



**Land off Collin Lane, Willersey
Gloucestershire**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out a programme of evaluation trenching on one parcel of land south of Collin Lane, Willersey, Gloucestershire (hereafter the 'Site', centred on NGR 410150, 239520) to allow determination of a planning application for residential development.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of eleven 30m long trenches in order to determine the archaeological potential of the Site and characterise any remains that may survive prior to redevelopment. The Site had been subject to a Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2014) which included an overview of the archaeological potential of the Site. The Site had also been subject to a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014). Both the Desk Based Assessment and geophysical survey demonstrated a low archaeological potential for the Site.

With the exception of the well preserved ridge and furrow which survived across the breadth of the Site, little of archaeological significance was identified. Trenches 2 and 3 each contained a single ephemeral gully. No dating material was recovered from these features despite excavating all of the exposed length of gully within Trench 3. It seems likely that given the lack of archaeological features elsewhere on Site that the gullies relate to the medieval/post-medieval use of the land for farmland.

The project archive has been compiled according to the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI, (Wessex Archaeology 2015), which has been submitted to and approved by the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council, and is fully cross-referenced and indexed. It is currently held by Wessex Archaeology under the project code **108100** and will be transferred to the Gloucester Museum Service under an accession number to be issued in due course.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting and is grateful to Cathy Patrick (CgMs) in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Charles Parry, the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council.

The fieldwork was directed by Martina Tenzer with the assistance of Eleanor Claxton Mayer. The report was compiled by Martina Tenzer and Chris Swales. The illustrations were prepared by Chris Breeden. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Chris Swales.



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Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out a programme of evaluation trenching on one parcel of land south of Collin Lane, Willersey, Gloucestershire (hereafter the 'Site', centred on NGR 410150, 239520) to allow determination of a planning application for residential development.
- 1.1.2 The Site had been subject to a Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2014) which includes an overview of the archaeological potential of the Site. The Site had also been subject to a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2014). Both the Desk Based Assessment and geophysical survey demonstrated a low archaeological potential for the Site. Following this work and discussions between Cathy Patrick (CgMs) and Charles Parry (Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council) it was agreed that a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching totalling 2% of the fixed development area, to confirm the absence of significant archaeology, would be required to aid determination of a planning application. This equates to the excavation of twelve 30m trenches in the area. A further 2% of trenching was to be held as contingency should significant archaeological remains be identified. Only eleven of these trenches could be excavated as **Trench 12** lay close to gas mains which could not be tracked across.
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) set out the strategy and methodology by which Wessex Archaeology (2015) implemented the archaeological evaluation. All works undertaken conformed to current best practice and to the guidance outlined in Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment ('MoRPHE') (English Heritage 2006), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a and 2014b) and in accordance with CIfA Codes of Conduct (2014c). The WSI was submitted to Charles Parry, the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council, for approval prior to commencing work.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises one parcel of land south of Collin Road, Willersey, Gloucestershire. The proposed development area covers 3.2ha and is currently in use as pasture (**Figure 1**). The Site is bounded to the north by Collin Lane and to the east by Collin Close and associated residential development. The land to the south is farmland and to the west the Site is bounded by a scatter of industrial buildings.
- 1.2.2 The solid geology of the Site comprises Mudstone of the Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone Formation. No superficial deposits are recorded for the study site (BGS Map, Sheet 200 1974, CgMs 2014).



- 1.2.3 The topography of the Site gently slopes from the south. At the north end of the Site the ground level is 72m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), this rises to 75m AOD to the south.

2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The following section summarises the Site's historical and archaeological background as presented in the Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2014) and considers the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (GHER), the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (WHER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHL). Evidence was gathered for the Site and a wider search area extending 1km from the Site.

2.2 Historical background

Summary

- 2.2.1 The Desk Based Assessment established that there were no designated archaeological assets within the proposed development area. Within the wider search area several known heritage assets were identified and are described below. A non-designated asset within the Site is represented by ridge and furrow of medieval date.

Prehistoric

- 2.2.2 There is no evidence for prehistoric activity within the Site boundaries and only limited evidence within the wider area.
- 2.2.3 Ditches sealed by soil dated to the Roman period have been identified c.670m southwest of the Site (WSM 38052).

Roman

- 2.2.4 There is no evidence for a Roman presence on Site. Within the wider search area a Roman settlement has been recorded located 640m to the north of the Site (HER 2332). Further evidence of Roman activity close to the Site is represented by a coin hoard (HER 2778) 450m to the east and buried Roman soil c.670m to the southwest.
- 2.2.5 Roman activity in close vicinity to the Site represents clearance and use of the land for farming.

Saxon-Early Medieval

- 2.2.6 The agricultural use of the Site probably continued into the medieval period. No further evidence for activities during Saxon or Early-medieval period has been identified within the area.
- 2.2.7 An 8th century origin for the village of Willersey has been suggested (CgMs 2014) centred around the church. The development area would be outside the historic core of the Saxon settlement.

Medieval

- 2.2.8 During the medieval period the area covering the Site was used as farmland and mentioned in the Domesday Book as part of the open field system of Willersey (CgMs 2014). The associated ridge and furrow earthworks survive to a considerable height within the development area.

Post-medieval and modern

- 2.2.9 The earliest map of 1767, as well as later maps of 1778 and the Ordnance Survey of 1885 shows the area of the Site as part of a field in close proximity to the growing village of Willersey.
- 2.2.10 An internal field boundary shown of the 1938 Ordnance Survey in the south-eastern corner. Associated farm buildings at the eastern limit disappear before the 1974 Ordnance Survey.
- 2.2.11 The Site remains in use as pasture with an encroaching residential development from the east. The latest Ordnance Survey of 2014 shows a south-west to north-east running boundary dividing the site in two parts.
- 2.2.12 The Site has been in use as pasture throughout the post-medieval period and has a low potential for significant archaeological remains.

2.3 Previous archaeological investigations

- 2.3.1 The Site has been subject to a Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2014) which includes an overview of the archaeological potential of the Site. No intrusive groundworks have taken place within the proposed development area itself or in close proximity to the Site. A geophysical survey was also carried out (Stratascan 2014).

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1.1 This report focusses on the results of the archaeological evaluation. The following summarises the methodologies set out in full in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2015), which has been submitted to and approved by the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council.

3.2 Aims and objectives

- 3.2.1 The general aims of the project were:

- *to record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;*
- *to provide sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be made about the need for additional archaeological mitigation;*
- *to make available the results of the work.*

The specific aim of the project was:

- *to support or disprove the identified low archaeological potential for the Site indicated by the Desk Based Assessment and geophysical survey.*

3.3 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.3.1 The archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation of eleven trenches (**Figure 1**). All trenches were 30m x 1.8m in size. The exact positioning of trenches was amended to accommodate the significant earthworks associated with the extant ridge and furrow, as well as a north-south aligned buried gas pipe located at the eastern edge of the



development area. **Trench 12** was unable to be accessed due to safety concerns regarding tracking plant over the buried gas pipe. The 2% of trenching held as contingency was not required to be implemented by the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council due to the lack of significant archaeological features identified. The evaluation conformed to the ClfA Codes of Practice (2015b).

3.4 Machine excavation

- 3.4.1 The location of all trenches was scanned using a CAT before excavation took place in order to check for uncharted services.
- 3.4.2 Topsoil and subsoil were removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil was removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the natural geology. Both topsoil and subsoil was stored separately at a safe distance away from the trench edge.

3.5 Hand excavation

- 3.5.1 Natural features were sampled sufficiently to establish their origin and to characterise any related human activity.
- 3.5.2 Archaeological features were hand excavated, with undated features 100% excavated, where possible, to try to secure adequate dating material.

3.6 Recording

- 3.6.1 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology pro forma recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A stratigraphic matrix was compiled to record the relationships between features and deposits (including those within 'blank' trenches).
- 3.6.2 All trenches were located by means of a RTK GPS system in relation to the OS grid, and other plans, sections and elevations of archaeological features and deposits were drawn as necessary at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 as appropriate.
- 3.6.3 A photographic record consisting of 35mm monochrome prints and digital images to a resolution of at least 10 megapixel was produced for the Site, including all trenches, natural and any archaeological features.

3.7 Monitoring

- 3.7.1 A monitoring visit was made by CgMs Consulting. Due to the sterile nature of the Site the Senior Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council decided a Site visit was not necessary.

3.8 Specialist strategies

Artefacts

- 3.8.1 No finds were recovered from any of the trenches.

Environmental

- 3.8.2 No environmental samples were taken due to the absence of archaeological features.



4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 A total of eleven trenches were excavated across the proposed development area (**Figure 1**). All trenches were 30m x 1.8m in size. The exact positioning of trenches was amended to accommodate the significant earthworks associated with the extant ridge and furrow, as well as a north-south aligned buried gas pipe located at the eastern edge of the development area. **Trench 12** was unable to be accessed due to safety concerns regarding tracking plant over the buried gas pipe.

4.1.2 The archaeological layers and stratigraphy were very similar in all of the trenches, although depths of deposits varied across the Site. Features of note are described by trench below. A full trench context listing is provided in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 General summary

Natural geology

4.2.1 The underlying natural geology consisted mainly of light yellow brown silty clay (e.g. **103**) with a rare frequency of fairly well sorted medium sized well rounded pebbles (**Plates 2-13**). Occasional patches of grey mottling, in the form of streaks, was detected in many of the trenches, indicating a gleyed formation under fluctuating wet and dry conditions. Natural was observed at undulating depths across the eleven trenches varying from 0.55m to 1.3m below ground level (bgl) (**Appendix 1**).

Subsoil

4.2.2 A mid yellow brown silty clay with rare small sized well rounded stone inclusions was observed across the Site (e.g. **102**). This represented a mix of topsoil and natural deposits and is highly suggestive of a remnant plough soil. Subsoil was encountered at varying depths across site ranging from 0.25m to 0.35m bgl. The thickness of subsoil varied from 0.3m to 0.75m (**Appendix 1**).

Topsoil

4.2.3 The topsoil was predominantly a dark grey brown clay sand with rare small sized sub rounded stone inclusions (e.g. **101**). Topsoil was typically present to a depth of between 0.25 and 0.35m bgl. Very little difference was noted in the character of the layer across the site and no artefacts were recovered (**Appendix 1**).

Ridge and Furrow

4.2.4 The ridge and furrow earthworks survived to a considerable height across the Site. The earthworks were especially prominent at the southern end of the Site (**Trenches 7-11**) with the ridges surviving to a height of 1.1m from the base of the trench. The corresponding furrows were recorded at a height of 0.2m from the base of the trench. The furrows were recorded at an average width of 10m, measuring from the the centre of furrow to the adjacent centre of furrow.

4.3 Features of note

4.3.1 **Trench 2** contained a single northeast to southwest aligned gully (**Figure 2, Plate 3**). Gully **204** measured 0.35m in width and survived to a depth of 0.14m. No dating evidence was recovered due to the immediate immersion of the trench with standing water.

4.3.2 **Trench 3** contained a single north to south aligned gully (**Figure 2, Plate 5**). Gully **304** measured 0.45m in width and survived to a depth of 0.13m. No dating evidence was



recovered and fill **305** comprised a sterile silt. Gully **304** was 100% excavated in an attempt to retrieve dating evidence.

5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 No finds were recovered from the Site and no environmental samples were taken due to the lack of significant archaeology and corresponding dating evidence.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 A total of eleven trenches were excavated across the proposed development area (**Figure 1**). Aside from the extant ridge and furrow the only archaeological features identified were gullies **204** and **304** located within **Trenches 2** and **3**. These features are undated but it seems likely that they are associated with the medieval and post-medieval agricultural landscape.

6.2 Conclusions

- 6.2.1 The evaluation has demonstrated the presence of a post-medieval agricultural landscape centred on arable farming as evidenced by the widespread ridge and furrow surviving across the Site. Two gullies were also identified which seem likely to be associated with this phase of land use. No earlier features were identified and no finds of archaeological significance were recorded. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the Site is located outside the historic core of the Saxon and later medieval settlement of Willersey.
- 6.2.2 On the basis of the results of the evaluation it is considered that the archaeological potential for the development area is extremely low.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

- 7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Gloucestershire Museum Service. The Museums Service has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under an accession code to be issued in due course. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

7.2 Archive

- 7.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Gloucestershire Museum Service, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014b; Brown 2011; ADS 2013; English Heritage 2005; MGC 1991; UKIC 2001).



7.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code (TBC), and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises one file document case of paper records.

7.3 Discard policy

7.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the Society of Museum Archaeologists' selection, retention and dispersal guidelines (Society of Museum Archaeologists 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.

7.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; ClfA 2014b). No samples were recovered during the investigation.

7.4 Security copy

In line with current best practice (e.g. 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.



8 REFERENCES

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8.2 Online sources

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9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1: Trench context tables

Trench 1		Dimensions: 30m x 2.60m Max depth: 0.55+m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
101	Topsoil – Dark brown clay based topsoil loosely packed from turf.	0m - 0.30m
102	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, depth sometimes varies due to large furrows.	0.30m - 0.55+m
103	Natural – Varies between light orange brown clay and light grey silty, pebbly clay.	0.55+m

Trench 2		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 0.85m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
201	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil, loosely packed from turf.	0m – 0.30m
202	Subsoil – Mid/light brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to furrows.	0.30m - 0.60m
203	Natural – light yellow brown clay natural, also varies to light grey silty clay.	0.60m – 0.85+m
204	Small gully running NE-SW, unable to draw or photographed due to high water table.	0.85m – 0.98m
205	Grey brown clay fill of gully – unable to record in section due to standing water in trench.	0.85m – 0.98m

Trench 3		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 1.05m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
301	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil with thin layer of turf.	0m – 0.35m
302	Subsoil – Mid/light brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to furrows.	0.35m - 0.90m
303	Natural – Light yellow brown clay, varies to silty/pebble/gravel clay.	0.90m -1.05+m
304	Gully running N-S.	1.05m – 1.18m
305	Secondary fill of gully.	1.05m – 1.18m

Trench 4		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 0.90m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
401	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil.	0m – 0.35m
402	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, varying in depth due to furrows.	0.35m - 0.75m
403	Natural – Light yellow brown clay varying to light grey silty/pebbly clay. Very close to water table – trench half flooded during excavation.	0.75m – 0.90m



Trench 5		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 0.60m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
501	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil, with thin layer of turf.	0m – 0.30m
502	Subsoil – Mid brown clay soil, depth varies slightly due to furrows.	0.30m - 0.50m
503	Natural – Light yellowish brown clay natural which varies to pebbly/gravel clay soil.	0.50m – 0.60+m

Trench 6		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 0.80m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
601	Topsoil – Dark brown claytopsoil with thin layer of turf.	0m - 0.30m
602	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, some variation in depth due to furrows.	0.30m - 0.60m
603	Natural – Light/mid yellowish brown clay natural, varies to pebbly/gravelly soil. North end of trench close to water table.	0.60m – 0.80m

Trench 7		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 0.90m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
701	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil with thin layer of turf.	0m – 0.25m
702	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to furrows.	0.25m – 0.65m
703	Natural – Light grey clay natural varying to light orange brown with gravel/pebbles.	0.65m – 0.90+m

Trench 8		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 1.10m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
801	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil with thin layer of turf.	0m - 0.30m
802	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to furrows.	0.30m - 0.80m
803	Natural – light grey to light orange brown clay with gravel/pebble inclusions.	0.80m – 1.10+m

Trench 9		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 1.30m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
900	Topsoil – Dark grey brown silty sand with 5% subrounded stone.	0 - 0.30m
901	Subsoil – Mid reddy brown clay sand with 2% subrounded stone.	0.30 - 0.50m



Trench 9		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 1.30m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
901	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil within layer of turf.	0m – 0.30m
902	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to furrows.	0.30m – 1m
903	Natural – light grey to light yellow brown clay with some pebble/gravel inclusions.	1m – 1.30+m

Trench 10		Dimensions: 28m x 1.80m Max depth: 1.10mm
Context	Description	Depth (m)
1001	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil with thin layer of turf.	0m - 0.30m
1002	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to large furrows.	0.30m - 0.80m
1003	Natural – Light grey to light orange brown clay with gravel/ pebble inclusions in patches.	0.80m – 1.10+m

Trench 11		Dimensions: 30m x 1.80m Max depth: 0.85m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
1101	Topsoil – Dark brown clay topsoil with thin layer of turf.	0m - 0.25m
1102	Subsoil – Mid brown clay subsoil, depth varies due to large furrows in the area.	0.25m - 0.65m
1103	Natural – Light grey to light orange brown clay with gravel/ pebble inclusions.	0.65 – 0.85m



9.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form