



**PHOENIX CONSULTING**  
*Archaeology Limited*

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

LAND OFF PINCET LANE  
NORTH KILWORTH  
LEICESTERSHIRE

NGR SP 625 861

PC437a

*on behalf of:*

**Mick George Ltd**

*by:*

A Richmond BA PhD MCIfA FSA

For presentation to curatorial authority

18<sup>th</sup> July 2015

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Mick George Ltd are seeking to promote a site off Pincet Lane, North Kilworth as a sand and gravel quarry (NGR SP 625 861). The Company are promoting the Site through the County's emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan. In support of the Company's submissions this archaeological assessment has been undertaken.

1.1.2 The assessment takes account of the extensive archaeological evaluations of the Site that have taken place in the past for earlier applications for mineral extraction. These works comprised of a desk-based assessment, fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial trenching. All reports relating to these past investigations are contained in the Council's Historic Environment Record (H Wells *pers comm*).

### 1.2 Site Description

1.2.1 The Site covers an area of land of *circa* 46.7 hectares occupying an elevated gentle valley side of a minor tributary of the River Avon, in the Parish of North Kilworth, Leicestershire. The area is bounded by Pincet Lane (B5414) to the east, Bosworth Road to the south, arable fields to the north and a combination of pasture, set aside and a copse known as Walton Holt Gorse to the west.

1.2.2 Presently the Site consists of ten fields, under a combination of improved pasture and arable. The site is gently undulating with a north-east aspect between the 160m AOD and 155m AOD contours. A minor east-west farm road divides the site in two and established hedge-rows and occasional tree-belts border the fields and boundaries. Pincet Lodge and its associated farm outbuildings border the site to the east, along Pincet Lane, as does a small bungalow built in the 1960's. Other buildings that border the site are a group of farm storage structures at the site's south-west corner, named on maps as 'depot' and the recently constructed Brickyard Farm bordering the Site to the NW.

1.2.3 The geological mapping of the region shows the solid geology of the Site to be glacial sands and gravels. Above these are relatively deep deposits of glacial boulder clay<sup>1</sup> giving rise to soils of the Ragdale Association

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<sup>1</sup> BGS solid and drift edition sheet 170, Ordnance Survey Geological Map of Great Britain Sheet 169 (1994).

(712g). Soils are characterised as developed on glacial till, slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged. It is generally difficult to cultivate such soils because of their clay horizons.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Archaeological background**

2.1.1 The Site has been subject to the full range of archaeological evaluations over the past 25 years, all relating to a series of earlier planning applications for mineral extraction. The following presents a summary of the main findings. Reports relating to the various assessments and evaluations are held by the County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER).

#### ***1992 desk and field assessments:***

2.1.2 In 1992 an archaeological assessment of the majority of the site took place by the Leicestershire County Council, Museums, Arts and Records Service (Liddle 1992)<sup>2</sup>. The assessment was carried out in relation to an earlier planning application for mineral extraction. At that time a fieldwalking survey, a metal detector survey and a review of available aerial photographs of the site took place. These surveys, however, identified little evidence of archaeological interest, aside from already recorded ridge and furrow cultivation together with several dispersed pieces of worked flint consisting of 7 flint flakes, 1 flint blade and 1 flint core. The report stated at the time that within the site, nothing was identified that would be a constraint to development (Liddle 1992 5).

#### ***2004 desk-based assessment:***

2.1.3 In 2004 a desk-based assessment was carried out for the Site in relation to a further application for mineral extraction (Coates 2004). At that time the document stated the following:

*The sites and monuments record contains no entries relating to archaeological find-spots or sites within the confines of the application area, although occasional finds and sites exist within the surrounding landscape. Ridge and furrow cultivation marks of presumed Medieval date exist in the field bordering Bosworth Road and surrounding Pincet Lodge.*

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<sup>2</sup> This earlier assessment included the five central fields of the Site, to the west of Pincet Lodge, but not the five fields to the north of the lane leading to Tophouse Farm.

### **2004 Geophysical Survey:**

- 2.1.4 As part of an earlier application, a detailed archaeo-geophysical survey was carried out across the majority of the Site (Bartlett 2004). The survey comprised of a magnetic susceptibility scan, followed by selective detailed magnetometer surveying. Findings were generally poor, with the most distinct readings being linear anomalies that probably relate to traces of ridge and furrow cultivation. A few anomalies had pit-like profiles, but were too weak and dispersed for this to be a likely interpretation. The highest readings were along the eastern edge of these fields, but the individual magnetic anomalies here were not clearly distinguishable from the general background activity. Overall the survey did not produce any findings, other than the identification of ridge and furrow, of unequivocal archaeological significance.

### **2004 Trial Trenching**

- 2.1.5 As part of an earlier application, a trial trenching evaluation was carried out across the majority of the Site (Coates and Richmond 2004). The reporting to those investigations stated the following:

*21 trial trenches, each 50m by 2m, were excavated across geophysical anomalies and archaeologically 'blank' areas. A former field boundary was identified ... which was visible on a 19th century map of the site. Another field boundary was identified .... and the remains of probable Medieval plough furrows were recorded. No other archaeological features were identified and no artefacts were recovered. The magnetic responses recorded in the geophysical survey may have been caused by modern land drains or localised soil/geological conditions.*

*The site appears to have been open and cultivated fields, as they remain today, dating from the Medieval period, and possibly earlier.*

## **2.2 Cartographic assessment**

- 2.2.1 A detailed land ownership map survives which includes the majority of the Site for the year 1855. The map is titled 'A plan of the arable, meadow and pasture land belonging to the Rectory of North Kilworth, situated in the said Parish in the County of Leicestershire - May 1855'. It details the southern part of the Site, presently five fields, as consisting of nine fields, revealing the extent of field enlargement through the removal of

boundaries since that date. The accompanying apportionment lists all the fields as arable and provides their various ownership and acreage details.

- 2.2.2 Pincet Lodge is depicted on this early map, although at this time it was called *The Folly* and consisted of three ranges around a central space. It is possible that the earlier building was replaced by the present house which appears to be of later Victorian date.
- 2.2.3 The next available map detailing the Site is the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey of 1886. Aside from the removal of a single field boundary, effectively enlarging the field to the south of *The Folly*<sup>3</sup>, the field pattern is the same as that depicted in 1855. The OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition mapping of 1904 reveals no change in the field layout, and by the time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of 1962 three field boundaries had been removed. By 1962 *The Folly* had been re-named as Pincet Lodge, the Leicester Road had been re-named as Pincet Lane and *The Bungalow* had been built in the south-eastern field. This landscape pattern has remained largely unaltered to the present day.

### **2.3 Archaeological context of the wider landscape**

- 2.3.1 The earliest recorded archaeology within the vicinity of the Site is of **Neolithic** date (3,500 to 2,000 BC). Approximately 2 kilometres to the south a Late Neolithic pottery vessel was found during gravel digging for the Rugby and Stamford Railway Line in 1865. About 2.5 kilometres to the south-east is the site of a Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure, near Husbands Bosworth.
- 2.3.2 **Bronze Age** activities (2,000 to 1,000 BC) are poorly represented in the general vicinity of the site, although a mound of potential Bronze Age date is recorded 1.5 km to the south. This is marked on early OS maps as ‘*tumulus*’. Closer to the site, two further mounds are recorded in the HER in the field opposite Pincet Lodge. In response to an application for a proposed building in 2002, a trench evaluation was undertaken over one of the mounds (Butler 2002). Despite the investigations, no features of archaeological interest were identified<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.3.3 In a field that borders the north-west corner of the Site a patch of burnt cobbles was identified during a past fieldwalking exercise<sup>5</sup>. The investigators suggested the remains may relate to Bronze Age activities (Liddle 1992) although there was no evidence to support this. Burnt stone

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<sup>3</sup> Now called Pincet Lodge

<sup>4</sup> A single unstratified piece of worked flint was recovered in the topsoil

<sup>5</sup> This was carried out in 1992 as part of the evaluation of land by Tarmac Roadstone Ltd. The area of land evaluated in 1992 included fields not within the present Site

mounds are found widely in prehistory and their functions are thought to be varied, from cooking sites to primitive saunas (Buckley 1990). Such features are, however, associated with charcoal burning and other activities of later periods. The site of the burnt cobbles has since been built over by the establishment in 2006 of Brickyard Farm. No archaeological cover was requested at that time.

- 2.3.4 Throughout Britain the **Iron Age** period (1,000 BC to AD 43) represents a time when farming settlements become more widely established and human groups created a substantial reduction in the level of woodland cover with the creation of fields for pasture and arable. There are, however, no recorded Iron Age sites within the general vicinity of the Site.
- 2.3.5 From an archaeological perspective the period of **Roman** (AD 43-410) provincial government equates with a massive increase in the material record. Indeed throughout the river valleys of the Midlands this period of expansion is reflected in the quantity and diversity of finds and settlements. Once again, however, there are no recorded sites or finds of Romano-British date within several kilometres around the Site
- 2.3.6 North Kilworth is mentioned in Domesday as *Chivelesworde*, suggesting that the Medieval settlement of the area had **Saxon** origins (AD 410-1066). Indeed, documentary evidence details that North Kilworth was the place of Cyeel's people in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and had two manors. Documents tell us that in the reign of Henry II (1154-89), *Stephen*, son of *Robert Rabaz* confirmed to the *Abbey of St Mary de Pratis* at Leicester the grant of the Church of North Kilworth, with all its lands, rents and possessions<sup>6</sup>.
- 2.3.7 There is documentary evidence for a Medieval Grange at North Kilworth<sup>7</sup> (site unknown but probably close to the main settlement of today) and 0.5 km to the north is a further Grange which is evidenced by archaeological earthworks. This is believed to be the site of Pinslade Grange, which was first noticed in 1787 and re-discovered in 1960 when it was surveyed for the Ordnance Survey. Pinslade Grange was given to Leicester Abbey by its founder in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but that it ceased to be part of the Abbey's demesne in 1254 and may have then been abandoned. The site is scheduled as an ancient monument (SM 17055).
- 2.3.8 Various post-Medieval buildings are within sight of the Site, including the Victorian house of Pincet Lodge, Bosworth Grange (19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse) and Highcroft Lodge Farm (19<sup>th</sup> century). None of these buildings are Listed.

<sup>6</sup> see Nichols 1807 vol iv, pt I, North Kilworth, Guthlaxton. 196

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Pat. Rolls 1553 .197

### **3.0 CONCLUSIONS**

#### **3.1 Concluding statement**

- 3.1.1 The majority of the proposed allocation site at North Kilworth has been extensively evaluated over the past 25 years relating to a number of earlier applications for mineral extraction. All the previous surveys, which included fieldwalking, aerial photographic survey, geophysics and trial trenching failed to identify any remains of archaeological significance. The fieldwalking found a few, isolated pieces of worked flint and the trial trenching identified nothing more than former field boundaries and the remains of probable Medieval ridge and furrows. No other archaeological features were identified and no artefacts were recovered.
- 3.1.2 Taking the evidence accrued from past investigations at the Site, the impact of any future proposed development on archaeology is considered to be low, and should not present a constraint to the Site being allocated in the emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan.



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