Wichita, Villa Flora and Land to the Rear of Dormer Cottage Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation Report

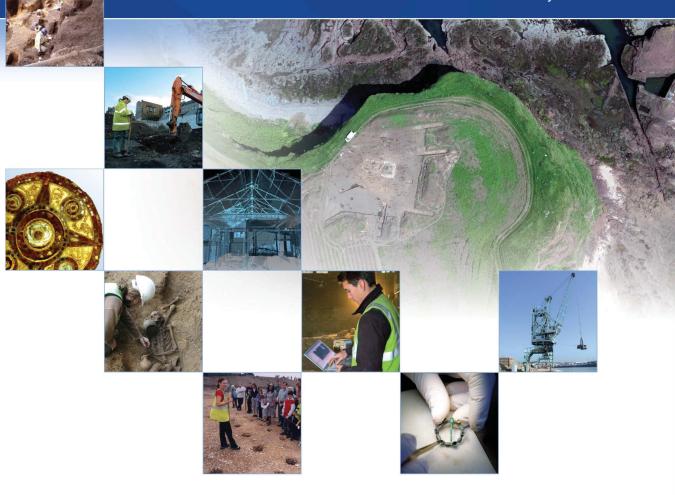
Planning Application: 11/03425

National Grid Reference Number: SU 8829 7997

AOC Project No: 32341

Site Code: SHM13

Date: February 2013





Wichita, Villa Flora and Land to the Rear of Dormer Cottage, Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead: An Archaeological Evaluation Report

On Behalf of: Matthew Homes Ltd

> 45-47 High Street Potters Bar Hertfordshire EN6 5AW

National Grid Reference (NGR): SU 8829 7997

AOC Project No: 32341

13th-15th February 2013 Date of Fieldwork:

Prepared by: Les Capon

Gísli Pálsson Illustration by:

Date: February 2013

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

Author: Les Capon Date: February 2013 Approved by: Melissa Melikian Date: February 2013

Draft/Final Report Stage: Draft Date: February 2013

Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group

Unit 7

St Margarets Business Centre

Moor Mead Road Twickenham **TW1 1JS**

020 8843 7380 Tel. 020 8892 0549 Fax.

e-mail. london@aocarchaeology.com



www.aocarchaeology.com

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Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group, on behalf of Matthew Homes Ltd, between the 13th and 15th February 2013 at land formerly occupied by two modern houses on the corner of Shoppenhangers Road and Larchfield Road, Bray, Maidenhead. The evaluation consisted of four machineexcavated trenches, each measuring 15m by 1.8m.

No archaeology was observed in any of the trenches. Natural Lynch Hill Gravel was observed at 45.05mOD in the east of the site, dropping to 44.88mOD in the southwest. The natural deposit was overlain by occasional patches of subsoil, with topsoil above. The modern remains of the foundations of 'Wichita' were recorded in Trench 2, with a live electricity supply nearby.

Due to the lack of archaeological deposits encountered it is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork be undertaken. The results of the evaluation will be summarised for inclusion in the Local Archaeology Round-up and published via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) website. On completion of the project, the archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, digital and black and white photographs, will be deposited with the local recipient museum when they reopen for deposition.

1. Introduction

1.1 **Site Location**

- 1.1.1 This document details the results of an archaeological evaluation, consisting of four evaluation trenches excavated in advance of a proposed new housing on land formerly occupied by two properties; 'Wichita' and 'Villa Flora' on Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The development site is located on the west side of Shoppenhangers Road at the junction with Larchfield Road. The site is located at SU 8829 7997 and is roughly rectangular in shape with a spur within southwest corner. The site measures 2643 sqm.
- The site was recently occupied by two cottages and includes part of the garden of a third property 1.1.3 (Dormer Cottage). To the north of the site is Larchfield Road, to the east is Shoppenhangers Road, to the south lie Dormer Cottage and further properties, while to the west is a Nursery School (Figure 2).

1.2 **Planning Background**

- 1.2.1 The local planning authority is the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Archaeological advice to the borough is provided by Fiona MacDonald of Berkshire Archaeology.
- 1.2.2 The site does not lie within a conservation area or archaeology priority area.
- 1.2.3 An archaeological condition was attached to planning consent (11/03425). The condition stated: A condition was attached to the permission which states:

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation in situ or by record of any finds made in this area of archaeological interest. Relevant Policies - Local Plan ARCH2, ARCH4.

1.2.4 Archaeological trial trenching was required. In response to this, a Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2013) set out the methodology for the archaeological evaluation and was approved by Fiona MacDonald prior to the start of work on site.

1.3 **Geology and Topography**

- 1.3.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS 2012) shows the site to be located on bedrock of Lynch Hill Gravel overlaid by the Lambeth Group of clay, sand and silt. Seaford and Newhaven chalk bedrock formations may also be present.
- 1.3.2 The site lies on the highest point of Shoppenhangers Road, at around 45.4mOD. The site is located 1.7m west of the River Thames as it meanders around Marlow and Maidenhead towards London.

2. Historical and Archaeological Background

2.0.1 The information below has been extracted and summarised from Berkshire Archaeology HER.

2.1 The Prehistoric Periods

(Palaeolithic c. 500,000 - 10000 BC; Mesolithic c. 10000 to 4000 BC; Neolithic c. 4000-2200 BC; Bronze Age c. 2200-700 BC and Iron Age c. 700 BC - AD 43)

2.1.1 A lakeside prehistoric site has been identified at Moor Farm (MRM15957), approximately 1.25km southeast of the site. That site yielded a finds assemblage datable to the Mesolithic, Neolithic and

Bronze Age periods, and may represent one large or several smaller camps. Finds spots of prehistoric date have also been found on Shoppenhangers Road itself such as Lower Palaeolithic axes and flakes at Shoppenhangers/Kings Pit (HER 00635.00.000), approximately 800m to the northeast and a Neolithic chipped hand axe (HER 00637.00.000) was recovered to the northeast of the site.

- 2.1.2 Iron Age pits were identified and excavated in 1939 at the Shoppenhangers/Kings Pit and fragments of pottery and flint flakes were recovered.
- A rectangular enclosure (possible earthwork) has been observed on aerial photographs of 2.1.3 Shoppenhangers Road, taken in 1945, which may be prehistoric or later in nature. Ring ditches have also been observed on aerial photographs within the playing field at Larchfield Primary School (MRM16420) directly northwest of the site.

2.2 The Roman Period (AD 43 – AD 410)

- A possible route of a Roman Road is indicated on the 1st Edition and later Ordnance Survey maps 2.2.1 approximately 800m to the northeast of the site within Stafferton Way Industrial Estate. No physical archaeological evidence has been observed.
- 2.2.2 Two Roman coins, noted as Antoninus (138-161 AD) have been recovered locally although their exact finds location remains unclear. Other Roman finds have included pottery and tile fragments at Boyn Hill gravel pit (HER 00601.00.000) and a Romano-British loom weight found at the same site (HER 00600.00.000).
- 2.2.3 Further afield the foundations of a large Roman building were excavated in 1886 to the north of the site (HER 00579.00.000). The remains included walls, hypocausts, coins, pottery and tessellated floors. The exact location of this possible villa is unclear.

2.3 The Early Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1066) and Medieval Periods (AD 1066 – AD 1538)

A Saxon settlement has been recorded at Moor Farm (HER 00464.00.000), although the exact 2.3.1 nature of the findings is unclear. This does suggest a Saxon presence within the area, although the church at Bray dates from 1293. Bray probably derives for a French word for 'mud'. Maidenhead is not recorded until the 13th century, when a crossing was built and a wharf developed (*Maidenhythe*).

2.4 The Post-Medieval (AD 1538 – AD 1900) and Modern Period (AD 1900 to present)

2.4.1 Early cartographic sources suggest that the area was open fields and pastures during the majority of the early post-medieval period. Shoppenhangers Road is first depicted on the 1875 Ordnance Survey map, but not named until 1899. It was not until the 1950s and 60s that properties began to populate Shoppenhangers Road, in the form of small single plot developments. During the later 20th century, further housing developments were constructed to the west of Shoppenhangers Road along with the construction of Larchfield Road. 'Wichita and 'Villa Flora' were built in the 1970s, whilst Dormer Cottage dates to the 1950s.

3. Strategy

Aims of the Archaeological Investigation 3.1

- 3.1.1 The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were defined as being:
 - To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
 - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.

- To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
- To enable the archaeology advisor to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 3.1.2 The specific aims of the archaeological evaluation were defined as being:
 - Determine the presence of any prehistoric evidence on site.
 - Determine the presence of any Romano-British activity on site.
 - To identify any evidence that may relate to the early medieval-medieval activities on site.
 - Determine the presence of any features which may relate to the post-medieval development of the area.
- 3.1.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

3.2 Methodology

- A written scheme of investigation prepared by AOC Archaeology (AOC 2013) defined the site 3.2.1 procedures for the archaeological evaluation. This document detailed how the evaluation, consisting of four machine-excavated trenches, would be undertaken (Figure 3). All work was carried out in accordance with local and national guidelines (IfA 2009 & 2010, EH 2008 & 2009). Provision was made for a report as defined in the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 3.2.2 A unique site code for the project (SHM 13) was assigned to the project and was used as the site identifier. Windsor & Royal Borough Museum were notified of the project prior to the fieldwork.
- 3.2.3 The levels for the trenches were established using a GPS, which also accurately plotted their location.
- 3.2.4 Trench 2 was excavated short of its proposed length due to proximity of hoardings around the site. Trenches 1 and 3 were extended slightly to enable the full percentage of the site to be evaluated.
- 3.2.5 The evaluation was conducted by the author under the overall management of Paul Mason, AOC Project Manager. The site was monitored by Fiona MacDonald of Berkshire Archaeology on behalf of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Results 4.

4.1 Trench 1

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description	
45.18m to 45.22m	0.00m	(100)	Dark brown topsoil	
45.22m to 45.30m	0.00m	(101)	Rubble-rich made ground	
44.92m to 45.03m	0.26m	(102)	Lynch Hill Gravel	

4.1.1 Trench 1 was located in the north corner of the site, oriented north-south. It measured 15.60m by 1.80m (Figure 3 and Plate 1).



Plate 1: Trench 1 Looking South

- 4.1.2 Naturally-lain Lynch Hill Gravel (102) was observed at 45.03mOD at the south end of the trench, dropping slightly to 44.92m at the north end, with root disturbance. This was sealed by dark greyish brown clayey silt (100) that was up to 0.26m deep, its surface at 45.18m OD. Occasional inclusions in this layer were gravel and very small fragments of hard brick. At the south end of the trench was an intrusive dump of loose modern building material (101), with its surface at 45.30m OD.
- 4.1.3 No archaeological features were present and no finds were collected from any deposits.

4.2 Trench 2

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description	
45.42m	0.00m	(200)	20 th century brick and concrete footing	
45.42m to 45.50m	0.0m	(204)	Dark brown topsoil	
45.00m to 45.05m	0.45m	(205)	Pale brown subsoil	
45.10m to 45.14m	0.6m	(206	Lynch Hill Gravel	

- 4.2.1 Trench 2 was located in the east side of the site, parallel to the angled corner of the site with Larchfield Road and Shoppenhangers Road. It measured 13.6m by 1.8m, and access was constrained by hoarding around the site (Figure 3 and Plate 2).
- 4.2.2 The lowest deposit in the trench was Lynch Hill Gravel (206), lying at 45.10mOD in the south end of the trench, and at 45.15m OD at the north end, a change of just 4cm. The naturally lain gravel was sealed by a layer of pale brownish yellow clayey silt (205) that was only 0.1m thick. Above this was a layer of topsoil (204) that was very dark brown silty clay, with occasional inclusions of modern brick fragments. This lay at 45.42mOD at the north end of the trench, and 45.50mOD at the south end.



Plate 2: Trench 2 Looking South

- 4.2.3 The topsoil was cut by two modern events. One was the construction cut for footings of the recently demolished house named 'Wichita' [203], which marked a corner of the building, and was 0.6m wide, lying deeply within the naturally lain gravel. The foundation was formed of a strip of concrete with a cavity wall on top of red brick [202]. At the southern end of the trench was the cut for an electric service [201], backfilled with redeposited topsoil (200). The service was still live, and presumably serves the adjacent property, Dormer Cottage.
- 4.2.4 No archaeological features were present and no finds were collected from any deposits.

4.3 Trench 3

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description	
45.24m	0.00m	(300)	Dark brown topsoil	
45.34m to 45.54m	0.00m	(301)	Rubble-rich made ground	
88.15m	0.30m	(302)	Buried topsoil	
44.96m to 44.23m	0.38m	(303)	Pale brown subsoil	
44.81m to 45.08m	0.53m	(304)	Lynch Hill Gravel	

- 4.3.1 Trench 3 was located in the centre of the site, and was oriented roughly north-south. It measured 16.4m by 1.8m of the site (Figure 3 and Plate 3).
- 4.3.2 The lowest deposit in the trench was naturally-lain Lynch Hill Gravel (304), lying at 45.03m at the south end of the trench, rising slightly to the north to 45.18mOD. The gravel was sealed by 0.15m depth of pale brown clayey silt subsoil (303). Above this was a layer of dark brown clayey silt (302) which resembled topsoil. This deposit was 0.08m thick.



Plate 3: Trench 3 Sample Section Looking West

- 4.3.3 This topsoil layer was sealed by a second layer of topsoil or garden soil, that was also dark greyish brown clayey silt (300), and probably represents a gardening or landscaping episode in association with construction of 'Villa Flora', the other cottage on the site. This lay at 45.24mOD. The topsoil had been partially sealed by a widespread dump of demolition material (301), likely to be the remains of the demolished properties on site.
- 4.3.4 No archaeological features were present and no finds were collected from any deposits.

4.4 Trench 4

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description	
45.24m to 45.37m	0.00m	(400)	Dark brown topsoil	
44.78m to 44.87m	0.36m	(401)	Lynch Hill Gravel	

- 4.4.1 Trench 4 was located in the west section of site, behind Dormer Cottage. It was orientated east-west and measured 15.00m by 1.80m (Figure 3 and Plate 4).
- 4.4.2 The lowest deposit was Lynch Hill Gravel (401), lying at 44.78mOD in the west end of the trench, and slightly higher, at 44.87mOD at the eastern end. The gravel was sealed directly by dark greyish brown topsoil (400) of 0.36m depth, with no subsoil interface. No finds were present in the topsoil, which lay at 45.37mOD in the east, dropping slightly to 45.24mOD in the west.
- 4.4.3 No archaeological features were present and no finds were collected from any deposits.



Plate 4: Trench 4 Looking East

5. **Finds**

5.1 During the course of the archaeological investigation, no finds were retrieved from the evaluation trenches and no environmental samples were taken.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The evaluation successfully characterised both the stratigraphic sequence and the archaeological potential of the site. The topography of the site was revealed by the Lynch Hill Gravels, which lay roughly flat, from 45.05mOD in the east of the site, dropping to 44.78mOD in the west of the site, a fall of 0.27m over 65m, which is almost negligible. It was noted however that there was no subsoil extant in Trenches 1 and 4, whilst, where present, it was no more than 0.1m deep in Trenches 2 and 3. This strongly indicates some reworking or landscaping of the site in the past. This may be associated with the construction of the cottages on the site in the 1970s, and laying out of the gardens.
- 6.2 The topsoil was notably clean in finds bar fragments of modern brick. This too may be an indication of garden preparation. The known historical use of the site as fields or farmland would be expected to have resulted in some residual finds being present following years of agriculture, but there was a marked absence of any archaeological finds.
- 6.3 The ring ditches apparent in the playing field at the adjacent school do not have any associated features on this site. Either the site lies beyond settlement associated with these features, or such evidence has been removed in past development.
- 6.4 Due to the lack of archaeological deposits encountered it is recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork be undertaken. The final decision in regards to the requirement for further archaeological fieldwork lies with Fiona MacDonald of Berkshire Archaeology, Archaeology Advisor to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

7. **Publication and Archive Deposition**

7.1 Due to the nature of the results at this stage of the archaeological investigation, publication is expected to be limited to a summary in the CBA Wessex Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).

7.2 On completion of the project, the site archive will be deposited with the local recipient museum when they reopen for deposition. Until this time the archive will be retained at AOC's premises.

8. **Bibliography**

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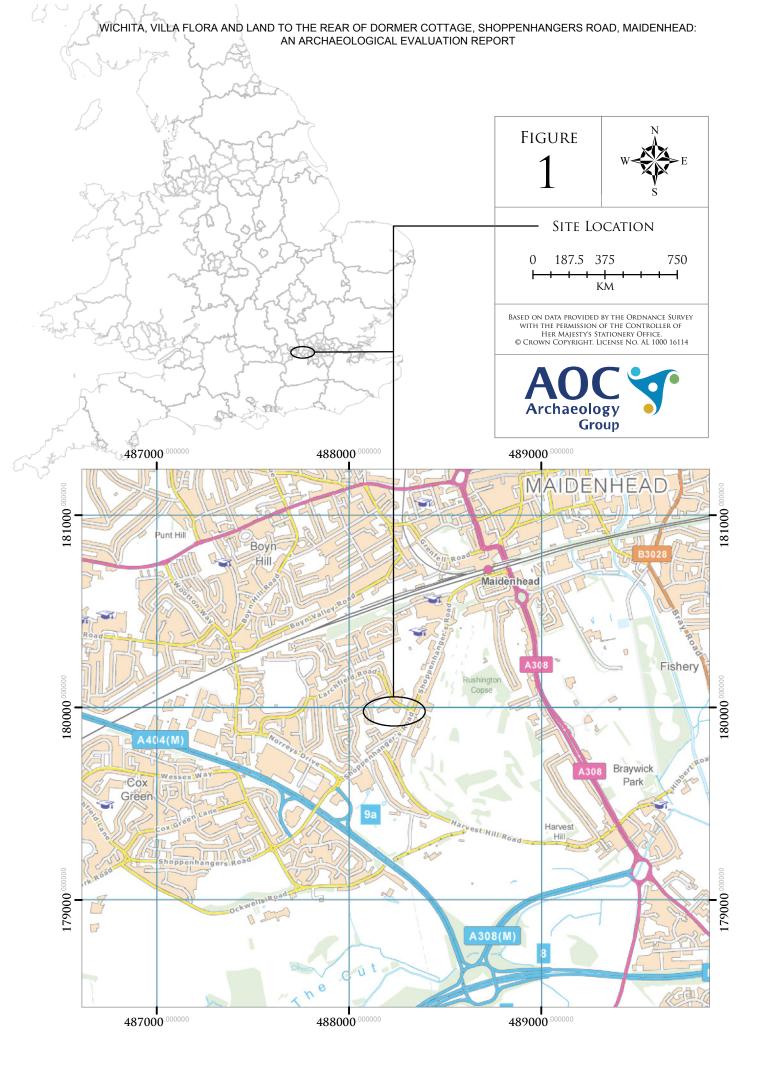
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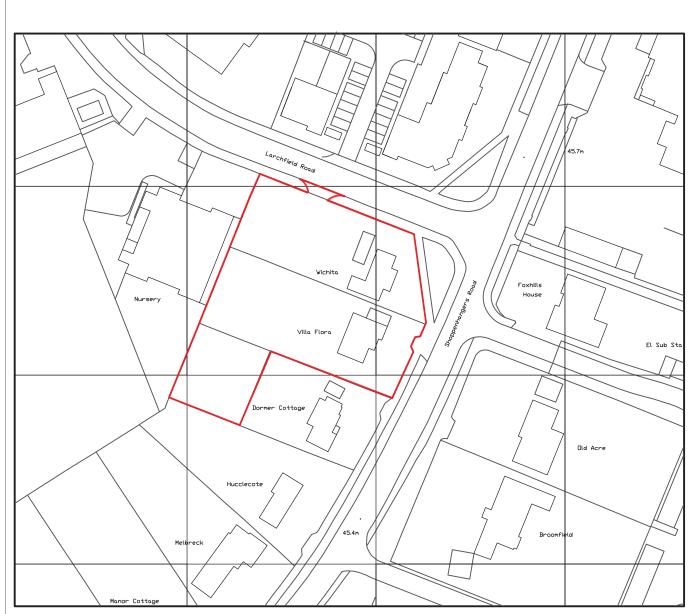
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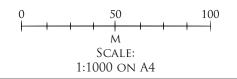


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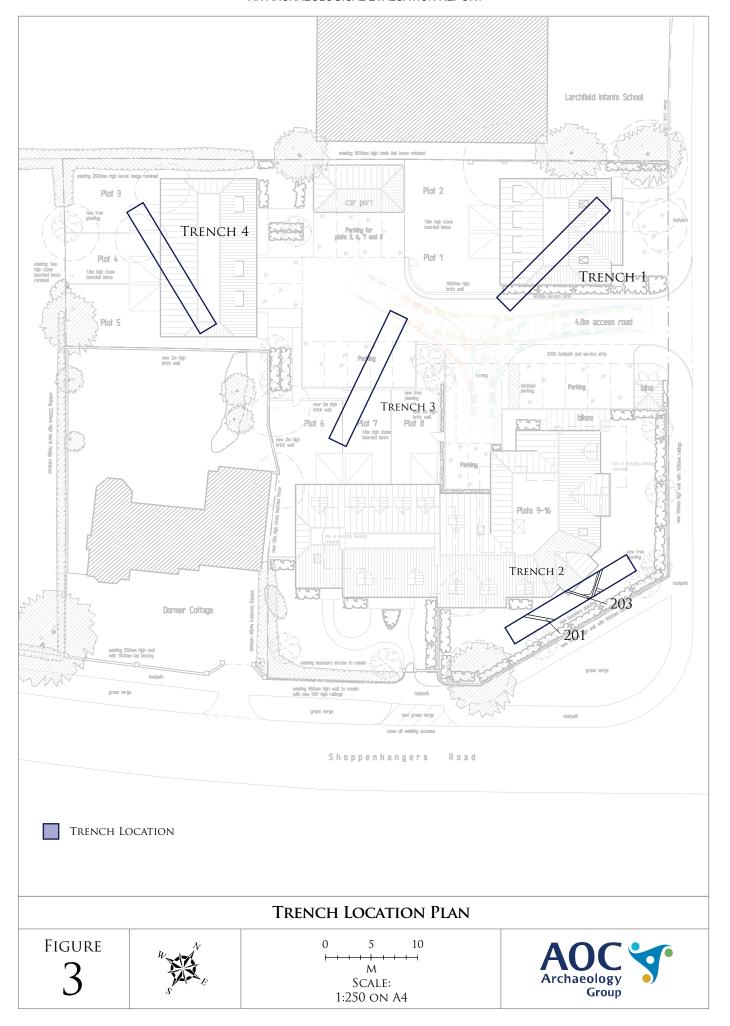
DETAILED SITE LOCATION

FIGURE









Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
100	Dark brown topsoil	14.0m	1.80m	0.26m
101	Rubble-rich made ground	1.60m	1.80m	0.26m
102	Lynch Hill Gravel	15.6m	1.80m	NFE
200	20 th Century brick and concrete footing	5.00m	0.60m	>0.6m
201	Construction Cut for 201	5.00m	0.60m	>0.6m
202	Fill of 203	2.50m	0.30m	>0.7m
203	Service run	2.50m	0.30m	>0.7m
204	Dark brown topsoil	14.00m	1.80m	0.50m
205	Pale brown subsoil	14.00m	1.80m	0.10m
206	Lynch Hill Gravel	14.00m	1.80m	NFE
300	Dark Brown topsoil	7.40m	1.80m	0.20m
301	Rubble-rich made ground	9.00m	1.80m	0.30m
302	Buried topsoil	14.00m	1.80m	0.08m
303	Pale brown subsoil	14.00m	1.80m	0.15m
304	Lynch Hill Gravel	16.40m	1.80m	NFE
400	Dark Brown topsoil	15.00m	1.80m	0.36m
401	Lynch Hill Gravel	15.00m	1.80m	NFE

Appendix B – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-140962

Project details

Project name WICHITA, VILLA FLORA AND LAND TO THE REAR OF DORMER

COTTAGE, SHOPPENHANGERS ROAD

Short description of the Four trench archaeological trenching ahead of a proposed redevelopment of

project the site. No archaeology: topsoil over Lynch Hill Gravel

Project dates Start: 13-02-2013 End: 15-02-2013

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project 32341 - Contracting Unit No.

reference codes

Any associated project SHM 13 - Sitecode

reference codes

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

NONE None Monument type

Significant Finds **NONE None**

Methods & techniques """Sample Trenches"""

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning After full determination (eg. As a condition)

process

Project location

Country England

Site location Berkshire Windsor And Maidenhead Maidenhead Wichita, Villa Flora And

Land To The Rear Of Dormer Cottage

Postcode SL6 2JZ

Study area 2643.00 Square metres

Site coordinates SU 8829 7997 51 0 51 30 40 N 000 43 39 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 44.78m Max: 45.05m

Project creators

Name of Organisation AOC Archaeology

Project brief originator AOC Archaeology

Project design AOC Archaeology

originator

Project Paul Mason

director/manager

Project supervisor Les Capon

Type of developer

sponsor/funding body

Name of Matthew Homes Ltd

sponsor/funding body

Project archives

WICHITA, VILLA FLORA AND LAND TO THE REAR OF DORMER COTTAGE, SHOPPENHANGERS ROAD, MAIDENHEAD: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Physical

Archive No

Exists?

Digital recipient

Archive Windsor and Royal Borough Museum

Digital Archive ID SHM 13

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Survey", "Text"

Digital Archive notes Held at AOC until transfer

Paper Archive recipient Windsor and Royal Borough Museum

Paper Archive ID SHM 13

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic", "Survey"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

Paper Archive notes Held at AOC until transfer

Project bibliography

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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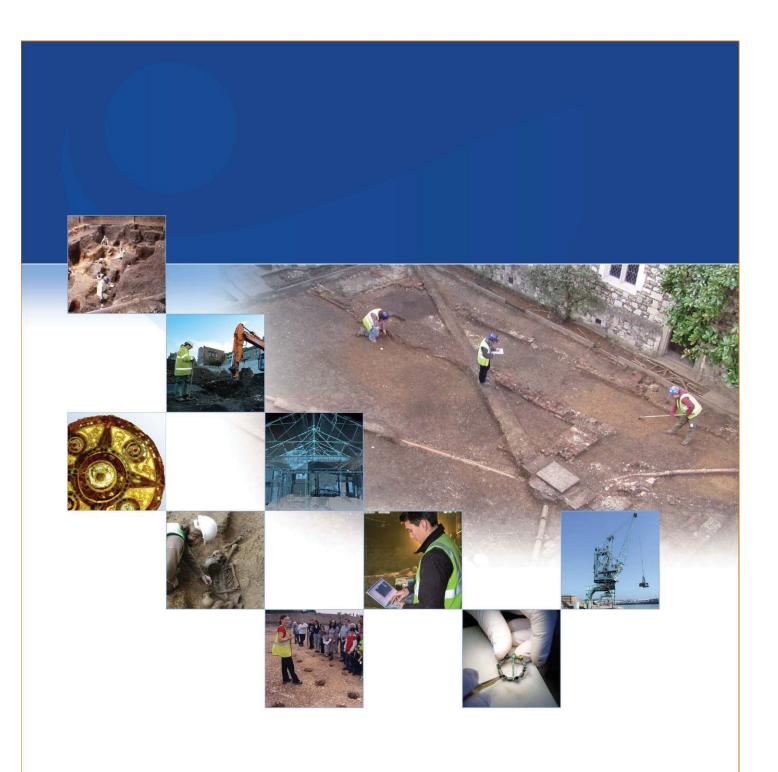
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Entered by les capon (les.capon@aocarchaeology.com)

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AOC Archaeology Group, Unit 7, St Margarets Business Centre, Moor Mead Road, Twickenham TW1 1JS tel: 020 8843 7380 | fax: 020 8892 0549 | e-mail: london@aocarchaeology.com