



CLASP

Community Landscape & Archaeology Survey Project

Please reply to Secretary of the Organising Committee:

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11th September 2008

Dear Paul

Additional Archaeological Investigation

Land East of Daventry

1. Introduction

Having now had opportunity to study the Recorded Scanning and Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report by Wessex Archaeology that you kindly sent us please find below our comments into the evidence revealed by the report. Since receiving that report we have also received from WNDC the Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners regulation 19 Response and other Supplementary Information. This latter document at paragraph 3.14 contains some interpretation as to what these various archaeological features might be together with their importance grading. We will comment further on that Response later in this paper.

2. Typographical Error

We would draw to your attention what appears to be an apparent significant typographical error in the Wessex report. Whilst the detailed survey results make no mention of block A9, paragraph 3.3.6 within the results mentions features 4012 and 4013. Figure 11 shows the area shown as A9 in Figure 1 as part of A11, the delineation and gridlines being the same as A9 in Figure 1. In our response Features 4012 and 4013 are described as being in Block A9 which would appear to be correct.

3. Tabulated Synopsis of the Wessex Report

Figure	Block	Feature	Suggested Action	Comments
5	A1	4001 4002	Requires further investigation probably by way of initial trial	Does this relate to the settlement

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Executive Committee: Alan Watson (Chair), Ruth Downie (Secretary), Angela Evans (Treasurer), Stephen Young (Archaeology Director), Nick Adams, David Banner, Jeremy Calderwood, Alan Priestley

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			trenching.	located just to the north of this location in the work undertaken in connection with the Churchfields Proposals?
2 & 6	A2 & A3		See notes at end of this paper.	
7	A6	4003	Requires further investigation probably by way of initial trial trenching.	Relationship to northerly settlement?
10	A8	4006,7,8, 9, 10 & 11	Requires further investigation probably by way of initial trial trenching.	Are these features contemporary with each other, do they relate to the northerly settlement?
11	A9	4012, 4013	Requires further investigation probably by way of initial trial trenching.	Do these relate to the northerly settlement or are they related to another settlement to the east?
13	A11	4014, 15, 16 & 17	Further investigation required by trial trenching to establish nature, purpose and phasing of these features. The involved pattern of features at the bottom part of 4014 is of particular interest. It is considered that some investigation to the two curved features between 4014 and 4015 that are categorised as 'trends' in the key to this Figure should be undertaken to establish if there is any underlying feature.	If 4016 and 4017 are defined as forming trackway it would be important to establish its dating relationship to other features and whether it can be detected elsewhere in the area together with its overall purpose and route.
14	B1	4020	Further investigation required.	Could this be the

			Probably by way of trial trenching to establish whether the feature is contemporary with 4014 & 4015 in A11 above.	southerly limit of the settlement/estate to the north?
15	B2	4021	Investigation required establishing whether this is an archaeological feature as mentioned in paragraph 3.3.8. If it is then full interpretation will be required.	
16	B4	4022	Further investigation required establishing whether these are related to form a pit boundary feature.	It is known that these do occur elsewhere in the locality, currently the closest known one is at Whitehall, Nether Heyford some five miles to the south-east. If this were confirmed as such then it could be contemporary with the known late Bronze - Iron Age activity on Borough Hill, the hillfort immediately adjacent to this site.
17	C3	4023	As for 4021 above an initial investigation is required to establish whether this is archaeological or not.	
18	D1(a)	4024, 5, 6, 7, 8	This is a complicated area that requires sufficient investigation to establish what 4024 is; if it is defined as archaeological then its relationship with 4026 & 4027 needs defining. The nature of 4026 itself requires identifying.	4026 is of specific interest owing to its apparent uniqueness in this report.

			<p>Consideration should also be given to a sample investigation into the numerous pits that are allocated a feature number in the northern part of the block but are considered to be possible archaeology.</p> <p>There are again two curved 'trends' in this block, similar to those in A11 that may require investigation.</p>	
19	D1(b)	4029, 30,31	4029 requires initial investigation to ascertain what it is. The possible pits in 4030 & 4031 require sampling to ascertain their purpose and date.	
20	D2	4032, 4033	Sampled investigation to ascertain what these are, purpose and date	
21	D4	4034, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9	Initial investigation to ascertain what 4038 is. 4035 again needs an initial investigation to see whether it is an agricultural building or not. 4039 can probably be ignored. The remaining features in this block require investigation by probably trial trenching to ascertain what they are, purpose and date.	
22	D6	4040, 1 & 2	Sampled investigation by way of trial trenching to identify the nature, purpose and date of 4040 & 40401. Hopefully this will confirm the geological interpretation of 4042.	
23	D8	4043	Again sample trial trenching to establish what these are.	

4. University of Durham Archaeological Services Report

Para 3.3.19 - The two NNW - SSE referred to in this paragraph require further examination to ascertain their actual nature, purchase and date.

Para 3.3.21 - The two curvilinear anomalies referred to here require investigation. Are they in fact similar to the 'trends' mentioned in A11 and D 1(a) above?

Para 3.3.23 - Perhaps some consideration needs to be given to deeper interpretation of the 'isolated anomalies' mentioned here.

5. Relationship between archaeological implications in this development and elsewhere

CLASP has had the opportunity to study not only the results of this application but also those for the applications for the contiguous Croudace/ Churchfields application to the north and also the Middlemore and Monkmore applications to the north and north and northwest. Additionally CLASP has been undertaking its own work on the nearby Romano-British town at Bannaventa to the north-east of the Danetre Village application; this work has consisted of major geophysical surveys, field walking and structured metal detecting surveys, the work is still ongoing. We have also undertaken other field walking and metal detecting exercises on the land to the north of the Daventry - Norton road immediately to the north of the area, this is within the area of the Croudace application and immediately to the north of the Danetre Village application. Some information about the CLASP work can be seen on our website at www.claspweb.org.uk albeit that there is no detailed synopsis there as yet of the Bannaventa work. This data can however be made available to you if you wish to see it.

It would appear that this latter work in conjunction with the Croudace geophysical survey has identified an apparent Romano-British villa and/ or farm. This site is surrounded by an extensive field system of similar configuration to that located in the northern half of the Danetre Village project and elsewhere in the area, notably in the Middlemore site, these were again linked to a possible Romano-British farm albeit that this was not precisely located. Together with work undertaken elsewhere a distinct pattern is evolving of a significant change in Romano-British farming practice in the area during the latter part of the 3rd C. This appears to be somewhat in parallel with a radical remodelling of Bannaventa itself at about the same time.

CLASP is therefore particularly keen to ensure that any work undertaken on the Danetre Village site has as one of its objectives the obtaining of any additional information that can help with deciphering the 3rd C landscape in this area. We would also pose the question are the apparent field boundaries in blocks A8, A9, A11 and B1 related to the more northerly settlement in the Croudace development, discussed above. Conversely though do they relate to

a hitherto unknown settlement to the immediate east of these blocks but probably outside of the Danetre Village settlement?

If all this evidence combined does indicate an identifiable landscape across a wide area surrounding Bannaventa the question must be posed is this of more significant importance than simply of a local or county nature? If this were the case then we would urge that the investigation, interpretation and recording of these features be completed most comprehensively prior to development. It may well be appropriate to fully expose a typical 3rd C field with its boundaries and incorporate it into the development as a permanent feature for the information and education of the local community.

6. Community Involvement

Whilst we expect and understand that the vast majority of the work undertaken on these developments will be undertaken commercially, CLASP would hope that we would be afforded the opportunity to assist by giving appropriate our members the opportunity to undertake field walking, metal detecting and possibly some excavation. This will need to be discussed in depth at a later stage. If sufficient resources could be found then it might be appropriate for CLASP with its extensive knowledge of the local landscape to undertake some research investigations into potential sites that lay immediately outside the development area but are linked with it.

7. Interpretations

We note that the Regulation 19 Response provides interpretations for several of the sites and also discusses the sites mentioned in the original Environmental Statement. We will discuss those aspects in our comments on the Regulation 19 response that we will be providing shortly. You will be supplied with a copy of these comments.

8. Prioritisation

Whilst not wishing to minimise the importance of any of the areas of interest we take the view that the priority areas for investigation should be A8, A9/ 11, B4 and D2. We also consider it important that the work should be objective in that it is seeking to fulfil answers to wider archaeological questions that are currently under consideration, especially that of the previously mentioned 3rdC reorganisation of the landscape and possibly economy in Bannaventa and its hinterland. This work will be important in defining the overall landscape of what is now Romano-British west Northamptonshire. To look at each single site in isolation is, to our view, of limited usefulness.

9. Conclusion

Having had this opportunity to analyse the Wessex Document at an early stage has been a helpful exercise that will enable us to positively inform the final outcome in the archaeological sphere on this project. Equally it will help provide the local community with an opportunity to define and appreciate the heritage of the Daventry Area.

Can you please advise whether an Aerial Photographic Survey of the area has been undertaken as to date we have been unable to find reference to it?

Hopefully we can meet in due course for an informal discussion on these reports and agree a way forward.

Yours sincerely,

Dave

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