

Archaeological Monitoring at Land at Yeo Valley, Cannington, Sedgemoor, Somerset

South West Archaeology Ltd. S. Stevens 03.07.23

LOCATION: LAND AT YEO VALLEY

PARISH: CANNINGTON

COUNTY: WEST SOMERSET, SOMERSET

CENTROID NGR: ST 24830 39020

SWARCH REF: CRFS23

PLANNING REF: 13/21/00041

MUSEUM REFERENCE NUMBER: TTNCM 113/2021

HER No: 45333

OASIS No: SOUTHWES1-420216

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring and recording were undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of a private client to monitor the excavation of a service trench on land at Yeo Valley, Cannington, Sedgemoor, Somerset. The trench was excavated by machine with a toothless grading bucket and monitored by S. Stevens on 15th-16th May 2023. This work was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Boyd 2021) and in line industry best practice and guidance (ClfA 2021).

Background

The site is on the south-west side of Cannington, c.1km south-west of the centre of Cannington. It is across two roughly rectangular fields on a relatively flat and level plateau beside the Cannington Brook, at a height of c.20m AOD. The fields are between the brook and the A39 and divided by a lane that leads to the Yeo Valley (Cannington) offices and building.

The site is at the approximate boundary of two soils: the well-drained fine loamy reddish soils over rock of the Milford Association, and the slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged reddish fine loamy over clayey soils of the Brockhurst 1 Association (SSEW 1983); which overlie mudstone and halite-stone of the Mercia Mudstone Group (BGS 2021).

Site Description

The site was located adjacent to the east of Yeo Valley creamery. The area of interest was on the south side of a slightly sloping field that had recently been harvested of crop and the topsoil was relatively soft but had been disturbed heavily by the crop and contained relatively common amounts of rounded stones. The service trench was excavated through the field, starting in the north-west corner and turning midway in the field, to end within a gateway on the south field boundary (see Figure 6).

Methodology

A service trench measuring 0.50m wide deep consistently was excavated by machine, using a toothless grading bucket to an average depth of c.0.60m below ground level (BGL), this being the top of the undisturbed natural substrate. The depth of the trench revealed natural in places, but was mostly excavated to a depth within the subsoil. No archaeological features were present.

Stratigraphy

The stratigraphy was consistent along the entirety of the trench. It consisted of topsoil layer (100) a mid brown soft-friable silt-clay up to 0.20m thick; overlying subsoil (101), a mid yellow-brown soft silt-clay up to 0.40m thick; overlying natural (102), a light-mid grey-yellow-brown gritty silt-clay, with frequent small sub-angular stone.

Discussion

The service trench monitored was for the installation of electrical cabling, in preparation, before ground works associated with the installation of a solar farm on the site. The fieldwork would indicate that there are soil depths of between 0.40-0.60m on average across the site and that any anchoring system for the panels which was within these levels would have little to no impact upon any buried archaeology deposits which may exist on the site.

References

British Geological Survey 2022: *Geology of Britain Viewer*.

http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html

Boyd, N. 2021: *Land at Yeo Valley, Cannington, Sedgemoor, Somerset: Written Scheme of Investigation*. South West Archaeology Ltd WSI no. CRFS21WSIv1

CIfA 2023: *CIfA Code, regulations and standards & guidance* <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (a brief explanation of the constituent soil associations)*.



FIGURE 1: NORTH-FACING SAMPLE SECTION OF TRENCH; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).



FIGURE 2: EAST-FACING SAMPLE SECTION OF TRENCH; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (1M SCALE).



FIGURE 3: POST-EXCAVATION PLAN OF TRENCH; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (2M SCALE).



FIGURE 4: SITE PLANS AND SECTIONS.