

WRSA12



## 4 WATFORD ROAD, ST ALBANS, HERTFORDSHIRE

*Archaeological Monitoring*

*for Faith Whittle*

5/12/1861

*April 2013*



**HEADLAND**  
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd



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HA Job no.:	WRSA12/001
NGR:	TL 1400 0605
Parish:	St Albans
Council:	St Albans
OASIS ref.:	Headland4-137389
HER enquiry number.:	
Archive will be deposited with:	St Albans Museum

Project Manager:	James Newbould
Author:	James McNicoll-Norbury
Fieldwork:	Michelle Collings
Graphics:	Anna Sztromwasser
Approved by:	James Newbould – Project Manager

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Illus 3 – West facing view of exposed footings

# 4 WATFORD RD, ST ALBANS, HERTFORDSHIRE

## Archaeological Monitoring

*Headland Archaeology Ltd undertook archaeological monitoring during groundworks associated with a porch and side extension at 4 Watford Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire in March 2013. No archaeological deposits or remains were revealed and no artefacts were recovered during the monitoring works.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Faith Whittle (the client) to undertake a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording during groundworks associated with the construction of extensions to the existing building at 4 Watford Rd, St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Planning permission for the development was granted by St Albans District Council (Planning Ref. 5/12/1861). The Development Area (DA) lies within an area of archaeological significance (AS.R. 25) and policy 111 of the District Plan required that the development should be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording of all groundworks.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) outlining the mitigation strategy and methodology was prepared by Headland Archaeology (2012). The WSI was approved by the St Albans City and District Council's District Archaeologist (who advises the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on archaeological matters). This report details the results of the archaeological monitoring, commissioned by the client.

### 2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The DA is located on the west side of Watford Road, close to the junction with King Harry Lane in St Albans, Hertfordshire centred at NGR: TL 1400 0605 as shown in Illus 1. The DA is currently in use as a domestic dwelling. It is located to the south of the core of Roman St Albans (Verulamium). It lies at a height of approximately 115m OD. The natural geology comprises deposits of the Lewes Nodular and Seaford Chalk Formation overlain by

superficial deposits of glacial and river terrace gravels (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

The DA has potential to contain Roman, Saxon and medieval remains. Indeed, it lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance (ASR. 25 – St Albans including Saxon Kinsbury, Saxon and medieval town and Sopwell Nunnery: Policy).

A Roman cremation and inhumation cemetery has been identified to the north of the DA, the southern limits of this cemetery are unknown but three cremation burials were found during works at 8 Watford Road in 1999, suggesting that the DA lies within the cemetery site.

### 3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

In general the objectives of the archaeological monitoring were:

To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains within the area of development and to ascertain their quality, nature, extent, depth, date and character.

In addition to these general aims, it was anticipated that the monitoring would:

- Secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme.
- Secure the analysis, conservation, and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Site works

The archaeological monitoring was undertaken over the course of one day on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2013. Three footing trenches measuring 2.50m by 0.50m, 2.50m by 0.50m and 3.90m by 0.50 were excavated by the groundworkers by hand. The archaeological monitoring was carried out in accordance with the WSI (Headland Archaeology 2012). Namely involving continuous archaeological observation, investigation and recording during all groundworks until agreed otherwise with the St Albans City and District Council's District Archaeologist.

### 4.2 Recording

All recording was in accordance with the code of practice of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and the Regional Standard for Field Archaeology (Gurney 2003). All contexts were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

### 4.3 Reporting and Archives

The results of the works are presented below. A summary report has been prepared for submission to the OASIS database (headland4-137389).

The complete project archive will be deposited with the St Albans Museum within 12 months of the completion of the project. The records (paper and digital) will be archived according to best practice guidelines set out by the Archaeological Archiving Forum.

## 5 RESULTS

### 5.1 Discussion

Full context descriptions and a record of the photographic archive are presented in Appendix 1.

Footing trenches measuring 0.50m in width were excavated by hand adjacent to the front of the current dwelling (Illus 1) covering a 2.5m<sup>2</sup> area. The trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.90m below ground level (bgl).

The stratigraphy comprised a layer of topsoil (001) measuring up to 0.20m thick overlying a layer of mixed Made Ground (002) (Appendix 1). The Made Ground comprised an orange brown silty clay with frequent stone inclusions and lenses of mixed material. Three modern services (gas and two water) were revealed within the southern and eastern footing trenches (Illus 2 and 3) truncating the area. Localised disturbances were observed within Made Ground (002) associated with the services.

Natural geology was not reached and no archaeological deposits or remains were identified. Furthermore no artefacts were recovered during the monitoring.

### 5.2 Conclusion

Monitoring has revealed no evidence of archaeological remains within the DA. The stratigraphic sequence identified within the DA comprised Topsoil with frequent rootlets, overlying mixed Made Ground.

Overall the monitoring revealed little evidence for past activity of any date. It is likely that there has been extensive modern disturbance and truncation within the DA associated with the construction of the existing dwelling. In particular resulting from the construction of the existing entrance-way and the laying of services and similar infrastructure associated with the dwelling.

The development involves destructive groundworks. However, as no archaeological features were uncovered within the footings trenches there will be no impact on any previously unknown heritage assets.

## 6 REFERENCES

### 6.1 Bibliographic sources

Brown, N and Glazebrook, J. 2000 *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper 8.

Glazebrook, J. 1997 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties - 1*

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Medlycott, M 2011 (ed.) *Research and Archaeology  
Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of  
England*. East Anglian Archaeology  
Occasional Paper 24

## 6.2 Internet Sources

British Geological Survey (no date) 'UK geology'  
[online] Available from <http://bgs.ac.uk/>  
[Accessed January 2012]

## 7 APPENDICES

### 7.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

#### *Photographic register*

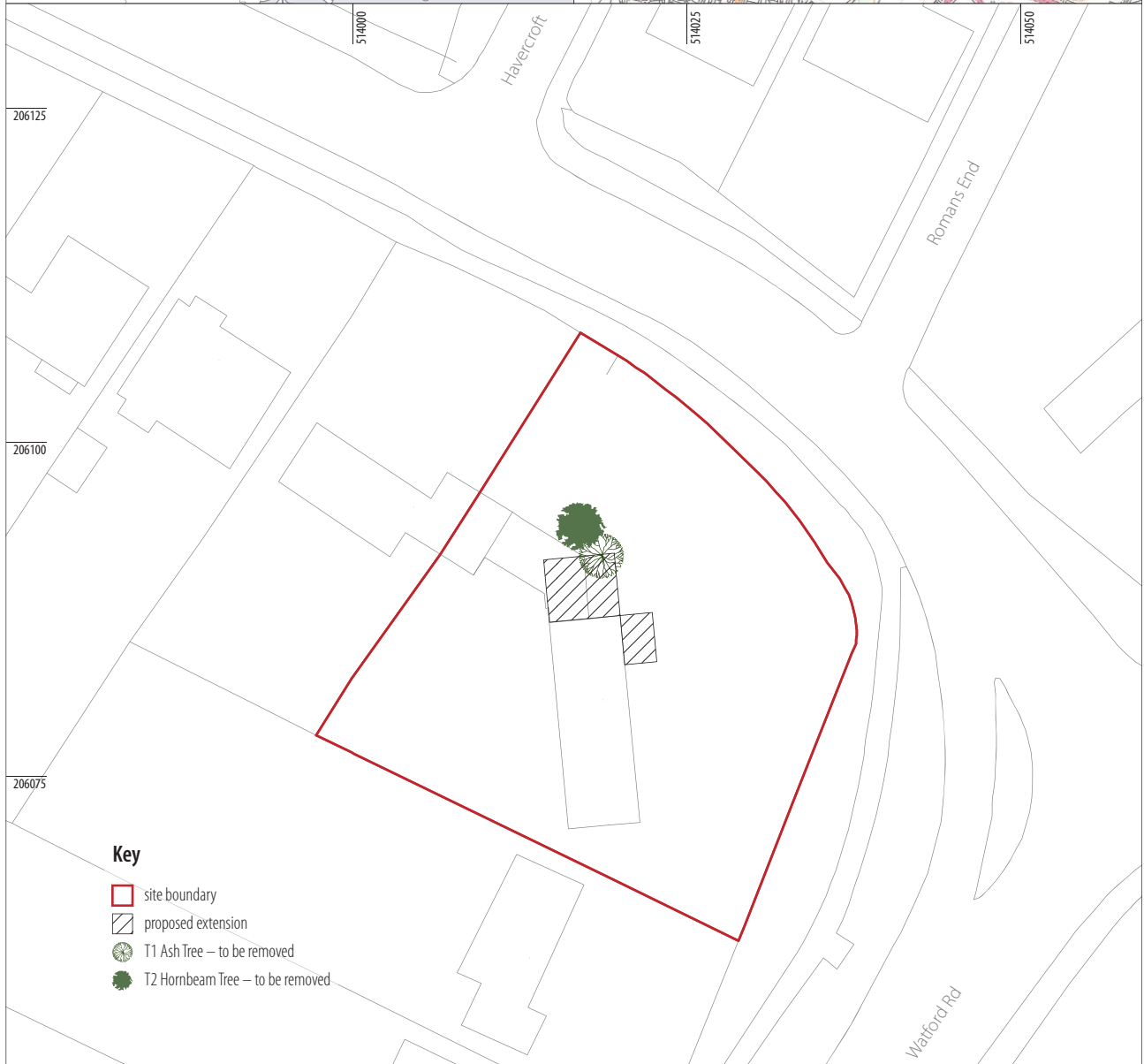
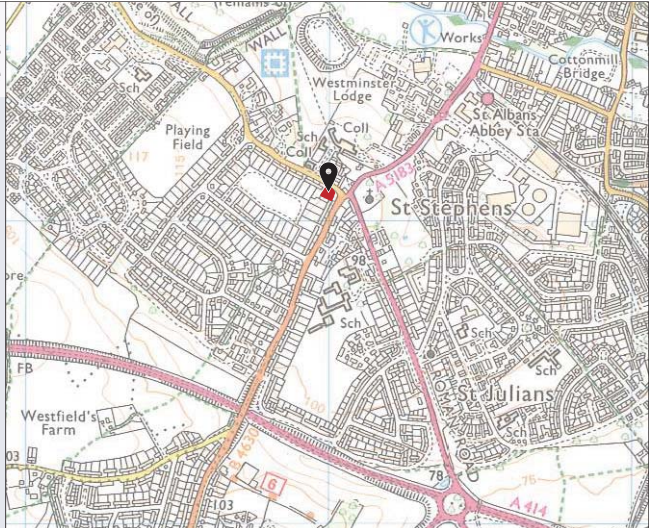
Photo No.	Digital Frame	Colour Slide frame/film	B&W frame/film	Direction facing	Description
001	3603				ID Shot
002	3603			W	General shot looking west
003	3603			W	General shot looking west
004	3603			W	General shot looking west
005	3603			S	North facing section of footings trench
006	3603			S	North facing section of footings trench
007	3603			S	North facing section of footings trench
008	3603			W	Working shot
009	3603			W	Working shot
010	3603			NW	Working shot
011	3603			S	General shot of footings trench, looking south with 1m scale
012	3603			S	General shot of footings trench, looking south with 1m scale
013	3603			S	North facing section of footing trench with 1m scale
014	3603			S	North facing section of footing trench with 1m scale

#### *Context register*

Context no.	Area	Description
001	Footings	Topsoil
002	Footings	Mixed made ground comprising of orange brown clay silt with stone inclusions



4 Watford Rd  
St Albans  
Hertfordshire



- Key**
- site boundary
  - proposed extension
  - T1 Ash Tree – to be removed
  - T2 Hornbeam Tree – to be removed

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scale 1:500 @ A4



**Illus 1**  
Site location



**Illus 2**

*S-facing view of exposed footings with 1m scale*



**Illus 3**

*W-facing view of exposed footings*





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**Headland Archaeology  
North East**

13 Jane Street  
Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705  
[northeast@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:northeast@headlandarchaeology.com)

**Headland Archaeology  
North West**

10 Payne Street  
Glasgow G4 0LF

0141 354 8100  
[northwest@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:northwest@headlandarchaeology.com)

**Headland Archaeology  
Midlands & West**

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

01432 364 901  
[midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com)

**Headland Archaeology  
South & East**

Building 68A, Wrest Park, Silsoe  
Bedfordshire MK45 4HS

01525 861 578  
[southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com)

[www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)