



LAND EAST OF CHESTER ROAD, MALPAS, CHESHIRE

Archaeological Walkover Survey





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QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	88000	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	12/04687/OUT	NGR	SJ 4908 4756		

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
1	E	CH	RJO	<i>RICHARD O'NEILL</i>	05.12.12	S/PROJECTS/88000 (BROSELAKE FARM, MALPAS, CHESHIRE)/REPORTS/WALKOVER SURVEY
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I= INTERNAL DRAFT E= EXTERNAL DRAFT F= FINAL

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs to undertake a walkover survey of land east of Chester Road, Malpas, Cheshire (hereafter referred to as the Site, NGR SJ 4907 4756) . The walkover followed an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) completed by CgMs (2012) and discussions with the Development Control Archaeologist for Cheshire West and Chester (Julie Edwards, Chester Archaeology). The walkover survey was commissioned to assess the survival of earthworks within the Site and to better inform future strategies to mitigate the potential loss of archaeological remains.

1.1.2 The Site occupies c.6ha of pasture land located on the north east fringe of Malpas. It is bound by the rear of a modern housing estate along Depenbech Close (immediately to the north of St Oswalds Close) and Barnmoore Close, and the rear of modern bungalows along St Oswalds Close to the west. The north and east of the Site are bounded by pasture fields, Greenway Lane and Broselake Farm, with Well Street to the south.

1.1.3 The Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project (Cheshire County Council and English Heritage 2007) has identified the Site as Ancient Fieldscapes with the type classification as Medieval Townfields.

1.1.4 The area is thus part of Malpas' historic agricultural landscape and contains elements that are potentially of Medieval origin and date, although no ridge and furrow is apparent from recent aerial photographs.

1.1.5 In addition to this historic landscape, the presence of nearby wells, place names associated with the presence of water/water supply and the marshy state of the southern area of the site indicates the area is a source of a water supply; this suggests the possibility that the area may have attracted use and settlement in antiquity. There is also the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to survive within the wetter southern part of the Site.

1.2 Planning Background

1.2.1 Outline planning consent has been sought (12/04687/OUT) for the construction of up to 140 dwellings, landscape, open space, access, highway improvement, and associated works.

1.2.2 A desk-based assessment (CgMs 2012) has been submitted with the application which details the historic and archaeological background of the Site. The walkover survey was commissioned to add further detail to the existing document (in association with the Cheshire HLC project (Cheshire County Council and English Heritage 2007).

1.3 Site Geology and Topography

- 1.3.1 Malpas occupies a ridge of high ground which forms the southern extension of the Mid-Cheshire Ridge, a ridge of sandstone which runs north-south through Cheshire. The underlying solid geology of the area is Malpas Sandstone, which is overlain by glacial sands and gravel. A ridge of glacial Till runs north-west to south-east across the site, bisecting the sand and gravel. The surrounding, gently undulating, landscape comprises mainly Boulder Clay.
- 1.3.2 The Site occupies pasture land falling from Chester Road (c.118m Above Ordnance Datum [AOD]) in the north-west to Well Street (c.97m AOD) in the south east. The southern part of the Site, next to Well Street, comprises wet ground that was flooded at the time of the survey.

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and Objectives

2.1.1 The general project objectives are:

- To determine the presence or otherwise of remains of archaeological interest within the Site;
- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any upstanding archaeological remains within the Site;
- To map at an appropriate scale the location of any upstanding archaeological remains within the Site;
- To locate and identify features depicted on the Tithe and Ordnance Survey (OS) Maps, and aerial photographs of the Site.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The walkover was conducted in line with a Level 1 survey as outlined in English Heritage *Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes* (2007). The walkover was undertaken by Chris Harrison on the 21st November 2012. The weather was overcast, windy and wet throughout.
- 2.2.2 The location of all features and a position fix of each photograph were recorded using a HP handheld computer with PocketGIS software and portable GPS chip with EGNOS/WAAS capability (with a horizontal dilution of precision was typically less than 1.5m).
- 2.2.3 Each identified cultural heritage asset has been labelled with a unique identification number (WA 01 etc. see **Figure 1**), a Gazetteer of which is provided in **Appendix 1**. A register of photographs and the photographs themselves are provided in **Appendix 2**.

3 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The features uncovered during the walkover survey are located on **Figure 1** and within the Gazetteer presented in **Appendix 1**.

3.2 Walkover

3.2.1 The walkover revealed a total of 5 (**WA01-5**) earthworks relating to field boundaries visible on the 1841 Tithe Map and aerial photographs.

3.2.2 A subtle east to west aligned linear double bank and central ditch (**Figure 1; WA01; Photographs 1-6**) was observed, which can be seen on the 1841 Tithe Map defining the boundary of land labelled 125 and 789. The boundary is not present on the 1875 OS Map. The earthwork is 0.3m high and each bank is c.3m wide.

3.2.3 The north bank of **WA01** exists as a slight lynchet formed from the banking of material from the north (upslope) against a former upstanding physical boundary, located probably within the central ditch. As the extant boundaries have mature, formally layered (hedging) trees (see **Photographs 7 and 9**) within their makeup, it is possible that the earthworks represent former hedgerows. Therefore, the ditch was probably formed by the removal of a hedge line, creating the southern bank as upcast at the same time.

3.2.4 A north east to south west aligned double bank (**Figure 1; WA02; Photograph 8**) was identified during the walkover, connected to the south end of a north west to south east aligned lynchet (**Figure 1; WA03; Photograph 10**). These former field boundaries enclose a small rectangle of land numbered 781 on the 1841 Tithe Map. Boundary **WA03** is not depicted on the 1875 OS Map. However **WA02** is present on this and later maps up to and including the 1999 OS Map; it is only a recent removal.

3.2.5 A short east to west aligned double banked linear feature (**Figure 1; WA04; Photograph 12**), that enclosed a small rectangular parcel of land labelled 790 on the 1841 Tithe Map, was revealed at the west of the Site. The boundary does not appear on the 1898 OS Map. The form of boundary **WA04** is similar to **WA01**.

3.2.6 A short subtle double banked east to west aligned linear feature (**Figure 1; WA05; Photograph 13**) was encountered enclosing the north side of the parcel of land numbered 789 on the 1841 Tithe Map. Boundary **WA05** is not depicted on the 1999 OS Map.

3.2.7 No earthworks internal to the relic or extant field boundaries were identified.

3.3 Extant Boundaries

3.3.1 The field boundaries still in existence are created from hedging, some of which, such as the eastern side of the Site, retains relic hawthorn (**Photograph 09**). The boundaries are sinuous and snake along their lengths, suggesting that they may date to the earliest enclosure of the land, respecting and utilising former land division (i.e. piecemeal enclosure around existing ridge and furrow). However, immediately east (Foxes Ridge) and west (just south of Barnways Glendhur) of the Site, the relic reverse 'S' field boundaries (consistent with the piecemeal enclosure of former ridge and furrow) conform to an east to west aligned axis, creating a thin parcel of land

running north to south (the Site). This may suggest that the Site lies within relic pasture, rather than as part of the ridge and furrow arable land.

- 3.3.2 The southern area of the Site was waterlogged at the time of survey. This may show that the narrow north to south aligned strip of land, which is slightly lower lying, may have retained more water and thus have been utilised as grazing rather than arable land (a common practice in the Medieval period). The extant thin field to the north of the Site also has the name 'Delune', which may derive from dairying practices.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1 The Site contains slight earthworks that relate to field boundaries depicted on the 1841 Tithe Map. All of the boundaries survive as slight linear earthworks, measuring 0.3m in height by c.3m in width. All but one of the boundaries (**WA03**) is double banked with a central ditch. However, inspection of the earthworks suggests that the banks may be a lynchet against a hedgerow that was removed and in the process of removal created a small bank (from the upcast). The topography of the Site, falling in level from north to south, has resulted in the erosion of land southwards, with material built up against the north face of boundaries.
- 4.1.2 Recent hedging and planting was evident in the extant field boundaries although some contained relic hedging trees. No phasing of the field boundaries could be identified. No house platforms or ridge and furrow were visible inside the field boundaries.
- 4.1.3 Due to the form of the immediate surrounding landscape and the features within the Site, it is likely that the Site was once used for pasture on the edge of the town, with its open fields. The sinuous nature of the boundaries does suggest that they may respect and utilise relic land divisions created in the Medieval or Post-Medieval periods.
- 4.1.4 Shallow earthworks of probable Post-Medieval date, potentially utilising and respecting earlier boundaries, were identified within the site. The features are likely to be types represented elsewhere in the region; their association with existing historic boundaries makes them of local archaeological interest and preservation *in situ* is therefore not deemed to be appropriate.

5 REFERENCES

- CgMs, 2012. *Chester Road, Malpas, Cheshire, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*.
- Cheshire County Council and English Heritage, 2007. *The Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Final Report* (minor revisions 2008).
- English Heritage (EH), 2007. *Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes, A guide to good recording practice*.

APPENDIX 1: CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS LOCATED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT AREA

WA ID	Description	Site Type	Condition	Date Visited	Easting	Northing
01	Field Boundary: subtle double banked with central ditch. Closer inspection suggests that the northern bank is a lynchet, the ditch an old hedgerow, and the southern bank upcast from the hedges removal.	Pre-Tithe (1841) field boundary	Stable	21/11/2012	349025 349081	347388 347407
02	Field Boundary: subtle double banked with central ditch. Closer inspection suggests that the northern bank is a lynchet, the ditch an old hedgerow, and the southern bank upcast from the hedges removal.	Pre-Tithe (1841) field boundary	Stable	21/11/2012	349091 349152	347577 347625
03	Field Boundary: north south subtle bank possible the line of an old hedgerow.	Pre-Tithe (1841) field boundary	Stable	21/11/2012	349091 349045	347577 347671
04	Field Boundary: subtle double banked with central ditch. Closer inspection suggests that the northern bank is a lynchet, the ditch an old hedgerow, and the southern bank upcast from the hedges removal.	Pre-Tithe (1841) field boundary	Stable	22/11/2012	349008 349026	347579 347582
05	Field Boundary: subtle double banked with central ditch. Closer inspection suggests that the northern bank is a lynchet, the ditch an old hedgerow, and the southern bank upcast from the hedges removal.	Pre-Tithe (1841) field boundary	Stable	21/11/2012	349025 349056	347478 347492

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER AND PHOTOS

Photo ID	Facing	WA ID	Description	Date Taken
01	W	01	Site conditions and boundary WA01	21/11/2012
02	WNW	01	Site conditions and boundary WA01	21/11/2012
03	NW	01	Site conditions and boundary WA01	21/11/2012
04	NNW	01	Site conditions and boundary WA01	21/11/2012
05	NW	01	Site conditions and boundary WA01	21/11/2012
06	W	01	Site conditions and boundary WA01	21/11/2012
07	NW		Existing boundary	21/11/2012
08	SW	02	Along boundary 02	21/11/2012
09	NE		Relic hedge	21/11/2012
10	NW	03	Along boundary 03	21/11/2012
11	NW		Relic hedge	21/11/2012
12	W	04	Along boundary 04	21/11/2012
13	W	05	Along boundary 05	21/11/2012



Photo 01: Site conditions and boundary WA01



Photo 02: Site conditions and boundary WA01



Photo 03: Site conditions and boundary WA01



Photo 04: Site conditions and boundary WA01



Photo 05: Site conditions and boundary WA01



Photo 06: Site conditions and boundary WA01



Photo 07: Existing boundary



Photo 08: Along boundary WA02



Photo 09: Relic hedge



Photo 10: Along boundary WA03



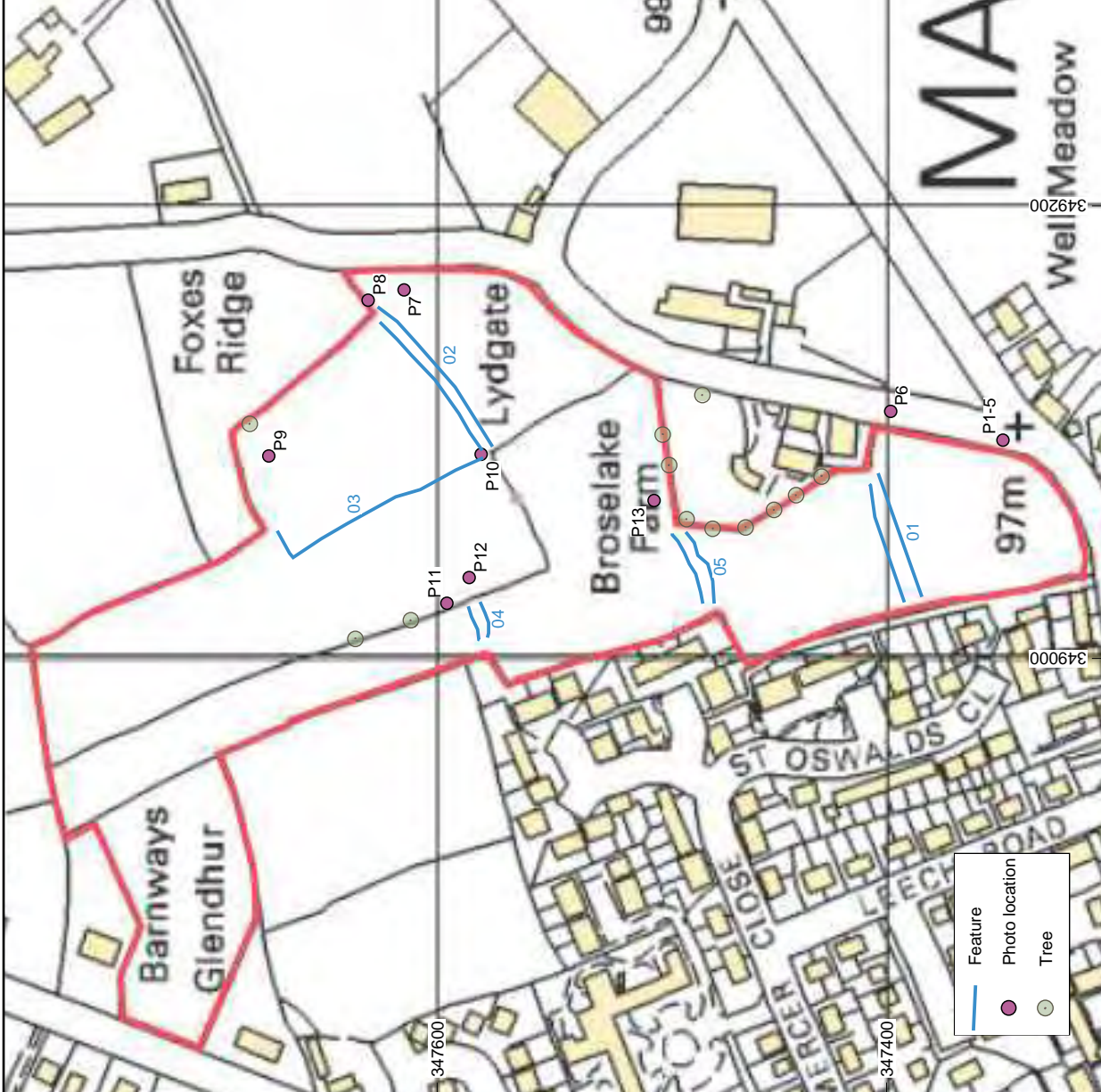
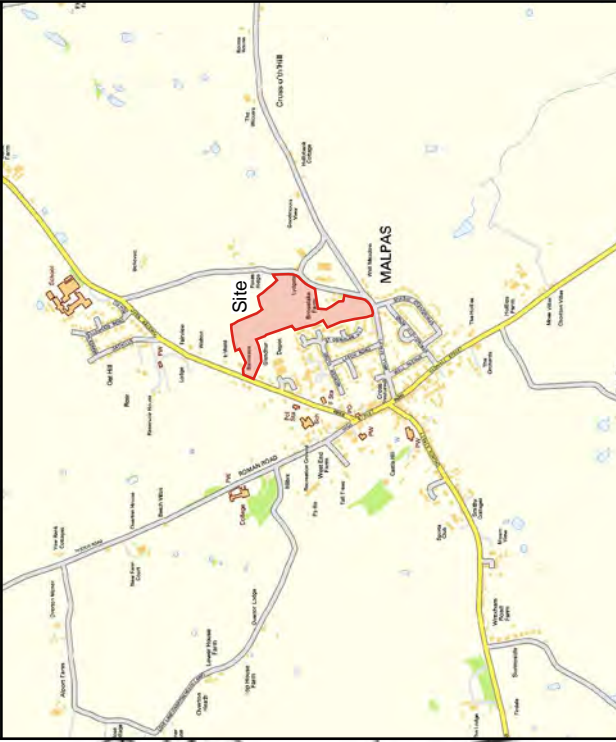
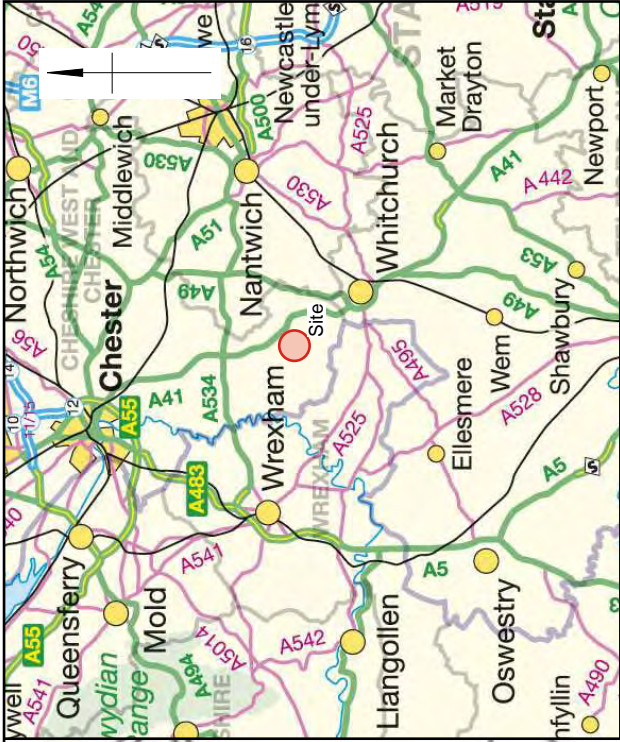
Photo 11: Relic hedge



Photo 12: Along boundary 04



Photo 13: Along boundary 05



Feature	Photo location	Tree

Date:	December 2012	Revision Number:	1.0
Scale:	Main graphic 1:3000 @ A4	Illustrator:	CB
Path:	Y:\Projects\88000 (Broselake Farm, Malpas, Cheshire)\Drawing Office\Report\Figs\Walkover\2012-12-06		

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Site location

Figure 1



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