The Woodyard Complex, Wimpole Hall Estate, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Monitoring Report

Client: The National Trust

OA East Report No: 1238
OASIS No: oxfordar3-91049
NGR:
Archaeological Monitoring at The Woodyard Complex, Wimpole Hall Estate, Cambridgeshire, SG8 0BW
Site Code: WPLWOC10

CHER No. Not applicable (na)

Date of Works: December 2010 to January 2011

Report No: 1238

Excavators: James Fairbairn, Chris Thatcher, Graeme Clarke

Client: The National Trust

Report Date: January 2011
Report Number: 1238
Site Name: The Woodyard Complex, Wimpole Hall Estate, Cambridgeshire, SG8 0BW
HER Event No: na
Date of Works: December 2010 to January 2011
Client Name: The National Trust
Client Ref: TW289784
Planning Ref: na
Grid Ref: TL 346 516
Site Code: WPLWOC10
Finance Code: WPLWOC10
Receiving Body: na
Accession No: na
Prepared by: Graeme Clarke
Position: Assistant Supervisor
Date: January 2011
Checked by: Steve Macaulay
Position: Acting Regional Manager
Date: January 2011
Signed: [Signature]

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Oxford Archaeology East,
15 Trafalgar Way,
Bar Hill,
Cambridge,
CB23 8SQ
t: 01223 850500
f: 01223 850599
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net
w: http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast
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# Table of Contents

Summary ........................................................................................................................................... 7

1 Geology and Topography .................................................................................................................. 9

2 Archaeological Background .............................................................................................................. 9

3 Methodology ...................................................................................................................................... 9

4 Results ............................................................................................................................................ 10

5 Discussion and Conclusions ........................................................................................................... 10

6 Acknowledgements .......................................................................................................................... 10

Bibliography ......................................................................................................................................... 11

Appendix A. OASIS Report Form ....................................................................................................... 12
List of Figures
Fig. 1  Site location map
Fig. 2  Layout of the monitored soil investigation works

List of Plates
Plate 1. Machine digging area WS14
Plate 2  Overburden of the trackway
Summary

During December 2010 and January 2011, OA East carried out archaeological monitoring at The Woodyard Complex, Wimpole Hall Estate, Cambridgeshire, SG8 0BW (TL 344 515). The monitoring was carried out during environmental soil investigation works at the site. These works were a remedial measure associated with the redevelopment of the existing buildings on the site by The National Trust. The site has previously been used as a gasworks. The soil investigation was monitored for any archaeological remains that may have been affected. No archaeological remains were exposed or any artefacts recovered during these works and it is therefore recommended that no further archaeological monitoring be required for the subsequent phases of this redevelopment.
Figure 2: Trenches investigated. Scale 1:500, Map Scale 1:5000
Plate 1: Machine digging area WS14

Plate 2: Overburden of the trackway
1 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

1.1.1 The underlying geology is comprised of Gault Clay overlain by alluvium (British Geological Survey 2001). The site lies in a rural setting at approximately 35m above ordnance datum on flat land adjacent to a stream which bounds the east of the site (see Figure 1).

1.1.2 The site is property of The National Trust comprising approximately 0.84 hectares. The site is occupied by a disused house with several outbuildings. Additional above ground structures associated with the site's previous use as a gasworks have been removed.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1.1 The parish of Wimpole was part of the Wetherley Hundred in the Late Saxon period. Wimpole was one of three settlements in the parish and was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) with twelve people enumerated and by 1563 there were 36 families (Elrington 1973, 264). In 1801 there were 56 families recorded in the parish consisting of a total of 202 people, and by 1831 the population had more than doubled to 583. After this high point the population of Wimpole slowly declined to 155 people in 1961.

2.1.2 The principal manor in the parish was held successively by several families before passing in 1436 to Henry Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury. Sir Thomas Chicheley began building the present Wimpole Hall in c.1640 with additions made from 1660 onwards. By the later 17th century the Chicheley's removed the remaining village for the creation of a park and gardens. Sir Thomas Chicheley sold Wimpole and Arrington in 1686 to Sir Thomas Cutler, a rich London merchant. The manor passed quickly through three successive families: the Holles, the Harleys and then to the Yorke family (Earls of Hardwicke) in 1739 who held the manor for a further 150 years.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 The objective of the archaeological monitoring 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.

3.1.2 Archaeological monitoring of the environmental soil investigation works were carried out to fulfil the requirements set by The National Trust. The monitoring was voluntarily requested by The National Trust who own the site.

3.1.3 The intrusive environmental soil investigation was located in numerous areas surrounding the existing buildings on site to fulfil the remedial requirements for the proposed redevelopment (see Figure 2).

3.1.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's pro-forma sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits. However no archaeological remains were encountered during the monitoring.

3.1.5 Site conditions were good throughout the monitoring.
4 RESULTS

4.1.1 No archaeological features were exposed or artefacts recovered during the archaeological monitoring.

4.1.2 The ground conditions encountered beneath the site broadly comprised of: hard standing underlain by made ground to an approximate depth of 0.6m below ground level (bgl). Beneath this a soft brown clay subsoil was observed to an approximate depth of 1.0m bgl. This was underlain by natural loose flint gravel with some sand and silt extending to an approximate depth of 1.6m bgl. At this depth a firm blue grey clay was observed considered to represent the Gault Clay identified in the desk study as underlying the site.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 No archaeological features were exposed or artefacts retrieved in the investigation area. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological monitoring is required for the further phases of redevelopment of this site.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

6.1.1 The author would like to thank The National Trust who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Steve Macaulay. The author would also like to thank RSA Geotechnics Limited who carried out the environmental soil investigation and accommodated the monitoring. Thanks must also be extended to Groupbridge for their hospitality on site.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

### APPENDIX A. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

#### Project Details

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#### Please select all techniques used:

- [X] Field Observation (periodic visits)
- [ ] Part Excavation
- [ ] Salvage Record
- [ ] Full Excavation (100%)
- [ ] Part Survey
- [ ] Systematic Field Walking
- [ ] Full Survey
- [X] Recorded Observation
- [ ] Systematic Metal Detector Survey
- [ ] Geophysical Survey
- [ ] Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
- [ ] Test Pit Survey
- [ ] Open-Area Excavation
- [ ] Salvage Excavation
- [X] Watching Brief

#### 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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**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:

- [Notes:](#)