Archaeological monitoring at Freethorpe Sewage Treatment Works, Halvergate, Norfolk

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

OA East Report No: 1456
OASIS No: oxfordar3-139135
NGR: TG4255 0630

Client: Anglian Water

April 2013
Archaeological monitoring at Freethorpe Sewage Treatment Works, Halvergate, Norfolk

Watching Brief

Site Code: XNFFRE12

NHER No. 130408

Date of Works: 25/3/2013 - 19/4/2013

Report No: 1456

Excavator: Anthony Haskins

Illustrator: Séverine Bézie BA MA

Client: Anglian Water

Report Date: April 2013
Table of Contents

Summary.................................................................................................................................5
1 Geology and Topography....................................................................................................7
2 Archaeological Background ...............................................................................................7
3 Methodology.......................................................................................................................7
4 Results................................................................................................................................8
   4.1 Pipework and ducting...................................................................................................8
   4.2 Concrete Slabs............................................................................................................8
5 Discussion and Conclusions...............................................................................................8
6 Acknowledgements............................................................................................................8
Bibliography .........................................................................................................................9
Appendix A. OASIS Report Form .......................................................................................10
List of Figures

Fig. 1  Site location map
Summary

Between the 25th March and 19th April 2013, OA East carried out an archaeological watching brief at Freethorpe Sewage Treatment Works, Halvergate, Norfolk (TG4255 0630). The monitoring was carried out during the construction of two concrete slabs and related ducts and pipework. No archaeological deposits were uncovered.
1 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY
1.1.1 The Site lies close to what would have been the edge of 'The Great Estuary' in all periods of occupation prior to the later Medieval, when deliberate drainage occurred, at 2.35m OD. Clay and silt of the Breydon Formation represents the former estuary, with peat growth along its landward edge. These recent deposits lie over immediately post-glacial diamictons and sand and gravel of the Lowestoft and Happisburgh Formations that represent the former dry land and coastline around the estuary.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
2.1.1 A search of the HER was carried out on the 7th December and included a 500m search area around the watching brief site ('The Site').

2.1.2 Two possible Bronze Age round barrows c. 650m to the west of the Site (NHER 14186) and c. 500m to the south (NHER 49404), represent the earliest known activity in the vicinity. Their position in respect of the former coastline echoes that of similar monuments in the parish (as outlined in the parish essay for Halvergate [http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk]).

2.1.3 Apart from the barrows HER records for the locality can be divided into those from the Romano-British and those from the Medieval periods. The former include cropmarks interpreted as field systems punctuated by domestic enclosures (eg NHER 49387, 500m to the north and NHER 49400, 400m to the south). Further records suggest Roman masonry buildings, 500m to the south of the Site (NHER 14774).

2.1.4 Records of Medieval date for the most part relate to the former site of the Medieval settlement of Wickhampton some 400m to the south of the Site, now much shrunken in size but with cropmarks suggesting its former extent (NHER 49402). Medieval rectilinear enclosures showing as cropmarks to the north of the Site probably relate to the medieval settlement at Halvergate (NHER 30301).

3 METHODOLOGY
3.1.1 The objective of this watching brief 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 The Brief required that any ground works were under constant archaeological supervision.

3.1.3 The area of investigation was located on the southern edge of the sewage works between the reed beds and the sludge tanks.

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.

3.1.5 Site conditions were cold but generally good, with occasional showers and snowfall.
4 Results

4.1 Pipework and ducting
4.1.1 The pipe work and ducting trenches were excavated to c. 0.9m depth in hand dug trenches c.0.3m wide. The trenches were excavated through a mix of redeposited mid brownish-grey clay topsoil and mid reddish-brown subsoil onto a layer of natural mid reddish-orange to reddish-yellow sand. No archaeological deposits were uncovered during these works.

4.2 Concrete Slabs
4.2.1 The eastern concrete slab was c. 8m long and 4m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.6m. The area was excavated through a layer of mid brownish-grey clay topsoil onto a mix of mid reddish-brown sand and mid brownish-grey sand. Onto a layer of mid reddish-brown sand and sorted rounded flints c. 100mm in diameter. No archaeological deposits were uncovered and the excavated material and exposed sand and gravel are all likely to be redeposited.

4.2.2 The western slab was c.13m long and c.5m wide and observed by G Clarke. It was excavated to a depth of 0.7m through a 0.15m deep concrete slab, a 0.15m deep layer of hard standing and 0.4m of made ground of orange and grey brown sandy silt with some flint gravel, concrete and hardcore fragments onto a layer of dark grey sandy silt.

5 Discussion and Conclusions
5.1.1 All the excavated areas had already been heavily disturbed, probably during the construction of the sewage works and reed beds, and no archaeological deposits were uncovered.

6 Acknowledgements

6.1.1 The author would like to thank Anglian Water who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Paul Spoerry.

6.1.2 The brief for archaeological works was written by James Albone, who monitored the watching brief.
APPENDIX A. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

**Project Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OASIS Number</th>
<th>oxfordar3-139135</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Name</td>
<td>Watching Brief at Freethorpe Sewage Treatment Works, Halvergate, Norfolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Dates (fieldwork)</td>
<td>Start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Work (by OA East)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Reference Codes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Code</th>
<th>XNFFRE12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HER No.</td>
<td>ENF 130408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type of Project/Techniques Used**

Prompt: Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice

Please select all techniques used:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monument</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select period...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Select period...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select period...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Select period...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select period...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Select period...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Location**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Norfolk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Broadland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish</td>
<td>Halvergate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HER</td>
<td>Norfolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Area</td>
<td>0.5km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Site Address (including postcode if possible):

Freethorpe sewage treatment works

National Grid Reference | TG42550630
### Project Originators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>OA EAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Brief Originator</td>
<td>Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Servic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Design Originator</td>
<td>Paul Spoerry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Paul Spoerry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Anthony Haskins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Project Archives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Archive</th>
<th>Digital Archive</th>
<th>Paper Archive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location ...</td>
<td>NHER</td>
<td>NHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession ID ...</td>
<td>ENF 130408</td>
<td>ENF 130408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Archive Contents/Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Physical Contents</th>
<th>Digital Contents</th>
<th>Paper Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal Bones</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramics</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Bones</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratigraphic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked Bone</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked Stone/Lithic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Digital Media

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

### Paper Media

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

### Notes:

---

© Oxford Archaeology East

Page 8 of 8

Report Number 1456
Figure 1: Site location