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Armthorpe Depot Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Planning Ref: 14/02290/3FULM
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May 2016



**Armthorpe Depot,
Doncaster, South Yorkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Armthorpe Depot, Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by AB Heritage Limited, on behalf of Wilmot Dixon, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of a proposed housing development at the former Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council Depot in Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire (NGR 462212 405035).

The evaluation comprised two 15 m x 2 m and one 10 m x 2 m trenches designed to test whether any underlying archaeological deposits remained below the hard surfacing of the Armthorpe depot. The trenches revealed up to 0.75 m of dumped material below modern hardcore and tarmac and it is likely that the site was landscaped in advance of the construction of the depot. No archaeological finds or deposits were discovered during excavation of the evaluation trenches.

The site archive, including trench sheets and photographic records is currently stored at Wessex Archaeology's Northern office in Sheffield, under the site code **112570**, and will be deposited with Doncaster Museum in due course. An OASIS form will be finalised at the time of deposition.



Armthorpe Depot, Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was commissioned by Daniel Dodds of AB Heritage Limited and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to him in this regard. The trenches were monitored by Andy Lines of South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS).

Fieldwork was undertaken by Chris Hirst on 9th May 2016. This report was written by Jonathan Buttery and illustrated by Nancy Dixon and the project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Norton.



Armthorpe Depot, Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by AB Heritage Limited, on behalf of Wilmot Dixon, to undertake an archaeological evaluation ahead of a proposed housing development at the former Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council Depot in Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire (hereafter 'the Site').

1.1.2 Following discussions between the AB Heritage and Andy Lines of South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS) a programme of archaeological evaluation comprising three 15 m long trenches was agreed in order to test the archaeological potential of the Site (**Figure 1**). AB Heritage produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI, AB Heritage 2016) outlining how the requirements of the work would be met. The format and content of the WSI was based on current Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and Historic England guidance (ClfA 2014a; 2014b, Historic England 2015) and was approved by SYAS prior to work commencing.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site is situated in Armthorpe Civil Parish in the Doncaster District of South Yorkshire, centred at NGR 462212, 405035. The Site contains buildings and yards, with the buildings predominantly around the perimeter of the Site and clustered towards the south end. The Site is currently under hard-standing of tarmac and concrete.

1.2.2 The underlying substrate is sandstone of the Nottingham Castle Sandstone Formation. This is overlain by superficial (drift) deposits of glaciofluvial sands and gravel of the mid Pleistocene (www.bgs.ac.uk).

1.2.3 The Site has a gentle slope from south to north with the mid-point being around 18.35 m AOD.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Much of the area around Armthorpe contains cropmark evidence of 'brickwork plan' field systems dating from the Iron Age to the late Roman period. Armthorpe is also mentioned in the 1086 doomsday book. It appears that prior to the construction of the Depot in the 1960s, the Site had lain undeveloped in recent centuries (AB Heritage 2016).



2.2 Romano-British

2.2.1 Archaeological excavations on land in the vicinity of the proposed development Site have confirmed the presence of complex multi-phase field systems, enclosures and trackways, as well as the remains of a small Romano-British farmstead.

2.3 Medieval

2.3.1 The Site lies within Armthorpe's historic core. The medieval village, which is mentioned in the doomsday book of 1086, is based mainly around the church of St. Leonard and St. Mary.

2.3.2 Excavations have shown that the medieval village of Armthorpe was made up of a cluster of farmsteads. Investigations carried out in 2006 uncovered features dating from the medieval period. Features included postholes, pits and a possible later medieval land surface.

2.3.3 The remains of what has been interpreted as farm house of 16th or 17th century date were also recorded during this investigation.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

3.1.1 The main objective was to establish the likely survival of archaeological deposits beneath the present depot. The evaluation sought to:

- *establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains that may affect the detail of the redevelopment proposals;*
- *determine the extent, condition, nature, character, date and significance of any archaeological remains encountered;*
- *establish the nature of the activity on the Site;*
- *identify any artefacts relating to the occupation or use of the Site;*
- *provide further information on the archaeology of the Site from any archaeological remains encountered;*
- *to recommend where necessary further investigation or mitigation works.*

3.2 Trenching

3.2.1 The setting out of the evaluation trenches in accordance with the agreed Site plan, was within +or- 100 mm using a survey grade GPS. The trenches were located in relation to the Ordnance Survey (OS) grid. The trenching was intended to comprise 3 three 15 m by 2 m trenches (see Figure 1), however, Trench one was shortened by five metres due to an overhead cable to the south-west of the trench.

3.2.2 Prior to any mechanical excavation each trench was scanned with a CAT to check for uncharted services.

3.2.3 Overburden was removed using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil/overburden was removed in a series of



level spits down to the level of the natural geology or the first archaeological horizon, whichever was reached first.

- 3.2.4 Any revealed deposits were hand cleaned where necessary. All archaeological features and deposits encountered were recorded using Wessex Archaeology pro forma recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A photographic record was made using 35mm film and digital images.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following is a summary of the information held in the Site archive. Trench locations are shown on **Figure 1** and the recorded contexts are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 General

- 4.2.1 Two 15 m x 2 m and one 10 m x 2 m trench were excavated. No archaeological features were identified. The trenches were dug to a depth of between 0.62 m to 0.75 m at which they encountered the natural substrate.
- 4.2.2 The natural substrate consisted of a mid-reddish brown silty sand with frequent coarse gravel inclusions
- 4.2.3 The subsoil across the Site was made up of a dumped mid-reddish brown silty sand with abundant sub rounded coarse gravel.
- 4.2.4 The deposits were sealed by a yellowish-brown silty sand hardcore that contained an abundant amount of sub angular coarse gravels, which was overlain by a layer of tarmac that ranged in depth from 0.05 m to 0.12 m.
- 4.2.5 No archaeological features were encountered and no residual finds were discovered on the spoil heaps.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 No Archaeological features or finds were encountered during excavation of the evaluation trial trenches. The Site appeared to have been truncated prior to the construction of the depot and levelled using redeposited natural sand and gravel. Any earlier remains, if present, are likely to have been truncated.

6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Museum

- 6.1.1 The project archive resulting from the excavation will, subject to confirmation, be deposited with Doncaster Museum under an appropriate accession code.

6.2 Preparation of archive

- 6.2.1 The complete Site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the Archaeological Archive Deposition Policy for Museums in Yorkshire and the Humber (Turnpenney 2012) standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material and in

general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; UKIC 2001; Brown 2011; CIfA 2014c; ADS 2013). All archive elements will be marked with an accession code, and a full index will be prepared.

6.2.2 An OASIS form will also be completed and will be finalised at the time of deposition.

6.3 Security copy

6.3.1 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.

7 REFERENCES

7.1 Bibliography

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7.2 Online Sources

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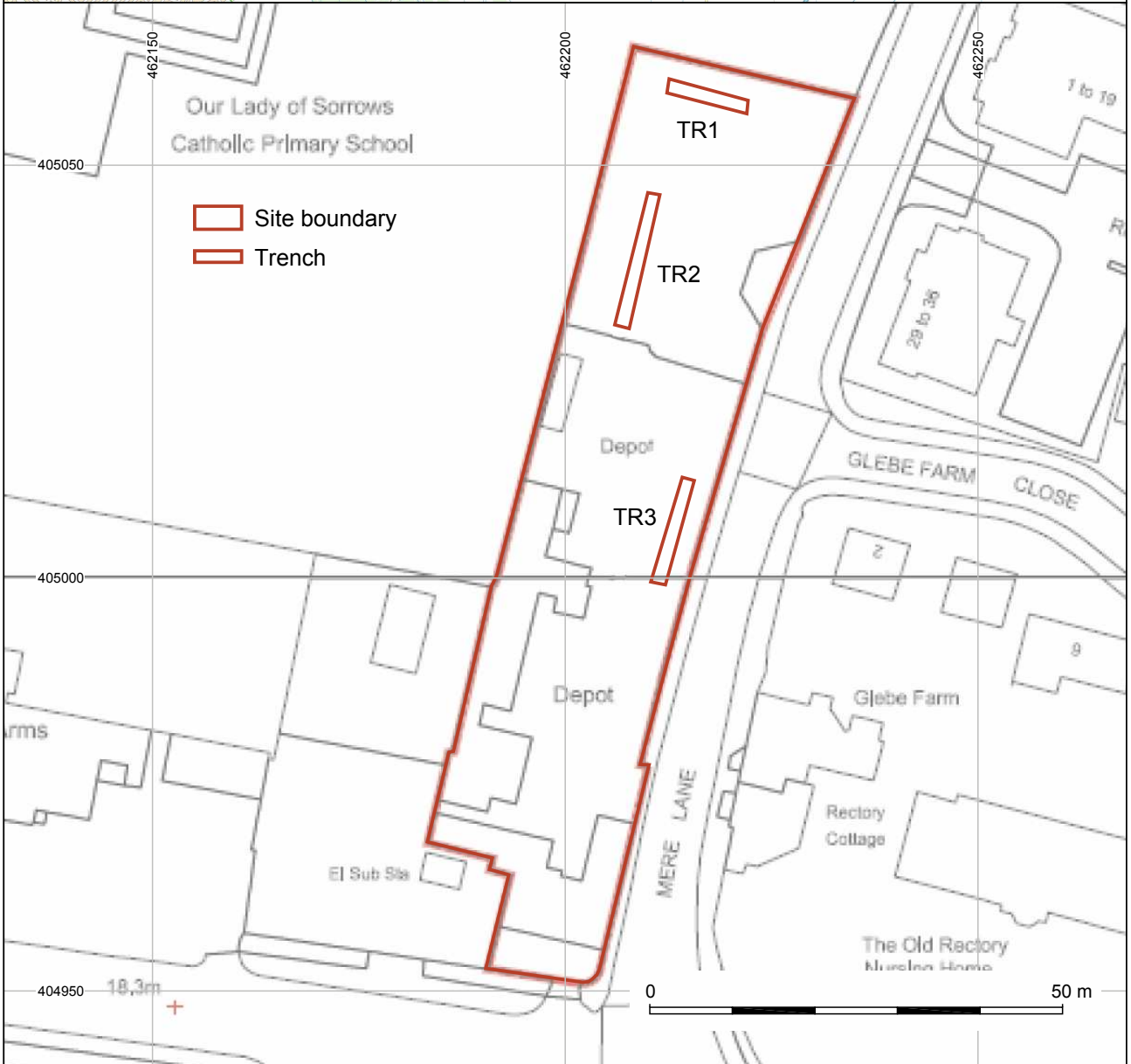
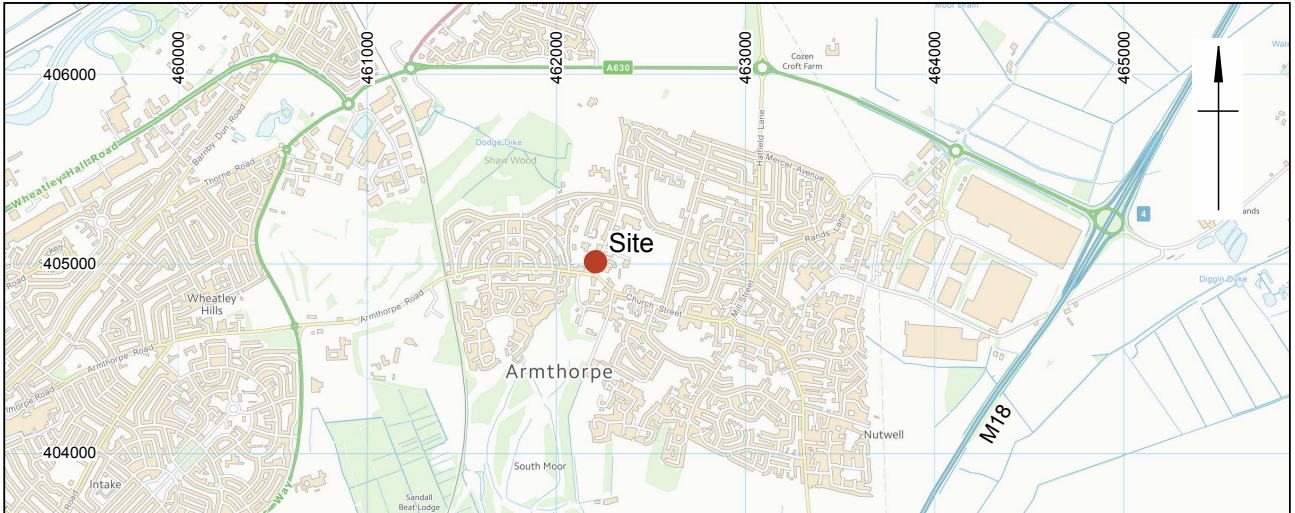
8 APPENDICES


8.1 Appendix 1: Context descriptions

Trench 1		Dimensions: 10 m x 2 m Max. depth: 0.62 m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
101	Layer – Tarmac.	0.05
102	Layer – Hardcore, mid-greyish brown, silty sand with abundant sub angular coarse gravel. Average size 3 cm.	0.38
103	Subsoil – Dark brownish orange, silty sand with abundant sub rounded coarse gravel.	0.43
104	Natural – Mid-brownish orange silty sand with frequent sub rounded coarse gravel.	0.62

Trench 2		Dimensions: 15 m x 2 m Max. depth: 0.74 m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
201	Layer – Tarmac.	0.12
202	Layer – Hardcore, light brownish yellow, silty sand with abundant sub angular coarse gravel. Average size 2 cm.	0.24
203	Layer – previous tarmac layer covered by existing hardcore.	0.37
204	Subsoil – Mid greyish brown, silty sand with abundant sub rounded coarse gravel. Average size 2 cm	0.47
205	Natural – Mid-reddish brown silty sand with Abundant sub rounded coarse gravel.	0.74

Trench 3		Dimensions: 15 m x 2 m Max. depth: 0.65 m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
301	Layer – Tarmac.	0.08
302	Layer – Hardcore, light greyish yellow, silty sand with abundant sub angular coarse gravel. Average size 2 cm.	0.34
303	Subsoil – Mid-brownish red, silty sand with abundant sub rounded coarse gravel.	0.54
304	Natural – Mid-reddish brown silty sand with frequent sub rounded coarse gravel.	0.65

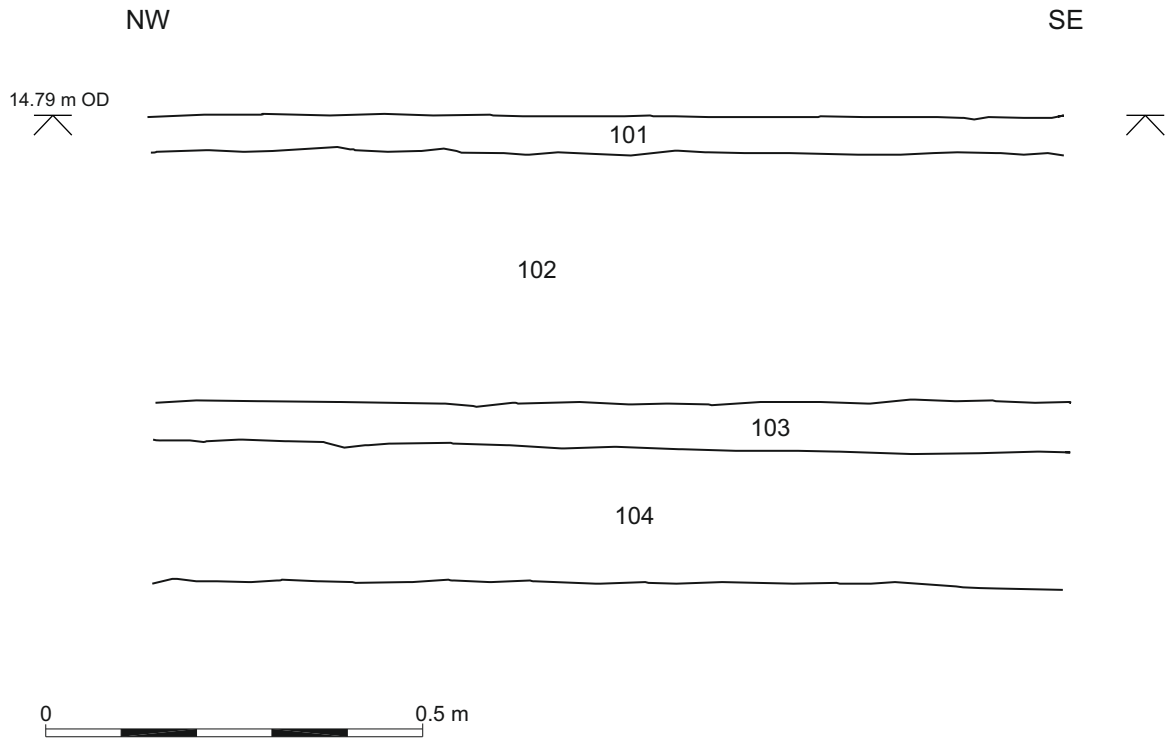


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Site location

Figure 1

South-west facing representative section, Trench 1



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Plate 1: Trench 1 representative section, view from south west



Plate 2: Trench 2 representative section, view from south west



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Plate 3: Trench 3 representative section, view from north east

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