Land at Langham Road, Blakeney

Archaeological Evaluation Report

OA East Report No: 1357
OASIS No: oxfordar3-121454
NGR: TG 02303 43467

Client: Hill Partnerships Ltd

April 2012
Land at Langham Road, Blakeney

Archaeological Evaluation

By Jonathan House BA

With contributions by Chris Faine MA Msc AIFA, Anthony Haskins MSc BSc PIFA

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Report Date: April 2012
Report Number: 1357
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HER Event No: ENF128791
Date of Works: March, 2012
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Planning Ref: 
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Summary

An evaluation was carried out by OA East on the 28th and 29th March 2012, on land to the west of Langham Road, Blakeney, Norfolk, Grid ref. TG 02303 43467.

A small assemblage of 12 worked flints were recovered as surface finds, the flints are considered to be of Bronze Age date. A small trading token carrying the crest of Great Yarmouth was also recovered dated to 1667AD.

The only features, and remaining noteworthy finds found within the evaluation related to post medieval agricultural activity, although the possible remains of a headland at the eastern boundary of the site may be an indication of medieval farming practices.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land to the west of Langham Road, on the southern periphery of Blakeney, centered on Grid ref. TG 02303 43467

1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by James Albone of Historic Environment Service, Norfolk County Council (Albone 2012) supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East.

1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by Norfolk County Council, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The proposed development area sits at approximately 21m AOD with the ground rising to the south and falling towards the coast and Blakeney marshes. The site is located at the south western edge of the modern town immediately to the west of Langham Road.

1.2.2 The superficial deposits on the site consist of Briton's Lane Sand And Gravel Member - Sand And Gravel. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. These deposits overlay chalk bedrock formed approximately 71 to 94 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. (British Geological Survey; Geology of Britain Viewer at a scale of 1:50000 http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html, accessed 19/3/12.)

1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 The following section draws heavily upon information sourced from 'Specification for Archaeological Evaluation, Land at Langham Road, Blakeney' (House 2012).

1.3.2 Blakeney is a coastal village 18Km west of Cromer, the village presides over a coastal inlet, giving the village a long history as a sea port. The first recording of a settlement is seen in the the Domesday Book of 1085, Blakeney is recorded under the name Esnuterle (Snitterley). Its success as a long-standing port can be seen in its buildings, such as the impressive church (NHER 6167) and the Medieval Guildhall (NHER 6133).

1.3.3 Archaeological work within the area is fairly limited, however the presence of archaeologically significant material can be seen in the variety of HER entries for the parish. These however relate to chance finds or visible upstanding remains. Many of the, sometimes substantial, groups of chance finds have no more locational information than the name and grid reference of the village.

1.3.4 Many of the finds scatters include flint objects of Neolithic and Bronze age date, and roughly 0.5km north-west of the proposed development area, two Bronze Age barrows can be seen (NHER 6131 and NHER 6132). Beaker pottery of Bronze Age date has
also been found to the south of the site (NER 6128), while undated cropmarks also to
the south have been tentatively suggested as Bronze Age in date (NER 17098).

1.3.5 A finds scatter discovered through metal detecting was also recorded within the search
area, the recovered finds being of Roman, medieval, and post-medieval date (NER
29163).

1.3.6 The finds assemblages in the area are dominated by medieval and post-medieval finds,
but a background presence of Roman material is also clearly identifiable.

1.4 Acknowledgements
1.4.1 The author would like to thank Hill Partnerships Ltd who commissioned and funded the
archaeological works. The author would also like to thank the site staff James Fairbairn,
and Dave Brown. Thanks are also extended to Paul Spoerry who managed the project
and James Albone who monitored the project.
2 **AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

2.1 **Aims**

2.1.1 The objective of this archaeological investigation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

2.2 **Methodology**

2.2.1 The Brief required that all archaeological deposits should be investigated, and recorded.

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Dave Brown using Leica GPS 1200.

2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

2.2.6 No suitable deposits were encountered within the evaluation for environmental analysis.

2.2.7 The site conditions and the weather did not inhibit the archaeological work.
3 Results

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The results will be presented by trench in numeric order. All trenches measured 50m in length and were excavated to a single bucket width of 1.8m.

3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.76m at the southern end, and 0.43m at the northern end. The top soil was relatively consistent through the trench although slightly thicker at the southern end measuring 0.42m and 0.35m at the northern end of the trench. The subsoil was a mid yellowish brown, sandy silt, measuring 0.08m at the northern end and 0.34m at the southern trench end.

3.2.2 The trench contained no finds or features of archaeological significance.

3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.84m at the south-western end, and 0.58m at the north-eastern end. The topsoil ranged in depth across the trench from 0.35m to 0.39m. The subsoil within the trench was more substantial to the south-west, 0.45m in depth, and measured only 0.23m at the north-eastern end.

3.3.2 The trench contained no finds or features of archaeological significance.

3.4 Trench 3

3.4.1 Trench 3 was excavated at its deepest point to 0.47m, the topsoil measuring 0.25m and the subsoil measuring 0.22m in the northern end of the trench. The depth of the trench in at the southern end was 0.42m, with the top soil measuring 0.3m and the subsoil measuring 0.12m.

3.4.2 The trench contained no finds or features of archaeological significance.

3.5 Trench 4

3.5.1 The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.69m at the south west end, with a depth of 0.37m for top soil, and 0.32m for subsoil. The north eastern end of the trench measured 0.35m of topsoil, with a much reduced level of subsoil, measuring 0.07m.

3.5.2 Two features were seen within the trench, two parallel ditches 401, and 403. Both ditches ran on a north-south alignment. Although no dating evidence was recovered from either ditch, it appeared ditch 403, cut through a land drain, and the presence of consistent large stones within the fill suggests, the features relate to later post-medieval land drainage. No other features were present within the trench.

3.6 Trench 5

3.6.1 The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.62m at the south-eastern end, the top soil measuring 0.51m and the subsoil 0.11m. The north-eastern end was 0.35m in depth with 0.3m of topsoil and 0.05m of subsoil.

3.6.2 The trench contained no finds or features of archaeological significance.
3.7 Finds Summary

3.7.1 All the finds recovered during the evaluation were recovered as surface finds, whilst walking on the field. Worked flints were recovered, mostly of Late Bronze Age date. Metal finds were also exclusively modern, aside from a single Great Yarmouth trading token, SF1, dated 1667. The token was found within the uncultivated area at the field entrance, the token had a recent scratch mark, and it is thought this find may have been the result of an accidental loss, or discarded by an unknown metal detectorist.

3.7.2 Post-medieval pottery was observed spread evenly across the field, the sherds were highly abraded, and the material was not retained as part of this archive.
4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Conclusions

4.1.1 The background scatter of flints would suggest a late Bronze Age presence within the landscape. Evidence for Bronze Age activity is already clearly demonstrated by the barrow monuments seen to the west (NHER 6131 and NHER 6132) and the Beaker pottery found to the south of the site (NHER 6128). Due to its small size, the flint assemblage probably only indicates activity within the general location, rather than suggesting an established site.

4.1.2 Trench 5 appears to show evidence of the remains of a headland as a visible elevation of the ground surface was present running along the inside of the eastern boundary of the field, alongside Langham road. The possible remains of this headland at the eastern boundary of the site would be the result of medieval farming practices.

4.1.3 Only two features were seen within the evaluation, two narrow, parallel ditches recorded in Trench 4. These were seen to cut the subsoil, with ditch 403 apparently cutting a post-medieval land drain. The ditches were also aligned with the road, and it is thought these features, although not directly dated by finds, were likely to be post-medieval or later.

4.1.4 The post-medieval pottery seen across the field seems indicative of manuring and the only features seen are consistent land drainage relating to post-medieval agriculture. This type of agricultural land use has continued to the present day.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the Historic Environment Service, Norfolk County Council.
### Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trench 1</th>
<th>General Description</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Avg. depth (m)</th>
<th>Width (m)</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sand and gravels.</td>
<td>NNW-SSE</td>
<td>0.59</td>
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<th>Width (m)</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sand and gravels.</td>
<td>NEE-SWW</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>50</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>General Description</th>
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<th>Width (m)</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sand and gravels.</td>
<td>NE-SW</td>
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<th>Width (m)</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
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<td>Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of soil and subsoil overlying a natural of sand and gravels.</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
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**Contexts**

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<td>400</td>
<td>Fill</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>Fill of 401</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>401</td>
<td>Cut</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>Cut of small ditch</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>402</td>
<td>Fill</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>Fill of 403</td>
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<td>403</td>
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<td>0.45</td>
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*Table 1. Trench Information and Context Inventory.*
APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Metal work

By Chris Faine

Small Find
B.1.1 One small find SF1 was recovered in the form of a copper alloy farthing token produced in Yarmouth, dated 1667. Both obverse and reverse show the arms of Yarmouth; per pale three demi-lions passant gardant, conjoined in pale with a many demi-herrings. Obverse inscription reads: GREAT YARMOUTH 1667. Reverse reads: FOR THE VSE OF THE POOR, with a rose mintmark.

B.2 Lithics

By Anthony Haskins

Introduction
B.2.1 An assemblage of 12 lithics (180g) was submitted for assessment from the above evaluation. This report describes the preliminary quantification of the assemblage and assesses its technological traits and chronological indicators. Based on these preliminary findings the report recommends that no further work is required.

Methodology
B.2.2 For the purposes of this report individual artefacts were scanned and then assigned to a category within a simple lithic classification system (Table 2). Unmodified flakes were assigned to an arbitrary size scale in order to identify the range of debitage present within the assemblage. Edge retouched and utilised pieces were also characterised. Beyond this no detailed metrical or technological recording was undertaken during the preliminary analysis. The results of this report are therefore based on a rapid assessment of the assemblage and could change if further work is required.

For the purposes of this report individual artefacts were scanned and then assigned to a category within a simple lithic classification system (Table 2). Unmodified flakes were assigned to an arbitrary size scale in order to identify the range of debitage present within the assemblage. Edge retouched and utilised pieces were also characterised. Beyond this no detailed metrical or technological recording was undertaken during the preliminary analysis. The results of this report are therefore based on a rapid assessment of the assemblage and could change if further work is undertaken.

Quantification:
B.2.4 All the material was recovered from a topsoil (101) scatter. A single core was recovered along with two flakes showing signs of retouch and a single scraper. The remaining material was unmodified flakes and a single blade.
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<th>SUB TYPE</th>
<th>CLASSIFICATION</th>
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<td></td>
<td>core technology</td>
<td>core</td>
<td>Platform at right angles 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flakes (&gt;50mm)</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flakes (&gt;25mm &lt;50mm)</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tertiary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flakes (&gt;10mm &lt;25mm)</td>
<td>tertiary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>blades (all sizes)</td>
<td>tertiary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chunks/angular shatter (&lt;50mm)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>misc retouched flake</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>scraper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 2. Table showing quantification results

**Assessment:**

B.2.5 The raw material was primarily a mid to dark partially translucent blue-grey flint. The cortex where present was of uniform thickness, chalky and generally an off-white to brown-white in colour. The uniformity of the cortex would suggest it was collected from glacial deposits, potentially near to the site. A single narrow flake showed signs of recortification suggesting that it may be earlier than the rest of the assemblage.

B.2.6 The single core had platforms at right angles and had been worked heavily from two platforms. The platforms show little sign of cleaning or preparation and the objective seems to have been to produce flakes. A number of incipient cones are present in the areas around the platforms either due to miss-hits or the material not flaking as expected.

B.2.7 The majority of the debitage present in the small assemblage is short thick flakes, at least half of which, were secondary flakes. The material generally exhibits prominent bulbs of percussion and little or no signs of platform preparation on the dorsal surface. A single blade was recovered and shows signs of more careful preparation, soft hammer removal and may be of a similar age to the flake showing signs of recortification.

B.2.8 Three of the lithics showed sign of further modification. A single poorly manufactured end scraper most likely of Mid Bronze Age date and two pieces exhibiting abrupt retouch with no discernible tool form. The two retouched tools are likely to be tools of expedience where the tool was created rapidly for a single use.

B.2.9 All the material showed signs of edge damage as expected of material derived from topsoil.

**Conclusions and Potential for further work**

B.2.10 The small size of the assemblage, its unstratified nature, and the lack of nearby archaeological features would mean little further information could be recovered by a more detailed analysis. The area around Blakeney has evidence of Bronze age activity (Anon 2012). The recovered assemblage would suggest a mid to late bronze age date (1500-700 BC), with poor platform preparation, the form of the flakes and the lack of skilled working (Butler 2005). The material may be derived from a suggest nearby settlement but is more likely to be part of an isolated scatter. The recortificated flake
and the single blade could potentially be from the Neolithic and pre-date the rest of the assemblage, however, without a larger assemblage it is impossible to confirm this.
APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Butler, C. 2005. 'Prehistoric Flintwork' Gloucestershire, Tempus


APPENDIX D. OASIS REPORT FORM
All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details
OASIS Number: oxfordar3-121454
Project Name: Evaluation

Project Dates (fieldwork) Start: 28-03-2012
Finish: 29-03-2012
Previous Work (by OA East) No
Future Work: Unknown

Project Reference Codes
Site Code: ENF128791
HER No: ENF128791
Planning App. No:
Related HER/OASIS No: XNFBLA12

Type of Project/Techniques Used
Prompt: Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type: Rural Residential

Please select all techniques used:
[ ] Aerial Photography - interpretation
[ ] Aerial Photography - new
[ ] Annotated Sketch
[ ] Augering
[ ] Dendrochronological Survey
[ ] Documentary Search
[ ] Environmental Sampling
[ ] Fieldwalking
[ ] Geophysical Survey
[ ] Grab-Sampling
[ ] Gravity-Core
[ ] Laser Scanning
[ ] Measured Survey
[ ] Metal Detectors
[ ] Phosphate Survey
[ ] Photogrammetric Survey
[ ] Photographic Survey
[ ] Rectified Photography
[ ] Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
[ ] Sample Trenches
[ ] Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
[ ] Targeted Trenches
[ ] Test Pits
[ ] Topographic Survey
[ ] Vibro-core
[ ] Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods
List feature types using the NMR Monument Type Thesaurus and significant finds using the MDA Object type Thesaurus together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state “none”.

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Project Location

County: Norfolk
District: North Norfolk Coast
Parish: Blakeney
HER: Norfolk
Study Area: 10000m2
Site Address (including postcode if possible): Langham Road, Blakeney, Norfolk.
National Grid Reference: TG 02303 43467
**Project Originators**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Brief Originator</td>
<td>James Albone</td>
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**Project Archives**

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<th>Physical Archive</th>
<th>Digital Archive</th>
<th>Paper Archive</th>
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**Archive Contents/Media**

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<th>Physical Contents</th>
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<td>Animal Bones</td>
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**Digital Media**

- Database
- GIS
- Geophysics
- Images
- Illustrations
- Moving Image
- Spreadsheets
- Survey
- Text
- Virtual Reality

**Paper Media**

- Aerial Photos
- Context Sheet
- Correspondence
- Diary
- Drawing
- Manuscript
- Map
- Matrices
- Microfilm
- Misc.
- Research/Notes
- Photos
- Plans
- Report
- Sections
- Survey

**Notes:**

A small assemblage of 12 worked flints were recovered as surface finds, the flints are considered to be of Bronze Age date. A small trading token carrying the crest of Great Yarmouth was also recovered dated to 1667AD. The only features, and remaining noteworthy finds found within the evaluation related to post medieval agricultural activity, although the possible remains of a headland at the eastern boundary of the site may be an indication of Medieval farming practices.
Figure 1: Site location
Figure 2: Trench plan and section 1
Plate 1: 401 and 403 taken from the south-west, 2m scale

Plate 2: Trench 3 taken from the south
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