



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Evaluation Report

97 High Street
Cheddington
Buckinghamshire



Quality Check

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Summary

In February 2020, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at 97 High Street, Cheddington, Buckinghamshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

The site is located in the village and civil parish of Cheddington, which originated in the Saxon period, though earlier settlement, possibly Neolithic, has been documented at a nearby multi-vallate hillfort constructed on Southend Hill. The area was deemed to have potential for archaeological survival; however, no cut features, deposits or artefacts were observed throughout the evaluation.

1 Introduction

1.1 In February 2020, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at 97 High Street, Cheddington, Buckinghamshire. The work was part of a requirement of the National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF) and Condition 5 of the Planning Consent, has been defined in a generic brief prepared by Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Service (BCAS), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Aylesbury Vale District Council. The relevant planning application reference is 18/01705/APP.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

The proposed development is located in the village and civil parish of Cheddington, in the Aylesbury Vale District Council administrative at National Grid Reference SP 92479 17050 (Fig. 1).

Description

The site is located at the southern end of the village, on the east side of the High Street. To the south is the Cheddington Tennis Club, to the North and West are residential properties and to the East are agricultural fields (Fig. 2).

Geology & Topography

Cheddington lies on the North slope of a spur of the Chilterns. The solid geology of the site consists mudstone, siltstone and sandstone of Gault Formation and Upper Greensand Formation. There are no identified superficial deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The site is situated at an elevation of c. 105m AOD.

Proposed Development

The proposed development calls for the demolition of the existing outbuildings and the erection of three detached residences, with access, parking and services (Fig. 3).

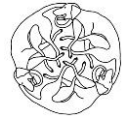


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



Figure 2: Site location (scale 1: 1,250)

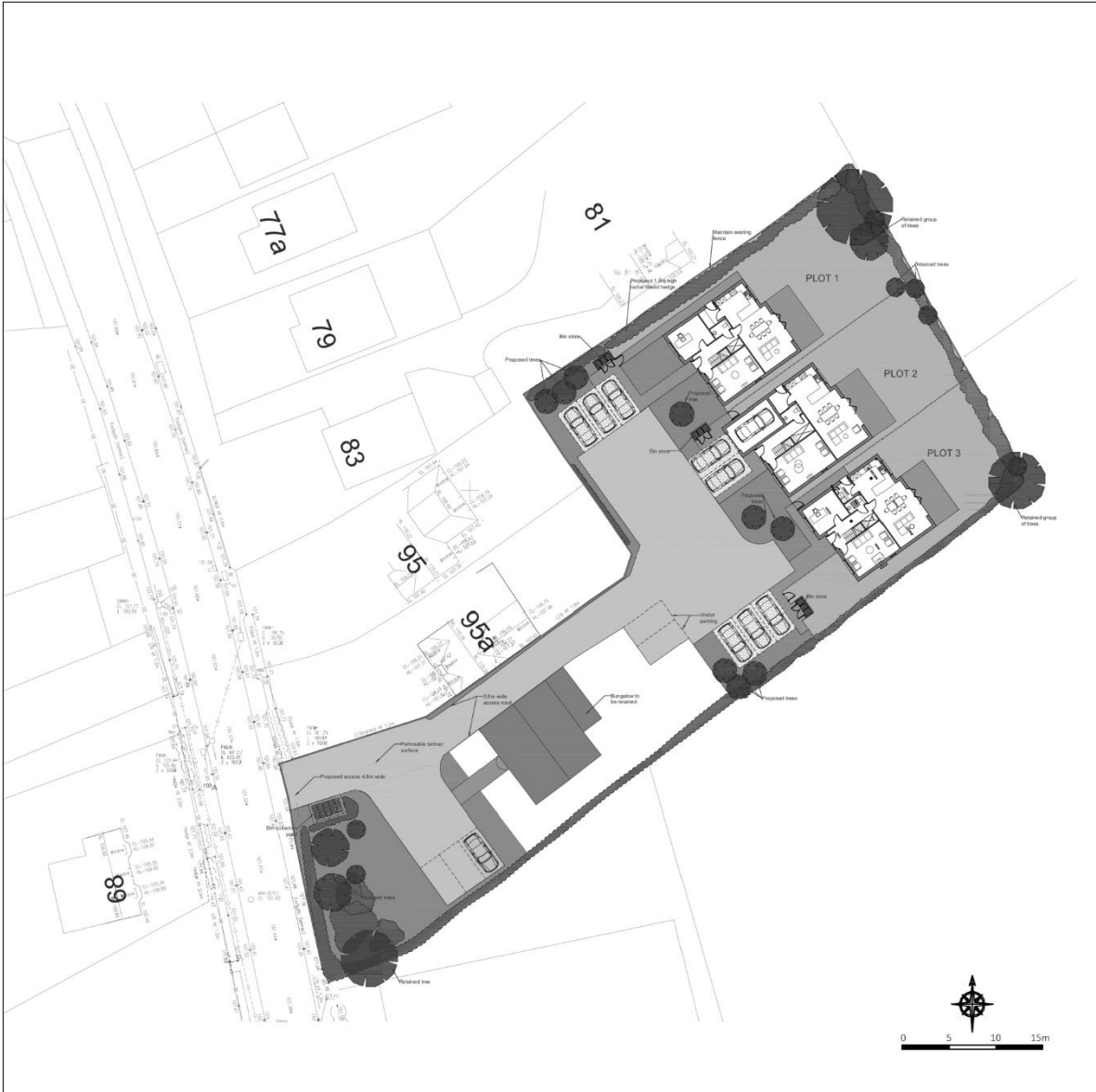


Figure 3: Proposed development (scale 1:750)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Shlasko & Kaye, 2019) were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area.
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

The development site has been highlighted as a possible route for the Roman road known as Viatores 169a. As well as simply locating and mapping these structures, the study of Roman roads is vital in understanding the overall framework for communication and transport during the Roman period. Establishing direction, construction and dating as well as how and why these features were used is a key research aim for the area. This information is essential for understanding how the Roman communities used and manipulated the surrounding landscape to suit local and regional habits (Taylor 2006:157).

2.2 *Methods*

In line with the requirements of the Brief, this is the first part of a staged investigation whereby the results of this stage will be assessed to determine the need and extent of further stages of archaeological investigation. The methods used were as follows:

- Two 20m long trenches, 1.8m wide, were excavated as close to the proposed footprint of the new structures as possible, and within the new parking areas (Fig. 4).
- Trench 1 was located in attempt to intercept the Roman road.

If heritage assets of archaeological interest were identified by the evaluation, the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation would be secured in accordance with a WSI which has been submitted and approved by the LPA.

2.3 *Standards*

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The design brief
- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (HE 2015, EH 2008)



3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The modern village of Cheddington appears to have originated in the Saxon period, but a possible cursus or mortuary enclosure at Southend Hill to the west of the railway line indicates local settlement may date from the Neolithic period. Moreover, late Neolithic/early Bronze Age ring ditches are located to the east of the village. A multi-vallate hillfort was subsequently constructed on Southend Hill, which was still in use when the Romans first occupied the area. There is scant evidence for Roman occupation within the village, although the possible Roman road running along the High Street and the discovery of tile fragments and metalwork suggest that there may once have been a villa close by. Early Saxon settlement evidence is entirely lacking, but the multiple ownership of land at the time of the Norman Conquest suggests a later subdivision of a middle Saxon estate.

This section has been compiled with information from the Buckinghamshire HER, the Victoria County History (British History Online, KDK's library and other reliable sources.

3.2 *Prehistoric* (before 600BC)

The earliest evidence for archaeological activity in the area is located to the southwest of the proposed development site at Southend Hill, where aerial photographs have recorded cropmarks of a possible Neolithic cursus or mortuary enclosure (HER 040390100). A series of Neolithic – Bronze age ring ditches (HER 0447300000), and a possible enclosure of a similar date (HER 0447301000) are also known from aerial photographs to the northeast of the proposed development site.

3.3 *Iron Age* (600BC-AD43)

Southend Hill appears to have played a significant and continuing role in the landscape as a small multivallate hill fort was subsequently constructed on the site (HER 0403900000). The hillfort covers an area of c.5ha and there are faint traces of circular structures and curved ditches within the double ditches enclosing the site. Pottery evidence suggests that the site was inhabited from the early to middle Iron Age (c.600-300 BC) and that occupation either continued into, or was resumed in the late Iron Age (c.100 BC - AD 50). The hillfort, which forms part of a series of hillforts along the Chiltern escarpment including the better-known hillfort of Ivinghoe Beacon to the east, is now a Scheduled Monument (List entry number 1017517). That the area was well settled in the Iron Age is further testified by the presence of late prehistoric flint flakes and cores at Southend Hill (HER 0403900002) and the early Iron Age features and pottery at Seabrook Farm to the south of the development site (HER 0770700000; Cotswold Archaeology 2017: 4). Mid-late Iron Age enclosures including one enclosing a single and double burial, pits and postholes were revealed during trial trenching to the west of Cheddington (HER 0795600000). The site continued in use into the Roman period.

3.4 *Roman* (AD43-c.450)

Further evidence for Roman activity in the area comes in the form of a scatter of Roman tile fragments found on the ground surface to the south of the proposed development site (HER 0126800001), a Roman coin found at The Green (HER 0503500000) and the possibility that a Roman Road (referred to as the Viatores 169a) runs along the High Street and through the proposed development site towards Pitstone.



3.5 **Saxon-Post medieval** (c.450 - 1900)

Although there is no evidence for early Saxon settlement within the study area, a settlement was clearly well established by the late Saxon period. Cheddington appears a number of times in the Domesday Survey of 1086 when it was divided into relatively small holdings (Williams and Martin 2002: 402, 408, 410, 414 & 421). The largest holding was 5 ½ hides held by Robert de Tosny. The tenant was Gilbert and there were six villans and four slaves. This land was held before the Conquest by Oswulf, son of Frani, a thegn of King Edward (*ibid*: 410). The next largest landholder before the Conquest was Fin the Dane, who held two estates in Cheddington totalling 3 ½ hides and one virgate (*ibid*: 410 & 421).

Documentary and archaeological sources point to subsequent manorial development and decline in the form of the medieval moat at Great Seabrook (HER 0046300000) and the house itself, which although post-medieval in date is recorded from the 13th century (HER 0046301000). Elsave Manor (HER0296700100), which was held by Osulf son of Frane in King Edward the Confessor's time, later became part of the landholdings of the Barony of Belvoir (VCH online).

The Grade II* listed Church of St Giles (NHLE Ref: 1310457) dates from the late 12th century. It was remodelled in the 14th and 15th centuries and was restored in 1858 when the vestry and south porch were added (VCH online).

Throughout the medieval and post medieval periods, Cheddington remained a small, largely agricultural community. Lynchets or cultivation terraces were cut into Southend Hill in the late medieval period (HER 0127100000)

The opening of the Grand Junction Canal in 1805 (HER 0411900000) and the London Northwestern Railway in 1838 (HER 1481100000), linked the village directly to the capitol. However, in the middle of the nineteenth century, most men in the parish were employed as agricultural labourers, whilst many of the women were listed as straw plaiters on the 1861 census (ancestry.com). Not all the inhabitants were working on farms. Cheddington was also home to several railroad workers and policemen, as well as the local vicar and his young family. Two households were also recorded living on canal boats.

3.6 **Modern** (1900 - present)

Cheddington Airfield, opened in 1942 as an RAF station, and was subsequently handed over to the USAAF. It closed 1952.



Figure 4: HER plan. Proposed development site is marked with a star (scale 1:25,000)



4 Results

4.1 Introduction

Two trenches measuring 20 metres in length and 1.80m wide and were excavated with an 8-tonne tracked machine fitted with a 1.2m toothless ditching bucket. No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were observed in either trench. The trenches were relocated slightly as the original locations impacted upon site access.

The stratigraphy on site was fairly uniform, consisting of multiple deposits of made ground as well as areas where topsoil, subsoil and natural can be seen.

4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located to the south east of the site, oriented NE-SW. It was relocated slightly from its proposed position outlined in the WSI, to maintain site access. The stratigraphy of the south eastern edge of the trench consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil and natural clay. However, there were two layers of made ground on the north western edge and north eastern end directly over the geology. These were part of the sub-base laid down to accommodate the driveway and the concrete slab supporting the former animal pens. No archaeological finds or features were revealed.

Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Topsoil	0.20m	heavily disturbed dark greyish brown, silty clay, with inclusions of pieces of plastic and wood
002	Subsoil	0.18m	dark brownish grey, no inclusions, slight bioturbation
003	Natural	<1.14m	grey clay, soft malleable, no inclusions
004	Made Ground	0.14m	grey-yellow clayey sand with sub-angular stone inclusions, crumbly, occasional pieces of house brick
005	Made Ground	0.21m	pinkish grey sand and rubble Type 1, with inclusion of sub angular stones and brick.

4.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was located to the north east of site, and its location was slightly adjusted to allow site access. The trench was orientated NW-SE and the stratigraphy consisted of two made ground layers overlying the natural clay. There were no archaeological finds or features present.

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
003	Natural	0.84	grey blue, clay, soft malleable, no inclusions
004	Made Ground	0.20	grey-yellow clayey sand with sub-angular stone inclusions, friable, occasional pieces of house brick
005	Made Ground	0.14	pinkish grey sand and rubble Type 1, with inclusion of sub angular stones and brick.



Plate 1: Trench 1 facing SW



Plate 2: Trench 2 facing NNW



Plate 3: Trench 1 stratigraphy. SE side

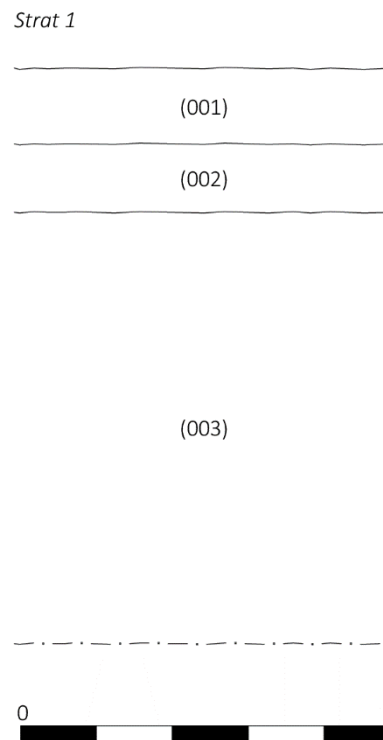


Figure 5: Trench 1 stratigraphy SE side



Plate 4: Trench 1 stratigraphy, NW side

Strat 2

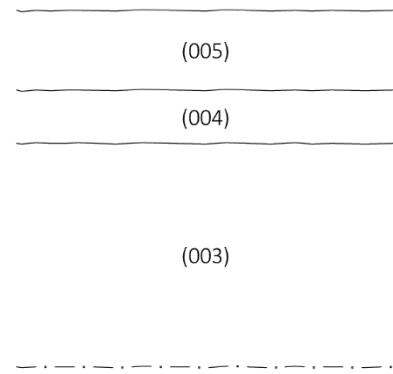


Figure 6: Trench 1 stratigraphy, NW side

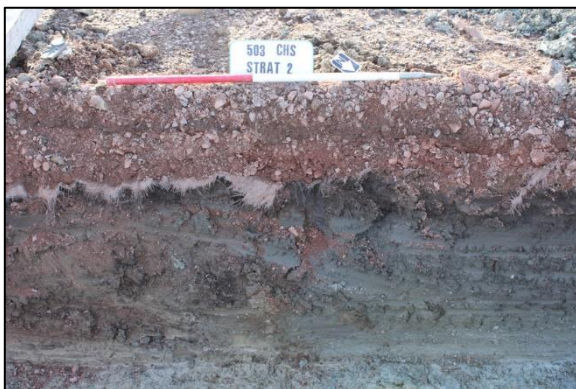


Plate 5: Trench 2 stratigraphy, SW side

Strat 3

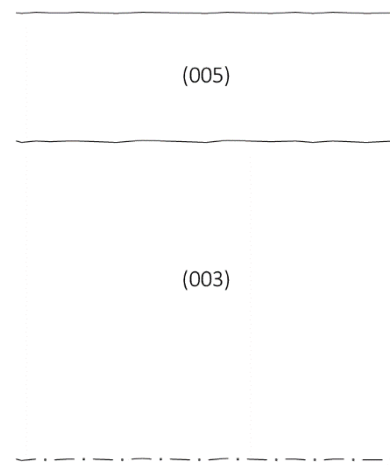


Figure 7: Trench 2 stratigraphy, SW side



Plate 6: Trench 2 stratigraphy, NW end

Strat 4

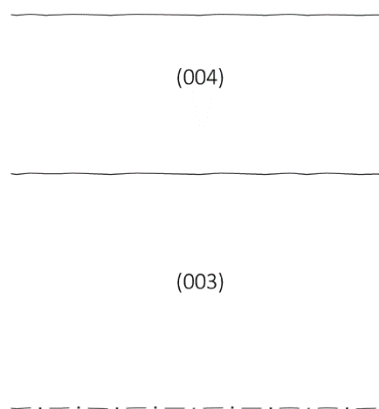


Figure 8: Trench 2 stratigraphy, NW end

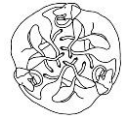


Figure 9: Trench location plan (scale as shown)



5 Conclusions

The evaluation revealed no archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts within any of the strata recorded. The presence of subsoil on the south eastern side of the site suggests the ground is relatively undisturbed on that side of the plot. However, the remainder of the site shows signs that the natural geology has been truncated by an unknown amount, probably during the construction of the extant house, driveway and other modern out-buildings.

It was hoped that this investigation would locate part of the Roman road, Viatores 169a, which is thought to run along the High Street and through the development site. However, no archaeological features or finds were observed during trial trenching. The absence of the road may be a result of the aforementioned truncation, or more likely, the trajectory of the road falls outside the area of investigation. The lack of features altogether may be because the trenches fell between widely dispersed features or have also been lost through truncation. Consequently, it was not possible to advance the stated research aims of the project, on this occasion.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Project Design Studio for commissioning this report on behalf of Prestige Renovations Ltd. Thanks are also due to Julia Wise of Buckinghamshire County Council for providing historic environment records and other relevant documents and to Lucy Lawrence of Buckinghamshire County Council for monitoring the project. Thanks to the ground workers for their assistance on site.

The fieldwork was carried out by Barney King and Sam Pryor BSc. The report was written by Barney King, and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Written Scheme of Investigation
2. Initial report
3. Trench recording sheets
4. Site drawings
5. Client's site plans
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The physical archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum (Accession number AYBCM: 2019.153). All digital files will be uploaded to the Archaeological Data Service (ADS)



8 References

Standards & Specifications

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Paine C. (ed) 1992 *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission

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Secondary Sources

British Geological Society (BGS): <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed: 29 November 2019)

Page W. 1925 'Parishes: Cheddington', pp 331-334 in *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 3. British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol3/pp331-334> [accessed 29 November 2019]

Williams A. & Martin G.H. 2002 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. London: Penguin



Appendix 1: Photograph List

Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		x	NE overview of Trench 1
2	x	x	NE overview of Trench 1
3	x	x	NW facing over view of Trench 2
4		x	NW facing over view of Trench 2 no board
5		x	Trench 1 overview SE view
6		x	Trench 1 overview SE view no board
7		x	Stratigraphy of sondage in Trench 1
8		x	Stratigraphy of sondage in Trench 1
9		x	General stratigraphy of Trench 1
10		x	General stratigraphy of Trench 2
11		x	General stratigraphy of Trench 2
12		x	Stratigraphy of sondage in Trench 2



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	97 High Street, Cheddington, Buckinghamshire	Project Site Code	503/CHS
OASIS reference	Kdkarcha1-375618	Event/Accession no	AYBCM : 2019.153
OS reference	SP 9247917050	Study area size	85.64 sqm
Project Type	Evaluation	Height (mAOD)	105m AOD
Short Description	<p>In February 2020, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at 97 High Street, Cheddington, Buckinghamshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.</p> <p>The site is located in the village and civil parish of Cheddington, which originated in the Saxon period, though earlier settlement, possibly Neolithic, has been documented at a nearby multi-vallate hillfort constructed on Southend Hill. The area was deemed to have potential for archaeological survival; however, no cut features, deposits or artefacts were observed throughout the evaluation.</p>		
Previous work	none	Site status	none
Planning proposal	Demolition of the existing outbuildings and the erection of three detached residences, with access, parking and services	Current land use	Demolished farm
Local Planning Authority	18/01705/APP	Planning application ref.	18/01705/APP
Monument type	None	Monument period	18/01705/APP
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	None	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaye	Director/Supervisor	Barney King
Sponsor/funding body	Prestige Renovations Ltd		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	12.02.20	End date	13.02.20
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical			
Paper	Buckinghamshire County Museum	WSI, report, site records,	
Digital	ADS		
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Evaluation: 97 High Street, Cheddington, Buckinghamshire		
Serial title & volume	KDK Archaeology Ltd Report ref. 503/CHS/2		
Author(s)	Barney King		
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