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Land at Wogaston Farm, Rhoscrowther, Pembrokeshire: Archaeological Evaluation

LAND AT WOGASTON FARM,
RHOSCROWTHER,
PEMBROKESHIRE.

NGR: 191514.200512

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



Ditch [103] looking southwest

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

On the 2nd and 3rd October 2014, Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Wogaston Farm, Rhoscrowther, Pembrokeshire (NGR: 191514.200512). The project was commissioned by Elgin Energy.

The project comprised the excavation and recording of an evaluation trench across a number of linear features, one of which possibly represented part of a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure, which contained a possible entrance at the east. The features had previously been identified by a geophysical magnetometer survey, undertaken by AB Heritage Ltd.

The evaluation has demonstrated the probable presence of the sub-rectangular ditched enclosure with a probable causeway entrance at the east. Due to a lack of artefactual material the enclosure remained undated, but is probably of some antiquity. An in-filled double-ditch Post-medieval/Modern field boundary was also present.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Magnetic (Magnetometer) Survey

Geophysical survey technique used to define areas of past human activity by mapping spatial variations and contrast in the magnetic properties of soil, subsoil and bedrock.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and circa AD 1500. However, in Wales the Medieval period can encompass the period from the end of the Roman period to the Norman period (AD 410-1066), in which case it is described as the *Early Medieval* period.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance Datum, used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between circa AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43. Traditionally sub divided into; Palaeolithic – c. 500,000 BC to c. 12,000 BC; Mesolithic – c. 12,000 BC to c. 4,500 BC; Neolithic – c. 4,500 BC to c. 2,000 BC; Bronze Age – c. 2,000 BC to c. 800 BC; Iron Age – c. 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period between AD 43 and AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on the 2nd and 3rd October 2014 on land at Wogaston Farm, Rhoscrowther, Pembrokeshire (NGR: 191514.200512). The project was commissioned by Elgin Energy.
- 1.2 The project was undertaken in accordance with the general principles of Planning Policy Wales (PPW; Edition 7) and complied with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Foundations Archaeology, 2014) and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2011).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site comprises agricultural fields, which are located to the west and southwest of Wogaston Farm, as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The topography at the location of the evaluation trench comprises land which slopes gently downwards from south to north, at approximately 61m OD. The underlying geology consists of *Milford Haven Group* - argillaceous rocks and sandstone; interbedded (BGS online viewer).
- 2.2 It is proposed to construct a new photovoltaic development within the site.
- 2.3 An archaeological assessment of the site was undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in 2012. The assessment highlighted that there was a limited potential for Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age features, but moderate potential for Iron Age activity; with a number of possible defended enclosures and a number of undated, but possibly Iron Age cropmarks in the vicinity. The site was deemed to have a low potential for Roman activity, moderate potential for Medieval features and a high potential for Post-medieval activity, in the form of the existing field system.
- 2.4 A geophysical survey of the site (AB Heritage 2014) suggested that the greater part of the site was of generally low potential, although a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure was identified in the eastern part of the study area.
- 2.5 In light of the identified presence of possible archaeological features within the proposed development area, Dyfed Archaeological Trust - Heritage Management required that an archaeological evaluation was to be undertaken at the location of the possible enclosure.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits, in order to allow the characterisation of the on-site archaeological resource.

- 3.2 This aim was achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to identify and define the nature of archaeological deposits on site and date these, where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterize the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover information about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) where possible, to define a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefactual and environmental evidence;
 - iv) a specific objective of this project was to establish the depths of archaeologically non-significant overburden within the site, in order to facilitate potential future mitigation of archaeological deposits, with a view to preservation *in-situ*. The archaeological evaluation, therefore, sought to minimize its impact upon archaeological deposits, whilst still achieving a coherent resource characterization.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A trench, which measured 95m by 2.2m, was excavated within the study area, as shown in Figure 2. The trench was primarily located in order to test the previously identified possible ditched-enclosure.
- 4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of the archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved by use of a 360° mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All mechanical excavation was conducted under the direction of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Thereafter, all additional excavation was conducted by manually.
- 4.3 Where necessary, the trench was trowel-cleaned in order to adequately define deposits.
- 4.4 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 A full stratigraphic description of all contexts identified during the course of the project is presented in Appendix I. A summary description and discussion is given below.
- 5.2 The natural, which consisted of shillet and clay deposits, was present at an average depth of 0.44m (60.73m OD) below Modern ground. This was intermittently overlaid by an orange brown clay silt subsoil (102), which became gradually thicker towards the eastern end of the trench, up to a

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maximum thickness of 0.12m. The subsoil was overlaid by ploughsoil (101), up to 0.41m thick.

- 5.3 The evaluation trench contained a total of three ditches; [103], (108) and (109), which were all cut into the top of the natural substrates. No other archaeological features were present within the evaluated area.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Ditch [103] comprised a north-south aligned ditch, which corresponded with the western part of the previously identified sub-rectangular ditched enclosure. The ditch contained a relatively substantial shillet and soil primary fill, which may represent re-deposited bank material. The sloping angle of the top of this deposit suggested that the bank would most likely have been located to the east (interior) of the ditch. No artefacts were present within any of the fills of the ditch and, as such, it remained undated. The lack of an equivalent ditch within the eastern half of Trench 1 suggested that the trench was possibly situated across a causeway enclosure entrance, which also correlated with the geophysical survey.
- 6.2 Probable ditches (108) and (109) were not excavated, but they clearly represented part of a double-ditch agricultural boundary shown on the geophysical survey. A sherd of Post-medieval/Modern pottery recovered from the top of ditch (108) indicated that these features represented relatively recently in-filled elements of the extant field system.

7 CONCLUSION

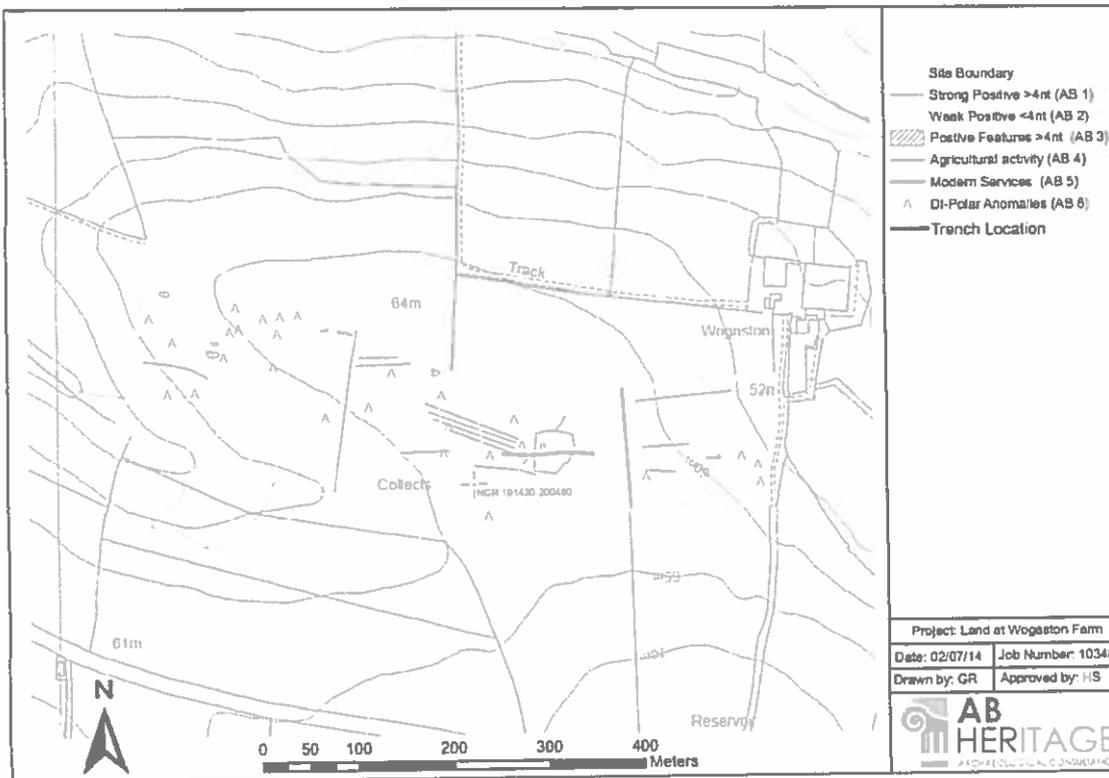
- 7.1 The evaluation has demonstrated the probable presence of the sub-rectangular ditched enclosure with a probable causeway entrance at the east. Due to a lack of artefactual material the enclosure remained undated, but is probably of some antiquity. A double-ditch Post-medieval/Modern field boundary was also present.
- 7.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited with the appropriate museum in due course. An OASIS form will be completed and submitted.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AB Heritage Ltd. 2014. *Wogaston Farm, Rhoscrowther: Geophysics Report*. Unpublished; Report no. 10348.

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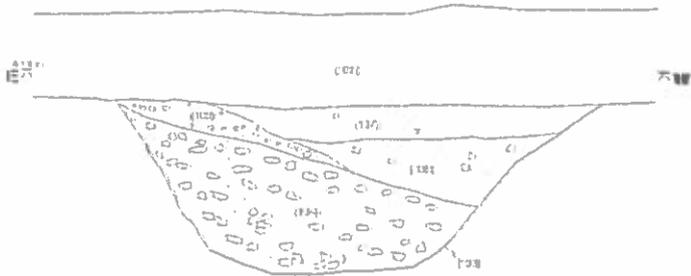
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12/0906/PA



Site Code: LNR12eval
 Accession Code:
 — TRENCH 1 WITH FEATURES SHOWN BY BLACK
FIGURE 2: Trench and Feature Locations in Relation to Geophysical Survey Results



NORTH FACING SECTION [103]



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| Site Code: LNR/2real |
| Accession Code: |
| FIGURE 3: Trench 1 Plan and Section |