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Flood Alleviation Scheme Deerhurst Walton, Gloucestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Ref: 83841.02
April 2015



**Flood Alleviation Scheme
Deerhurst Walton, Gloucestershire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Figure 1: Site location plan of excavated area.

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Plate 1: South facing representative section of Field 1 strip.



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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Bruton Knowles, to undertake an archaeological watching brief on a narrow strip of land between 5m and 30m wide within three fields, ahead of a flood alleviation scheme at Walton Hill, Deerhurst Walton, Gloucestershire. Due to the proximity of known archaeological remains, three areas were archaeologically monitored. The monitoring of the engineering contractor's groundworks took place on the 27th January, 24th and 31st March 2015. No archaeological finds or deposits were uncovered in any part of the site.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Bruton Knowles for commissioning the archaeological work. In particular, our gratitude is extended to Jonathan Smith and the site manager, Dave Peters for his assistance throughout the project.

The watching brief monitoring and recording was undertaken by Luke Jarvis and Kerry Birnie. This report was compiled by Michael Fleming. The illustrations were produced by Liz James. The project was managed by Andy King.



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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by Bruton Knowles to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works associated with a flood alleviation scheme on land at Walton Hill, Deerhurst Walton, Gloucestershire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 388840 228060 (hereafter 'the Site') (**Figure 1**). The watching brief took place on the 27th January, 24th and 31st March 2015. The aim of the watching brief was to identify and record any archaeological remains exposed within the area of groundworks using the methodologies and standards set out in the written scheme of investigation by Wessex Archaeology (WA 2013b).

1.1.2 The proposed development has been the subject of a desk-based assessment (WA 2013a), which identified some potential for archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development area. As a result the Senior Archaeologist for Gloucestershire County Council advised that a watching brief should be maintained during all groundworks to discharge the archaeological planning conditions which have been levied against the application (13/00054/FUL). The planning conditions relating to the archaeological resource are:

5) No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured and implemented a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To facilitate recording of the sites archaeology so as to accord with the NPPF.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The Site is located in the village of Deerhurst Walton, Gloucestershire, approximately 11km north-west of Cheltenham and 6.5km south of Tewkesbury. The Site comprises a narrow strip of land c. 550m in length and between 5m and 30m wide, within three connected fields, which undulate to follow the natural contours of the ground (**Figure 1**). The Site follows the route of a flood barrier. It is surrounded to the north by the carriageway of an unnamed road which passes through the village and to the south, east and west by farmland.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the Site is mapped as Branscombe Mud Formation, with a small finger of alluvium mapped within the centre (BGS 2015). The Site is level and flat, and lies at an elevation of c. 10m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

1.3 Archaeological background

Introduction

- 1.3.1 The following is summarised from the approved Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2013b).

Prehistoric

- 1.3.2 Prior to recent drainage works, the Site would likely to have been poorly drained and subject to seasonal flooding. Poor drainage of the Site meant that the area was not cleared of woodland until fairly late in the Site's history, perhaps giving rise to the early medieval place names of Deerhurst and Walton, indicating woodland areas. However, two possible prehistoric barrows are situated c. 500m north-west and c. 740m to the south-west of the site, and indicate some prehistoric activity in this area.
- 1.3.3 The field name *Tumpy Milkland* was recorded in the 1815 Enclosure Award for a field 320m south-west of the Site. It has been suggested that in Gloucestershire the field name *tumpy* is indicative of the presence of *scowles*, or hollows, representing the remains of prehistoric open-cast iron-ore mining activity (McWhirr 1981).

Romano-British

- 1.3.4 There is little evidence for Romano-British activity in the vicinity of the Site. A small quantity of pottery was recovered from Hoo Garage, c. 250m to the south-east. There are a number of known Romano-British settlements within the wider landscape, including one at Deerhurst, c. 2km to the north-west of the Site.

Medieval

- 1.3.5 Deerhurst Walton is documented in the *Domesday* survey as *Ualton*, part of the capital manor of Deerhurst (WA 2013b). The name Deerhurst indicates a *wood frequented by deer* (Mills 2003), whilst the Walton element indicates (in this case) *village in a wood* (*ibid.*). The hamlet of Deerhurst Walton was called Walton or *Ualton* until the 14th century (Elrington 1968). As the early medieval names indicate a wooded area, this could suggest that the villages of Deerhurst and Walton were created from cleared woodland in the early medieval period.
- 1.3.6 Elrington (1968) indicates that by the early 14th century the population of Deerhurst Walton was probably of a similar size, or potentially larger than, the village of Deerhurst itself to the north-west. However the population of Deerhurst Walton was likely to have been scattered between separate farmsteads, rather than concentrated a nucleated settlement.
- 1.3.7 Much of the earthwork and cropmark evidence recorded within the area remains undated, although the majority are thought to be those associated with medieval and early post-medieval settlement. Three of these areas lie partially within the Site itself (**Figure 1**). A possible house platform or plot and associated ridge and furrow earthworks have been identified immediately west of Walton/Manor Farm. Two associated irregular depressions are postulated to be the remains of ponds or additional houses which have been robbed out for their stone. These features may be evidence of medieval settlement associated with the farm. Further undated earthworks comprising rectangular enclosures are located to the south and are also thought to represent contemporary features, although some of the visible earthworks may be associated with land drainage. The presence of possible medieval or early post-medieval settlement is supported by later cartographic evidence, as the *Inclosure Map* of 1815 which names this field as *Old House Ground*.



- 1.3.8 A moated site is recorded to the south of Grange Farm. The eastern end of the Site impinges into this area. Little is known about this site and there are no indications that any associated settlement evidence has been identified here. The 1884 Edition OS map depicts the moated site, but an additional 'arm' of the moat ditch is visible at the southern end, indicating the ditch has since silted up and that additional elements are likely to survive below ground.

Post Medieval

- 1.3.9 Manor Farmhouse, at Manor Farm, mostly dates to the 16th century and includes former stables and an earlier barn of 15th-century origin. These structures are Grade II Listed (LB1262755 and LB1341678). A 17th-century dovecote and cider house at Grange Farm is also Grade II Listed (LB1152168).
- 1.3.10 Early 19th-century maps show much of the Site as it appears today. A small number of features of post-medieval date are situated within fairly close proximity to the Site. The 1884 edition OS Map shows that the line of the modern A38 was originally a trackway or hollow-way which cuts through older medieval ridge and furrow. This is likely to be of post-medieval date. An undated lime kiln was identified 130m east of Site during a 1972 survey of the parish, however it seems probable that this feature is of post-medieval date, as it is recorded as a disused kiln on the 1884 edition OS map.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and objectives

- 2.1.1 With due regard to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), the aims of the watching brief were to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains on the Site, and to record them prior to their destruction.

2.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2013b), approved by the Gloucestershire County Archaeologist, a brief summary of which is presented below.
- 2.2.2 All trenching was monitored by an experienced WA archaeologist. Exposed deposits were assigned a unique context number and recorded using WA's *pro forma* record sheets.
- 2.2.3 A photographic record was created using digital cameras. Particular attention was taken to record the trench locations to provide a full record of both the original and final condition of the excavated areas.
- 2.2.4 Site survey was carried out using a Leica Viva series GNSS unit using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Detailed descriptions of the exposed deposits are presented in Appendix 1; a summary of the results is provided below.



3.2 Stratigraphy

- 3.2.1 The geology of the Site comprised a mid reddish-brown silty-clay topsoil, seen in all three fields (100, 200, 300) and a light red-brown silty-clay natural, also seen in all three fields (101, 201, 301) (**Plate 1**).

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 Despite the Site being located in an area of known archaeological activity, no archaeological deposits or features were encountered, possibly as a direct result of historic seasonal flooding within this area.

5 STORAGE AND CURATION

5.1 Museum

- 5.1.1 As no finds were recovered, Tewkesbury Museum will not issue an accession number for the project archive resulting from the watching brief. The primary site records will be offered to the client in the first instance. The archive will be temporarily stored at Wessex Archaeology's central office in Salisbury under Site Code 83841.

5.2 OASIS

- 5.2.1 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> has been initiated for the work and key fields in regard of the evaluation have been entered under OASIS ID wessexar1-201858. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

5.3 Discard policy

- 5.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

5.4 Security Copy

- 5.4.1 In line with current best practice (Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

5.5 Copyright

- 5.5.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003*.

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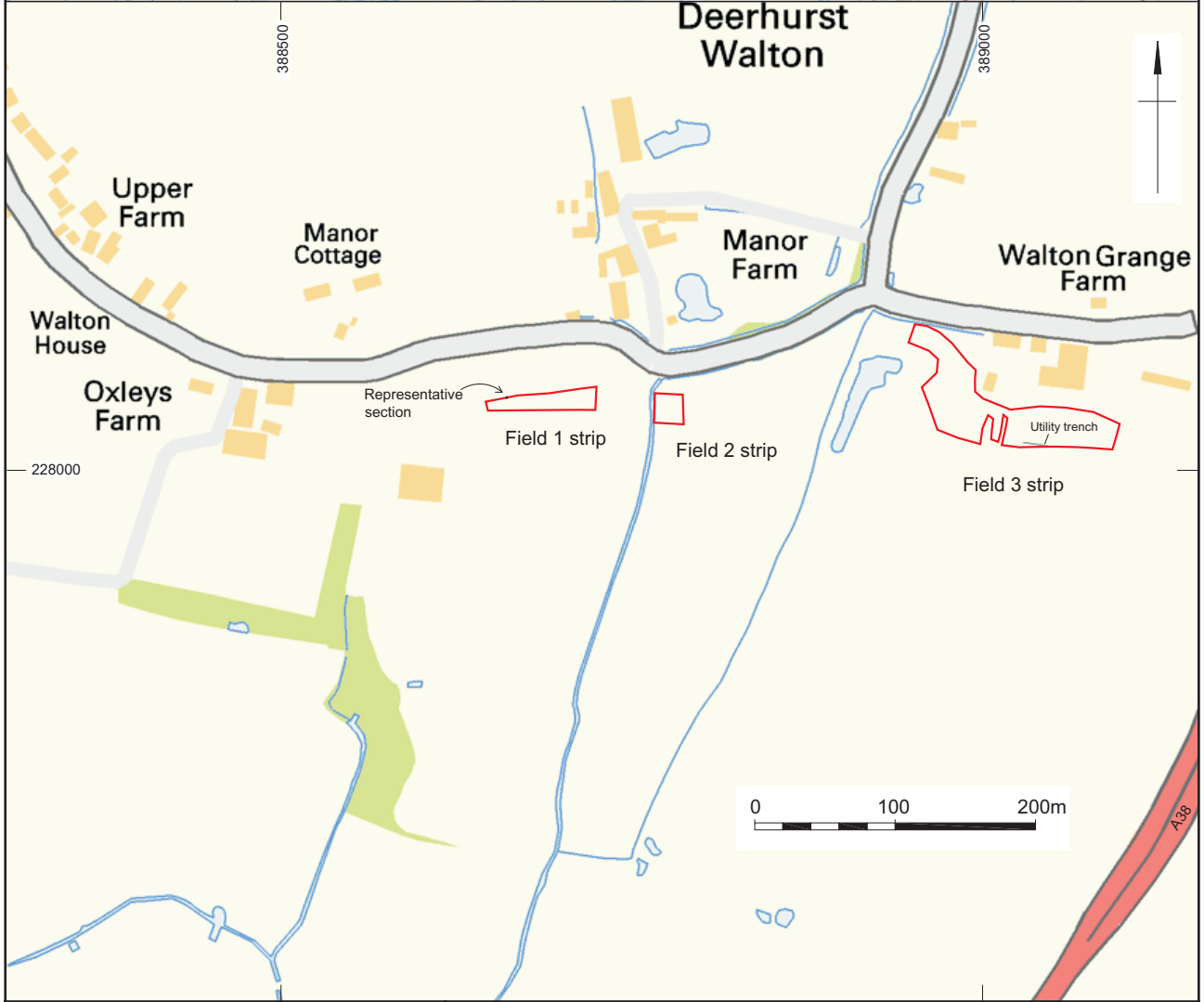
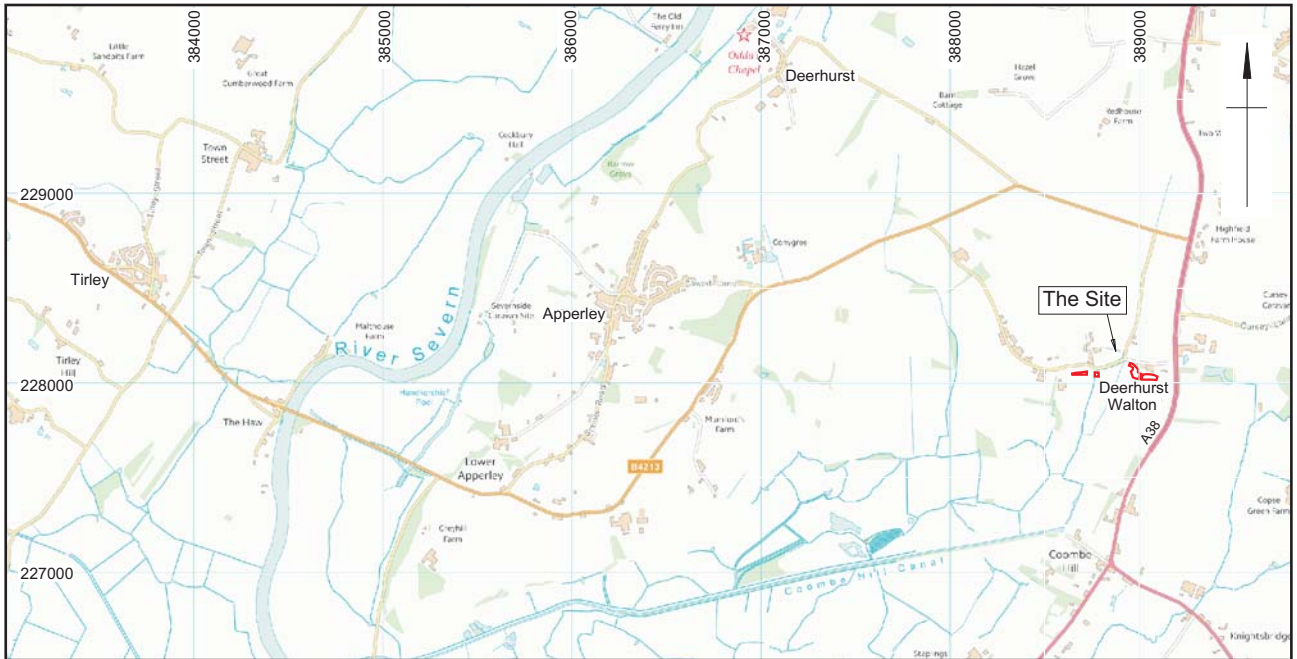
7 APPENDICES



7.1 Appendix 1: Context summary

Field 1			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
100	Topsoil	Mid. red-brown silty-clay.	0-0.30m
101	Natural	Light red-brown silty clay.	0.30m+

Field 2			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
200	Topsoil	Mid. red-brown silty-clay.	0-0.30m
201	Natural	Light red-brown silty clay.	0.30m+

Field 3			
Context	Description		Depth of deposit (m)
300	Topsoil	Mid. red-brown silty-clay.	0-0.30m
301	Natural	Light red-brown silty clay.	0.30m+




	 Excavated area	Contains Ordnance Survey open data © Crown Copyright and database right 2015. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.	
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Site location plan of excavated areas

Figure 1



Plate 1: South facing representative section of Field 1 strip

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