

# **KERSWELL GREEN SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT**

## **Interim Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief**

Prepared By

**NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

On behalf of

**COSTAIN**

For

**SEVERN TRENT WATER**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Summary**

Network Archaeology was commissioned by Costain Geotechnics to provide an archaeological watching brief on exploratory groundworks (geotechnical boreholes) at the proposed expansion and upgrade to the Kerswell Green Sewage Treatment Plant.

The work was monitored over a one day period, on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010, by a single archaeologist.

This interim report presents the results of observations made during the geotechnical investigations. It is envisaged that these results will form part of the full archaeological report which will be prepared following completion of future archaeological works. These are currently planned to take place during the main development phase later in the year.

### **1.2 Description of the Proposed Development Area**

The Proposed development Area (PDA) is located within a triangular area of land located to the east of the main road through Kerswell Green, to the south of an unadopted road and west of the M5. The field had been used for arable cultivation, but had recently been fenced off and left fallow.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

A desk-based assessment covering the PDA and its immediate environs showed that the only known archaeological remains from within the PDA itself was medieval ridge and furrow (but see 3.1). However, the surrounding landscape contains possible prehistoric activity (as evidenced by enclosures and trackways) and a Roman road located only 200m to the west of the PDA.

### **1.4 Proposed Groundworks**

The proposal was for a single borehole up to 7m deep and two test-pits up to 3m deep each. On the day, however, the test-pits were substituted by further boreholes, due to ground conditions.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

Having located the positions of the proposed boreholes by hand-measured survey, the geotechnical contractor undertook hand-excavation to a depth of c.1-1.2m. The final required depth at each location was achieved through mechanical boring.

Archaeological recording was limited to the hand-dug portion, as the water-table prevented observations and recording below this depth. The results presented below have, therefore, been supplemented borehole data recorded by the geotechnical contractor. The three boreholes were located by hand-held GPS (with an accuracy of to +/- 5m), digitally photographed to the top of the water-table and recorded in section. Each borehole was allocated a block of one hundred 'context' numbers for recording purposes, as follows: Borehole 1 was assigned 100-199, Borehole 2 was assigned 200-299 and Borehole 3 was assigned 300-399.

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Reconnaissance

Slight surface undulations were observed within the PDA. The origin of the undulations could not be positively determined but they might represent the remnants of ridge and furrow (see 1.3).

#### 3.2 Borehole 1

Borehole 1 was located at NGR 386240 246467 and measured 0.34m in diameter. It contained four distinct soil horizons which are shown in Plate 1 and described in Table 3.1. The water table was encountered at 1.02m below present ground surface. No archaeological remains were observed or finds made.

**Plate 1: East facing section of Borehole 1**



**Table 3.1: Context index for Borehole 1**

Context No	Description	Interpretation	Depth
100	Mid brownish grey friable silty sand with occasional small angular and rounded stones	Topsoil	0-0.2m
101	Mid brownish grey friable sandy silt with occasional small shell fragments and small angular and rounded stones	Subsoil	0.2-0.68m
102	Light orangey brown friable sandy silt with moderate small-medium rounded stones	Alluvial layer	0.68-0.95m
103	Light orangey brown friable silty sand with frequent gravel	Alluvial layer	0.95-1.02m

#### 3.3 Borehole 2

Borehole 2 was located at NGR 386264 246474 and measured 0.34m in diameter. It contained four distinct soil horizons, which are shown in Plate 2 and described in Table 3.2. The water table was encountered at 1.17m below present ground surface. No archaeological remains were observed or finds made.

**Plate 2: East facing section of Borehole 2**



**Table 3.2: Context index for Borehole 2**

Context No	Description	Interpretation	Depth
200	Mid brownish grey friable silty sand with occasional small angular and rounded stones	Topsoil	0-0.18m
201	Mid brownish grey friable sandy silt with occasional small shell fragments and small angular and rounded stones	Subsoil	0.18-0.55m
202	Light orangey brown friable sandy silt with moderate small-medium rounded stones	Alluvial layer	0.55-0.98m
203	Light orangey brown friable silty sand with frequent gravel	Alluvial layer	0.98-1.17m

**3.4 Borehole 3**

Borehole 3 was located at NGR 386281 246485 and measured 0.34m in diameter. It contained five distinct soil horizons which are shown in Plate 3 and described in Table 3.3. The water table was encountered at 1.15m below present ground surface. No archaeological remains were observed or finds made.

**Plate 3: East facing section of Borehole 3**



**Table 3.3: Context index for Borehole 3**

<b>Context No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Depth</b>
300	Mid brownish grey friable silty sand with occasional small angular and rounded stones	Topsoil	0-0.22m
301	Mid brownish grey friable sandy silt with occasional small shell fragments and small angular and rounded stones	Subsoil	0.22-0.63m
302	Light orangey brown friable sandy silt with moderate small-medium rounded stones	Alluvial layer	0.63-0.91m
303	Light orangey brown friable silty sand with frequent gravel	Alluvial layer	0.91-1.07m
304	Light orangey grey friable silty sand with no inclusions visible in the borehole.	Alluvial layer	1.07-1.15m

## **4 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION**

Despite there being a record of extant ridge and furrow within the PDA, no surviving trace could be seen, despite close examination of the surface.

Unfortunately, the change of methodology to boreholes meant that no useful profiles could be obtained to record any buried remains which might survive at the site.

The absence of any archaeological deposits or finds suggests only limited archaeological activity within the local area.

The layers identified below subsoil were clearly alluvial in nature, suggesting that the PDA is located within the historic floodplain of the nearby River Severn.