

WTDH11/001



WAYSIDE, TRING ROAD, DUDSWELL, HERTFORDSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

for Paul and Joan Lane

June 2011



HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY (UK) Ltd



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Project Manager

Joe Abrams

Author

Nuala C. Marshall

Fieldwork

Nuala C Marshall

Graphics

Julia Bastek

Approved by

Joe Abrams, Project manager



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Technology Centre, Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4QH
T 01525 850 878 • E leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com
www.headlandarchaeology.com

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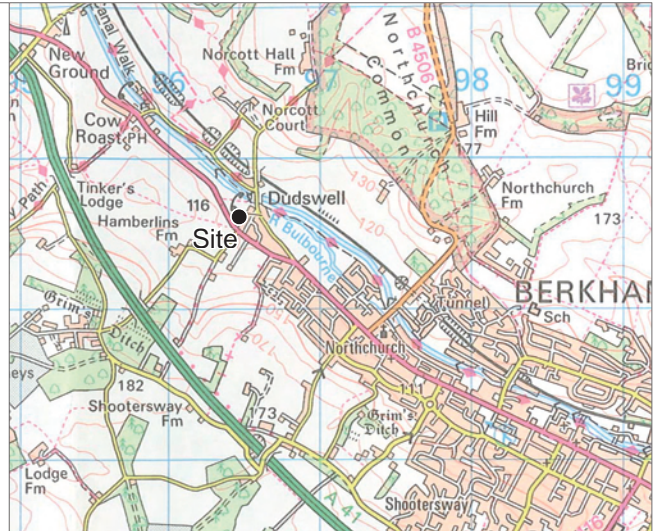
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Wayside, Tring Road
Dudwell, Berkhamsted
Hertfordshire



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Scale 1:1,000 @ A4



0 50m

Illus 1
Site location & trench plan

WAYSIDE, TRING ROAD, DUDSWELL, HERTFORDSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

Headland Archaeology Ltd conducted an evaluation at a proposed development area (PDA) at Wayside, Tring Road, in order to provide further information on its archaeological potential. The work was commissioned by Paul and Joan Lane. A total of three trenches were excavated over the development area and despite the rich archaeological landscape the PDA is located in, this evaluation revealed no significant sub surface archaeological remains.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

BB Design, acting on behalf of Paul and Joan Lane (client), have developed proposals for the demolition of an existing house at Wayside, Tring Road, Dudswell, Hertfordshire (proposed development area - PDA) and the construction of one replacement house and two further chalet style houses to the rear, within the rear garden.

The local planning authority (LPA) is advised, on archaeological matters, by the Hertfordshire County Council, Historic Environment Officer (HEO). The HEO advised that the PDA lay in an archaeologically sensitive area and, therefore, the applicant must commission an Archaeological Field Evaluation (inclusive of fieldwork and report) prior to the validation of a planning application by the LPA. This request is in line with Planning Policy Statement 5 (HE6, HE7, HE9, HE12).

The client commissioned Headland Archaeology to undertake the evaluation (the fieldwork took place on the 3rd May 2011) and this report outlines the results. Following submission of the report (this document), the HEO will advise the LPA with regard to the need (or not) for mitigation works in advance/alongside development works.

1.2 Site Location and Geology

The PDA lies to the north-west of Berkhamsted on the north side of Tring Road (site centre NGR SP 96468 09559). Currently, the land forms part of a back garden to

a single residential dwelling. The land is bound to the NW, NE and SE by a boundary of hedges, fences and a low built wall (on the NW boundary). Out with the boundary, to the NW, lies open arable fields, and to the SE, is the location of more housing.

The geology of the area comprises Holywell nodular chalk formation and New Pit chalk formation overlain by superficial deposits of 'Head 1' which is characterised by clay, silt, sand and gravel in the area (British Geological Survey Website). The PDA is flat while the surrounding landscape slopes gently uphill to the NE and SW, on either side of Tring Road.

1.3 Archaeological background

The PDA lies immediately north of the line of a Roman Road known as Akeman Street. This was a major Roman road in England that linked Watling Street with the Fosse Way. Its junction with Watling Street was just north of Verulamium (near modern St Alban's) and that with the Fosse Way was at Corinium Dobunorum (now Cirencester). Its course passes through towns and villages including Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, Aylesbury, Alchester (outside modern Bicester), Chesterton, Kirtlington, Ramsden and Asthall (Wikipedia Website). Large tracts of land adjacent to Roman roads were unsettled and field systems would be the only sub-surface remains to leave any trace. However, investigations in the immediate vicinity of the PDA have revealed a series of significant Roman period remains. A Roman Hypocaust and occupational material was discovered 250m SE of the PDA (HER 1334) and further, contemporary remains were revealed 150m to the SE (HER 4860). The proximity of both sites to



Illus 2

Proposed development area

- 2 the line of Akeman Street (both roughly 50m north of it) made land within the PDA a reasonable location to expect similar remains.

The above findings were noted prior to trial trenching being undertaken and have been considered in the production of this report.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation were:

- to identify and establish the location, extent, nature and date of any archaeological features or deposits and then assess the particular significance of any element of the historic environment that may be affected by the relevant proposal
- to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any remains on the site, in their cultural and environmental setting
- to analyse any evidence retrieved in light of objectives contained within the frameworks of local and regional research. In this case they are provided by Glazebrook

(1997), Brown & Glazebrook (200) and Medlycott & Brown (2008)

- to establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits
- to recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions

2.2 Methodology

A total of three trenches were excavated amounting to 27.5 linear meters, 1.6m wide, and the trenches were laid out in order to sample land which fell within zones of proposed development impact.

A JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-bladed bucket was used to remove topsoil under direct archaeological control. Excavations continued until clean geological sediments or significant archaeological deposits were encountered.

Further excavation required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation was continued by hand. Identified features were then investigated by hand and all features were recorded. The stratigraphy of each trench was recorded in full.

2.3 Recording

All recording was in accordance with the code of practice of the Institute for Archaeologists. All trenches and contexts were given unique numbers and all recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded. A full photographic record including colour slide and black and white print photographs was taken, supplemented with digital photography. A metric scale was clearly visible in record photographs.

3. RESULTS

Trenches 1 and 2 were orientated NNE – SSW and Trench 3, NW – SE. This orientation was designed to sample land that fell within zones of proposed development impact (two chalet style houses and an access road). Due to current landscaping in the PDA, Trench 3 was split into two parts to avoid disturbance to this landscaping. Full trench descriptions, including orientation, length and soil profile, can be found in Appendix 1.

The general soil profile of the area comprised 0.20 to 0.25m of mid grey loose sand clay topsoil lying over a subsoil of mid brown friable sand clay. The subsoil had a depth of between 0.2 and 0.4m and lay above a natural geology of shattered flint rich brown orange clay (Illus 5).

Below the subsoil in Trench 2, two features were encountered towards the centre of the trench (Illus 3). They were rectangular in plan, orientated NNE – SSW and each had a length of 1.4m and a width of 0.9m exposed in the trench. The fill was similar to the topsoil, with some fragments of red brick debris, and had a depth of 0.05m. After investigation, the two features were interpreted as



Illus 3

Shed footings seen in Trench 2

modern shed footings. This interpretation was supported by anecdotal evidence offered by the client.

No archaeological remains were revealed in Trenches 1 and 3.



3

Illus 4

Trench 1 - typical trenching result

3.1 Description of the significance of the heritage assets

The local and regional research contexts that are provided by Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000) and Medlycott & Brown (2008) outline various gaps in knowledge in the Hertfordshire area. In particular, for the Roman period, there is limited evidence for rural settlement layout, and more research on the Roman road network is needed (Brown & Glazebrook, 2000). Both of these gaps in knowledge (amongst others) could have been considered, and added to, by any discoveries in the PDA. However, the paucity of evidence from this evaluation makes this irrelevant.

Description of Heritage Asset	Trench no.	Feature no.	Significance of heritage asset (Low, Medium, High) and of local, regional, national, international interest
None	N/A	N/A	None

Table 1

Significance of heritage assets



Illus 5

Soil profile as seen in Trench 1

4. DISCUSSION

Evidence of Roman occupation was known in the vicinity of the PDA which lies immediately adjacent to the line of a former Roman Road (Akeman Street, Section 1.3). However, this evaluation revealed no sub-surface remains of Roman date and no significant remains from any period.

4 Not all land adjacent to Roman roads was densely settled or used. The small number of roads that we recognize as Roman are the trunk roads fed by a network of many thousand 'lesser' roads (Rackham, 1986: 252) weaving their way from field to marketplace (town). Akeman Street was just such a trunk road, which, if compared to modern equivalents, we can appreciate these can run through vast amounts of countryside. This could be a reason as to why this evaluation resulted in producing no evidence of archaeological features, artefacts or deposits.

4.1 Assessment of the impact of development on the significance of heritage assets

The change of use in the PDA is from domestic garden into housing with an access road; a change which will involve destructive groundworks. However, as no archaeological features were uncovered, the impact of these groundworks on heritage assets within the PDA is nil.

<i>Description of Heritage Asset</i>	<i>Trench no.</i>	<i>Feature no.</i>	<i>Description of development affecting For use as a burial ground</i>	<i>Significance of heritage asset (Low, Medium, High) and of Local, Regional, National, International interest</i>	<i>Impact of development on heritage asset (None, Low, Medium, High)</i>
None	N/A	N/A	None	None	None

Table 2

Development impact upon heritage assets

5. REFERENCES

5.1 Bibliography

- Brown, N & Glazebrook, J, 2000, *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, research agenda and strategy*, East Anglian Archaeology.
- Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, 2011, *Archaeological evaluation, Wayside, Tring Road, Dudswell, Hertfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation*, Unpublished client report.
- Rackham, O, 1986, *The History of the Countryside: The classic history of Britain's landscape, flora and fauna*, Orion.

5.2 Websites consulted

- Open Geoscience – British Geological Survey
 Website <<http://www.bgs.ac.uk>> Accessed 20 May 2011
- Wikipedia – The Free Encyclopedia
 Website <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akeman_Street>
 Accessed: 20 May 2011

6. APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Trench register

Trench no.	Orientation	Description	Length (m)	Max Depth (m)
1	NNE - SSW	Topsoil of mid grey loose sand clay, with some garden debris and root inclusion, laying over a subsoil of mid brown friable sand clay with a mid percentage stone inclusion. This lay over natural geology of brown orange clay with flint stone inclusion	10	0.65
2	NNE - SSW	As Trench 1 - Topsoil of mid grey loose sand clay, with some garden debris and root inclusion, laying over a subsoil of mid brown friable sand clay with a mid percentage stone inclusion. This lay over natural geology of brown orange clay with flint stone inclusion	10	0.50
3	NW - SE	As in previous trenches - Topsoil of mid grey loose sand clay, with some garden debris and root inclusion, laying over a subsoil of mid brown friable sand clay with a mid percentage stone inclusion. This lay over natural geology of brown orange clay with flint stone inclusion	7.5	0.45

Photographic register

Photo no.	Direction	Description
001	–	ID SHOT
002	–	Pre-Condition working shot
003	–	Pre-Condition working shot
004	–	Pre-Condition working shot
005	–	Pre-Condition working shot
006	–	Pre-Condition working shot
007	–	Pre-Condition working shot
008	–	Pre-Condition working shot
009	N	SFS thought pit A in Trench 2
010	N	SFS through pit B in Trench 2
011	W	Post ex shot of Trench 2
012	S	Post ex shot of Trench 3
013	S	Post ex shot of Trench 3
014	E	Post ex shot of Trench 1
015	S	Cleaned up NFS of Trench 1 showing soil profile
016	S	Cleaned up NFS of Trench 1 showing soil profile
017	SW	Post condition shot
018	W	Post condition shot
019	NE	Example of backfilled trench



6.2 Appendix 2 – Historic Environment Record Summary Sheet

Site name and address: Wayside, Tring Road, Dudswell, Hertfordshire		
County: Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum	
Village/Town: Dudswell	Parish:	
Planning application reference: N/A		
HER Enquiry reference: N/A		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: Paul and Joan Lane Wayside Tring Road Dudswell Hertfordshire		
Nature of application: Small-scale development proposal		
Present land use: Domestic garden		
Size of application area: 80 square metres	Size of area investigated: 80 square metres	
NGR (to 8 figures): SP 96468 09559		
Site code (if applicable): WTDH11		
Site director/Organization: Nuala C. Marshall [Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd]		
Type of work: Evaluation (Trial trenching)		
Date of work: 03.05.11	Start: 03.05.11	Finish: 03.05.11
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Dacorum Heritage Trust		
Related HER Nos: HER 1334, HER 4860	Periods represented: None	
Relevant previous summaries/reports: None		
Summary of fieldwork results: Headland Archaeology Ltd conducted an evaluation at a proposed development area (PDA) at Wayside, Tring Road, in order to provide further information on its archaeological potential. The work was commissioned by Paul and Joan Lane. A total of three trenches were excavated over the development area and despite the rich archaeological landscape the PDA is located in, this evaluation revealed no significant sub surface archaeological remains.		
Author of summary: Nuala C. Marshall	Date of summary: 24.05.11	



Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd
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North East (HQ)

13 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE

T 0131 467 7705 • F 0131 467 7706 • E office@headlandarchaeology.com

North West

10 Payne Street, Glasgow G4 0LF

T 0141 354 8100 • F 0141 332 9388 • E glasgowoffice@headlandarchaeology.com

Midlands & West

Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road, Hereford HR4 9NZ

T 0143 236 4901 • F 0143 236 4900 • E hereford@headlandarchaeology.com

South & East

Technology Centre, Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4QH

T 01525 850 878 • E leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com