CCC AFU Report Number 871

Monitoring at Manor Farm, Morborne, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

Spencer Cooper

May 2006

Commissioned by Mr Rome
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Machine stripping, Soham</th>
<th>On-site surveying</th>
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<td>Guided walk along Devil's Dyke</td>
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<td>Medieval well, Soham</td>
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<td>Timbers from a medieval well, Soham</td>
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<td>Bed burial reconstruction, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery</td>
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<td>Medieval tanning pits, Huntington Town Centre</td>
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<td>Breaker's vessel</td>
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<td>Research and publication</td>
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Monitoring at Manor Farm, Morborne, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

Spencer Cooper HND BA

Site Code MORMAFO6
CHER Event Number: EOB2215
Date of works: 3rd April 2006
Grid Ref: TL 1398 9161

Editor: Elizabeth Shepherd Popescu BA PHD
MIFA
Illustrator: Carlos Silva MAAIS
**PROJECT DETAILS**

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<th>Project name</th>
<th>Monitoring and recording brief at manor farm Morborne</th>
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<td>Short description</td>
<td>On the 3rd April 2006 an archaeological recording and monitoring brief was undertaken at Manor Farm, Morborne, Cambridgeshire (TL 1398 9161). The proposed development consisted of ten foundation pits for a barn extension, located close to the remains of Morborne deserted medieval village.</td>
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<td>Project dates</td>
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<td>Future work</td>
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<td>Planned development</td>
<td>Barn</td>
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<td>Monument types / period (list all that apply and use thesaurus of monument types)</td>
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**PROJECT LOCATION**

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<th>County</th>
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<tr>
<td>HER for region</td>
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<td>National grid reference</td>
<td>Easting (6 figure) 1398</td>
<td>Northing (6 figure) 9161</td>
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<td>Height OD</td>
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<td>Min OD 28m</td>
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**PROJECT ORIGINATORS**

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<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Cambridgeshire County Council, CAM ARC</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project brief originator</td>
<td>Kasia Gdaniec</td>
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<td>Project design originator</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director/supervisor</td>
<td>Spencer Cooper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project manager</td>
<td>James Drummond-Murray</td>
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<td>Sponsor or funding body</td>
<td>Cambridgeshire County Council</td>
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**ARCHIVES**

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<tr>
<th>Location and accession number</th>
<th>Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, database, context sheets etc)</th>
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<td>Paper</td>
<td>Cambridgeshire County Store</td>
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<td>Digital</td>
<td>CAM ARC</td>
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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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<tr>
<th>Full title</th>
<th>Monitoring at Manor Farm, Morborne, 'An Archaeological Watching Brief</th>
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<tr>
<td>Report number</td>
<td>871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series title and volume</td>
<td>Grey Literature</td>
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<td>Page numbers</td>
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<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Cooper, S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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Summary

On the 3rd April 2006 an archaeological recording and monitoring brief was undertaken at Manor Farm, Morborne, Cambridgeshire (TL1398 9161) by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCAFU). The proposed development consisted of ten foundation pits for a barn extension, located close to the remains of Morborne deserted medieval village.

The results from the test pits add very little to current understanding of these remains. No medieval artefacts or features were recognised in this watching brief.
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## Drawing Conventions

### Sections
- Limit of Excavation
- Cut
- Cut-Conjectured
- Soil Horizon
- Soil Horizon - Conjectured
- Intrusion/Truncation
- Top of Natural
- Top Surface
- Break in Section
- Cut Number \(118\)
- Deposit Number \(117\)
- Ordnance Datum \(15.45\) m ODN

### Plans
- Limit of Excavation
- Deposit - Conjectured
- Natural Features
- Intrusion/Truncation
- Sondages/Machine Strip
- Illustrated Section \(8.14\)
- Cut Number \(118\)
1 Introduction

On the 3rd April 2006 an archaeological recording and monitoring brief was undertaken at Manor Farm, Morborne, Cambridgeshire (TL1398 9161) by the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (CAFU). The proposed development includes ten foundation pits for a barn extension. From the outset it was hoped that this monitoring brief would make a useful contribution to the understanding of adjacent remains of the deserted medieval village. Indeed, the field in which the barn extension is proposed contains a number of eroded earthworks.

This archaeological monitoring brief was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application), supplemented by a Specification prepared by CCC AFU.

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 and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

2 Geology and Topography

The site is located on a ridge of Oxford Clay capped in places by drift deposit (BGS 1981) at 27m OD, 2 km west of the Great North Road.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

Morborne was originally settled in the Saxon period and is mentioned in the Domesday Book (Page and Proby, 1926). The site lies adjacent to the boundaries of SAM 247, relating to the deserted medieval village of Morborne. Extensive ridge and furrow earthworks relating to the village are visible in the area (eg HER 0004, 00630). Manor farmhouse (HER 01861) itself is a Grade II listed building and there is a moat associated with the farm (HER 01027).
Figure 1: Site location showing position of trenches (black) and development area (red)

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To the west of the subject site a large area of surviving earthworks indicates evidence for a deserted medieval village (HER 414067). These earthworks are extremely well preserved and included pillow mounds, crofts, drove ways and rectangular boundary enclosures. The preservation of these remains is due to the lack of development in the area since its decline in the medieval period and the whole area of visible remains is protected as a scheduled ancient monument (SAM 247). These earthworks probably represent one of the best examples of a deserted medieval village in Cambridgeshire.

4 Methodology

The objective of this recording and monitoring 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.

The Brief required monitoring of ten 1m square foundation pits for a new dutch barn extension.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type excavator under constant archaeological supervision.

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.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU’s pro-forma sheets. Plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

5 Results

Foundation pit 1

Foundation pit 1 was 0.62m deep, 1m square and located in the eastern part of development area. The earliest deposit encountered was deposit 3, which was an orange brown natural clay. Deposit 2 was a dark greyish brown silty clay which was 0.40m deep and contained no artefacts. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.
Foundation pit 2

Foundation pit 2 was 0.52m deep, 1m square and located in the eastern part of the development area. The earliest deposit encountered was a dark greyish brown silty clay (4) which was 0.42m deep and contained post-medieval building material. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.
Figure 2: Plan and selected sections
Foundation pit 3

Foundation pit 3 was 0.60m deep, 1m square and located in the eastern part of the development area. The earliest deposit encountered was a dark greyish brown silty (5) clay which was 0.50m deep. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.

Foundation pit 4

Foundation pit 4 was 0.65m deep, 1m square and located in the eastern part of the development area. The earliest deposit encountered was a dark greyish brown silty clay (6) which was 0.55m deep. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.

Foundation pit 5

Foundation pit 5 was 0.60m deep, 1m square and located in the western part of the development area. A single deposit (7) was observed in this foundation pit which consisted of a silty clay which was 0.50m deep.

Foundation pit 6

Foundation pit 6 was 0.64m deep, 1m square and located in the western part of the development area. A single deposit (8) was observed in this pit which consisted of a brownish grey silty clay which was 0.50m deep.

Foundation pit 7

Foundation pit 7 was 60m deep, 1m square and located in the western part of the development area. The earliest deposit observed in this pit was deposit 10 which was a dark greyish brown silty clay 0.30m deep. Deposit 9 was a dark brown silty clay which was 0.30m deep.

Foundation pit 8

Foundation pit 8 was 0.70m deep, 1m square and located in the western part of the development area. The earliest deposit observed was context 11 which was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.50m deep. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.

Foundation pit 9

Foundation pit 9 was 0.70m deep, 1m square and located in the western part of the development area. The earliest deposit
encountered in this foundation pit was deposit 12 which was a dark grey silty clay 0.60m deep. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.

Foundation pit 10

Foundation pit 10 was 0.58 m deep, 1m square and located in the western part of the development area. The earliest deposit encountered in this pit was deposit 13, which consisted of a dark greyish brown silty clay which 0.48m deep. Deposit 1 was a dark grey silty clay which was 0.10m deep and contained modern rubble.

6 Discussion

The aim of the project was to establish the character, date, and state of the preservation of archaeological remains within the development area. The limited nature of the investigations makes any tangible interpretation extremely difficult.

The main observation from the ten test pits is that the deposit sequence is very similar in many of the test pits. There is a common sequence in test pits 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 consisting of topsoil (1) sealing a subsoil. The only dating evidence from these pits was the modern building material observed in the topsoil. Deposits 2,4,6,11,13 and 14 may represent a subsoil or some form of occupation layer.

In foundation pits 5 and 6 the overburden consisted of one deposit (8 and 7). These deposits may represent post-medieval occupation material. Understanding of these deposits is limited by the small-scale nature of the investigation.

7 Conclusions

The development area is located on the edge of an area of earthworks relating to a deserted medieval village. The earthworks present in the village of Morborne represent some of the best-preserved examples in Cambridgeshire. Therefore this project was important in respect that it represents one of the first professional archaeological investigations within the village of Morborne. Unfortunately the results from the test pits add very little to current understanding of these remains. No medieval artefacts or features were recognised in this watching brief.

Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.
Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Mr N. Rome who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by James Drummond-Murray. The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec.

Bibliography

British Geological Survey 1981 Sheet 188
Page, W and Proby, G Eds 1926 The Victoria County History of Huntingdonshire. Volume 1
Cambridgeshire County Council's **Archaeological Field Unit** undertakes a wide range of work throughout the county and across the eastern region.

Our key purpose is to increase understanding of the rich heritage of the region.

We are keenly competitive, working to the highest professional standards in a broad range of service areas. We work in partnership with contractors and local communities.

We undertake or provide:

- surveys, assessments, evaluations and excavations
- popular and academic publications
- illustration and design services
- heritage and conservation management
- education and outreach services
- volunteer, training and work experience opportunities
- partnership projects with community groups and research bodies

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