Flag Fen Sludge De-Watering

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

December 2014

Client: Anglian Water

OA East Report No: 1701
OASIS No: oxfordar3-195702
NGR: TL 522264 298340
Flag Fen Sludge De-Watering

Watching Brief

By Kathryn Nicholls BA

Editor: Richard Mortimer MifA

Illustrator: Charlotte Davies MPhil

Report Date: December 2014
Report Number: 1701
Site Name: Anglian water sewage works, Flag Fen
HER Event No: n/a
Date of Works: November 2014
Client Name: Anglian Water
Client Ref: 4503445305
Planning Ref: n/a
Grid Ref: TL 522264 298340
Site Code: PETLF14
Finance Code: PETLF14
Receiving Body: Peterborough Museum

Accession No:
Prepared by: Kathryn Nicholls
Position: Acting Supervisor
Date: November 2014

Checked by: Richard Mortimer
Position: Senior project Manager
Date: December 2014
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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Summary

Oxford Archaeology East undertook a watching brief at the Anglian Water sewage works at Flag Fen, Peterborough over three days in November 2014. During this time a trench approximately 100m in length was excavated to a depth of 1m. Much of the area excavated had already previously been disturbed for service cables. A layer of peat was observed underlying the modern disturbances, however, no archaeological features were observed or recorded.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Anglian Water Sewage Works, Flag Fen, Peterborough (Fig. 1)

1.1.2 This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with an instruction issued by Rebecca Casa-Hatton of Peterborough Museum, 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 National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). 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 This site lies on the Oxford Clay formation which is overlain by superficial peat deposits.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 Approximately 1km north east lies the nationally important site of Flag Fen. A Bronze Age post alignment and a platform along with associated Bronze Age and later field systems and settlements were located here. The post alignment consisted of five rows of timber posts and at least five levels of horizontal timbers. Walkways were also identified with signs of trample and wear. A number of items were uncovered from the fen edge which were believed to have been votive deposits, these included items such as jewellery and weapons. Human remains also indicate that the fen edge may have been used for the laying of the dead. A number of other features can be seen in the form of cropmarks, such as Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age or Roman enclosures and a potential Roman temple.

1.3.2 Recent evaluation work at Newark Road, 1.5km north west, uncovered a number of post holes within ditched enclosures which are thought to represent post-built timber framed structures of Bronze Age date. Flint, pottery and a polished jadeite axe fragment were found (Rees 2014). This represents the most recent of many evaluations and excavations on the Peterborough Fen Edge to the west of Flaf Fen.

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The author would like to thank the client Anglian Water for commissioning the work. Richard Mortimer managed the project.
2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims
2.1.1 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 and to excavate and record it as necessary.

2.2 Methodology
2.2.1 The Brief required that excavation of the trench be monitored by an archaeologist. Areas previously disturbed did not need to be monitored due to prior excavation.
2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a tracked 360 type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
2.2.3 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.
2.2.4 Any archaeological features and deposits would have been 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.
3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The cable trench was approximately 100m in length and excavated to a maximum depth of 1m and a width of approximately 0.5m. Much of the pipe trench was in an area which had previously been excavated (Fig 2). At the western end of the pipe trench there was between 0.8m and 1m depth of rubble and make-up layers overlying the a layer of peat. As the pipe trench moved further east the modern layers decreased to a depth of 0.40m (Plate 1). The peat seen was typical of the area. No archaeological features, finds or deposits were uncovered.
4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion and conclusion

4.1.1 No archaeological features, finds or deposits were noted within the pipe trench. Much of the ground excavated had already been previously disturbed by 20th century structures, service cables and pipes. Excavation only extended to a depth of 1m which was not deep enough into the peat layer for archaeology to be uncovered. Archaeology may exist within the area at depths greater than that reached by the pipe trench.
APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Online resources
APPENDIX B. OASIS REPORT FORM
All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

**Project Details**

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**Type of Project/Techniques Used**

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Please select all techniques used:

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- [ ] 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**

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| Study Area | 100m                                            | National Grid Reference                      |

### Project Originators

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<tr>
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Figure 1: Site location map, Anglian water sewage works, Third drove, Flag Fen, Peterborough
Figure 2: Pipe Trench plan
Plate 1: Photo of Trench Section