LOWER FOXHANGERS FARM POULSHOT AND ROWDE WILTSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

For

GEOMAC LTD

CA PROJECT: 3185 CA REPORT: 10132

OCTOBER 2010



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date	12 October 2010
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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Lower Foxhangers Farm
Location:	Poulshot and Rowde, Wiltshire
NGR:	ST 9628 1655
Туре:	Evaluation
Date:	26 – 30 July 2010
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Devizes Museum
Site Code:	LFR10

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in July 2010 on land at Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and Rowde. Ten trenches were excavated.

The evaluation identified a number of archaeological features within the site.

One undated ditch, two undated gullies, and two possible clay extraction pits were revealed. A ditch containing timber, stone and 18th/19th-century pottery may relate to the location of the original Foxhangers Wharf or construction of the canal.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2010 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Geomac Ltd of land at Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and Rowde, Wiltshire (centred on NGR: ST 9628 1655; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken as part of a programme of archaeological works required to fulfil the condition on a planning consent for the development of the land for the construction of a canal boat marina with associated infrastructure.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2010) and approved by David Vaughan, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council (WC). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Wiltshire* (Wiltshire County Council 1995), and the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (English Heritage 2006). It was monitored by David Vaughan, including a site visit on 29 July 2010.

The site

- 1.3 The site comprises a single arable field 5ha in area, adjacent to the Kennet and Avon Canal (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 55m AOD, and is roughly flat with ground dropping away gradually to the northwest.
- 1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Kimmeridge Clay of the Jurassic era (BGS 1959). A light yellowish brown clay natural substrate was encountered across the site.

Archaeological background

1.5 The northern edge of Site is bounded by the Kennet and Avon Canal. The Kennet and Avon Canal, designed and built by John Rennie, was constructed between 1794 and 1810. It links the River Avon at Bath with the River Kennet at Reading. The route initially designed for the canal, shown on plans of 1793, did not run adjacent to

the site, but instead turned south-west towards Bulkington at Upper Foxhanger Farm. However, an Act of 1796 authorised certain deviations and resulted in the current route as shown on a map of the 1790s (CA 2008, 7). By 1803 the canal was open between Bath and Foxhanger, but the Caen Hill Locks were still under construction. Prior to their completion in 1810 barges were unloaded at Foxhanger Wharf and goods transported by railway to Devizes where they were loaded onto other barges (Clew 1985, 65; Corfield 1978, 9). A widening of the canal at the eastern end of the northern edge of the site was constructed to allow longer barges to turn around, having unloaded their cargo at Foxhanger Wharf. Foxhanger wharf is not labelled on the historic maps and its precise original location is uncertain. The current Foxhanger wharf, located to the north-east of the site, appears to post-date the construction of the railway in the later 19th century. The site is labelled as Wharf Field on the 1821 Foxhanger Estate Map, indicating that the wharf may have extended along the northern edge of the site. Wharves are not necessarily substantial structures and may simply comprise hard-standing adjacent to the canal. A metalled trackway runs along the canal at the northern end of the site and the canal is brick lined with a stone capping but no evidence of a wharf structure was identified along the northern boundary of the site during the site visit. A mobile crane was present at the eastern end of the wharf but no historic canal machinery was identified and no associated features or structures are shown on the historic maps (CA 2008).

- 1.6 Medieval settlement in the area was focused at Martinslade, Smithwick Farm and Lower Foxhangers Farm. No prehistoric or Roman sites have been identified in the immediate vicinity. Documentary sources from the mid 18th century onward indicate an agricultural usage for the site up to the present day (CA 2008).
- 1.7 Geophysical survey of the site in March 2010 revealed a number of linear anomalies, positive area anomalies and discrete pit-like positive anomalies which were concluded to be of potential archaeological origin (Stratascan 2010). Two further linear features to the west were thought to relate to a nearby boundary ditch, while an area of magnetic disturbance to the north may relate to a nearby field boundary, construction of the canal or presence of a nearby power cable.

Archaeological objectives

1.8 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist Wiltshire Council in making an informed judgement on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.9 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of ten trenches (trenches 2, 3, 4, 5 and 9 were 50m in length and 1.8m in width, trenches 1, 6, 7 and 8 were 30m in length and 1.8m in width, trench 10 was 40m in length and 1.8m in width), in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Trenches 1, 7, 8 and 10 were located to test anomalies identified in the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2010) whilst trenches 2–6 and 9 were located within areas with no anomalies. A small eastward extension was made to trench 7 to further investigate a feature encountered within the trench.
- 1.10 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.11 In accordance with the Ecology Method Statement (Adonis Ecology Ltd 2010) Trenches located within 6m of hedgerows (Trenches 1, 7 and 10) were relocated to ensure protection of any nesting birds. In addition, where trees are present Cotswold Archaeology's Procedures for Working Within The Vicinity Of Trees were followed to ensure protection of both trees in line with BS 5837:2005 Trees in Relation to Construction, and the protection of any bats present. Trench ends were ramped to ensure adequate means of escape for widespread reptiles or other wildlife accidentally entering the trench.
- 1.12 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003) and no deposits were identified that

required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995).

1.13 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Devizes Museum, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, finds and palaeoenvironmental evidence are to be found in Appendices A, B and C respectively. The OASIS report is contained in Appendix D.
- 2.2 The natural substrate was identified approximately 0.3m below present ground level (bpgl), and was sealed by topsoil in all trenches. No archaeological features were revealed in trenches 3, 5, 6 and 9. Trench 10 contained a modern linear feature and trench 1 contained two geological features. Anomalies identified by the geophysical survey within trenches 1, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10 were not identified during the evaluation. Archaeological features were identified in all other trenches and are discussed below.

Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)

2.3 In Trench 2 the natural substrate 202 was identified at 0.23m bpgl and was cut by small east-west orientated gully 203. The gully was 0.46m wide and 0.16m deep and contained a single fill 204 from which no finds were retrieved and which was sealed by topsoil 201. This feature was not identified on the geophysical survey.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

2.4 The natural substrate was encountered at 0.24m bpgl and was cut by north-west/south-east orientated ditch 403. The ditch was 0.9m wide and 0.16m deep. The single fill 404 contained no finds and was sealed by topsoil 401. This feature was not identified on the geophysical survey.

Trench 7 (Figs 2, 3 & 4)

- 2.5 Natural substrate 702 was identified at 0.32m bpgl. At the south-west end of the trench it was cut by small gully 705. This measured 0.62m wide and was 0.27m deep and contained a single fill 706. No finds were retrieved and this feature was not identified on the geophysical survey. The natural substrate was also cut by north-west/south-east orientated ditch 703 which measured 2.19m wide and 0.27m deep and corresponds to a geophysical anomaly. This contained a single fill 704, from which 18th to 19th-century pottery was recovered.
- 2.6 At the north-east end of the trench the natural substrate was cut by 707, a steep-sided, flat-based, ditch 1.63m wide and 1.45m deep and aligned east-west (Fig. 4). A stakehole 714 at the base of the ditch contained a wooden stake 716, 0.15m in length, 0.05m in width and at least 0.2m in height, surrounded by a backfill deposit 715. A possible second stakehole 717, partially exposed alongside the western edge of the trench, was retained *in situ* and unexcavated. Stakehole 714 was immediately adjacent to wooden planking 713 which ran across the base of the ditch, possibly forming part of a timber lining. The two wooden planks were also left *in situ*. A primary waterlain and organic rich silt 708 filled the base of the ditch, sealing the wooden fragments, and contained 18th to 19th-century pottery. The ditch had been backfilled with yellow clay similar to the natural substrate. On either side of the ditch cut thin clay deposits 711 and 712 may represent the remains of bank deposits or be reworked natural substrate. The ditch corresponds to a geophysical anomaly.
- 2.7 The backfilled ditch was sealed by layer 710, a silt containing limestone rubble and clinker. The layer may be associated with levelling after the backfilling of the ditch, or construction activity associated with the canal immediately to the north.
- 2.8 The discrete anomalies identified on the geophysics were not identified during the current evaluation.

Trench 8 (Figs 2 & 3)

2.9 Natural substrate 802 was identified at 0.3m bpgl, it was cut by two large pits 803 and 807. Pit 803 was a large steep-sided pit cut through the natural clay substrate. The pit was observed across the width of the trench for 6m and was 1.16m deep.

The base of the pit was covered by thin clay silt primary fill 806, which was sealed by 805, a dark organic silty clay containing fragments of willow and cherry wood, and a triangular leather offcut. The pit was backfilled with redeposited clay 804, two sherds of 18th to 19th-century pottery were recovered from this fill.

2.10 Pit 807 was observed across the width of the trench for 6m and was 0.27m deep. It had very diffuse edges and irregular sides, filled by a hard clay 808.

The Finds and Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

- 2.11 Quantities of artefactual material, comprising pottery, clay pipe, glass, metal object, leather, coal and oyster shell, were recovered from four deposits (Appendix B).
- 2.12 Sherds of post-medieval and modern pottery were collected from three deposits 704, 708 and 804. The sherds comprised refined whiteware with blue stamped decoration, plain refined whiteware, salt-glazed stoneware, and a fragment of blue-painted porcelain, collectively dateable broadly to the 18th to 19th centuries. Other, earlier, post-medieval sherds from these deposits occurred residually and are identifiable as coarse internally-glazed earthenware.
- 2.13 One fragment of leather was retrieved from deposit 805 within pit 803 and could be an off-cut of post-medieval date, considering the date of the pottery retrieved from the above layer 804 (see Appendix B).
- 2.14 It is recommended that the modern artefacts are not retained due to their limited archaeological potential.
- 2.15 Three pieces of waterlogged wood were retrieved from context 804 within pit 803 (Appendix C). One fragment of wood was identified as willow (*Salix* spp) and two fragments were identified as wild/bird cherry (*Prunus avium/padus*). There was no evidence that any of the fragments had been worked and are most likely natural fragments preserved due to waterlogged conditions. No further analysis is recommended for these pieces.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The evaluation has identified a number of archaeological features within the site. Most features had been truncated by modern ploughing.
- 3.2 Features 703, 707, 803 and 807 showed a general correlation with the results of the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2010). However many of the linear and discrete anomalies identified by the geophysical survey were not observed in the evaluation, whilst some features excavated in the evaluation had not been identified by the geophysics.
- 3.3 The undated linear gullies and ditches 203, 403 and 705, together with postmedieval ditch 703, may relate to field boundaries or drainage features. These features are shallow and, with the exception of 703, had not been identified by the geophysical survey.
- 3.4 Ditch 707 was a substantial feature with surviving timber planking 713 and wooden stake 716 at its base. These timber fragments suggest it may have been lined and revetted with planks and may be associated with Foxhangers Wharf or the construction of the canal between 1794 and 1810 as the feature is dated to the 18th or 19th century by pottery found in its fills. Pits 803 and 807 may be related to clay extraction, possibly also associated with the construction of the canal, as the fill (804) of pit 803 contained 18th or 19th-century pottery.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Alexandra Wilkinson, assisted by Jerry Stone and Jon Pick. The report was written by Alexandra Wilkinson, assisted by Chiz Harward. The illustrations were prepared by Peter Moore. The finds report was written by Angela Aggujarro and the palaeoenvironmental report by Sarah Cobain. The archive has been compiled by Chiz Harward, and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

5. **REFERENCES**

Adonis Ecology Ltd 2010 Ecology Method Statement for Proposed Marina Development at Lower Foxhangers, Devizes

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1959 Sheet 282 Devizes 1 inch scale

- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010 Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and Rowde, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 Land at Lower Foxhangers Farm, archaeological deskbased assessment, CA typescript report **08147**

Clew. K.R. 1985 The Kennet and Avon Canal, David & Charles Ltd., Newton Abbot

- Corfield, M.C. (ed) 1978 A guide to the industrial archaeology of Wiltshire, Wiltshire County Council Library Museum Service, Wiltshire
- Stratascan 2010 Lower Foxhangers Farm, Geophysical Survey Report, Stratascan report J2714

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
100	Layer	Ploughsoil, dark grey silt	30	2.1	0.25– 0.30	
101	Layer	Natural substrate, light orange brown clay, occasional manganese flecks	30	2.1		

Trench 2

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
201	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	50	1.8	0.23	
202	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange silty clay, common manganese flecks	50	1.8		
203	Cut	Cut of linear	8.46	0.46	0.16	
204	Fill	Fill of 202	8.46	0.46	0.16	

Trench 3

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
301	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	50	1.8	0.30	
302	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange clay. Sondage shows clay becoming increasingly grey green with depth	50	1.8	>0.7	

Trench 4

No.	Туре	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Spot-
			(m)	(m)	(m)	date
401	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	50	1.8	0.24	
402	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange silty clay, common manganese flecks	50	1.8		
403	Cut	Linear ditch	1.80	0.9	0.16	
404	Fill	Fill of 403	1.80	0.9	0.16	

Trench 5

No.	Туре	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Spot-
			(m)	(m)	(m)	date
501	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	50	1.8	0.22	
502	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange silty clay, occasional manganese flecks	50	1.8		

Trench 6

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
601	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	30	1.8	0.27	
602	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange silty clay	30	1.8		

Trench 7

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
701	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	30	1.8	0.30	
702	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange silty clay, occasional manganese flecks	30	1.8		
703	Cut	Cut of linear	1.8	2.19	0.27	
704	Fill	Fill of 703	1.8	2.19	0.27	
705	Cut	Cut of gully	1.8	0.62	0.27	
706	Fill	Fill of gully	1.8	0.62	0.27	
707	Cut	Cut of linear	3.6	1.63	1.45	
708	Fill	Primary fill of 707	>1.2	1.30	0.85	
709	Fill	Backfill of 707	3.6	1.63	0.90	
710	Layer	Mid grey silt with stone rubble and clinker	2.6	3.6	0.30	
711	Layer	Clay-silt deposit			0.17	
712	Layer	Clay-silt deposit			0.11	
713	Structure	Two parallel wooden planks, set across base of, and perpendicular to, ditch 707	1	0.25	0.03	
714	Cut	Circular stakehole: not excavated	0.3	0.2		
715	Fill	Fill of 714	0.3	0.2		
716	Structure	Wooden stake: retained in situ	0.15	0.05	0.2	
717	Cut	?stakehole: not excavated	0.3	>0.2		
718	Fill	Fill of 717	0.3	>0.2		

Trench 8

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
801	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	30	1.8	0.30	date
802	Layer	Natural substrate, mottled greyish orange silty clay, occasional manganese flecks	30	1.8		
803	Cut	Cut of pit	6.0	1.6	>1.16m	
804	Fill	Fill of 803	1.48	0.7	0.95	C18-19
805	Fill	Fill of 803	1.12	0.7	0.26	
806	Fill	Fill of 803	1.12	0.7	0.04	
807	Cut	Cut of possible pit	6.0	1.8	0.27	
808	Fill	Fill of 807	6.0	1.8	0.27	

Trench 9

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
900	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	50	1.8	0.30	
901	Layer	Natural substrate, greyish orange silty clay,	50	1.8		

Trench 10

No.	Туре	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot- date
1000	Layer	Ploughsoil, mid greyish brown silty clay	40	1.8	0.30	
1001	Layer	Natural substrate, greyish orange silty clay,	40	1.8		
1002	Cut	Linear feature	2.98	0.65	>0.24	
1003	Fill	Fill of 1002	2.98	0.65	>0.24	Modern

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Date
704	Post-med and Modern pottery: refined white ware, salt-glazed		27	C18-C19
	stoneware,			
	post-med internally glazed ware	1	3	
	Clay pipe	2	7	
	Metal objects: Fe nail, Pb strip	1	1	
	Oyster shell			
708	Glass	2	11	C18-C19
	Post-med and Modern pottery: refined whiteware, post-med	4	23	
	internally glazed	1	3	
	Ceramic building material: small fragment			
713	Wooden planks forming structure/lining at base of ditch 707. Retained in situ.	2	-	-
804	Post-med and Modern pottery: Porcelain, green glazed sandy ware.	2	4	M C18-C19
	Coal	21	17	
805	Leather off-cut?	1 6 Post-med		

APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Context	Description	Таха	Weight (g)
804	Fill of	Salix spp (willow) (1)	1
	pit 803	Prunus avium/spinosa (wild/bird cherry) (2)	2.8

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name	Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and F	Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and Rowde, Wiltshire			
Short description	Archaeology in July 2010 on land at	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in July 2010 on land at Lower Foxhangers Farm Poulshot and Rowde. Ten trenches were excavated. The evaluation identified a number of archaeological features within the site. One undated ditch, two undated gullies, and two possible clay extraction pits were revealed. A ditch containing timber, stone and 18th/19th-century pottery may relate to the location of the origina Foxhangers Wharf or construction of the canal.			
	extraction pits were revealed. A ditch co 18th/19th-century pottery may relate to Foxhangers Wharf or construction of the				
Project dates	26 -30 July 2010				
Project type	Field Evaluation				
Previous work	Desk Based Assessment: Cotswold Archaeology 2008 Geophysical Survey: Stratascan 2010				
Future work	Unknown				
PROJECT LOCATION					
Site Location	Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and F	Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and Rowde, Wiltshire			
Study area	5ha				
Site co-ordinates	s ST 9628 1655				
PROJECT CREATORS					
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Brief originator	Not applicable	Not applicable			
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology				
Project Manager	Simon Cox	Simon Cox			
Project Supervisor	Alexandra Wilkinson				
MONUMENT TYPE	None	None			
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	None			
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Contents			
Physical	Devizes Museum	Ceramics, wood, leather			
Paper	Devizes Museum	Context sheets, trench sheets, photographic registers			
Digital	Devizes Museum	Database, digital photos			
BIBLIOGRAPHY					

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010 Lower Foxhangers Farm, Poulshot and Rowde, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report **10132**







