Sewage Treatment Works
Great Welnetham
Suffolk

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Client: Anglian Water

OA East Report No: 1315
OASIS No: oxfordar3-115315
NGR: TL 876 602
Sewage Treatment works, Great Welnetham, Suffolk

Archaeological Watching Brief

Site Code: WLG026
Date of Works: November 2011
Report No: 1315
Excavator: Tom Lyons
Client: Anglian Water
Report Date: December 2011
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Summary

During November 2011 OA East carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Anglian Water sewage treatment works at Great Welnetham, Suffolk (TL 876 602). The monitoring was carried out ahead of installation of new infrastructure at the site; this included the excavation of a deep storm tank. No in-situ archaeological deposits or soil horizons were observed as much of the ground had been disturbed during the initial construction of the site; however, artefacts were recovered during the ground works including a sherd of Roman pottery and some worked lithics.
1 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY
1.1.1 The site is located on Lowestoft Formation chalky till geology and situated in the valley of the River Lark on a west facing slope, less than 100m from the river.
1.1.2 The site of the sewage treatment works had clearly been levelled during construction of the existing compound and hard standing ground. This had involved significant truncation of the hillside and disturbance of the existing soil horizons.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
2.1.1 The sewage treatment works is located in an area of archaeological potential, with several sites or find spots recorded on the Heritage Environment Record in the immediate vicinity. A Roman settlement is recorded at Sicklesmere (WTG005) with other Roman artefacts recorded close by (WLG018; WLG016).
2.1.2 It may be significant that the sewage treatment works is situated on the slopes of a river valley, near to a confluence, as this is a location typically utilised in later prehistory.

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 all ground works be monitored by an archaeologist as the proposed ground works could potentially damage any archaeological features or deposits.
3.1.3 The area of investigation was concentrated in the northern part of the sewage treatment works. A new pumping station was due to be installed towards the north-east corner of the compound; in the central northern part of the compound a new storm tank was proposed.
3.1.4 Manual excavations were undertaken in the north-east corner of the site ahead of ground works in order to locate existing pipes and cables.

4 RESULTS
4.1.1 Hand excavation in the north and north-east corner of the site revealed a recent mixed topsoil horizon which was at least 1m deep; natural geology was not seen. This contained modern ceramic and building material but also yielded a single sherd from a Roman storage vessel.
4.1.2 Installation of the new storm tank, located in the central northern part of the site, involved deep excavation of an area measuring approximately 5m x 5m. No archaeological features or deposits were seen during machine stripping of the ground surface. The upper levels of what appeared to be natural geology were visible at approximately 0.35m beneath the ground level, although this might have been colluvial material.
4.1.3 Inspection of the spoil heaps from the excavations for the storm tank yielded four pieces of worked flint, including a broken retouched blade, and one fragment of burnt flint. These are likely to date from the Late Neolithic or Bronze Ages c. 2500-1500BC.
5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1.1 Considering the proximity of the sewage treatment works to known Roman archaeology any significant ground works are likely to encounter residual Roman pottery, especially where ground has already been disturbed.

5.1.2 The recovery of prehistoric lithics at the site attests to the significance of the location in prehistory.

5.1.3 As the artefacts recovered during monitoring of the ground works were from secondary contexts, it is possible they were moved from their original point of deposition. With this in mind it is more appropriate to consider these artefacts as indicators of general later prehistoric and Roman activity in the vicinity, rather than direct evidence.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

6.1.1 The author would like to thank Anglian Water who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. Thanks are also due to Stuart Hall of Black & Veach for his cooperation on site. The project was managed by James Drummond Murray.

6.1.2 The brief for archaeological works was written by Sarah Poppy of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.
## APPENDIX A. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

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### Type of Project/Techniques Used

**Prompt**

Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5

**Please select all techniques used:**

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

### 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:** Suffolk
- **District:** Suffolk
- **Parish:** Gt Welnetham
- **HER:** Gt Welnetham
- **Study Area:** Stanningfield Road, Sicklesmere, Suffolk
- **Site Address (including postcode if possible):** Stanningfield Road, Sicklesmere, Suffolk
- **National Grid Reference:** TL 876 602
### Project Originators

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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
Figure 1: Site location
Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44(0) 1865 263 800
f: +44(0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: http://thehumanjourney.net

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44(0) 1524 541 000
f: +44(0) 1524 848 606
e: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net
w: http://thehumanjourney.net

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44(0) 1223 850 500
f: +44(0) 1223 850 599
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net
w: http://thehumanjourney.net