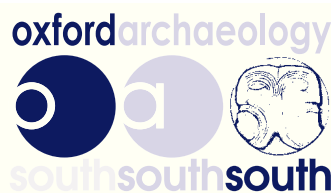


Rollright Quarry Chipping Norton



Archaeological Watching Brief Report




October 2011

Client: Smiths Bletchington Ltd

Issue No: 1
OA Job No: 5157
NGR: SP 281 306



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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Christopher Richardson

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Plate 3 A hand-investigated soil patch



Summary

In early September 2011, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Rollright Quarry, Chipping Norton. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Smiths of Bletchington Ltd and involved the monitoring of soil stripping for the construction of a haul road and prior to stone extraction. No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were observed.

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 In early September 2011, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Rollright Quarry, Chipping Norton. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Smiths of Bletchington Ltd. and comprised the monitoring of ground reduction in preparation for stone quarrying and for the construction of a haul road to the quarry. The haul road was approximately 230m long, the area of reduction for stone quarrying was 3.3 ha.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of planning permission. Works associated with extraction are subject to a long standing permission (planning ref: W97/1494) and agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI - OA 1999). Works associated with the haul road are covered by planning permission ref: 07/1461/P/CM a brief set by Hugh Coddington of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC 2006) and a WSI produced by CgMs Consulting (CgMs 2011).
- 1.1.3 This report documents the results of the watching brief required and specified in the above documents.

1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The development site is located to the north west of Chipping Norton and west of the A3400 and the Rollright Stones. Its southern extent is the road from the A3400 to the Cross Hands PH at the junction of the A44 and the A436. The route of the proposed road stretches from NGR SP 28543031 to SP 28363044. The geology is fine loam overlying limestone and the site slopes gently towards the southeast from 238m OD to 225m OD (OCC 2006).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site is situated just off the Saltway to Great Rollright road (the Cotswold or Jurassic Way) which is the ancient road linking the East Midlands to the south-west. There is an early megalithic complex and barrow cemetery to the east of the site at the Rollright Stones. There are also Iron Age and Roman settlements and a Saxon cemetery near to the Stones.
- 1.3.2 The periodic expansion of the quarry site has been monitored by watching briefs during 1999, 2005 and 2008. Along with a spot find of a beaker vessel in the 1940's an Iron Age pit or ditch was exposed in the quarry face to the west of the present site in 1999 (see OA 1999 for both references).
- 1.3.3 All previous observations noted the presence of soil anomalies interpreted as the infills of frost fractures/ice wedges as well as the occasional presence of historic quarrying features.



2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 The projects aims were to preserve by record any archaeological remains which may be disturbed by the development works and to make available the results of the investigation.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 A 0.4m thick topsoil overlay a mid red brown clay subsoil (0.2m thick). This overlay limestone in a yellow brown clay matrix.
- 3.1.2 Several, linear, irregular and discrete soil patches were hand-excavated in order to investigate the possibility that these were either pits or quarrying features or other remains of anthropogenic origin. All fills and edges were more indicative of geological processes (see Plate 3). No finds were recovered from any deposit

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were noted or retrieved during the watching brief.

3.3 Environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were noted during the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 Only fills of geological origination features (frost fractures etc.) were observed, similar to those seen on the 1999 investigations and other previous sites.



APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Depth	Width	Length	Comments	Finds	Date
100	Fill	0.4m		230m	topsoil		
101	Fill	0.2m		230m	subsoil		
102	Fill			230m	Limestone [natural]		
103	Cut	0.43m	3.12m		Irregular depression		
104	Fill				Fill of Irregular depression 103		
105	Cut	0.93m	3.06m		Frost fracture		
106	Fill	0.33m			Fill of Frost fracture 105		
107	Fill	0.4m	1.37m		Fill of Frost fracture		
108	Fill	0.23m			Fill of Frost fracture 105		
109	Cut	0.92m+	1.1m	10m+	Frost fracture		
110	Fill	0.08m	0.06m+	10m+	Fill of frost fracture 109		
111	Fill	0.05m+	0.08m+	10m+	Fill of frost fracture 109		
112	Fill	0.48m	0.44m	10m+	Fill of frost fracture 109		
113	Cut	0.48m	1.48m		Frost fracture		
114	Fill				Fill of frost fracture 113		
115	Fill	0.32m	0.58m		Fill of frost fracture 113		
116	Fill	0.2m	1.3m	10m+	Fill of frost fracture 109		
117	Cut	1.12m+	1.26m	1.6m	Discrete natural feature		
118	Fill	0.76m	1.26m	1.6m	Fill of 117		
119	Fill	0.3m+	0.76m		Fill of 117		



APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

CgMs Consulting	2011	Project Design for Archaeological Works In respect of Rollright Quarry. CgMs Ref: WB/13172
English Heritage	1991	The Management of Archaeological Projects (2nd ed.)
English Heritage	2006	The Management of Projects in the Historic Environment
IFA	2008	Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs
OAU	1992	Field Manual (ed. D. Wilkinson)
Oxford Archaeology	1999	Rollright Quarry, Archaeological Watching Brief. Written Scheme of Investigation. Planning permission W97/1494
Oxford Archaeology	2008	Flick Quarry, Rollright, Oxfordshire Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Oxfordshire County Council	2006	Rollright Quarry Access Road – Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief

APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Rollright Quarry, Chipping Norton
Site code:	CHROQ11
Grid reference:	NGR SP 281 306
Type of watching brief:	Construction of haul road and topsoil/subsoil removal from quarry area
Date and duration of project:	September 2011 – 4 weeks
Area	3.3ha
Summary of results:	No archaeological remains
Location of archive:	Oxfordshire County Museum Service

Plate 1: The quarry site after removal of topsoil and subsoil



Plate 2: The haul road



Plate 3 A hand-investigated soil patch





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Figure 1: Site location

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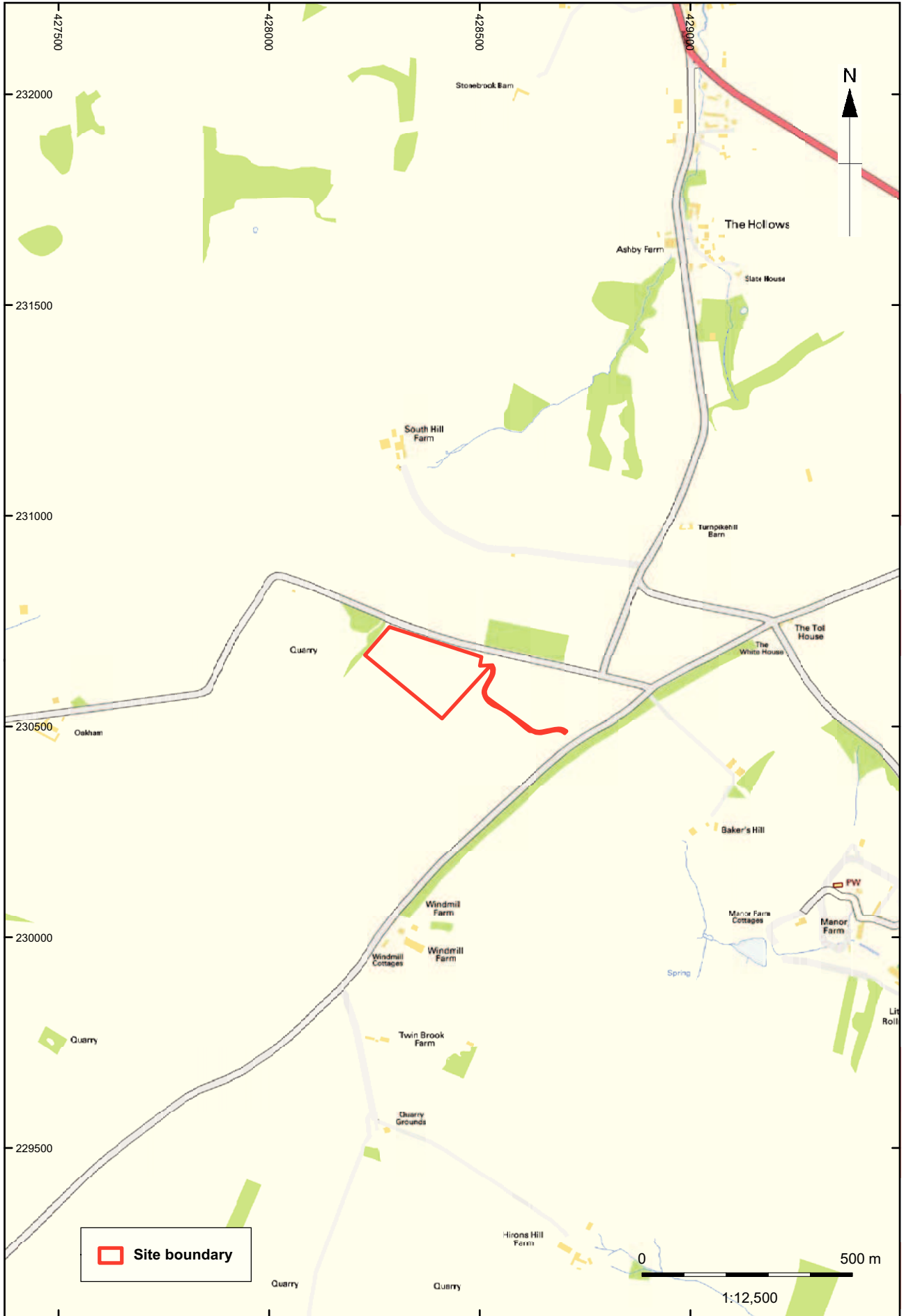


Figure 2: Site area