
1 PEEL PLACE, HOLMROOK

The Lancaster University Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Mr. Watson of Peel Place Quarry to carry out an archaeological evaluation of an area of land (4.3 hectares) as a condition of planning permission. An area of 3500m² was examined during the first phase of assessment carried out in June 1997 and a second phase immediately to the north of this comprised an area of 8690m² and was carried out in June 1998. The third phase was limited to an area to the north of phase two required for immediate extraction, while the remaining land is under pasture and will be examined at a later date.

METHODOLOGY

Phase III

This third phase of evaluation examined a plot of land further north than phase two and covered an area measuring 7 500m², of which 7 % was excavated. Ten trenches were laid out in a grid formation, compatible with the previous phases. Six of the trenches were aligned north/south and the remaining four trenches were laid east/west. The northern most trench (TR15) was 25m long while the other nine were 30m in length, all were 1.8m wide, which was the width of the machine's bucket.

Sieving

In order to enhance artefact retrieval, particularly of lithics, a sieving programme was implemented, comprising the dry sieving of 30 litres of excavated topsoil, through a 5 mm mesh, at 5m along the length of all the trenches.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Phase III

A common stratigraphic profile was identified within each trench (TR15-24) comprising sandy gravels at a depth of 0.4m below the surface which was overlain by a deposit of fine sand of varying depth. The topsoil was generally 0.2m – 0.25m in depth and was a friable well draining sandy loam of the Ellerbeck Brown Earth series of soils. It also had a 15 % sub-angular gravel component noted in all trenches.

No archaeological features were identified in any of the trenches. The sieving retrieved a number of post-medieval and modern ceramic artefacts, including clay pipe and modern table ware fragments. A flint fragment was retrieved, but it had not been worked.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT

The trenches contained no significant archaeological deposits or features and therefore the proposed and ongoing quarrying of this localised area will have no

adverse impact. Consequently no further archaeological recording work is deemed necessary in this current area.

It must be stressed, however, that the negative results of these first phases of archaeological evaluation do not indicate similar dearth of archaeological remains within the remainder of the evaluation area, particularly considering the highly localised nature of other prehistoric activity in the locale. Consequently the area presently under pasture still needs to be subject to the full programme of archaeological trial trenching in order to satisfy the planning conditions.