



NOSTERFIELD QUARRY

NOSTERFIELD

NORTH YORKSHIRE

INTERIM REPORT

REPORT

MARCH 2005





WATCHING BRIEF
NOSTERFIELD QUARRY
NORTH YORKSHIRE

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INTERIM REPORT
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LIST OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
Summary	vii
Acknowledgements	vii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 LOCATION AND LAND USE	1
1.2 PLANNING BACKGROUND	1
1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	4
1.4 CHRONOLOGY OF INVESTIGATION	4
2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	6
2.1 HISTORY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS	6
2.2 THE STATE OF KNOWLEDGE IN 1995	10
3.0 PRE-DETERMINATION ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION	11
3.1 INVESTIGATION 1 (DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT)	11
3.2 INVESTIGATION 2 (EVALUATION)	11
4.0 WATCHING BRIEF	13
4.1 INVESTIGATION 3 (AREA 1, 2 AND 3: TRENCH 4)	13
4.2 INVESTIGATION 4 (TRENCH 5)	21
4.3 INVESTIGATION 5 (WYAS WATCHING BRIEF)	27
4.4 INVESTIGATION 6 (WYAS GRADIOMETRY)	27
4.5 INVESTIGATION 7 (TRENCH 7)	30
4.6 INVESTIGATION 8 (TRENCH 6)	35
4.7 INVESTIGATION 9 (INTERVENTION 1 AND 2)	35
4.8 INVESTIGATION 10 (INTERVENTION 3)	56
4.9 INVESTIGATION 11 (INTERVENTION 4)	56
4.1 INVESTIGATION 12 (INTERVENTION 6)	66
4.11 INVESTIGATION 13 (INTERVENTION 5NE)	66
4.12 INVESTIGATION 14 (INTERVENTION 5NW)	75
4.13 INVESTIGATION 15 (INTERVENTION 5SW)	80
4.14 INVESTIGATION 16 (INTERVENTION 5SE)	101
4.15 INVESTIGATION 17 (INTERVENTION 9)	112
4.16 INVESTIGATION 18 (INTERVENTION 7)	116
4.17 INVESTIGATION 19 (INTERVENTION 8)	122
5.0 DISCUSSION	126

5.1	FEATURE-TYPE AND PRESERVATION	126
5.2	DATING AND CHRONOLOGY	127
5.3	PRELIMINARY INTERPRETATION	130
6.0	CONCLUSIONS	132

References

Figures

1	Location map	2
2	Phases of mineral extraction	3
3	Map of archaeological investigations	5
4	Location of Investigations 1 and 2	12
5	Location of Investigation 3	14
6	Investigation 3 (Trench 4, Area 1) map of archaeological features	16
7	Investigation 3 pit complex hachure plans and sections	17
8	Investigation 3 plans of 1069, 1079, 1081, sections of 1068, 1080, 1082	18
9	Location of Investigation 4	23
10	Investigation 4 map of archaeological features	24
11	Investigation 4 plans of 5024, 5025 and 5026	25
12	Investigation 4 sections of 5024, 5025 and 5026	26
13	Location of Investigation 5	28
14	Location of Investigation 6	29
15	Location of Investigation 7	31
16	Investigation 7 map of archaeological features	32
17	Investigation 7 detail of Structure 12	33
18	Investigation 7 Structure 12 sections	34
19	Location of Investigation 8	36
20	Location of Investigation 9	37
21	Investigation 9 map of archaeological features	39
22	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) plan of pit complex	41
23	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) F37, F38, F39 and F40 sections	42
24	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) F77 post-excavation plan and section	44
25	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) F44, F45, F46 post-excavation plans	46
26	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) F44, F45, F46 sections	47
27	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) Neolithic and Bronze Age pits	50
28	Investigation 9 (Intervention 1) Neolithic and Bronze Age pit sections	51
29	Investigation 9 (Intervention 2): find spots	54
30	Location of Investigation 10	57

31	Investigation 10 contour survey at 0.20m intervals	58
32	Location of Investigation 11	59
33	Investigation 11 (Intervention 4) map of archaeological features	61
34	Investigation 11 (Intervention 4) Structure 11	62
35	Investigation 11 (Intervention 4) Structure 11 sections	63
36	Investigation 11 (Intervention 4) F13	65
37	Location of Investigation 12	67
38	Location of Investigation 13	68
39	Investigation 13 (Intervention 5NE) map of archaeological features	70
40	Investigation 13 (Intervention 5NE) eastern part of Structure 10	71
41	Investigation 13 (Intervention 5NE) Structure 10 sections	72
42	Investigation 13 (Intervention 5NE) Structure 10 sections	73
43	Investigation 13 (Intervention 5NE) Structure 10 sections	74
44	Location of Investigation 14	76
45	Investigation 14 (Intervention 5NW) map of archaeological features	77
46	Investigation 14 (Intervention 5NW) F48 and F50 post excavation plan	78
47	Investigation 14 (Intervention 5NW) F48 and F50 sections	79
48	Location of Investigation 15	81
49	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) map of archaeological features	82
50	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 3	84
51	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 3 sections	85
52	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 7	86
53	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 7 sections	87
54	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 2	88
55	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 1	89
56	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 1 sections	90
57	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 2 sections	92
58	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 4 and Structure 5	93
59	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structures 4 and 5 sections	94
60	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 6	95
61	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) Structure 6 sections	96
62	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) F150 post excavation plan and sections	98
63	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) F202	99
64	Investigation 15 (Intervention 5SW) F202 - Structure 9 elevation	100
65	Location of Investigation 16	102
66	Investigation 16 (Intervention 5SE) location of test pits	104
67	Investigation 16 (Intervention 5SE) map of archaeological features	105
68	Investigation 16 (Intervention 5SE) F304 and F316	106
69	Investigation 16 (Intervention 5SE) F320 and F335	107

70	Investigation 16 (Intervention 5SE) F304 and F320 sections	109
71	Location of Investigation 17	113
72	Investigation 17 (Intervention 9) contour map at 0.20m intervals	114
73	Investigation 17 (Intervention 9) hachure plan	115
74	Location of Investigation 18	117
75	Investigation 18 (Intervention 7) location of augers	118
76	Investigation 18 (Intervention 7) deposit map	120
77	Investigation 18 (Intervention 7) location of the peat deposits	121
78	Location of Investigation 19	123
79	Investigation 19 (Intervention 8) location of trenches	124
80	Investigation 19 (Intervention 8) trench sections	125
81	Provisional phase plan	128

Plates

1	Neolithic Peterborough ware	20
2	Volcanic rock saw	20
3	Late Neolithic Grooved ware	20
4	Prehistoric handaxe	52
5	Flint cores	55
6	Flint projectiles	55
7	Elk mandible	64
8	F92 and F93 double cremation burial	83
9	Cremation during excavation	83
10	Middle Bronze Age urn	83
11	F146	91
12	F260	91
13	F251 and F253	91
14	F172	91
15	F162 and F163	97
16	F82	97
17	Roman coin showing obverse side	97
18	Flint microliths	101
19	Flint microburin	101
20	F304 post-excavation	108
21	F320 post-excavation	108
22	F304 and F307 Section L	108
23	F335	108
24	F316 horse burial	110
25	F306	110

26	F306 section	110
27	Flint drill and piercer	111
28	F426 well	111
29	The Flasks	112

Tables

1	Index of investigations	4
2	Phases of activity	127

Appendices

A FEATURE INDICES

1	Investigation 3
2	Investigation 4
3	Investigation 7
4	Investigation 9
5	Investigation 11
6	Investigation 13 to 16
7	Investigation 17 to 19

B STRUCTURE INDEX

1	Investigations 7 and 15
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C LITHIC REPORTS

1	Nosterfield 1991-1996: Lithic report (Peter Rowe)
2	Nosterfield 1998: Lithic report (Peter Rowe)
3	Nosterfield 1999-2003: Lithic report (Peter Rowe)

D CERAMIC REPORTS

1	Neolithic pottery from Nosterfield (Blaise Vyner)
2	Excavations at Nosterfield 1998: Report on the early prehistoric pottery (Blaise Vyner)
3	Pottery from archaeological excavations and watching briefs at Nosterfield 1999-2002 (Blaise Vyner)
4	Pottery from Nosterfield 1999 (Blaise Vyner)
5	Assessment of Roman and later pottery from Nosterfield, North Yorkshire (Barbara Previous and Alan Vince)

E ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

1	Nosterfield, nr Ripon: report on the charred plant remains (J.P. Huntley)
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- 2 Nosterfield: report on sediment stratigraphies of three shafts (Deborah J. Long and Richard Tipping)
- 3 Report on completion of C14 dating for sediments from F44, F45, F46 and Find 14: Recommendations and proposal for further work (Richard Tipping)
- 4 Palaeoecology of core Nosterfield 45 (Dr Jim Innes)
- 5 Nosterfield - The Flasks: Palynology of Core 69 (Dr Jim Innes)
- 6 Nosterfield - The Flasks: Shake Hole 1: Palynology (Mairead Rutherford)

F WYAS FIELD REPORTS

- 1 Nosterfield Quarry, North Yorks: Archaeological watching brief (WYAS)
- 2 Nosterfield Quarry, North Yorks: Gradiometer survey (WYAS)

G ZOOARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORTS

- 1 Assessment of hand-collected zooarchaeological Remains From Nosterfield (Stephen Rowland)

H SCIENTIFIC DATING

- 1 Radiocarbon dating of human bone (SUERC)
- 2 Radiocarbon dating certificate: F216, C1482 (SUERC)
- 3 Archaeomagnetic analysis of F159 (GeoQuest)
- 4 Radiocarbon dating of a horse femur from F316, C1732 (SUERC)

I OSTEOLOGICAL REPORTS

- 1 Nosterfield Osteological report (Malin Holst)
- 2 Nosterfield Osteological report: F335 (Malin Holst)

J PROVISIONAL PHASE MAP

Summary

This interim report presents the provisional results of an on-going watching brief at Nosterfield Quarry, North Yorkshire. Archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken at Nosterfield Quarry since 1991, by a range of contractors. Pre-determination assessment and evaluation was undertaken by Mike Griffiths and Associates and AOC (Scotland) in 1991-2 and 1995 in support of a planning application for the current quarry operation. Subsequently, a series of watching briefs has been undertaken across the site prior to gravel extraction, in accordance with an archaeological planning condition. Since 1998, this fieldwork has been carried out by Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd, on behalf of Mike Griffiths and Associates, for Tarmac Northern Ltd. This report initially summarises the results of fieldwork carried out in the area prior to 1995, and the state of knowledge at that time. Since that date, surveys, watching briefs and further evaluation have revealed the range and character of archaeology within the site, and provided evidence for the changing use of the landscape from the Mesolithic to the modern day. The long duration of this project has also allowed for the development of methodologies best suited to the nature of the site, and the archaeological remains in this area.

The successive phases of investigation have revealed a diverse range of features, dispersed throughout the quarry site. Small pits have been identified predominantly in the eastern part of the site. A significant concentration of archaeological features has been identified to the west of the quarry, where linear features (ditches and pit alignments), ring-ditches and square-ditch enclosures have been identified, as well as a number of cremation and inhumation burials.

The earliest evidence from the site consists of a series of Mesolithic lithic artefacts, from secondary contexts, but providing an indication that the landscape was occupied at this time. Into the Neolithic, evidence for domestic activity becomes more secure. A period of land clearance in the later Neolithic and early Bronze Age has been identified from a programme of sediment analysis, which would seem to correspond with the dates ascribed to assemblages of pottery and lithics produced from pits. This may indicate domestic occupation in the area, possibly restricted to specific zones within the landscape, and contemporaneous with the construction of the monument complex of Thornborough to the south. During the Bronze Age, the area seems to have become a focal point for burial, rather than occupation, with the construction of ring-ditches (round barrows), which are suggested to have formed the centre of cremation cemeteries, and later for inhumation. During the Iron Age, there appears to have been a demarcation of the landscape with boundaries, through the construction of pit alignments and ditches. Inhumation burials, and a horse burial, suggest that the area formed a funerary location until the end of the Iron Age. Romanised occupation followed with evidence for a corn-drying kiln, and an assemblage of high status pottery. This occupation appears to have disused many of the preceding features. This change in use remained until the modern day, and the landscape became dominated by the agricultural features and divisions of land that characterised the medieval and post-medieval landscapes.

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