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PARCEL B, ELM FARM, WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

CNF48507_2 OASIS ID: archaeo17-341550

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NGR: TG 1327 0343	Report No: 5784				
District: South Norfolk	Site Code: ENF145649				
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 7739				
	Date: 15 th March 2019				
	Revised 5 th April 2019				

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details Project name Parcel B, Elm Farm, Wymondham, Norfolk

Between 27th February and 11th March 2019, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a cart-based magnetic gradiometer survey on c.10.9 hectares of land at Elm Farm, Wymondham, Norfolk (NGR TG 1327 0343). The survey was carried out in conjunction with a metal detector survey of the southern field where part of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe is expected to run. The project formed part of the archaeological mitigation of the site in advance of a new residential development. The survey has been given the identification numbers: ENF145649 and CNF48507.

The archaeological anomalies were restricted to a weak, intermittent linear response (1) that is likely to represent the remains of the Roman road across the southern portion of the site. In addition, a number of historic boundaries (2) depicted on the 1887 OS map were also present in the survey data.

Project dates (fieldwork)	27 th February – 11 th March 2019				
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work	Trial tr	enching	
P. number	7739	Site code	ENF14	15649	
Type of project	Geophysical Survey				
Site status	-				
Current land use	Arable				
Planned development	Residential				
Main features (+dates)	Faint linear response (1) likely representing the course of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe Historic boundaries (2) as depicted on the 1887 OS map				
Significant finds (+dates)	-				
Project location					
County/ District/ Parish	Norfolk	South Norfoli	(Wymondham	
HER/ SMR for area	Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER)				
Post code (if known)	-				
Area of site	c.10.9ha				
NGR	TG 1327 0343				
Height AOD (max/ min)	c.46-48m AOD				
Project creators					
Brief issued by	Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES)				
Project supervisor/s	Keeley-Jade Diggons				
Funded by	Persimmon Homes				
Full title	Parcel B, Elm Farm, Wymondham, Norfolk: Geophysical Survey				
Authors	Diggons, K-J., Summers, J.R., Bescoby, D. and Podbury, L.				
Report no.	5784				
Date (of report)	15 th March 2019; revised 5 th April 2019				

PARCEL B, ELM FARM, WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

SUMMARY

Between 27th February and 11th March 2019, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a cart-based magnetic gradiometer survey on c.10.9 hectares of land at Elm Farm, Wymondham, Norfolk (NGR TG 1327 0343). The survey was carried out in conjunction with a metal detector survey of the southern field where part of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe is expected to run. The project formed part of the archaeological mitigation of the site in advance of a new residential development. The survey has been given the identification numbers: ENF145649 and CNF48507.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between 27th February and 11th March 2019, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a cart-based magnetic gradiometer survey on c.10.9 hectares of land at Elm Farm, Wymondham, Norfolk (NGR TG 1327 0343). The survey was carried out in conjunction with a metal detector survey of the southern field where part of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe is expected to run. The project formed part of the archaeological mitigation of the site in advance of a new residential development. The survey has been given the identification numbers: ENF145649 and CNF48507,
- 1.2 The project was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES; dated 30th January 2019) and a specification compiled by AS (dated 31st January 2019). The geophysical survey was carried out in accordance with the Historic England document *Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008), and ClfA, *The use of Geophysical Techniques in Archaeological Evaluations* and *ClfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey* (2014). It also complied with requirements set out in the NCC "*Standards for development-led archaeological projects in Norfolk*" (Robinson *et al*, 2018; Section 5.1.4).

1.3 The geophysical investigation of the site was designed to determine the nature, extent and significance of sub-surface features, in order to inform the further mitigation strategy for the proposed development, which will include a trial trench evaluation.

Planning policy context

- 1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018) 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 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- 2.1 The site lies on the north eastern edge of Wymondham, to the north west of Norwich Common, adjacent to the east of Carpenter's Farm. The site comprises Parcel B of the larger residential development site. Some former outbuildings are located at the street frontage and the remainder is in agricultural use. The site is bisected by a track and the survey area extends to 10.9ha.
- 2.2 The town of Wymondham is located on the north side of the River

Tiffey, with the site sitting at approximately 46-48m AOD. The land north of the site slopes down to 20m AOD by the River Tiffey near Barford, *c*.4km away, while south of the site is an area of gently undulating open countryside.

- 2.3 The solid geology comprises Cretaceous upper chalk overlain by Lowestoft Formation chalky till. The local soils comprise coarse and fine loamy soils, sometimes over clayey soils which are prone to seasonal waterlogging.
- 2.4 The survey was carried out in dry conditions with the soil surface moderately damp. The field had been fallow prior to the fieldwork, with the vegetation cut back for the survey. The surface was relatively smooth, making it appropriate for cart-based survey, although it was rutted in places.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistory

- 3.1 The earliest known human occupation of the area is represented by a single Lower Palaeolithic flint flake (NHER 21590) unearthed *c.*990m away from the proposed site. A Palaeolithic flint handaxe was also recovered within the surrounding area (NHER 20669). Several Neolithic worked flints have been located close to the site (NHER 20669, 21587, 21589, 22754), and recovered *c.*990m from the site were a number of worked flints thought to be Neolithic 'industrial' waste (NHER 21590).
- 3.2 Prehistoric activity continues in the area with Bronze Age (NHER 66894, 31269, 18264) and Iron Age (NHER 20669) finds. Bronze Age activity has been located in close proximity to the site; including an early Bronze Age axehead (NHER 66894) *c.*730m west of the proposed site, a middle Bronze Age chisel (NHER 29286) *c.*260m to the east, and a late Bronze Age punch (NHER 47933) also *c.*230m to the east.

Romano-British

3.3 The Romano-British period is represented by finds of pottery, brooches and coins (NHER 21588, 30069, 31269, 31300, 31302, 31988, 41227, 41753, 61343, 66894, 68053, 68054). The line of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe (NHER 19725), traced through earth works and crop marks visible on aerial photographs, is believed to traverse the western part of the wider proposed development area. A programme of archaeological excavation was completed *c*.100m from the proposed site and the remains of the Roman road and a roadside feature were recorded, however much of the feature was heavily truncated (ENF141452). A small-scale Romano-British domestic settlement was identified *c*.470 south-west of the proposed site, evidenced by a cluster of rubbish pits and possible extraction pits (NHER 56676). An illegible 2nd century Roman coin was also found *c*.230m east of the proposed site (NHER 30070). *Medieval*

- 3.4 The Medieval period in the area surrounding the proposed development site is represented by various finds of pottery, metalwork, and coins (NHER 29284, 33081, 21588, 30069, 31269, 31270, 31300. 31302, 31304, 41753). The activity ranges over the whole period with material evidence from the early Saxon period (NHER 20669, 61343, 68052), and the late Saxon Period (NHER 18264, 20669, 21588, 41227, 68052). Metal detecting *c.*725m west of the site unearthed a range of medieval objects including a late Saxon spindle whorl, medieval dress accessories, and a medieval thimble (NHER 66894). A medieval spur rowel box was also located *c.*260m to the east of the site (NHER 29286).
- 3.5 Wymondham is recorded in the Domesday Book as 376 households, the largest in the hundred of Forehoe, however the site lay outside of the main settlement during this period (www.opendomesday.org). In 1107 Wymondham Abbey was founded, and completed in 1130, c.3km away from the proposed site (www.wymondhamabbey.org.uk)

Post-medieval

- 3.6 The area surrounding the site has yielded numerous post-medieval finds, in the form of metalwork and coins (NHER 18264, 21588, 22753, 22825, 29287, 30069, 63889). In close proximity to the proposed site, activity is relatively extensive. A probable medieval to post-medieval common-edge settlement at Lower Grove Farm, visible on aerial photographs, is situated c.800m north-west of the site (NHER 61825). Oaklands Farm, which lies c.1km north-west of the site, is a structure originally constructed in the late 16th century, with multi-phased alterations (NHER 30649). Lying c.620m to the east of the site, on the site of what was once a medieval gallows is Kett's Oak, an oak tree where Robert Kett reputedly addressed his rebels in 1594 (NHER 9451).
- 3.7 Evidence of 18^{th} century activity is also apparent in immediate proximity to the site. Downham Grove, a 17^{th} or 18^{th} century house, sits c.615m east of the site. A post-medieval windmill is shown on a 1797 map standing in the centre of Wymondham Common, c.370m south-east of the site (NHER 43835). Downham Grove, a 17^{th} or 18^{th} century house with multi-phased alterations, also sits c.615m east of the site (NHER 9455). Two of twenty-one 18^{th} century milestones along the Norwich to Thetford turnpike are located within c.1km of the site (NHER 48357, 62760).

Modern

- 3.8 The Norfolk Railway line is situated south of the proposed site. The line was opened in 1844, and is still in use today (NHER 13571). Former St Edmund's Church was constructed in 1893, and is located *c.*420m away from the site on Norwich Common, and was converted into residential property in 1973 (NHER 57154).
- 3.9 Evidence of a World War Two German aircraft crash was found c.1km

south-west of the site, beneath the Norfolk Police HQ (NHER 33779), although this may be the same plane from another nearby crash site (NHER 30872).

4 METHOD OF WORK

Introduction

- 4.1 The magnetic survey was undertaken using a dual sensor Grad601-2 Magnetic gradiometer manufactured by Bartington instruments Ltd, mounted on a custom-built non-magnetic cart. The gradiometer measures small distortions in the earth's magnetic field caused by the presence of magnetically susceptible buried objects and archaeological features. The instrument is extremely stable and capable of detecting changes in magnetic field strength of the order of 0.03 nanoTesla (nT/m).
- 4.2 Magnetic gradiometer survey was selected due to its efficiency in providing easily interpretable data over a large site area. The instrument offers the ability to rapidly cover a survey area and responds to a wide variety of magnetic anomalies resulting from past human activity (e.g. Historic England, 2008, 20-24).
- 4.3 Cart-based survey was selected due to the smooth, level ground across the majority of the site. The cart-based system provides a stable platform for the magnetometer sensors, eliminating many of the positional 'walking errors' inherent in hand-held magnetometer survey. The cart-mounted GPS generates geographic co-ordinates for each data point collected, providing consistently accurate spatial positioning.

Survey Methodology

- 4.4 Grid squares measuring 30m x 30m were set out across the entirety of the survey area using an RTK GPS net rover (**Fig. 3**). Geophysical data were collected systematically in a zig-zag pattern along 60m traverses within this grid, with sensor traverses spaced at 0.5m. Using a grid square framework in addition to cart mounted GPS positioning improves data management and further enhances survey accuracy and repeatability.
- 4.5 Data were recorded using a Trimble Geo7x data logger and differential GPS receiver (DGPS), using Geomar Trackmaker NAV601 software. The magnetometer sampling interval was set to 8Hz, resulting in readings in excess of every 20-25cm.
- 4.6 A single 30m traverse was re-surveyed on a daily basis (AM and PM) to act as a control and confirm the repeatability of the data collection (Appendix 1).

Data Processing

4.7 The remedial processing of the data can enhance anomalous responses caused by potential archaeological features and eliminate magnetic noise from modern near-surface iron sources. Data processing also allows for the correction of inherent instrument heading errors. The survey data were processed using Surfer 11 software, where the following data processing routines were applied:

Despike: Despiking the data automatically removes random high amplitude 'iron spikes', improving the graphical presentation and removing the influence of outlying values from the dataset.

Destripe: Striping effects observed in the raw data due to heading errors was removed using iterative median equalisation between adjacent profiles.

Interpolation: Data point locations were interpolated using a Kriging interpolation routine to produce a uniform grid of magnetic values at a resolution of 0.25 by 0.25 m.

Clip: Clipping the data replaces all values outside a specified minimum and maximum with specified 'clip' values. This reduces the large dynamic range of the data, improving the visibility of weaker magnetic anomalies. The data were clipped to -3nT and +3nT.

4.8 Raw data have been displayed as X-Y trace plots (**Figs. 5 and 6**).

Display and interpretation

4.9 The processed data are displayed as a greyscale magnetic map (**Figs. 7-9**) and the interpretation of anomalous magnetic responses undertaken manually with recourse to documented responses from subsequently excavated features. A graphical interpretative plan of the site identifying potential archaeological features (**Fig. 10**) was then produced in AutoCAD LT2012.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The survey results from the site showed little of likely archaeological origin. The possible identification of the line of the Roman road (1) between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe (NHER 19725) was made, along with the location of historic boundaries recorded on the 1887 OS map. Anomalies are discussed below with reference to numbered features shown on the interpretation plan (**Fig. 10**).

5.2 In the southern field, weak intermittent anomalous responses on a broadly E-W orientation (1) may correspond with Roman road NHER 19725, which is recorded as crop mark data on the site. However, it should be noted that these anomalies are very weak and, in the absence of the previously recognised course of the Roman road (NHER 19725), it is unlikely that they would have been identified as archaeologically significant and they may in fact be coincidental. There are a number of possible explanations for this limited visibility of the Roman road (see Section 6).

Anomalies of historic origin

5.3 Historic boundaries present on the 1887 OS map (Fig. 11) were identified in the survey data as weakly positive linear anomalies on a NW-SE and NE-SW alignment (2). The NW-SE boundary in the western portion of the southern field was accompanied by a number of dipolar anomalies (7) representing ferrous metal. This is most likely remnants of posts from a former wire fence along this boundary. Strong magnetic responses (3) in the NW corner of the southern field, enclosed by the NE-SW historic boundary, may reflect former activity in a yard area associated with the farm workings. In addition, a strong ferrous response (4) was identified along the NW-SE boundary in the northern field and is likely to be associated with the use or infilling of this boundary.

Modern features and magnetic interference

- 5.4 Plough marks were visible across much of the survey area on a NE-SW orientation and NW-SE in the headlands.
- 5.5 A NE-SW anomaly (**5**) in line with the northern boundary of the northern field is likely to represent the line of cultivation along the field margin.
- 5.6 Magnetic interference and disturbance (6) was noted along most boundaries of both surveyed fields. Much of this is the result of ferrous material on the field margins, including wire fences. The patterning in the data along the southern boundary of the southern field is likely to represent the deposition of material from the regular re-cutting of the boundary ditch in this location.
- 5.7 Numerous positive dipolar responses (**7**), the largest of which have been marked on Fig. 10, were identified across the survey area. The majority of these are probably not archaeologically significant, and represent modern ferrous material within the near subsurface.

5 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The results from the survey at Elm Farm were detailed and of a high order. However, there were few anomalies of likely archaeological origin to be discerned.
- 6.2 Of note is the very faint suggestion in the data of the course of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe (NHER 19725), which has previously been identified as cropmark evidence (Fig. 12). Although the cropmark data appears to indicate the presence of the agger and flanking ditches, the magnetic data could not discern these features clearly.
- 6.3 Excavations to the immediate SE of the survey area have previously uncovered evidence of the road, where it was noted that:

"There was no evidence of an agger (the central, usually raised section of the road) which was probably truncated through excavations seemingly associated with the spreading of spoil from the formation of the current pond and the disposal of a great deal of waste. It is likely that this part of the garden was excavated in order to dispose of this waste and spoil. The feature to the south of the remains of the road is more likely to represent an expansion of the road surface and evidence of a roadside ditch, as is common with Roman roads, was not observed." (Birks 2017, 10)

- 6.4 Although this evidence suggests that the construction of this section of the road was relatively slight, without a significant surface or substantial flanking ditches, the surface is likely to have been of compacted clay (Albone *pers. Comm*). Such a surface is likely to have been magnetically indistinct from surrounding deposits, which could explain the very weak response presented by the road, in contrast to the clear cropmark evidence. It is also possible that modern ploughing of the site could have truncated remains of a road in this form, thus affecting visibility in the magnetic gradiometer survey.
- 6.5 Although ditches are noted in the cropmark evidence over the present site, they are not recorded as cropmarks in any of the other adjacent visible sections (Fig. 12) and are not apparent in the magnetic data. It is possible therefore that this identification is erroneous and, in line with the excavation data, ditches may have been absent or insubstantial. Alternatively, the infilling of the ditches may not have been magnetically enhanced and, as for the likely clay surface, similarity between the infill material and surrounding deposits could have resulted in limited visibility within the magnetic survey. The boulder clays of Norfolk have often been shown to produce low magnetic contrast in magnetometer surveys and it is notable that even the responses from the known historic boundaries on the site (2) were also relatively weak. Previous survey of other fields in the immediate vicinity of the site (Walford and Fisher 2010) also produced relatively weak responses and identified few archaeological features (Fig. 13).

provided by the Roman road is a combination of the factors discussed above: that the remains of the road may have been relatively slight but also constructed of, or filled with, material that was magnetically indistinct from the background readings in the survey data. In addition, plough truncation could also be a factor in the survival of this monument.

6.7 No other remains of likely archaeological significance were identified by the survey.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Overall, the survey produced an excellent quality of data, with low overall levels of magnetic noise. However, the identification of magnetic anomalies of archaeological origin was limited. As discussed above in relation to the Roman road, this is likely to be due to a combination of factors associated with the construction of the road surface and infilling of the possible ditches. The boulder clays of Norfolk have often been shown to produce low magnetic contrast in magnetometer surveys and this is likely to have had a significant effect on the magnetic data from the site. However, issues of survival, such as damage from modern ploughing, could also be significant, depending on the depth at which archaeological features are located. The potential impact of such issues of visibility on archaeological features other than the road that may exist in the survey area is unclear.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank the client, Persimmon Homes, for funding the project and for their assistance.

AS is pleased to acknowledge the advice and input of James Albone of Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCC HES).

The fieldwork was supervised by Keeley-Jade Diggons, and carried out with assistance from Jack Waite and Peter Clarke.

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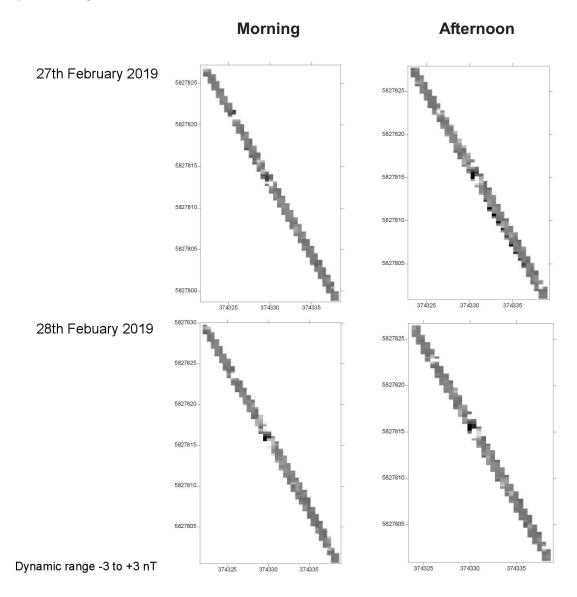
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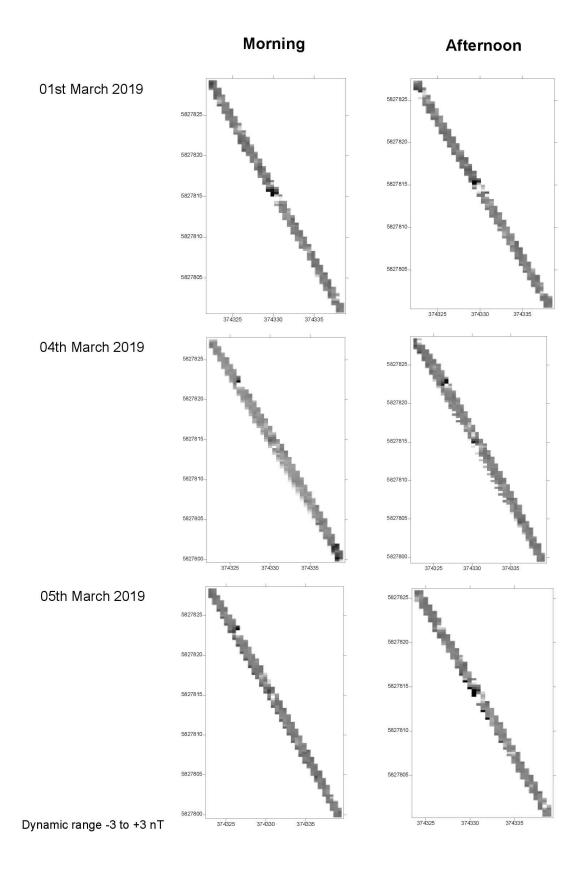
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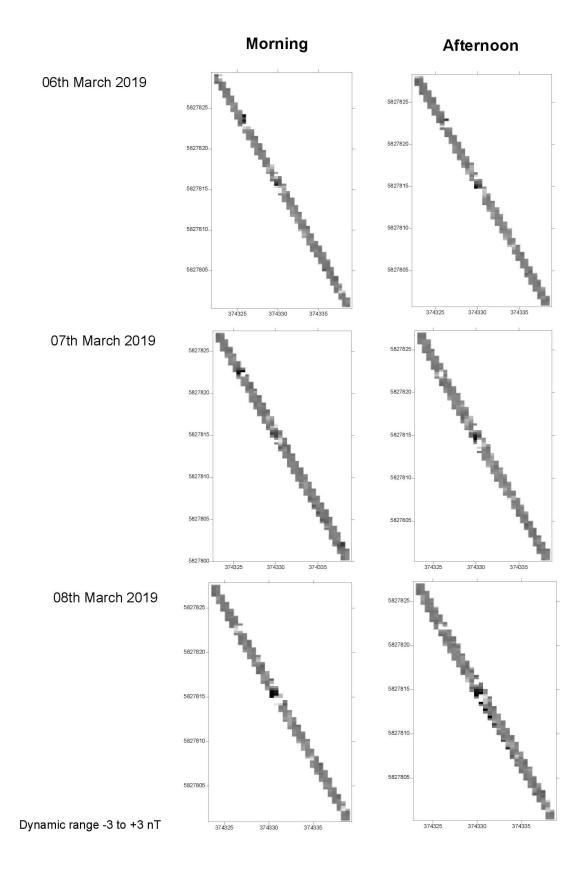
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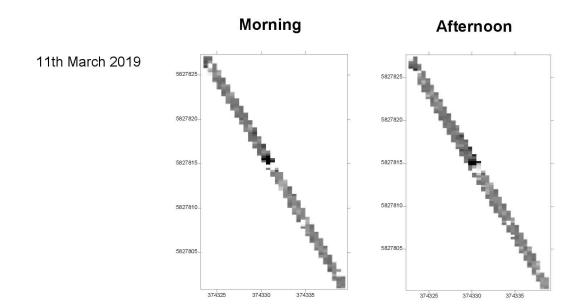
APPENDIX 1

Repeatability









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OASIS ID: archaeol7-341550

Project details

Project name Elm Farm (Parcel B), Norwich Common, Wymondham, NR18 0SW (GEO)

Short description of the project

Between 27th February and 11th March 2019, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out a cart-based magnetic gradiometer survey on c.10.9 hectares of land at Elm Farm, Wymondham, Norfolk (NGR TG 1327 0343). The survey was carried out in conjunction with a metal detector survey of the southern field where part of the Roman road between Caistor St Edmund and Crownthorpe is expected to run. The project formed part of the archaeological mitigation of the site in advance of a new residential development. The survey has been given the identification numbers: ENF145649 and CNF48507. The archaeological anomalies were restricted to a weak, intermittent linear response (1) that is likely to represent the remains of the Roman road across the southern portion of the site. In addition, a number of historic boundaries (2) depicted on the 1887 OS map were also

present in the survey data.

Project dates Start: 27-02-2019 End: 11-03-2019

Previous/future

work

codes

Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference

P7739 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes

ENF145649 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Other 15 - Other

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Geophysical Survey" Prompt Planning condition

Solid geology (other)

Cretaceous upper chalk

Drift geology (other)

Clay

Techniques

Magnetometry

Project location

Country England

Site location NORFOLK SOUTH NORFOLK WYMONDHAM Elm Farm (Parcel B), Norwich Common,

Wymondham

Postcode **NR18 0SW** Study area 10.9 Hectares

TG 1327 0343 52.586290495883 1.148620641796 52 35 10 N 001 08 55 E Point Site coordinates

Height OD / Depth Min: 46m Max: 48m

Project creators

Name of

Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Organisation

Project brief originator

NCC

Project design originator

Jon Murray

Project

Jon Murray

director/manager

Project supervisor Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Type of

sponsor/funding

body

Persimmon Homes

Name of

sponsor/funding

body

Persimmon Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive

Exists?

No

Digital Archive recipient

Norwich Castle Museum

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available

"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"

Paper Archive

recipient

Norwich Castle Museum

Paper Contents

"none"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey"

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Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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