ceramic Industry of the Severn Valley* Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Southampton
- Vince, A G 1984b 'Late Saxon and medieval pottery in Gloucestershire' in A Saville (ed) *Archaeology in Gloucestershire. From the Earliest Hunters to the Industrial Age* Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums and the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, pp 248-75



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