

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
Esh Homes Ltd

Beech Crescent
Heighington
Darlington

archaeological monitoring

report 4847
August 2018

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of a watching brief conducted in advance of a development at Beech Crescent, Heighington. The works comprised a topsoil strip and ground reduction at the north of the site.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Esh Homes Ltd and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

- 1.3 A ditch recorded in trench 1 of the evaluation phase was located and re-excavated. The fill contained late 20th century red ceramic sewer pipe fragments, and is considered modern in origin.
- 1.4 Furrows, the remains of medieval or post-medieval ploughing, were recorded in the area exposed, along with the remains of a late 20th century works compound.
- 1.5 No further archaeological deposits were recorded and no artefacts were recovered.

Recommendations

- 1.6 No further archaeological works are required.

2. Project background

Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The site is located at Beech Crescent, Heighington, Darlington (NGR centre: NZ 2515 2260). It covers an area of approximately 0.5 ha. To the north and east of the site is the A6072, to the west Beech Crescent, and to the south Heighington Lane.

Development

- 2.2 Planning permission has been granted for a residential development of 45 houses with associated gardens and parking at Beech Crescent, Heighington. The planning application reference number is 16/00820/FUL.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the monitoring programme was to identify and record any archaeological features or artefacts uncovered during groundworks.

Written Scheme of Investigation

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance a Written Scheme of Investigation provided by Archaeological Services Durham University (reference DS18.160r2) and approved by the planning authority. The regional research framework (Petts & Gerrard 2006) contains an agenda for archaeological research in the region, which is incorporated into regional planning policy implementation with respect to archaeology. In this instance, the scheme of works was designed to address agenda items:

Late Bronze Age and Iron Age

lii. Settlement

Lix. Burials

Roman

Riv. Native and civilian life

Later Medieval

MDi. Settlement

MDii. Landscape

Dates

- 2.5 Fieldwork was undertaken between 12th and 15th August 2018. This report was prepared for August 2018.

Personnel

- 2.6 Fieldwork was conducted by Alan Rae. This report was prepared by Alan Rae, and edited by Peter Carne, with graphics by Dr Helen Drinkall. The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The site code is **HBC18**, for **Heighington Beech Crescent 2018**. The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to an appropriate depository in due course. Archaeological Services Durham University is registered with the **Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS project (OASIS)**. The OASIS ID number for this project is **archaeol3-32535**.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

- 3.1 At the time of the works, the development area comprised a former arable field.
- 3.2 The development area sloped gently from 135.9m OD in the east to 138.7m OD in the west.
- 3.3 The underlying solid geology of the area comprises Ford Formation Dolostone of the Permian period, which are overlain by Devensian glaciolacustrine and glaciofluvial deposits.

4. Archaeological and historical background

Previous archaeological works

- 4.1 A geophysical survey was undertaken at the site in November 2016 (Phase 2016) which identified anomalies of uncertain origin. An archaeological evaluation was conducted in March 2018 which revealed an undated ditch in trench 1 (Archaeological Services 2018). The ditch ran parallel with a modern field boundary and a field drain. A heritage assessment of the development area (Stephenson 2015) has been completed and its conclusions are summarised below.
- 4.2 There is evidence of human activity in the area from at least the Bronze Age, and a major Roman road ran two miles west of the site. However the site has no special archaeological potential and is likely to have been agricultural land from the medieval period. Cultivation is likely to have had a detrimental effect on any earlier sub-surface remains, as evidenced by the removal of earthwork ridges by more recent ploughing.
- 4.3 The entire site lies within the Heighington Conservation Area since its extension in 1999. There seems no special architectural or visual reason for the area's inclusion other than providing an open buffer up to the 1980s' bypass. The bypass represents a major change to the historical landscape to the east.
- 4.4 Although a group of Grade II listed buildings, including Trafalgar House, walls and a dovecote lie south of the site, they are well screened from the site by stone walls and field boundaries and orientated away from the site.
- 4.5 A geomagnetic survey of the site has been completed (James 2016). The majority of the anomalies identified were thought to be a result of modern material/agricultural activity and geological/pedological origin.

5. The archaeological monitoring

Introduction

- 5.1 An area measuring approximately 0.5 ha (Figure 2) was stripped to depth to expose the ditch excavated during the evaluation and to look for any other archaeological features that might be present. The groundworks were undertaken using a 360° backhoe excavator under close archaeological supervision.

The groundworks (Figures 2-3)

- 5.2 Natural subsoil varied between a dark yellow-brown sandy gravelly clay and a yellow boulder clay [4] and was identified at a depth of 0.32m (136.2m OD). A modern pipe trench [F3: over 17.5m+ long, 0.54m wide, 0.2m deep] was cut into the natural subsoil, on an approximate north-east / south-west alignment, filled with a mottled dark reddish yellow brown sandy clay [2], which contained modern ceramic pipe fragments. The pipe trench was not visible from 5m north-east of the section where the ground had been truncated. Over lying fill [2] was topsoil [1]
- 5.3 To the north of the pipe trench a layer of crushed stone [5] had been compacted into the top of the glacial clay to form a works compound with an exit onto Beech Crescent close to the roundabout at the north of the site. The compacted stone was covered in topsoil [1].
- 5.4 Three furrows were recorded on a north-west /south-east alignment. The furrows were c.3-5m apart and c.2.5-3m wide, and filed with a dark brown loam.

6. The artefacts

- 6.1 No artefacts were recovered.

7. The palaeoenvironmental evidence

- 7.1 No material suitable for palaeoenvironmental assessment was identified during the works.

8. The archaeological resource

- 8.1 No archaeological deposits or artefacts have been uncovered during the works.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 No further archaeological works are required.

10. Sources

Archaeological Services 2018 *Beech Crescent, Heighington, County Durham: archaeological evaluation*. Unpublished report 4724, Archaeological Services Durham University

Phase site investigations 2016 Station Road, Heighington, Co Durham: archaeological geophysical survey. Unpublished report ARC/1998/718

Petts, D, & Gerrard, C, 2006 *Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic environment*. Durham

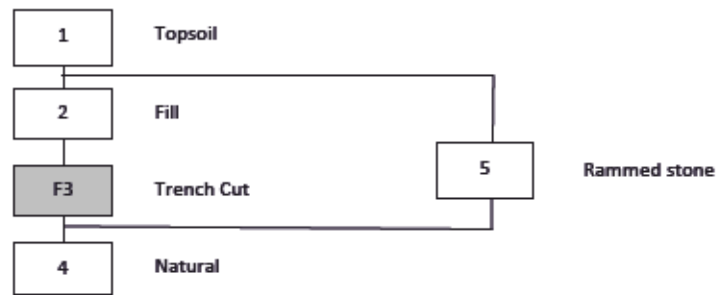
Stephenson, B, 2015 *Land at Station Road, Heighington, Darlington: Heritage Assessment*. Unpublished report BSA Heritage

Appendix 1: Data tables

Table 1.1: Context data

No	Area	Description
1	1	Topsoil
2	1	Fill
F3	1	Cut for pipe trench
4	1	Glacial clay
5	1	Modern rammed stone

Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrix





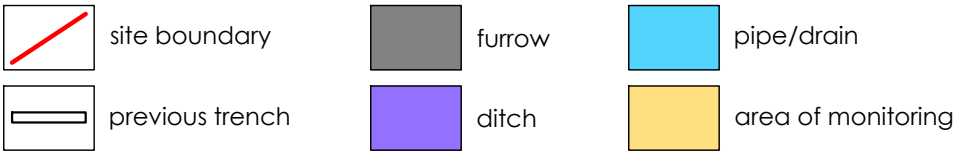
Photograph 1: Feature F3, looking east

Figure 1: Site location

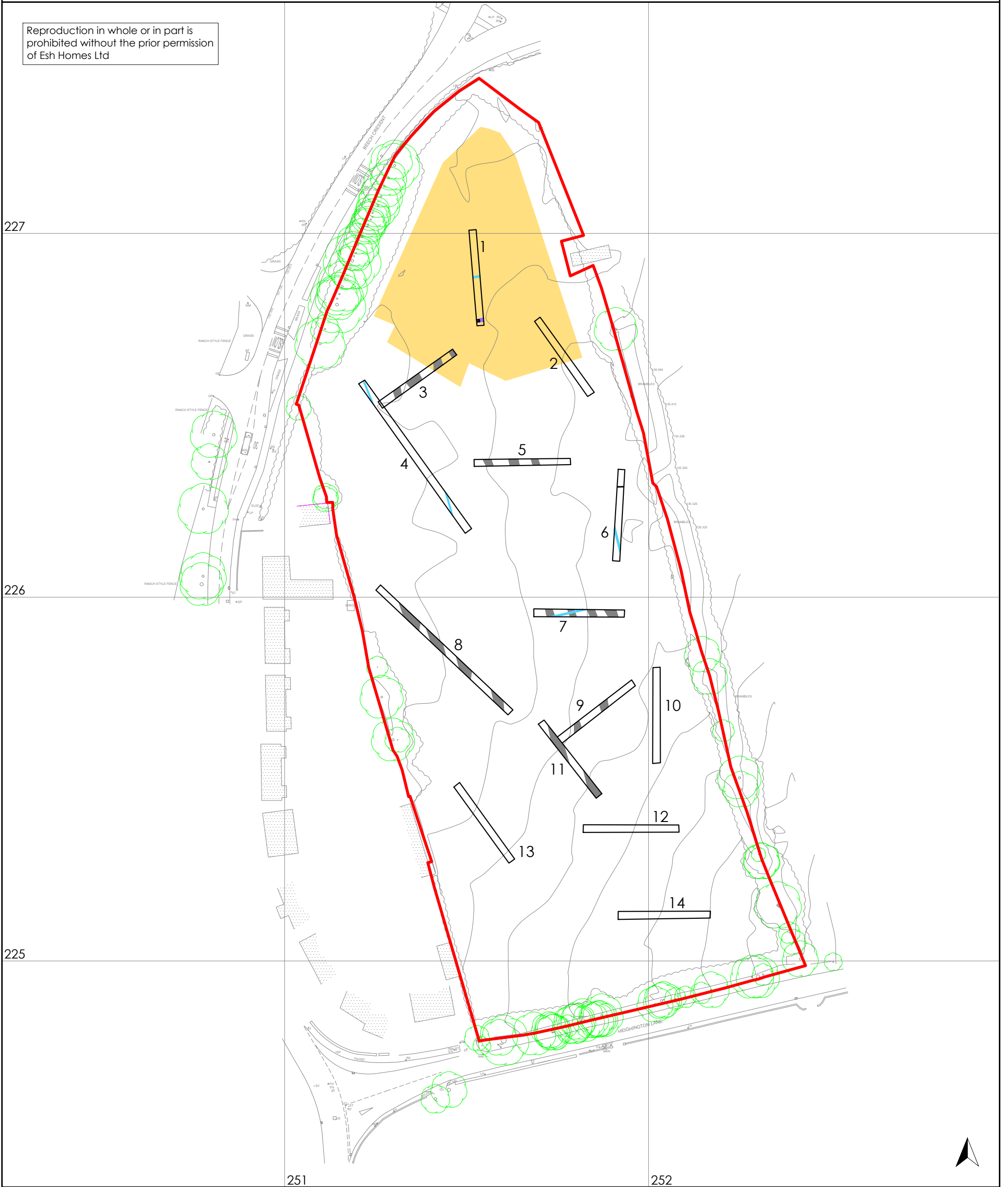


site location

0 1km
scale 1:25 000 for A4 plot



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0 50m
scale 1:1000 for A3 plot

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Figure 2: Location of archaeological
monitoring

