

LAND ADJACENT TO HENDRE ISAF FARM, TROWBRIDGE, CARDIFF

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CA PROJECT: 1871
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SUMMARY

Site Name: Land adjacent to Hendre Isaf Farm
Location: Trowbridge, Cardiff
NGR: ST 2358 8016
Type: Evaluation
Date: 30-31 March 2005
Planning Reference: 04/723/R
Location of Archive: National Museum of Wales
Site Code: HIF 05

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2005 at the request of the Strategic Estates Division of Cardiff County Council on land adjacent to Hendre Isaf Farm, Trowbridge, Cardiff. In compliance with an approved WSI (CA 2004a), a single T-shaped trench was excavated within the development area.

A substantial drainage ditch containing artefacts dated to the 17th to 18th centuries was identified within the evaluation trench at a depth of approximately 0.25m below the modern ground surface.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2005 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for the Strategic Estates Division of Cardiff County Council on land adjacent to Hendre Isaf Farm, Trowbridge, Cardiff (centred on NGR: ST 2358 8016; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application for residential development of the site.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a brief for archaeological evaluation (GGAT Curatorial 2004) prepared by GGAT Curatorial, the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and with a subsequent detailed WSI produced by CA (2004a) and approved by Neil Maylan, GGAT Curatorial. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the *Management of Archaeological Projects II* (EH 1991).

The site

- 1.3 The site lies at the eastern edge of the residential development of Trowbridge, a district situated in the north-eastern part of the city of Cardiff. It is bounded to the north by an area of overgrown vacant land; to the east by a current building site; to the south by buildings associated with the former farm; and to the west by Hendre Road (Fig. 2). The site is flat and lies at approximately 7m AOD.
- 1.4 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Raglan Mudstone of the Upper Silurian period (BGS 1989). The proposed development area encloses an area of approximately 0.6ha and is currently overgrown, vacant land.

Archaeological background

- 1.5 The archaeological potential of the site has been outlined fully in the GGAT brief (GGAT Curatorial 2004). In summary, despite no known archaeological activity within the development area, it is positioned on the geological interface between the Old Red Sandstone and alluvial marshes, where known medieval and Roman sites exist along the fen edge, including recently discovered Roman deposits and evidence of structures at Areas 9-12 St Mellons, approximately 150m to the south-

west of the current site (CA 2004b). The farm itself lies within the outlying lands of the medieval manor of Rumney, and was one of a number of farms sited on a lane leading from the manorial centre at Rumney Castle onto the Wentloog Level.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.6 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date, significance and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist the Local Planning Authority in making an informed judgement on the likely impact upon the archaeological resource by the proposed development.

Methodology

- 1.7 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of a single T-shaped trench comprising a 20m length and a 10m length (Fig. 2). Both lengths were 1.8m wide.
- 1.8 The trench was excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 1: *Excavation Recording Manual* (1996).
- 1.9 All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995). The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive (including artefacts) will be deposited with the National Museum of Wales.

2. RESULTS

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix 1. Details of the relative heights of the principal deposits and features expressed as metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) appear in Appendix 2.

- 2.2 The natural substrate was revealed at a depth of between 0.2m and 0.4m below the present ground level. It was cut by ditch 002 which was aligned north-west/south-east and extended through the length of the longer part of the trench. The ditch was at least 8m wide, extending beyond the north-eastern limit of excavation. Its south-western side sloped very gently (c. 25°) before dropping more steeply (c. 45°) to a rounded base. The north-eastern side of the ditch was partially exposed and appeared to slope up from the base at the same gradient as the opposite side (i.e. c. 25°).
- 2.3 Ditch 002 was filled with a deposit of silty clay which graduated from pink-brown towards the surface to dark brown-grey at the base. It would appear that this fill is derived from sustained silting that has been subject to post-depositional processes, causing the gradual change in colour. Consequently, during excavation an arbitrary distinction was made between the pink material in the top part of the feature and the dark material towards the base, and each was given a separate context number. The earlier material was numbered 005 and the later 003. The ditch was sealed by a layer of overburden, up to 0.4m deep, comprising a mix of dark grey-brown silty clay and modern refuse.

The Finds

- 2.4 A small quantity of pottery and animal bone was recovered during excavations. 17th- to 18th-century tin-glazed earthenware, yellow slip ware and slip-trailed earthenware was recovered from ditch fill 003. Ditch fill 005 produced two sherds of late 17th- to mid 18th-century Westerwald stoneware and a single fragment of animal bone, identified as a horse metapodial.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The evaluation has identified a substantial ditch extending through a large part of the proposed development area. The feature appears to cover the majority of the small site, leaving only a thin strip along the road frontage potentially undisturbed. A post-medieval date for the ditch seems certain, as the sherds of Westerwald pottery dated to the late 17th to mid 18th centuries were found near the base of the feature.

- 3.2 Although the site is situated on slightly higher ground than the adjacent marshland associated with the Wentloog Level, the area is still likely to have required some degree of drainage. Indeed, during the evaluation the trench became inundated with rising groundwater. It is possible that the ditch represents a post-medieval addition to an earlier drainage system associated with Hendre Isaf Farm, which according to documentary records, was one of a group of farms with the prefix '*Hendre*' which, together with their surrounding lands, belonged to the manor of Rumney in the medieval period (GGAT Curatorial 2005).
- 3.3 Although the site lies close to that of Areas 9-12, Trowbridge Road (CA 2004b), where a series of Roman ditches and evidence of structures was recently discovered, there was no evidence from the current evaluation to suggest that this activity extended into the proposed development area.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Mark Brett, assisted by Derek Evans. The report was written by Mark Brett. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Mark Brett, and prepared for deposition by Sam Inder. The project was managed for CA by Mark Collard and Mary Alexander.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1989 England and Wales, Sheet **263**: Cardiff

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004a *Land adjacent to Hendre Isaf Farm, Trowbridge, Cardiff Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2004b *Areas 9-12 Trowbridge Road, St Mellons, Cardiff: Archaeological Evaluation*, CA Report No. **04066**

GGAT (Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust) Curatorial 2004 *Land adjacent to Hendre Isaf Farm, Trowbridge: Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*

GGAT (Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust) Curatorial 2005 *Land between Willowbrook Drive and Crickhowell Road, St Mellons: Brief for Archaeological Evaluation*

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<i>Context No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Depth/thickness (m)</i>
001	Layer. Modern overburden. Dark grey-brown silty clay. Loose. Contains very frequent modern refuse.	<0.4
002	Ditch cut. Aligned NW/SE. <8m wide. SW side slopes c.25° before dropping c.45° to rounded base. NE side only partially exposed, sloping upwards from base at c.25°.	1.15
003	Secondary/latest fill of ditch 002. Mid pink-brown silty clay. Friable. Contains very irregular small-medium sub-angular stone fragments. Graduates into 005; no clear distinction.	c. 0.65
004	Natural substrate. Mid pink clay with lenses of mid yellow clay and dark pink sandstone. Compact.	-
005	Primary fill of ditch 002. Mid brown-grey silty clay. Friable. No visible inclusions. No clear distinction with 003 above.	c. 0.5

APPENDIX 2: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES

Levels are expressed as metres below current ground level and as metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), calculated using the spot height located on the railway bridge at NGR ST 2289 7912 (12.5m AOD).

Current ground level	0.00m (7.25m)
Top of ditch 002	0.2m (7.06m)
Limit of excavation	1.5m (5.69m)

Upper figures are depth below modern ground level, lower figures in parentheses are metres AOD.