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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD**

**GREENHILL FARM, TILSWORTH, BEDFORDSHIRE**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

Authors:	Zbigniew Pozorski (Fieldwork & report) Antony RR Mustchin (Editor)	
Illustrations:	Rosanna Price	
NGR: SP 97979 24564	Report No: 4606	
District: Central Beds	Site Code: AS 1683	
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 5710	
Signed:	Date: 17 June 2014	
	Revised: 14/07/2014	

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**OASIS SUMMARY SHEET**

<b>Project details</b>			
<b>Project name</b>		Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire	
<p><i>In June 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 97979 24564). The evaluation was commissioned by Tilsworth Developments Ltd and was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for the demolition of commercial buildings, the erection of 11 dwellings with associated hardstanding, landscaping and change of use to paddocks.</i></p> <p><i>The site is located in the north-eastern part of Tilsworth village. It had potential to reveal further evidence for the medieval settlement of Tilsworth. Its proximity to the linear cropmarks (HER 2804) and the scatters of Iron Age and Roman pottery recorded along the ridge to the north of the village also raised possibility that the site might have yielded evidence of activity during these periods.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. Only modern deposits associated with the commercial development of the site were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)		06, 09/06/2014	
Previous work (Y/N/?)		N	Future work (Y/N/?)
P. number		5710	Site code
			AS 1683
Type of project		An Archaeological Evaluation	
Site status		-	
Current land use		Former commercial site	
Planned development		Construction of 11 dwellings with associated hardstanding, landscaping and change of use to paddocks	
Main features (+dates)		-	
Significant finds (+dates)		-	
<b>Project location</b>			
County/ District/ Parish		Bedfordshire	Central Bedfordshire
			Tilsworth
HER/ SMR for area		Central Bedfordshire HER	
Post code (if known)		LU7 9PU	
Area of site		c. 10,000 m <sup>2</sup>	
NGR		SP 97979 24564	
Height AOD (min/max)		104/106.50m	
<b>Project creators*</b>			
Brief issued by		CBC	
Project supervisor/s (PO)		Zbigniew Pozorski	
Funded by		Tilsworth Developments Ltd	
Full title		Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire: An Archaeological Evaluation	
Authors		Pozorski, Z.	
Report no.		4606	
Date (of report)		June 2014 (Revised 14/07/2014)	

# GREENHILL FARM, TILSWORTH, BEDFORDSHIRE

## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### SUMMARY

*In June 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 97979 24564). The evaluation was commissioned by Tilsworth Developments Ltd and was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for the demolition of commercial buildings, the erection of 11 dwellings with associated hardstanding, landscaping and change of use to paddocks.*

*The site is located in the north-eastern part of Tilsworth village. It had potential to reveal further evidence for the medieval settlement of Tilsworth. Its proximity to the linear cropmarks (HER 2804) and the scatters of Iron Age and Roman pottery recorded along the ridge to the north of the village also raised the possibility that the site might have yielded evidence of activity during these periods.*

*In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. Only modern deposits associated with the commercial development of the site were present.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In June 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 97979 24564; Figs. 1 and 2). The evaluation was commissioned by Tilsworth Developments Ltd and was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for the demolition of commercial buildings, the erection of 11 dwellings with associated hardstanding, landscaping and change of use to paddocks (Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Ref. CB/13/03471/FULL).

1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologists (CBC) *Brief for A Programme of Archaeological Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication at Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire* (dated 19/03/2014).and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 08/05/2014) and approved by CBC. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The evaluation aimed to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. In particular it aimed to establish the presence or absence of any remains relating to medieval settlement activity (well documented in the area; see *Archaeological and Historical Background*, below). Secondary research objectives – as stated in the specification – related to the

characterisation of any later prehistoric and Roman occupation evidence. It was also important to understand the level of truncation on the site.

### *Planning policy context*

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

## **2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**

2.1 The site is located in the north-eastern part of Tilsworth village c.2.5km west-north-west of Houghton Regis and c.5km east of town centre of Leighton Buzzard (Fig. 1). It is accessed from Blackhill in the centre of the village. The site, until recently, comprised agricultural and light industrial buildings, yard and grassed areas of Greenhill Farm. The buildings had been demolished before the evaluation started.

## **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

3.1 The site is situated on land rising towards the rear (north and north-east) of the site at c.105m AOD. The solid geology of the area is of clay of Gault Formation (British Geological Survey 1978). Soils on the site are clayey soils of the Evesham 3 association, described as slowly permeable calcareous clayey and fine loamy over clayey soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### *Prehistoric and Roman*

4.1 Fieldwalking in the vicinity of Tilsworth has demonstrated the presence of archaeological remains of prehistoric date. Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flints have been found towards the eastern end of the village (HER 16272), and Iron Age and Roman pottery (HER 1761, 1763, 3442 and 3932), indicative of contemporary settlement, has been found along the ridge that runs to the north of the village. The current site at Greenhill Farm may be seen to lie between this loose concentration of Iron Age and Roman material to the north and the core of the historic medieval settlement to the south. This Iron Age and Roman artefactual material is likely to be associated with linear cropmarks recorded at NGR SP 976 249, to the north-west of the current site, and considered to be of early Iron Age to Roman date (HER 2804). In addition, the Roman Watling Street (modern A5 road) passes the village c.650m to the east.

### *Saxon and Medieval*

4.2 The village originated in the late Saxon period or earlier. It is recorded at Domesday as being held by William Peverel and appears to have been a substantial manor (Williams and Martin 2003, 571). Surviving elements of the medieval village lie at the western edge of the settlement. These include Warren Knoll, a motte considered to be of 11<sup>th</sup> century date and part of a series of defences constructed to control the valleys to the west of Watling Street (HER 536, SM 24408). The motte itself measures c.35m in diameter and is 3.5m in height but has been much degraded by the building of a summerhouse and store associated with the adjacent vicarage. Just over 60m to the south of this is the medieval parish church of All Saints which dates to the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries (HER 959, LB 5/32). It is built of Totternhoe stone. Tilsworth Manor moat comprises a second scheduled monument within the village (HER 14685, SAM 11554). It surrounds the upstanding remains of Tilsworth Manor and is rectangular in shape and measures 70x 90m.

4.3 The manorial centre is believed to have moved from its original 11<sup>th</sup> century location at Warren Knoll to Tilsworth Manor moated site by the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. The castle overlooks both the Ouzel Valley and the ancient line of Watling Street, and can be seen from the motte-and-bailey castle at Totternhoe on the far side of the valley to the south. The motte site remained as part of Tilsworth Manor, recorded as a warren in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in use as such until around 1910. The rectory of Tilsworth House was built on the side of the motte in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tilsworth Manor (now Farmhouse) is surrounded by a large, wide moat of some 70m x 90m. The drawbridge gatehouse access from the moat dates to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and is Grade II\* listed (HER 529, LB967/27/308). The Manor Farmhouse (HER3265, LB 967/27/309) is Grade II listed and has foundations and a stone-lined cellar of 15<sup>th</sup> century date, with other parts dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. It underwent major alterations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

4.4 The presumed extent of the medieval village core (HER 16887) as extrapolated from cartographic sources extended between the motte, church and manor to the west and Greenhill Farm in the east. The village was surrounded by

common strip fields and well-preserved traces of ridge and furrow cultivation (HER 5073) remain in some places, such as at Tilsworth Golf Course. In addition to the church and manorial sites, the medieval settlement incorporated a village green. Further cropmarks and earthworks to the south and south-east of Greenhill Farm suggest that the medieval settlement was larger than the current village (HER 1348). These include a large hollow way and headland adjacent to Greenhill Farm. Medieval pottery has been found during fieldwalking to the south and east of the village (HER 16272; 16277).

### *Post-medieval*

4.5 Several listed buildings of post-medieval date are recorded in the village. These include the Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed house known as Tudor Cottage (HER 6005, LB 967/27/304), the Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> century Green Farmhouse at 27 and 29 Dunstable Road (HER 6006, LB 967/28/306), the similar Yellow Farmhouse also on Dunstable Road (HER 6007), the unlisted Bury Farmhouse on Dickens Lane which dates to 1826 (HER 8046) and two post-medieval barns at Manor Farm (HER 14684).

4.6 Few archaeological investigations have taken place in the village, but medieval pottery and animal bone was recorded during soil stripping for an access road at Granary Farm in 2004 (Network Archaeology 2004). Monitoring at Wood Farm Barns revealed no archaeological features (ASC 2005), nor did a small archaeological evaluation at Stanbridge Road (Northants Archaeology 2006).

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

5.1 Six trenches were excavated using a mechanical 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 2). The trenches were placed in locations judged to be less disturbed by modern development: outside the footprints of buildings which until recently occupied the site. Trench 1 measured 20 x 1.80m whilst Trenches 2 – 6 measured 30 x 1.80m.

5.2 Topsoil and undifferentiated overburden were mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

## **6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:



**Trench 1** (Fig. 2, DP 1-2)

<i>Sample section 1A (DP 3): north-west end, south-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 106.21m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.06m	L1000	Modern made ground. Mid yellow, loose sand with moderate CBM fragments.
0.06 – 0.34m	L1001	Modern made ground. Mid greyish brown, friable, sandy silt with frequent CBM fragments.
0.34m+	L1002	Natural light bluish grey and yellow, compact, clay.

<i>Sample section 1B (DP 4): south-east end, south-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.62m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.18m	L1000	Modern made ground. As above.
0.18 – 0.30m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above.
0.30m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present.

**Trench 2** (Fig. 2, DP 1, 5)

<i>Sample section 2A (DP 6): north-east end, south-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 106.20m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.09m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.09m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 2B (DP 7): south-west end, south-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.93m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.12m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present.

**Trench 3** (Fig. 2, DP 8-9)

<i>Sample section 3A (DP 10): north-west end, north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 106.17m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.13m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.13m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 3B (DP 11): south-east end, north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.39m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.11m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.11m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present.

**Trench 4** (Fig. 2, DP 12-13)

<i>Sample section 4A (DP 14): north-west end, south-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 104.96m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.14m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 4B (DP 15): south-east end, north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 104.13m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.15m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.15 – 0.35m	L1004	Subsoil. Mid brownish yellow, firm, clayey silt.
0.35m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present.

**Trench 5** (Fig. 2, DP 16-17)

<i>Sample section 5A (DP 18): north-east end, north-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.40m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.14m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.14m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 5B (DP 19): south-west end, north-west facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.60m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.19m	L1001	Modern made ground. As above, Tr. 1.
0.19m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present.

**Trench 6** (Fig. 2, DP 20-21)

<i>Sample section 3A (DP 10): east end, north-north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.70m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.06m	L1005	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown, friable, sandy silt.
0.06 – 0.29m	L1006	Modern made ground. Mid to dark, brownish grey, friable, sandy silt with occasional CBM fragments.
0.29 – 0.36m	L1007	White, compact, chalk.
0.36 – 0.51m	L1008	Modern made ground. Mid to dark brownish grey. Compact, sandy silt with frequent CBM fragments.
0.51m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

<i>Sample section 3B (DP 11): west end, north-north-east facing</i> <i>0.00 = 105.30m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.48m	L1006	Modern made ground. As above.
0.48 – 0.55m	L1010	Compacted CBM rubble.
0.55 – 0.66m	L1008	Modern made ground. As above.
0.66 – 0.74m	L1011	CBM fragments (bricks) pressed into top of L1002.
0.74m +	L1002	Natural clay. As above, Tr. 1.

*Description:* No archaeological features or finds were present.

## **7 CONFIDENCE RATING**

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

## **8 DEPOSIT MODEL**

8.1 The site was commonly overlain by modern made ground L1001 (0.05 – 0.20m). As the site had been subject to demolition works prior to the evaluation, much of the ground within the site was reduced (c.0.30m) principally due to the removal of tarmac and its base.

8.2 Subsoil L1004, a mid brownish yellow, firm, clayey silt (0.10 – 0.25m thick) was present only in the eastern part of Trench 4.

8.3 The natural clay, L1002, was present at 0.06 – 0.75m below existing ground level and comprised a light bluish grey and yellow, compact, clay. The bluish variation in clay colour was caused by motor oil or similar contamination.

## **9 DISCUSSION**

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for settlement evidence of medieval date. The site is located just north-east of the medieval core of the village. There was also potential for later prehistoric and Roman remains.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. No residual finds were recovered. Only modern deposits associated with the previous commercial development of the site were present.

## **10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site with Luton Culture. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Tilsworth Developments Ltd for funding the project (in particular Mr Pete Foster and Mr Pete Wright for assistance).

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Hannah Firth of Central Bedfordshire Council.

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## APPENDIX 1          CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

<b>Records</b>	<b>Number</b>
Brief	Y
Specification	Y
Registers	4 (Context, Drawing, Drawing Sheet, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	12
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	2
Site drawings A4	0
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	43

## APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site name and address:</b>	Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire
<b>County:</b> Beds	<b>District:</b> Central Beds
<b>Village/Town:</b>	<b>Parish:</b> Tilsworth
<b>Planning application reference:</b>	Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Ref. CB/13/03471/FULL
<b>Client name/address/tel:</b>	Tilsworth Developments Ltd
<b>Nature of application:</b>	Construction of 11 dwellings
<b>Present land use:</b>	Former commercial site
<b>Size of application area:</b> c.1ha	<b>Size of area investigated</b> 310m <sup>2</sup>
<b>NGR (8 figures):</b>	SP 97979 24564
<b>Site Code:</b>	AS 1683
<b>Site director/Organization:</b>	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
<b>Type of work:</b>	Trial trench evaluation
<b>Date of work:</b>	06, 09/06/2014
<b>Location of finds/Curating museum:</b>	Luton Culture
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	<b>Periods represented:</b> None
<b>Relevant previous summaries/reports:</b> -	-
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>	<p><i>In June 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried an archaeological evaluation at Greenhill Farm, Tilsworth, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 97979 24564). The evaluation was commissioned by Tilsworth Developments Ltd and was undertaken in compliance with a condition attached to planning approval for the demolition of commercial buildings, the erection of 11 dwellings with associated hardstanding, landscaping and change of use to paddocks.</i></p> <p><i>The site is located in the north-eastern part of Tilsworth village. It had potential to reveal further evidence for the medieval settlement of Tilsworth. Its proximity to the linear cropmarks (HER 2804) and the scatters of Iron Age and Roman pottery recorded along the ridge to the north of the village also raised possibility that the site might have yielded evidence of activity during these periods.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. Only modern deposits associated with the commercial development of the site were present.</i></p>
<b>Author of summary:</b> Z Pozorski	<b>Date of Summary:</b> June 2014

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. South-west part of the site with Trenches 1 and 2. Looking north-east.



DP 2. Trench 1. Looking north-west.



DP 3. Trench 1, north-west end. Sample section 1A. Looking north-east.



DP 4. Trench 1, south-east end. Sample section 1B. Looking north-east.



DP 5. Trench 2. Looking north-east.



DP 6. Trench 2, north-east end. Sample section 2A. Looking north-west.



DP 7. Trench 2, south-west end. Sample section 2B. Looking north-west.



DP 8. North part of the site with Trench 3. Looking south-south-east.



DP 9. Trench 3. Looking north-west.



DP 10. Trench 3, north-west end. Sample section 3A. Looking south-west.



DP 11. Trench 3, south-east end. Sample section 3B. Looking south-west.



DP 12. North-east part of the site with Trench 4. Looking south-south-east.





DP 13. Trench 4. Looking south-east.



DP 14. Trench 4, north-west end. Sample section 4A. Looking north-east.



DP 15. Trench 4, south-east end. Sample section 4B. Looking south-west.



DP 16. Central part of the site with Trench 5. Looking south-west.



DP 17. Trench 5. Looking north-east.



DP 18. Trench 5, north-east end. Sample section 5A. Looking south-east.



DP 19. Trench 5, south-west end. Sample section 5B. Looking south-east.



DP 20. Trench 6. Looking east-south-east.



DP 21. Trench 6. Looking west-north-west.



DP 22. Trench 6, east end. Sample section 6A. Looking south-south-west.



DP 23. Trench 6, west end. Sample section 6B. Looking south-south-west.



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**Fig. 1 Site location plan**  
 Scale 1:25000 at A4



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**Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan**  
 Scale 1:1000 at A4