

**Report on Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control at  
'The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk'  
ENF141921**

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**Archaeological Report**

**CB519R v.1.1**

**The Old Forge, Swaffham Road  
Ickburgh, Norfolk'**

**ENF141921**

Prepared for:

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## Summary

Groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling and garage at 'The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk' (Norfolk Historic Environment Record event number ENF141921) were carried out under archaeological supervision and control between July 2017 and March 2018. Despite the potential for archaeological remains, none were present.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A programme of Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control resulting from development proposals at 'The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk' (grid reference TL 80794 94687, Fig. 1) has been requested by the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (reference CNF46595\_1).
- 1.2 Report, CB519R v.1.0, details how Chris Birks undertook these works and summarises the results and a copy was submitted to the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service. Approval was received prior to preparation and distribution of this final copy, CB519R v.1.1.

Fig. 1. Site location plan



Not printed to scale

## 2.0 Project Background

- 2.1 A proposal for the construction of a new dwelling and garage at 'The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk' was approved subject to a condition for a Programme of Archaeological work.

Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control (also referred to as "archaeological monitoring" or "Watching Brief") were required at a level of constant attendance.

- 2.2 Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control were required to record the presence/absence, date, extent, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological layers or subsoil archaeological features in accordance with *National Planning Policy Framework (2012)*, (paras 128, 129, 132, 134 and 141). They were undertaken in accordance with a generic Brief issued by the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service and Generic Written Scheme of Investigation for Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control (CBGenWB v.1.9). Specific aims of the project are to determine the presence/absence, date, extent, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological layers or subsoil archaeological features. This forms part of the research agenda for the eastern counties of England in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011). Full details of research aims, methodology and standards are provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 2.3 The *Code of Conduct* (2014), *Regulations for Professional Conduct* (January 2015 revision) and *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (2014) by the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists (CIFA) were adhered to.
- 2.4 Works were carried out according to guidelines set out in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003) and *Management of research projects in the historic environment. The MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015).
- 2.5 Norfolk Historic Environment Record event number ENF141921. Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) ID: chrisbir-312869 (*Appendix 2*).
- 2.6 The archive will be prepared, including a form suitable for microfilming if required, consistent with the principles of *Management of research projects in the historic environment. The MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015) and submitted to the Norfolk Museums Service for long-term storage.

### **3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 3.1 A search of Norfolk Historic Environment Records (NHER) within 1km of the site was carried out on 17 March 2017 and produced 53 records. Due to the lack of archaeological remains encountered during the excavations, only those within the immediate vicinity of the site are summarised in this report. Further details of these and all other entries can be seen at the Historic Environment Record office at Gressenhall near Dereham by prior appointment.
- 3.2 In 1988, an undated wooden structure and several prehistoric worked flints were found during excavations for a pond to the south of the development site (NHER 24828). Subsequent investigations by J. J. Wymer recovered a small number of additional flints. The majority of the flints were Late Upper Palaeolithic, including complete and broken long blades (one retouched at one end) and a core tablet. A sherd of medieval pottery was also found.
- 3.3 Lower/Middle Palaeolithic worked flints and Late Upper Palaeolithic long blade industry have been recorded at Lynford Hall Pit to the east/southeast of the development site (NHER 21499). This large gravel pit produced a significant number of Palaeolithic flints when it was worked during the 1980s and 1990s. Although no formal archaeological work took place, the quarry and its reject heaps were examined on many occasions by a number of individuals. The finds recovered included up to 20 handaxes, many flakes (including some handaxe thinning flakes) and one retouched flake. Two pieces showed possible evidence for Levallois technique, suggesting that at least some of this material dates to the Middle Palaeolithic. Several of the handaxes are also of a form typically associated with Late Middle Palaeolithic Neanderthal populations. These handaxes are almost certainly related to a substantial Late Middle Palaeolithic assemblage that was recovered when a new quarry pit was opened to the east of this site in 2001 (see NHER 37095). This assemblage is of national significance as it was found within the organic fills of a palaeochannel, in close association with the remains of woolly mammoths and several other large mammals. The remainder of the Lower-Middle Palaeolithic assemblage from this site was however most likely derived from the

Wissey gravels and associated to one or more earlier phases of activity (and therefore probably contemporary with a small assemblage of residual, rolled material recovered during the excavation of the palaeochannel). Over 100 Late Upper Palaeolithic flints were also recovered from this quarry, found when silty Late Glacial deposits were disturbed at the northern edge of the quarry, close to the river. A single fragment of Iron Age pottery was also found in this part of the site.

- 3.4 A Roman coin of Antonius Pius was found to the southwest of the site in 1966 (NHER 5079). Two pieces of Roman pottery were found to the northeast of West Farm and west/northwest of the development site in 1953 (NHER 5077). The site has since been built over.
- 3.5 Metal detecting to the northwest of the development site in 1997/8 recovered a Roman coin and a late Roman buckle plate while an access road to a duck processing factory was being built (NHER 35794). A Late Saxon strap end was also found.
- 3.6 Metal detecting to the west/southwest of the development site in 2000 recovered an Early Saxon cruciform brooch (NHER 35795). A Late Saxon suspension unit from a censer or lamp was found through metal-detecting to the south of the development site in 2010 (NHER 54024).
- 3.7 St Peter's Church lies to the northeast of the development site (NHER 5048). This church was formerly dedicated to St Bartholomew. Most of the 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century church was rebuilt between 1866 and 1867. The tower dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Legend has it that a beer mug and bottle in the east gable were put there by a builder who was sacked for drinking on the job. An archaeological watching brief during drainage work in 2004 found no archaeological features or finds.
- 3.8 The site of St Mary's and St Lawrence's Chapel, a medieval leper chapel, lies close-by and to the southwest of the development site (NHER 5083). Parts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages at this site belonged to a former 13<sup>th</sup> century flint and stone leper chapel. The chapel was used as a bridge toll house in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was made into cottages in 1739 and burnt down in 1888. The remains of the chapel were then integrated into the pair of semi-detached houses now on the site. There are still two 13<sup>th</sup> century doorways. A watching brief at the site in 2001 found no archaeological features or finds.
- 3.9 The earthworks of a rectangular moated enclosure to the south of the development site are visible on the ground and on aerial photographs (NHER 31916). The moat may have been the site of a medieval to Post-medieval parsonage. Fragments of Post-medieval brick and pottery have been found within the moat.
- 3.10 Metal-detecting to the west/northwest of the development site in 2016 recovered a medieval coin as well as medieval to Post-medieval metal objects (NHER 61240). The metal finds include a medieval brooch; medieval/Post-medieval hooked tags and a scale pan from a balance and a Post-medieval dagger pommel. Nearby, metal-detecting in 2016 recovered a medieval brooch and a Post-medieval sword belt hanger (NHER 61241).
- 3.11 Sporadic metal-detecting to the northeast of the development site between 1992 and 2015 recovered medieval and Post-medieval coins and a medieval strap-end and swivel from a leash (NHER 29672).
- 3.12 West Park Farm and Tithe Barn lie to the west of the development site (NHER 29977). This timber-framed farmhouse probably dates to around 1600 but was much altered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The brick barn is 19<sup>th</sup> century and has a corrugated asbestos roof. It has since been converted into housing and is called the Tithe Barn though there is no evidence to suggest it ever was a tithe barn.
- 3.13 Manor Farm, a 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed and rendered farm house with a thatched roof lies to the northeast of the development site (NHER 16512). Inside there are original wooden beams. It may be built on or stand close to the site of an earlier medieval manor. The excavation of three trial trenches near Manor Farm in 2008 recorded several Late-medieval and Post-medieval pits, ditches, and post-holes as well as a Post-medieval well or soakaway and the remains of a Post-medieval or early modern structure (NHER 51117). These features are likely associated with cottages that once stood on the southern boundary of this plot.

- 3.14 An archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to 69 Ashburton Road to the northeast of the development site in 2008 revealed six pits, two post-holes, a possible foundation trench, two brick walls and modern features (NHER 51295). All the features were Post-medieval or modern in date.
- 3.15 The possible site of a Post-medieval church or chapel lies to the southeast of the development site (NHER 15248). A church is marked here on Faden's 1797 map of Norfolk. This may be a mistake by Faden or the site of an early nonconformist chapel. Close to this location and also marked on Faden's 1797 map lies the site of a brick kiln (NHER 15249).
- 3.16 The Woodlands, former school and teacher's house, lies to the northeast of the development site (NHER 57303). This school was erected in 1850 with an attached teacher's house and was enlarged in 1870. It seems that the school closed before the 1940s and has been very much altered in its conversion to residential use.
- 3.17 Earthworks of 19<sup>th</sup> century floated water meadows to the southeast of the development site were surveyed in 1996 (NHER 31242). The meadows were probably created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Nathan Lucas of Lynford Hall. Their creation was part a larger regional trend for reclamation and landscape improvement schemes carried out by large estates.
- 3.18 The site of the Mundford Royal Observers Corp post lies to the north/northeast of the development site (NHER 35421). It was opened in 1961 and closed in 1991. There is an aircraft observation post and an underground room for measuring fallout in the event of nuclear attack. The men working here built a second structure without official authorisation. It has been suggested that this was constructed for the men's families, but this has been refuted. The small second bunker may have been constructed as a lavatory and was later used for storage.
- 3.19 A modern copy of a barbed and tanged flint arrowhead was found in a pit to the northwest of the development site in 1962 (NHER 5082). The find was reported in the local press as a 'polished flint axehead'. The pit has since been built over.
- 3.20 Metal-detecting to the west of the development site in 2014 and 2015 recovered multi-period finds including a Neolithic/Bronze Age flint flake, a medieval pottery sherd and coin, Post-medieval tokens, medieval to Post-medieval buckles and medieval harness mounts (NHER 59860).
- 3.21 In 1998, an archaeological excavation on the course of a new pipeline to the southwest of the development site did not record any archaeological finds or features (NHER 33833).
- 3.22 An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at Manor Farm, Ickburgh to the east/northeast of the development site in 2017 did not record any archaeological finds or features (NHER event number ENF142928, Birks 2017)

## **4.0 Geology and Topography**

- 4.1 The parish of Ickburgh lies upon a solid geology close to the border between Upper Chalk in the east and Lower and Middle Chalk in the west with areas of overlying Boulder Clay (Funnell 2005) The soil landscape is characterised as that of Brecklands (Williamson 2005).
- 4.2 The site is located to the north of Swaffham Road towards the south side of Ickburgh and north of the River Wissey on relatively level land at an elevation of c. 16m OD.

## **5.0 Results**

### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 Site conditions were good and access was gained from Swaffham Road to the south of the site. The weather was dry and overcast with sunny spells. Archaeological monitoring was carried out between 05 July 2017 and 07 March 2018 during excavations associated with the new dwelling, garage and surface water drainage. Context numbers were allocated during fieldwork and are summarised in *Appendix 1*.
- 5.1.2 A drawing depicting foundations trenches is not available and a site plan drawing has been prepared from a drawing provided by Clayland Estates Limited (*Fig. 2*).

## 5.2 Observations

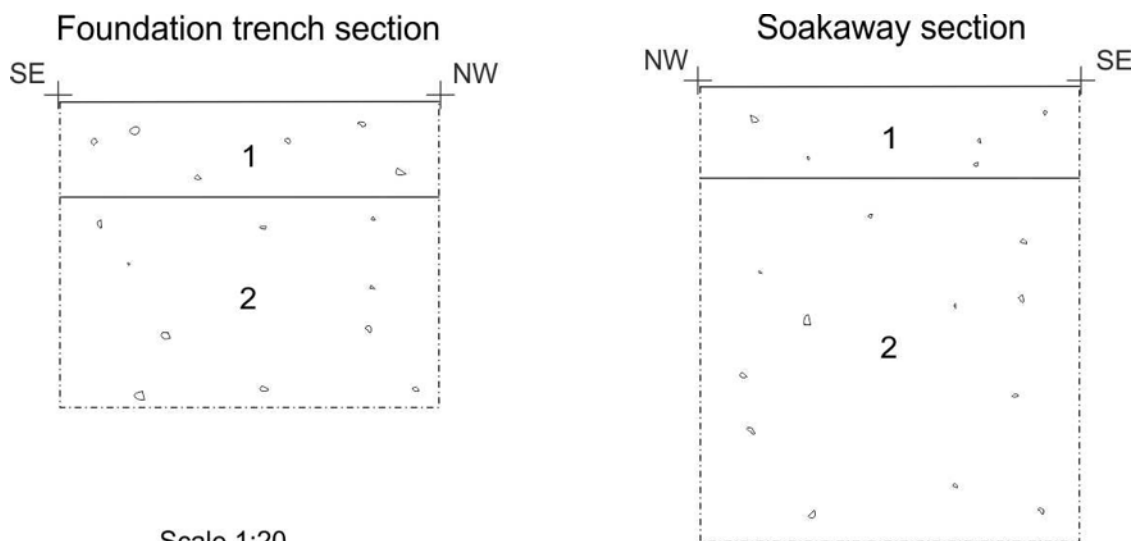
- 5.2.1 Initially, c. 0.3m (west side of the plot) to c. 0.1m of light to mid grey silty sand topsoil (1) with rare small-sized subangular flints was removed and spoil was used on the east side of the plot to level the ground surface. Excavations for foundation trenches for the dwelling and garage extended to a depth of c. 0.8m beneath present ground level removing c. 0.2m of topsoil (1) and light to mid orange yellow sand undisturbed 'natural' deposits (2) with occasional small-sized subangular flints.

**Plate 1.** Example of foundation trenches, looking north



- 5.2.2 Excavations for a surface water soakaway measured c. 1.5m by 1m to a depth of c. 1.2m beneath present ground level removing c. 0.3m of topsoil (1) and undisturbed 'natural' deposits (2). The client advised that excavations for surface water drainage trenches would only extend into made-up ground deposits and were not monitored.

**Fig. 3.** Sample section drawings



Scale 1:20





5.2.3 No archaeological remains were present.

## **6.0 Conclusions and Discussion**

6.1 Monitoring during groundworks associated with the construction of the new dwelling, garage and surface water soakaway did not reveal any archaeological remains. The precise reasons for this are not known. Archaeological remains may survive beyond the minimally excavated areas or are located beyond the development site.

## **Acknowledgments**

The project was undertaken by Chris Birks on behalf of Mr Simon Ball who also funded the work. Many thanks to James and Mark who carried out the excavations. Many thanks also to Clayland Estates Limited. Fieldwork was undertaken by Chris Birks and the report was written by Chris Birks.

Many thanks to Peter Watkins at the Norfolk Historic Environment Record office based at Gressenhall. Thanks also to James Albone, Steve Hickling, Charlotte Jarvis, John Percival, David Robertson and Andrew Rogerson at the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service.

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**Appendix 1** Context Summary

<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	D	Light to mid grey silty sand topsoil with rare small-sized subangular flints	CB/05 Jul 17
2	D	Light to mid orange yellow sand undisturbed 'natural' deposits with occasional small-sized subangular flints	CB/05 Jul 17

**Key**

D deposit

## Appendix 2 OASIS Record

**OASIS ID: [chrisbir1-312869](#)**

### Project details

Project name	WUASC at 'The Old Forge, Ickburgh, Norfolk'
Short description of the project	Groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling and garage at 'The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk' were carried out under archaeological supervision and control between July 2017 and March 2018. Despite the potential for archaeological remains, none were present.
Project dates	Start: 05-07-2017 End: 07-03-2018
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ENF141921 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK BRECKLAND ICKBURGH The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk
Study area	80 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 80794 94687 52.519598406937 0.665010366239 52 31 10 N 000 39 54 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Chris Birks
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Chris Birks
Project director/manager	Chris Birks
Project supervisor	Chris Birks

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No

Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Paper Archive ID	ENF141921
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"
Paper Archive notes	Report includes colour digital image

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### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Report on Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control at 'The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Norfolk'
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Birks, C.
Other bibliographic details	Report Number CB519R v.1.1
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Entered by	Chris Birks (chris@chrisbirksarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	2 May 2018

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## OASIS:

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- Site boundary
- New dwelling

0 20m

**Chris Birks** Archaeological Services - Urban & Rural

The Old Forge, Swaffham Road, Ickburgh, Norfolk

Scale 1:500      CB519R v.1.1      02 May 18

Based on a drawing by Clayland Estates Ltd

Figure 2. Site plan