Wroot Road Quarry, Finningley, Doncaster, South Yorkshire

An Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey
for Yorkshire Aggregates Ltd

by Andrew Mundin
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WQD 03/80

October 2003
Summary

Site name: Wroot Road Quarry, Finningley, Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Grid reference: SE 6911 0043

Site activity: Fieldwalking

Date and duration of project: 17th October 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: WQD 03/80

Area of site: 5.4 ha

Summary of results: Eight fragments of pottery and three stuck flints were recovered from the site. All the pottery was late post-medieval. One of the stuck flints is a late Neolithic oblique arrowhead.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5NR and will be deposited with Doncaster Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford 20.10.03
Steve Preston 21.10.03
Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological fieldwalking survey carried out at Wroot Road Quarry, Finningley, Doncaster (SE 6911 0043) (Fig. 1). The work has been commissioned by Mr Chris Ballam of The Land and Development Practice, 1 Horsefair, Wetherby, Leeds, LS22 6JG, on behalf on Yorkshire Aggregates Ltd.

Planning permission has been sought from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council for mineral extraction on the site. To inform the planning process, the results of an archaeological evaluation are required to accompany the planning application as set out in *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990). This report documents a non-invasive evaluation to determine the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains that may be affected by the expansion of the quarry.

This fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Mundin, Steve Ford and Jo Pine on the 17th October 2003.

Location, topography and geology

The quarry is situated on Wroot Road, which lies c.1km north-east of Finningley, to the east of Doncaster. The proposal site lies immediately to the east of the current quarry workings (Figs. 1 and 2). The site lies on a glacial outwash plain. The underlying geology is Older River Gravel (BGS 1969) and lies at c. 5m above Ordnance Datum. The site is mostly flat but there is a slight hollow to the ground in the south-eastern corner of the site.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief prepared by Mr Roy Sykes of South Yorkshire Archaeological Service following the results of an earlier desk-based assessment (Sidebottom 2003).

In summary although there is no known archaeology on or immediately adjacent to the application area there are a variety of cropmarks and finds present in the general area. The topographic position of the site, which was formerly adjacent to an extensive wetland area, is one which was favoured for earlier prehistoric occupation.
Objectives and methodology

The aim of the fieldwalking was to recover artefacts that pre-dated the 19th century, from the surface of ground. These finds can originate from either buried archaeological deposits, which have been disturbed by ploughing, or from material that was always within the topsoil. The fieldwalking took place along north–south lines spaced at 10m intervals and based on the National Grid. Material was collected from units of 10m intervals along these lines with an average search width of 1m. This approximated to a 10% sample of the site. The methodology is comparable with that practised in regions of central southern England (Richards 1990; Ford 1987a, appendix 1). A record was made of the conditions under which the fieldwalking took place, as results can be influenced by factors such as vegetation cover and weather. The topography was also recorded to assist in the interpretation of the finds.

Results

A total area of 5.4ha was fieldwalked by 3 individuals.

Collection conditions

All of the fieldwalked area had been ploughed recently but had weathered well; the sandy, stoney soil was easily washed by light rain. Very little vegetation was present and the ground was dry. For most of the fieldwork the weather was overcast, but on occasion was sunny. Areas to the south and west were very stoney with less stone towards the north.

Finds

Stuck Flint by Steve Ford

Just three prehistoric struck flints were recovered. These had been introduced to the site, as flint was not obviously available within the local gravel. The pieces comprised two flakes and an oblique arrowhead. One flake was iron stained, the other flake was lightly patinated and the arrowhead was surprisingly fresh. It cannot be determined if these differences of condition reflect material from different periods or simply very localized variations in soil conditions. The two flakes are not closely datable other than to a broad span of time representing the Mesolithic to the late Bronze Age.
In contrast, the oblique arrowhead is typical of the later Neolithic (Green 1980). It was well made but both the tip and part of the barb are missing.

**Pottery**

In all 8 sherds where recovered in the fieldwalking. All the sherds date from late post-medieval to modern times. Their distribution is shown in Figure 3. Of minor note was a sherd from a stoneware ginger-beer bottle produced in Sheffield. Of the remaining sherds, two were post-medieval red ware, one with a manganese glaze and five were mass produced white, or blue and white, glazed china of 19th or 20th century date.

**Tile**

A single small fragment of tile (2g) was recovered.

**Clay pipe**

Two pieces of clay pipe stem were recovered from the fieldwalking.

**Conclusion**

The fieldwalking has produced a very modest quantity of finds from two distinct periods, prehistoric and late post-medieval times. The stuck flint is of a little archaeological interest, but is not necessarily of significance for the possible presence of subsoil archaeological deposits on the site. The arrowhead in particular is likely to have arrived on the site during a hunting expedition. As the local geology does not appear to be flint-rich, it is possible that even low densities of flintwork may represent the presence of occupation/activity sites, with flint usage being conservative. In such situations, it is often difficult to distinguish between stray finds such as casually lost or discarded items from activities taking place within the wider landscape, or small occupation sites. However in this instance the density of flint finds recovered is so low, despite 10% coverage of the surface area that they cannot be interpreted as representing prehistoric occupation.

The pottery and clay pipe are distinct as being relatively recent additions to the fields and were presumably incorporated within manure spread onto arable fields. They are of no archaeological significance.

On the basis of the results of this non-invasive evaluation, the site does not appear to have any archaeological potential.
References

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Figure 1. Location of site on Wroot Road and South Yorkshire.

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Figure 2. Location of site in relation to Wroot Road Quarry.

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Figure 3. Distribution of fieldwalking finds. WQD 03/80

KEY:
- Flint
- Flake
- Arrowhead
- Tile
- Pottery
- Clay pipe

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