

1 SUMMARY

Between the 6th and 15th September 2005 an archaeological watching brief, on behalf of Leerose, was undertaken to observe intrusive groundworks connected with the erection of camera columns and intruder detection beam towers, and associated cable laying at Marble Hill House. During the course of the works a limited sequence deposits was exposed due the shallow depth of trenching. None of the deposits observed were identified as containing significant archaeological potential.

2 INTRODUCTION

Site Location

- 2.1 The site is located in Marble Hill Park, a Grade II Registered Historic National Park, approximately 1.5km southeast of Richmond town centre, on the western bank of the River Thames (Figure. 1 & 2). The proposed development is situated at Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 17302 73626, bounded by Richmond Road to the north, Orleans Road to the west and, immediately to the south, the River Thames, in the London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames. The watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Leerose.

Development Proposals

- 2.2 The development involved the erection of two camera columns and 8 single and double sided intruder detection beam towers requiring the excavation of a service trench 400mm wide and up to 600mm deep. This was anticipated that such works may disturb the foundations of the former service wing to Marble Hill House, which was demolished at the beginning of the 20th century.

Planning Background

- 2.3 In accordance with *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 15, paragraph 6.38, and PPG 16, conditions 16 & 17, & PPG) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990) and following an application for the Outline Planning Permission (Ref. No. 05/0790/F), the LPA archaeological advisor to the London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be carried out. This was undertaken in order to determine the potential archaeological impact to the site during development.
- 2.4 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* was prepared (AOC 2005) detailing the methodologies utilized during the course of the archaeological investigations.

- 2.5 The fieldwork was managed Mark Beasley for AOC Archaeology and supervised by Helen MacQuarrie and Catherine Edwards. The site was monitored by the LPA archaeological advisor on behalf of the London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The site at Marble Hill House lies close to the transition in drift geology between River Brickearths and Thames alluvial deposits. Both overlie the solid geology of London Clay (BGS Sheet 270). No geotechnical investigations have been undertaken on site prior to the production of this document.
- 3.2 The development site is located on the River Thames flood plain, directly on the western side of the river, and also lies to the west of the Richmond Park plateau. The site lies at an approximate height of 2.5m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

Archaeological Background

- 3.3 The information from the following section is drawn from the WSI (AOC 2005).

Prehistoric

- 3.4 The river terraced gravels upon which the site lies have yielded a number of prehistoric artefacts; the earliest of these isolated finds were dated to the Bronze Age. They included a Bronze Age barbed flint arrowhead found near Richmond Bridge, a Bronze Age socketed gouge from the Surrey bank of the River Thames, prehistoric worked flints and an Iron Age pot sherd discovered during an excavation in 1981.

Roman

- 3.5 There is also evidence for a possible 2nd Century Roman riverside settlement in Twickenham.

Post-Medieval

- 3.6 Marble Hill was acquired for Henrietta Howard (1688-1767), later Countess of Suffolk and onetime mistress of George II. Building started in 1724 and was completed in about 1729. The house, designed in the newly fashionable Palladian manner was built under the supervision of Roger Morris and the gardens laid out by Charles Bridgeman, aided by Alexander Pope.
- 3.7 When Lady Suffolk died in 1767 the estate passed to her brother's son, the 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire. He, on occasions lived there but frequently rented out the property. Lord Buckingham died in 1793 and Marble Hill passed as a life interest to Lady Suffolk's great niece, Miss Hotham. She soon abandoned the house to tenants.

- 3.8 In 1824, Miss Hotham's heirs broke the entail on the estate, and sold Marble Hill to the Army Agent Timothy Brent. In the following year he sold the property to Jonathan Peel (1799-1879), the younger brother of Sir Robert Peel.
- 3.9 In 1898 the property was bought by the Cunard family with the intention of creating a suburban housing estate: plans for roads and drainage were prepared. Vocal opposition backed by funds raised from individuals and various local authorities secured the property for public use at a cost of £70,000 in 1902. The London County Council (later the Greater London Council) held it in trust until 1986, when the GLC was abolished. English Heritage then took charge of the property.

4 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 To establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the development site.
- 4.2 To mitigate by record the impacts of construction on any surviving archaeological deposits.
- 4.3 To record and sample excavate any such archaeologically important material.
- 4.4 To enable the LPA archaeology advisor to make an informed decision on the status of the condition imposed on planning consent.
- 4.5 The final aim will be to make public the results of the archaeological work.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 A site code (**MBL05**) was obtained from the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre (LAARC) before work commenced.
- 5.2 A watching brief condition was imposed on all ground works and intrusive activities connected with the erection of the camera columns and intruder detection beam towers, and associated cable laying. These works consisted of the excavation of a series of trenching adjacent to the southwest, southeast, and northeast sides of Marble Hill House (Figure 2).
- 5.3 The work was undertaken with the use of a 1 ton mechanical excavator, utilising a 400mm wide bucket, excavating to a planned depth of 500mm. Due to substantial root activity, excavations were limited to a maximum depth of 450mm.

- 5.4 A written record was compiled over the course of the trench excavations, in association with digital photography to record the nature of the deposits observed.
- 5.5 All of the work was carried out in line with Archaeological Guidance Paper (AGP): 3, Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (English Heritage June 1998); GLAAS Archaeological Field Guidance Papers 2, 3 and 5 (GLAAS 1998); and IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA October 1994).

6 RESULTS

Cable Trench

- 6.1 At the point of completion, the cable trench measured approximately 0.4m wide and reached a maximum depth of 0.3m (Figure. 2). This was excavated to a shallower depth than expected due to the density of root activity in the vicinity. The deposits observed varied throughout the length of the trench. Undisturbed natural deposits were not encountered.
- 6.2 In the cable trenching to the southwest and southeast of the house the lowest deposit encountered in the trench was a firm light orange brown silty sand (1/002), interpreted as being a subsoil deposit. This occurred at an average of 0.24m below ground surface. Lying directly above this was a soft dark grey sandy silt (1/001), with a moderate organic content and high degree of root activity, so clearly defined as top-soil deposits. Context (1/001) contained irregular, yet substantial dumps of modern building debris, primarily CBM.
- 6.3 The only variation in the uniform nature of the deposits was identified in the cable trench to the west wing of Marble Hill House, where the full 0.25m depth of the trench was identified as containing modern made ground (1/003).

Camera Base Pits

- 6.4 In addition to the excavation of the cable trench six pits were excavated for the installation of camera columns and associated cable services (Figure 2). Each pit approximately measured 1m square, and reached an average depth of 0.45m. Undisturbed natural deposits were not encountered.
- 6.5 The deposits observed mirrored those identified to the southeast and southwest of Marble Hill House. In each pit silty sand (1/002) was directly overlain by the sandy silt (1/001).
- 6.6 No features or deposits of an archaeological nature were observed over the course of the groundworks. (See Appendix A for more detail on the contexts observed)

7 FINDS

- 7.1 No finds of an archaeological nature were observed over the course of the watching brief.

8 INTERPRETATION

- 8.1 Of the deposits exposed and recorded over the course of the groundworks, none were identified as containing archaeological potential. Those to the southwest and southeast of the house represent the normal accumulation of soils in an extensive garden setting, with subsoil lying beneath organic topsoil. The modern made ground to the northeast of the house can be interpreted as the remaining debris from the demolition of the former service wing in the early 20th century.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 With regard to the general aim of the watching brief, i.e. establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains, it was clearly demonstrated that the cable trench did not disturb any deposits of an archaeological nature.
- 9.2 The disturbance caused by groundworks in order to excavate the cable trench and camera base pits was limited to either deposits typical to the landscaped garden setting, or modern building debris.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The watching brief revealed that of the deposits observed at Marble Hill House, none were identified as possessing no archaeological potential. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological work is necessary. Any future proposed groundworks will have to be evaluated on an individual basis dependent on the nature of the work and any potential impacts upon the historic building and its setting.

11 PUBLICATION

- 11.1 Due to the limited nature of the project, publication is to be limited to a summary in the London Archaeology Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).

12 ARCHIVE DEPOSTION

- 12.1 The archive will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre (LAARC).

13 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC Archaeology (2005). *A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Marble Hill House, Richmond Road, Twickenham.*

British Geological Survey. (Sheet 270). *Solid and Drift Geology, South London.*

English Heritage. (1998) *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork 3.*

Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (1998). *Archaeological Field Guidance Papers 2, 3 and 5.*

Institute of Field Archaeologists. (1994) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief.*

Fig.1 Site Location

Fig.2 Detailed Site/Trench Location

APPENDIX A CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	Topsoil	172m	Trench	0.24m
1/002	Subsoil	172m	Trench	0.06m+
1/003	Modern Made Ground	55m	Trench	0.25m+

APPENDIX B OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-11779

Project details

Project name	Marble Hill House, Richmond Road, Twickenham
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology between the 6th and 15th September 2005 to observe the instillation of camera columns and intruder detection beam towers, and associated cable laying at Marble Hill House, Twickenham. Shallow trenches were excavated adjacent to the southwest, southeast and northeast sides of Marble Hill House, averaging a depth of 0.3m. These trenches exposed a limited sequence of deposits, primarily consisting of densely rooted top-soil. No archaeological features were revealed during this watching brief.
Project dates	Start: 06-09-2005 End: 15-09-2005
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MBL05 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	7207 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	05/0790/F - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	English Heritage List of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON RICHMOND UPON THAMES TWICKENHAM Marble Hill House, Richmond Road, Twickenham
Postcode	TW1 2NL
Study area	8500.00 Square meters
National grid reference	TQ 17302 73626 Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology
Project director/manager	Mark Beasley
Project supervisor	Chris Clarke
Sponsor or funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London
Digital Archive ID	MBL 05
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster','Images vector','Spreadsheets','Text'
Digital Archive notes	LAARC metadata

Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London
Paper Archive ID	MBL 05
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Diary', 'Matrices', 'Microfilm', 'Report'
Paper Archive notes	at AOC until microfilming and deposition

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Marble Hill House, Richmond Road, Twickenham
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Clarke, C.
Date	2005
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 bound text and illustrations.

Entered by	Fitz (fitz@aocarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	7 December 2005