

## 1 ABSTRACT

*In March 2006 an archaeological evaluation and watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group at Elizabeth House, Bognor Regis, West Sussex on behalf of Warings Contractors Ltd. The site is bounded to the south by Victoria Drive, to the east by a childcare centre and to the north and west by various residential buildings. The site is centred on SZ 9301 9955. The watching brief comprised the monitoring of a single drain trench excavation measuring 26.00m x 1.00m at base. The ensuing evaluation comprised the excavation of five trenches; three measuring 10.00m x 2.00m at base, one measuring 15.00m x 2.00m at base and one measuring 20.00m x 2.00m at base. The trenches were located to assess the impact of the proposed development plan on any surviving archaeology. No archaeological remains were identified.*

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### Site Location

- 2.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SZ 9301 9955, and is within land bounded to the south by Victoria Drive, the east by a childcare centre and the north and west by various residential buildings. The site is rectangular in shape and covers an area of approximately 0.3 hectares (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The development proposal is for a care home.

### Planning Background

- 2.3 The Local Planning Authority is West Sussex County Council. Archaeology advice to the council is provided by John Mills, Archaeology Advisor to the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.4 A condition (condition 26) placed on the planning application (No.:BR/420/05) stated that:

*“No development shall take place within the area indicated on the attached plan until the applicant, or their agent or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority”.*
- 2.5 No previous archaeological works have been undertaken on, or near, the investigation site.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Bognor is one of the oldest Saxon sites on recorded in West Sussex. The town is first referred to in AD 680 as *Bucgan ora* meaning Bucge's shore. Originally a Saxon-landing place, the village became a small fishing village in the later Saxon period.
- 3.2 In 1275 it was recorded as *Buggenore* and in 1405 as *Bogenor*. A Roman farmstead was discovered in nearby Felpham in 1965 and in the mid-seventies an Iron Age settlement was uncovered during construction work. The only known find of archaeological significance in the immediate area of the site is a Late Bronze Age hoard. (J. Mills *pers. Comm.*)
- 3.3 At the end of the 18th Century Sir Richard Hotham began his grand scheme to create a select, up market resort at Bognor. Sir Richard succeeded in creating a thriving seaside resort; Bognor was the very first English resort especially for bathing.

### **4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INVESTIGATION**

- 4.1 The aims of the investigation as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2006) were to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. This applied to remains of all periods and includes evidence of past environments.
- 4.2 The following objectives were addressed:
- Was there evidence for later prehistoric occupation or land use?
  - Was there evidence for Roman occupation or land use?
  - Was there evidence for medieval occupation or land-use, particularly in the form of field boundaries?
  - Was there evidence for post-medieval occupation or land-use?
- 4.3 The evaluation was conducted to enable the Archaeology Advisor to WSCC to make an informed decision on the status of the condition on the planning permission, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
- 4.4 The final aim is to make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 Prior to commencing the archaeological works on site, a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) was prepared by AOC Archaeology (AOC 2006).
- 5.2 All fieldwork procedures followed AOC Archaeology Group Ltd Fieldwork Sector On-Site Handbook, dated May 2003 (AOC 2003) and was conducted in accordance with the WSI.
- 5.3 The excavation and recording conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines. (English Heritage 1991, 1992, 1998a, 2002; IFA 1992, 1994, 1997; Museum of London 1994; United Kingdom Institute for Conservation 1983, 1990; Council for British Archaeology 1987)
- 5.4 Before excavation commenced, a museum acquisition number was obtained from Horsham Museum (**CDM 7848**). This was used as a site code.
- 5.5 The watching brief was conducted on a single drain trench measuring 26.00m x 1.00m at base. The evaluation comprised five trenches; one measuring 20.00m x 2.00m, one measuring 15.00m x 2.00m, three measuring 10.00m x 2.00m at base (Figure 3). Due to the presence of large tree roots Trench 4 was not fully excavated and Trench 3 was therefore extended by 2.50m. These were machine excavated with a JCB fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All machining was conducted under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Undifferentiated overburden of recent origin was removed in successive level spits.
- 5.6 As far as was practicable the trenches were located as set out in the WSI. Trench 4 was moved slightly to the south and on a different alignment due to issues arising over site access.
- 5.7 Excavated material was examined visually and with a metal detector in order to retrieve artefacts and to assist in the analysis of their spatial distribution.
- 5.8 On completion of machine excavation, all faces of the trench that required examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools. All investigation of archaeological horizons was by hand, with cleaning, inspection, and recording both in plan and section.
- 5.9 A temporary bench mark was already set up by the principal contractors' surveyors at the southeast corner of the brick slab. This had a value of 7.25mOD. As the previous building was still standing and blocking the line of sight, a second temporary bench mark was required. This was set up at the southwest end of Trench 2 on the brick slab and had a value of 7.28mOD (Figure 2).

- 5.10 The evaluation work was undertaken by the author under the overall project management of Mark Beasley for AOC Archaeology.

## 6 RESULTS (Figure 2)

### Evaluation

#### Trench 1

Depth of deposit (mOD)	Context	Description
7.34 – 7.24	(1/001)	Dark brown topsoil
7.24 – 7.06	(1/002)	Mid-brown silty clay subsoil
7.06	(1/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural

- 6.1 The natural silty clay (1/003) was sealed by silty clay sub-soil (01/002) and topsoil (1/001). A modern borehole, 0.20m in diameter, was identified at the north end of the trench.

- 6.2 No archaeological features or deposits were identified in this trench.

#### Trench 2

Depth of deposit (mOD)	Context	Description
7.26 – 6.76	(2/001)	Brick slab and modern bedding layer.
6.76 – 6.65	(2/002)	Mid grey clay fill of [2/003]
6.76 – 6.65	[2/003]	Modern square post hole
6.76	(2/004)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural

- 6.3 The natural silty clay (2/004) was cut by a single modern posthole [2/003]. This was sealed by sealed by modern deposits (2/001) which had truncated any earlier deposits

- 6.4 No other archaeological features were identified within this trench.

#### Trench 3

Depth of deposit (mOD)	Context	Description
7.21 – 7.10	(3/001)	Brick Slab
7.10 – 6.71	(3/002)	Light brown silty gravel. Modern make up
6.71	(3/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural

6.5 The natural silty clay (3/003) was sealed by sealed by light brown silty gravel. modern make up (3/002) and brick (3/001).

6.6 No archaeological features or deposits were identified in this trench.

#### **Trench 4**

Depth of deposit (mOD)	Context	Description
7.22 – 7.02	(4/001)	Dark brown topsoil
7.02 – 6.84	(4/002)	Mid-brown silty clay sub-soil
6.84	(4/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural

6.7 Natural silty clay (4/003) was sealed in Trench 4 by a silty clay sub-soil (04/002) and topsoil (4/001).

6.8 No archaeological features or deposits were identified in this trench.

#### **Trench 5**

Depth of deposit (mOD)	Context	Description
7.22 – 7.07	(5/001)	Dark brown topsoil
7.07	(5/002)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural

6.7 Natural silty clay (5/002) was sealed in Trench 5 by a layer of dark brown topsoil (5/001).

6.8 No archaeological features or deposits were identified in this trench.

## Watching Brief (Figure 2)

Depth of deposit (mOD)	Context	Description
7.11 – 7.01	(6/001)	Brick Slab
7.01 – 6.61	(6/002)	Dark brown silty gravel. Modern make up
6.61	(6/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural

- 6.9 A watching brief was conducted on the machine excavation of a drain trench measuring 26.00m x 1.00m at base. Natural silty clay (6/003) was sealed by dark brown silty gravel modern make up (6/002) and brick (6/001).
- 6.10 No archaeological features or deposits were identified in the watching brief.

## 7 FINDS

- 7.1 No finds were retained from the evaluation.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified in the watching brief or evaluation.
- 8.2 Given the presence of topsoil or modern made ground immediately overlying the natural deposit in most instances combined with the flat nature of these deposits it is possible that the site has previously been horizontally truncated, removing any potentially archaeological remains.
- 8.3 Given the low potential for the survival of archaeological deposits on the site it is not recommended that any further archaeological works are required.
- 8.4 The evaluation methodology, as detailed in Section 5, was adequate to assess the archaeological potential of the site.
- 8.5 This evaluation report will be made available to interested parties through issue to the county SMR Manager and the local studies Library, subject to any confidentiality restrictions. Publication of the site will be limited to an OASIS form with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).



## 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Fig. 1 Site Location**

**Fig 2. Trench Location**

## APPENDIX A - CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
	<b>Evaluation</b>			
(1/001)	Dark brown topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.10m
(1/002)	Mid-brown silty clay subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.18m
(1/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural	Trench	Trench	NFE
(2/001)	Brick slab and modern bedding layer.	Trench	Trench	0.50m
(2/002)	Mid grey clay fill of [2/003] Mid grey clay fill	Trench	Trench	0.10m
[2/003]	Modern square post hole	Trench	Trench	0.10m
(2/004)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural	Trench	Trench	NFE
(3/001)	Brick Slab	Trench	Trench	0.11m
(3/002)	Light brown silty gravel Modern make up	Trench	Trench	0.40m
(3/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural	Trench	Trench	NFE
(4/001)	Dark brown topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.20m
(4/002)	Mid-brown silty clay subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.18m
(4/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural	Trench	Trench	NFE
(5/001)	Dark brown topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.15m
(5/002)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural	Trench	Trench	NFE
	<b>Watching Brief</b>			
(6/001)	Brick Slab	Trench	Trench	0.10m
(6/002)	Dark brown silty gravel .Modern make up	Trench	Trench	0.10m
(6/003)	Yellow/brown silty clay. Natural	Trench	Trench	NFE

## Appendix B - OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

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**OASIS ID: aocarcha1-13998**

#### Project details

Project name	Elizabeth House, Bognor Regis
Short description of the project	In March 2006 an archaeological evaluation and watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group at Elizabeth House, Bognor Regis, West Sussex on behalf of Warings Contractors Ltd. The site is centred on SZ 9301 9955. The watching brief comprised the monitoring of a single drain trench excavation measuring 26.00m x 1.00m at base. The ensuing evaluation comprised the excavation of five trenches; three measuring 10.00m x 2.00m at base, one measuring 15.00m x 2.00m at base and one measuring 20.00m x 2.00m at base. The trenches were located to assess the impact of the proposed development plan on any surviving archaeology. In three of the trenches 0.20m of topsoil sealed mid brown silty clay subsoil, this overlay natural mid yellow brown silty clay. In the remaining trenches modern surfaces truncated the natural. No archaeological remains were identified.
Project dates	Start: 22-03-2006 End: 29-03-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	CDM 7848 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'

Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### **Project location**

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX ARUN BOGNOR REGIS Ellizabeth House
Postcode	PO21 2TA
Study area	0.30 Hectares
National grid reference	SZ 9301 9955 Point
Height OD	Min: 6.61m Max: 7.07m

### **Project creators**

Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology
Project director/manager	Mark Beasley
Project supervisor	Andy Leonard
Sponsor or funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Chichester District Museum
Paper Archive ID	CDM 7848
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Unpublished Text'
Paper Archive notes	Archive to be retained at AOC until deposition at museum

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	ELIZABETH HOUSE, BOGNOR REGIS, WEST SUSSEX □ AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND WATCHING BRIEF REPORT
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Leonard, A'
Date	2006
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	AOC Archaeology
Description	A4 unbound grey literature with illustrations.

**Project  
bibliography 2**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Elizabeth House, 81 Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis, West Sussex - A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Eddisford, D.
Date	2006
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	AOC Archaeology
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Entered by	Andy Leonard (andyleonard@aocarchaeology.co.uk)
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**OASIS:**

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