Ashwell Road
Steeple Morden

Archaeological Evaluation Report

March 2012

Client: Hill Partnerships Ltd.

OA East Report No: 1342
OASIS No: oxfordar3-120244
NGR: TL 2833 4188
Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden

Archaeological Evaluation

By Rob Atkins BSocSc Diparch

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Illustrator: Stuart Ladd MA

Report Date: March 2012
Report Number: 1342
Site Name: Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden
HER Event No: ECB 3724
Date of Works: 27th February 2012
Client Name: Hill Partnerships Ltd
Client Ref: 14185
Planning Ref: S/1490/107
Grid Ref: TL 2833 4188
Site Code: STEASR12
Finance Code: STEASR12
Receiving Body: CCC Stores, Landbeach

Accession No:
Prepared by: Rob Atkins
Position: Project Officer
Date: March 2012

Checked by: Stephen Macaulay
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: March 2012
Signed: ..................................................................................................................................................

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Summary

On 27th February 2010 OA East conducted an archaeological evaluation on land off Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden (TL 2833 4188) prior to construction of four residential houses. The archaeological work comprised four evaluation trenches targeted within the footprint of the proposed new buildings. No archaeological features or artefacts were found in any of the trenches.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work
1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at land off Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden on 27th February 2012. The work took place in advance of proposed development on the 2700m² area, which will consist of the construction of four semi-detached properties.

1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Hill Partnerships, in accordance with a Brief issued by Dan McConnell of Cambridgeshire County Council (McConnell 2010). The work was in accordance of conditions imposed on the Planning Application (S/1490/107), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Macaulay 2012).

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 CCC, 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 site is on the Cenomanian Chalk beds (British Geological Survey (BGS) 2002). It is located on the south-western edge of the village of Steeple Morden more than 0.5km to the south of the church. The development area is situated on relatively flat ground between 50 and 51m OD. The current land use is open ground (grass).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background
1.3.1 The proposed development sites lies more than 0.5km to the south of the medieval parish church of St Peter and St Paul and is located on the southern edge of the medieval historic core of the village. Steeple Morden is a village with medieval origins and there has been a manor known in the village since 1015. The village is referred to as Alia Mordune ‘the other Morden’ in the Domesday book, Steeple being added in the 13th century.

1.3.2 The Cambridge Historic Environment Record records a number of known archaeological sites/find spots close to the application area. Directly to the west is a large linear feature, dated to the Bronze Age (2000-700BC) that has a barrow (burial mound) associated with it (MCB19196). A square enclosure (MCB18302) is visible as a cropmark to the south-east of the site.

1.3.3 Steeple Morden lies on the route of The Icknield Way in a landscape of known Bronze Age barrows and prehistoric remains, with at least 30 visible as cropmarks/soilmarks in the parish. A ring-ditch was found at Ashwell Station chalk quarry and this site also produced Anglo-Saxon jewellery, perhaps indicating that there has been later Saxon reuse of these prehistoric burial mounds.
1.4  **Acknowledgements**

1.4.1  The author would like to thank Hill Partnerships for funding the project. Stephen Macaulay managed the project on behalf of OA East and the fieldwork was carried out by Rob Atkins and Julian Newman. The site was surveyed by Taleyna Fletcher.

2  **AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

2.1  **Aims**

2.1.1  The objective of this evaluation 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 a programme of trial trenching within the footprint of the four proposed houses. Each of the four trenches were to be 10m long proving a 5% sample of the total area. The work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.2  The site survey was carried out using a Leica GPS 1200 system with SmartNet. All trenches were photographed with colour slide and digital cameras. The work took place during dry and overcast conditions.

3  **RESULTS**

3.1  **Overview**

3.1.1  All four trenches were excavated onto natural subsoil. This was a mixture of sands, gravels and chalk. The sterile topsoil was between 0.25m and 0.3m deep.

4  **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

4.1  **Overview**

4.1.1  No archaeological features or artefacts were found in the evaluation.

4.2  **Significance**

4.2.1  The site is of no archaeological significance

4.3  **Recommendations**

4.3.1  Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.
APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Macaulay, S., 2012 Specification for archaeological evaluation Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden OA East report (unpublished)

McConnell, D., 2010 Brief for archaeological evaluation Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden CCC report dated 18th August 2010 (unpublished)
**APPENDIX B. OASIS REPORT FORM**

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

**Project Details**

<table>
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**Type of Project/Techniques Used**

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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
- [ ] Photographic Survey
- [ ] Photogrammetric Survey
- [ ] Phosphate Survey
- [ ] Rectified Photography
- [ ] Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
- [x] 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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Report Number 1342
## Project Originators

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## Archive Contents/Media

### Digital Media
- Database
- GIS
- Geophysics
- Images
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- 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
Figure 1: Site location