

**BUTCHER'S HILL FARM
BATES'S DROVE
LITTLEPORT
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

Project: BHF1560
CHER event no. ECB 3256

Document: 2009/97
Version 1.0

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14th September 2009

Produced for:
J Gilbert & Son (Littleport) Ltd

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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

The project was commissioned by J Gilbert & Son (Littleport) Ltd. It was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Andy Thomas and Dan McConnell of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office.

This report has been prepared by David Ingham (Project Officer), who also undertook the fieldwork..

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Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	10/09/09	n/a

Structure of the Report

Section 1 is an introduction to the project, the methodology for which is given in Section 2. The results and significance of the fieldwork are presented in Section 3; Section 4 is a bibliography. Section 5 contains Appendix 1, which comprises an OASIS record form.

Key Terms

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

ALGAO	Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
CAPCA	Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
Client	J Gilbert & Son (Littleport) Ltd
Design Brief	CAPCA 2009. <i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation: Scotland Farm, Scotland Road, Dry Drayton</i>
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority
Procedures Manual	<i>Procedures Manual, Vol. 1: Fieldwork</i> , 2nd edition, 2001 Albion Archaeology



Non-Technical Summary

This document has been prepared by Albion Archaeology on behalf of J Gilbert & Son (Littleport) Ltd. It reports on an archaeological field evaluation undertaken in September 2009, which was occasioned by the forthcoming construction of a new agricultural store at Butcher's Hill Farm, Bates's Drove, Littleport, Cambridgeshire. The new agricultural store is 502m² in size, and is located at (NGR) TL 5317 9116.

Butcher's Hill Farm is situated within an area that is rich in archaeological remains. A multi-period site consisting of late Bronze Age (CHER MCB5189), Iron Age (CHER MCB10284) and Roman (CHER MCB10285) settlement remains is located within the same field as the development, while metal-detector surveys at the farm have produced finds dating to the Bronze Age, Roman and medieval periods (CHER MCB15276). Other signs of contemporary activity are scattered around these settlements, such as a 'burnt mound' (CHER MCB10288) and several find-spots (CHER MCB 8773, MCB 10286 and MCB10287). Further afield, an extensive Roman settlement 1km to the north-east was observed prior to ploughing in the 1940s (Fowler 1949).

Because of the high archaeological potential of the site, a condition was placed on the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. A design brief issued by the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA 2009) stated that further information on the archaeological impact of the work was required.

The archaeological potential of the store's proposed location was evaluated by a 15m-long trench, sampling 5% of the development area. It revealed an agricultural trench of unknown date, and a tree-throw. These remains are not considered to be of sufficient archaeological significance to require mitigation.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

The development comprises the construction of a new agricultural store at Butcher's Hill Farm, Bates's Drove, Littleport, centred on (NGR) TL 5317 9116 (Fig. 1).

Because of the high archaeological potential of the site, a condition was placed on planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The LPA's archaeological advisors, the CAPCA, issued a Design Brief (CAPCA 2009) outlining the requirements of a field evaluation, which constituted the initial phase of investigation. The results of this phase will determine whether any further archaeological work is required at the site.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by J Gilbert & Son (Littleport) Ltd to carry out the evaluation.

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

Littleport lies approximately 7km to the north-east of Ely, with Butcher's Hill Farm itself located 5km north-west of the village, at a height of *c.* 2m OD (Fig. 1). The underlying geological deposits comprise glacial till overlying Ampthill Clays. The footprint of the new agricultural store covers an area of 502m².

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

Butcher's Hill Farm is situated within an area that is rich in archaeological remains. A multi-period site consisting of late Bronze Age (CHER MCB5189), Iron Age (CHER MCB10284) and Roman (CHER MCB10285) settlement remains is located within the same field as the development, while metal-detector surveys at the farm have produced finds dating to the Bronze Age, Roman and medieval periods (CHER MCB15276). Other signs of contemporary activity are scattered around these settlements, such as a 'burnt mound' (CHER MCB10288) and several find-spots (CHER MCB 8773, MCB 10286 and MCB10287). Further afield, an extensive Roman settlement 1km to the north-east was observed prior to ploughing in the 1940s (Fowler 1949).

1.4 *Project Objectives*

The principal objective of the evaluation was to test for the presence of archaeological remains within the development area, and subsequently to define their extent, condition, nature and significance. Attention was paid to determining the amount of truncation that has affected the remains, and whether palaeosols or 'B' horizons were present. The evaluation also aimed to determine what impact the proposed development would have on the remains that were present.



2. METHODOLOGY

A 15m-long trench covering an area of 25m² (Fig. 1) was opened on 7th September 2009. This was done using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless bucket, operated by an experienced driver acting under archaeological supervision.

Overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits, which were encountered at the same level as the undisturbed geological deposits. The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts. Any potential archaeological features were noted, cleaned, excavated by hand, and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. The trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. All deposits were recorded using a unique number sequence.

A full methodology is provided in the Project Design (Albion Archaeology 2009).

The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

- IfA *Code of Conduct*
Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation
- Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork* (2nd edition, 2001)
- ALGAO (east) *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*
- CCC *Deposition of Archaeological Archives in the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store* (HER 2004/1)
- CAPCA *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*
- English Heritage *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*

The trench was inspected by the CAPCA officer prior to its backfilling.



3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Results

The evaluation revealed an agricultural trench of unknown date, which was cut by a tree-throw. The profile of the agricultural trench was similar to that of Roman bedding trenches, which are thought to have been used for viticulture, yet was also similar to that of post-medieval trenches used widely across the Fens for soil improvement. The only artefact recovered from it was a flint flake weighing 1g (discarded), and the feature therefore remains undated.

Trench	Length	Width	Depth of overburden	OS grid ref.	
1	14.2m	1.6m	0.45m	TL 53170 / 91169	TL 53177 / 91159

Table 1: Trench summary

Context	Type	Description
100	Ploughsoil	Friable dark grey sandy clay, 0.45m thick
101	Natural	Firm light greyish orange clay with patches of mid-orange sandy clay
102	Agricultural trench	Linear, NW–SE. Sides: vertical. Base: flat. Width: 0.55m. Depth: 0.13m
103	Fill	Firm dark grey sandy silt, occasional small stones. Contained patches of redeposited natural
104	Tree-throw	Curvilinear. Minimum length: 2.8m. Width: 1m. Unexcavated
105	Fill	Firm mixed brown/orange sandy clay. Unexcavated

Table 2: Trench 1 — context summary

3.2 Significance of Results

The archaeological remains revealed by evaluation of the forthcoming development site at Butcher's Hill Farm are undated, and are likely to relate to agricultural practices. These remains are of low archaeological significance, and are not deemed by the CAPCA to warrant archaeological mitigation.



4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albion Archaeology 2001. *Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork*, 2nd edition
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- Fowler, G 1949. 'A Romano-British village near Littleport, Cambs', in *PCAS* 43, 7–20
- IfA 1999a. *Code of Conduct*
- IfA 1999b. *Standard and Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings)*



5. APPENDIX 1: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: albionar1-63817

Project details

Project name	Butchers Hill Farm, Bates's Drove, Littleport
Short description of the project	Trial trench evaluation of the site for a new 502 sq m agricultural building.
Project dates	Start: 07-09-2009 End: 09-09-2009
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BHF1560 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	LAZY BED Uncertain
Significant Finds	FLINT Uncertain
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Farm infrastructure (e.g. barns, grain stores, equipment stores, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE LITTLEPORT Butchers Hill Farm, Bates's Drove, Littleport
Postcode	CB6 1ST
Study area	502.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 5317 9116 52.4964074489 0.256566198035 52 29 47 N 000 15 23 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 1.90m Max: 2.70m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Robert Wardill



Project supervisor	David Ingham
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	J Gilbert & Son (Littleport) Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Store
Physical Archive ID	ECB3256
Physical Contents	'Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Store
Digital Archive ID	ECB3256
Digital Contents	'Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography', 'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Store
Paper Archive ID	ECB3256
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic', 'Worked stone/lithics'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Photograph', 'Report', 'Correspondence', 'Drawing'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Butcher's Hill Farm, Bates's Drove, Littleport, Cambridgeshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Ingham, D.
Date	2009
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford
Description	A4, spiral-bound, colour
Entered by	David Ingham (dp.ingham@albion-arch.com)
Entered on	10 September 2009

OASIS:

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