COLD NORTON FARM, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE

FIELD-WALKING SURVEY

by
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for
Countryside Planning and Management

March 1993

CAT Job 0295
CAT Report 93110
COLD NORTON FARM, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological field-walking carried out by Cotswold Archaeological Trust on land at Cold Norton Farm, Stone, Staffordshire during February 1993. The survey was commissioned by Countryside Planning and Management of Knights Gate, Quenington, Gloucestershire for the Agricultural and Food Research Council.

The objective of the survey was twofold;-

(i) To identify potential archaeological sites from the presence of artefactual material on the surface of arable fields; and

(ii) To facilitate the design of an archaeological evaluation strategy should significant results be discovered.

1.2 The Study Area

The study area designated by CPM for the survey lies 0.28km south-west of Stone (NGR: SJ 88500/32000), bounded by the M6 and the B5026. The topography of the study area is of moderate relief, ranging from 120m O.D to the south-west to 110 m O.D in the north-eastern sector of field C. The area walked comprised three arable fields (A to C) totalling 36.5 ha (figures A1 to A8).

A desk based archaeological assessment conducted by CPM in January 1993 revealed no known archaeological deposits within the study area. However the presence of prehistoric stone implements, which are often found in association with Neolithic and Bronze Age burial sites, in the general area and the proximity of the deserted medieval village at Cold Norton Farm, suggested that the area was of sufficient interest to warrant an archaeological evaluation.
2 DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Data Collection

All artefactual material of non-natural origin or clearly-imported to the area was collected by the field team during the course of the survey. No discrimination was made in favour of the recovery of particular artefact classes.

An assumption is made that the recovered material will be representative of the artefactual content of the ploughsoil but that any deeper features may not be located.

2.2 Methodology

Fieldwalking was carried out in accordance with a specification for archaeological evaluation detailed within section 2.1 of the CPM document Archaeological Specification for Cold Norton Farm, Stone, Staffordshire (CPM 892 Hi3-2/93/jrh). The methodology is briefly repeated here for reference. The three fields were systematically walked along 20m spaced lines with collection points at 20m intervals, in line with local field-walking policy. The lines were aligned relative to the OS National Grid and were walked alternately south-north and north-south.

Artefacts from the surface of the fields were collected and bagged over the 20m lengths, with appropriate 12 figure grid references identifying finds to the nearest metre. The three fields under examination were walked over the course of a single day by four experienced fieldworkers, well versed in artefact recognition for all periods. Each walker viewed the strip of ground-surface 1m either side of the transect line walked, giving a figure of approximately 10% of the study area sampled in detail by line-walking.

Collected material was subsequently sorted and identified and plotted on 1:2500 OS base maps to display the distribution of individual artefact classes. Distribution maps for all artefact categories are contained within Appendix A.

2.3 Field and weather conditions

The field and weather conditions were somewhat varied throughout the project. Fields A and C had crop just through, covering approximately 10% of the ground-surface. Field B had recently been furrowed. All three fields were in a good condition for field-walking. Weather conditions were variable throughout, fluctuating from bright sunlight to overcast, filtered light with heavy rain.
3 FIELD-WALKING RESULTS

The field-walking programme has yielded no artefactual material to indicate the presence of archaeological features within the study area. Artefactual material was only lightly distributed across the three fields and no topographical features or soil colour marks were noted.

The artefactual classes recovered all dated from the post-medieval and modern period, and consisted of pottery, ceramic building materials, glass, slate, clay-pipe and two iron objects (figures A1 to A8). No patterning in the spatial distribution of these objects was apparent, there being a thin spread of all categories across the study area. No archaeological significance is attached to the presence of this material, which has derived from long-term manuring with domestic refuse in conjunction with episodes of casual loss and discard. For the record the spatial distribution of the post-medieval pottery and recent ceramic building material have been plotted.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The field-walking survey has produced no flints, pottery or other artefacts dating from before the post-medieval period. The condition of the fields and the weather was favourable for this method of archaeological assessment and it is therefore concluded that if any archaeological deposits are present within the study area no artefactual traces are present within the ploughsoil.
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APPENDIX A
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LOCATION MAP

FIG 1
COLD NORTON FARM, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE '93

FIELD WALKING
Spatial distribution plan

Modern pottery
- 0-25g
- 26-50g
- 51-100g

FIG A2
COLD NORTON FARM, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE '93
FIELD WALKING
Spatial distribution plan
Recent brick and tile
- 0-25g
- 26-50g
- 51-100g
- 101-200g
- 201+

FIG A3