



Former Webbs Factory Site, Bridge Road,
Lymington, Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**FORMER WEBBS FACTORY SITE
BRIDGE ROAD, LYMINGTON,
HAMPSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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September 2011

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

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PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	04/82337	NGR		432790 095860	

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Watching Brief Report

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Front Unusual post-medieval three handled pottery vessel

**FORMER WEBBS FACTORY SITE
BRIDGE ROAD, LYMINGTON,
HAMPSHIRE****Watching Brief Report****Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Redrow Homes Southwest Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground preparation at the site of the former Webbs factory, Bridge Road, Lymington, Hampshire (hereafter 'the Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 432790 095860.

The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent (Application No. 04/82337) granted by New Forest District Council for a mixed use development, comprising residential housing, a hotel, retail units and office accommodation.

The site's location, positioned on a spur of land jutting into the course of the River Lymington, suggested high potential for the survival of medieval salt working features such as salterns or storage 'granaries', related to the documented activity within the town from the 12th century.

Works were undertaken in two phases and initially consisted of the monitoring of excavations made below the present ground surfaces for the purposes of ground preparation and landscaping in advance of a surcharge of material onto the Site by up to c. 4.0m aOD. The Phase I watching brief was maintained during trench excavation associated with the remediation of contaminated made ground deposits. Following a hiatus in site works, further archaeological monitoring (Phase II) was completed during borehole drilling, which included a series of 6 boreholes with a 0.2m diameter, evenly distributed throughout the central and eastern half of the Site.

Due to significant post-medieval and modern industrial development of the Site, the stratigraphy had suffered from heavy truncation and no *in situ* archaeological features or deposits were recorded. Within the heavily disturbed, backfilled material, a tall, narrow, cylindrical earthenware pottery vessel, with three equally spaced, vertical looped handles was recovered during the trench excavation. Although clearly unstratified within the made ground deposits, a makers stamp of ELLIOT identified the vessel as that of Horace W Elliott, a designer and dealer in the arts and crafts movement of the late 19th century.

The fieldwork was carried out during April 2008 and August 2011.

**FORMER WEBBS FACTORY SITE
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HAMPSHIRE**

Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Redrow Homes Southwest Ltd (the Client), and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Richard Meager in this regard.

The fieldwork was carried out by Kevin Ritchie and Simon Flaherty. This report was compiled by Sian Reynolds and illustrations were prepared by Linda Coleman. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

**FORMER WEBBS FACTORY SITE
BRIDGE ROAD, LYMINGTON,
HAMPSHIRE****Watching Brief Report****1 INTRODUCTION****1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Redrow Homes Southwest Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground preparation in advance of a surcharge of material at the site of the former Webbs factory, Bridge Road, Lymington, Hampshire (hereafter 'the Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 432790 095860 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent (Application No. 04/82337) granted by the New Forest District Council for a mixed use development of the Site, comprising private and affordable housing, a hotel, restaurant, office accommodation, a retail unit and car parking. This application was approved with the attached archaeological condition (Condition 4):

1.1.3 Condition 4 states:

No development shall take place on the site 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 by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The development is located in an area of archaeological significance where the recording of archaeological remains should be carried out prior to the development taking place in accord with Policy DW-E23 of the New Forest District Local Plan.

1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2008 & 2011) covering the scope and methodology of the watching brief was submitted to and approved by the Hampshire County Archaeologist, acting as the advisor to the New Forest District Council.

1.1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken in April 2008 and August 2011.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The Site comprises a semi-circular parcel of land of approximately 3.8ha and is bounded by Bridge Street to the north, the Lymington River to the east and south and a railway line to the west. The modern ground surface is at two levels separated by retaining walls and ramps.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area comprises alluvium over sands and gravels characteristic of the Bracklesham and Bagshot Beds (British Geological Survey, Sheet 330, 1975).

1.2.3 A geotechnical report (Hydrock Consultants 2008) indicated that the Site contained made ground deposits up to 6.25m in depth. As part of the required contamination remediation works of the Site, these deposits were removed and formed the first stage of a programme of archaeological work.

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 A full assessment of the history and archaeological potential of the Site is contained within a Desk-based Archaeological Assessment prepared by CgMs Consulting (Hawkins 2004). A brief summary is presented below.

1.3.2 The archaeological potential of the Site for the prehistoric periods is uncertain. The environment is likely to have comprised alluvial mudflats and wetland marshes and is therefore unlikely to have been utilised for settlement. Nevertheless, the resource rich area may still have been utilised by hunter gatherer groups.

1.3.3 Similarly, little evidence from the Romano-British, Saxon and early medieval periods is recorded from the Site.

1.3.4 Lymington is recorded as 'Lentune' in the Domesday Survey of 1086 when it was a small rural manor. The urban origins of the town belong to the twelfth century and it received its first charter between 1184 and 1216. Further charters were granted in c. 1256 and 1315. By 1300 around sixty established burgages were recorded together with just under forty new burgages. At this time extensive salt works (salterns) are recorded along the beach together with storage 'granaries' for the salt.

1.3.5 Lymington was the most important centre for salt production in Hampshire in the late medieval and Post medieval period until the collapse of the industry in the early 19th century. The town was a regionally important port and in 1346-7 it provided 9 ships and 159 men for the defence of the coast.

1.3.6 From the medieval period to c.1800, the Site is believed to have been a focus for salt production. Evidence associated with the salt industry may be present in the form of salt pans, salt reducing fires, storage pits and associated buildings on the Site.

1.3.7 From the 1690's onwards progressively heavy taxes were levied on the English salt industry and by the end of the eighteenth century the salterns at Lymington had become so unprofitable that the majority closed. It is likely that salt production on the Site ceased around this time.

1.3.8 By 1846 the Site was occupied by a mill pond and mill. The 1871 Ordnance Survey shows a large mill pond, a sawmill, brickfield and kiln occupy the Site. The mill pond was fed tidally through a sluice in the river wall.

1.3.9 The excavation of the millpond and the excavation of clay for the brick works are likely to have had a highly destructive impact on the archaeological

resource. It is probable that the infilling of these features accounts for the significant depths of made ground that are demonstrated by the geotechnical investigations.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 With due regard to the IfA *Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008), the generic aims of the project were to;

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains, associated with the salt industry and should remains be found to be present to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard.
- To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- To determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains.
- To determine or confirm the approximate extent and degree of modern truncation
- To prepare a report on the results of the watching brief

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the WSI (WA 2008 & 2011). All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008).

3.1.2 Works consisted of the monitoring of excavations made below the present ground surfaces for the purposes of ground preparation and landscaping in advance of a surcharge of material to the Site by up to c. 4.0m aOD. A watching brief was maintained during both the trench excavation (associated with the decontamination of the area) and the drilling of a series of 6 x 0.2m diameter boreholes, distributed evenly throughout the central portion of the Site.

3.1.3 A photographic record of the watching brief was maintained through digital images. The photographic record illustrated both the detail and general context of the archaeological remains revealed, and the Site as a whole.

4 FIELDWORK RESULTS

4.1 Preparatory works

4.1.1 In 2008, a Phase I archaeological watching brief was maintained during trench excavation associated with the remediation of contaminated modern made ground to record anything of archaeological interest.

- 4.1.2 A 20m x 10m trench was opened with a 360 mechanical excavator, to a maximum depth of c. 4m (**Figure 1, Plate 3**). This trench recorded approximately 2m of modern made ground deposits and comprised demolition material from the former Webbs factory.
- 4.1.3 The made ground deposits overlay c. 2m of organic rich alluvial silts. Within the trench these deposits were heavily disturbed, and contained large quantities of broken glass bottles and ceramic building material, typical of post-medieval refuse, presumably relating to the later industrial occupation of the Site.
- 4.1.4 Recovered from this alluvial material was a tall, narrow, cylindrical pottery vessel, which was identified as being the work of Horace W Elliott, a designer and dealer in the arts and crafts movement of the late 19th century.

4.2 Deposit Sequence

- 4.2.1 A further phase of archaeological recording was undertaken in August 2011. The watching brief was maintained during borehole drilling within the Site.
- 4.2.2 Boreholes were drilled through a mid greyish brown made ground layer which contained post-medieval and modern material. This disturbance became darker towards the base, possibly indicating some degree of leaching of industrial contaminants. The depth of the made ground, was relatively consistent across the Site, with depths of 2.2-2.7m recorded in 5 of the 6 boreholes (the made ground sequence recorded in BH5 was 3.5m deep).
- 4.2.3 The made ground sealed a mid green grey brown alluvial sequence with some organic content, recorded as 2.3-2.5m deep in 5 of the 6 holes (that of BH6 was recorded as 3.7m deep). The results correlate with the Site's previous designation as a low lying alluvial marsh.
- 4.2.4 The alluvial deposits overlay natural river gravels.

4.3 Archaeological Features

- 4.3.1 No archaeological features were identified during the watching brief.

5 FINDS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 An unusual pottery vessel was recovered from redeposited/backfilled material within Trench 1 during the watching brief at the Site.

5.2 Pottery vessel

- 5.2.1 The vessel is a tall, narrow, cylindrical form, with a base diameter of 140mm, tapering slightly to a diameter of 120mm at the top. Part of a raised horizontal cordon is visible at the top, but the vessel is missing its rim. Around the upper part of the body are three equally spaced, vertical looped handles. The vessel is made in a coarse red earthenware, of a type common throughout the post-medieval period, and partially glazed inside (to about

halfway down) with a clear lead glaze. On the base is the maker's stamp of ELLIOTT, surmounted by a fleur-de-lys in a diamond (**Plate 2**).

- 5.2.2 This mark can be identified as that of Horace W Elliott, who was a designer and dealer in the arts and crafts movement of the late 19th century. As a designer, he is particularly associated with the Ewenny pottery in south Wales, and designed pieces which were made there, but he also designed for C H Brannam and Denby. His fleur-de-lys mark was often used on Ewenny and other wares (<http://www.studiopottery.com/cgi-bin/mp.cgi?item=260/>).
- 5.2.3 A possible interpretation for this vessel as a butter pot has been suggested. These vessels, resembling chimney pots, but with a flat base, were used in the 17th and 18th centuries to send butter to market. A possible parallel for the Lymington pot is provided by a 17th century example from a kiln at Horton, within the Verwood rural production centre (Draper and Copland-Griffiths 2002, 139; Fig. 3), but these vessels were made at virtually every local pottery. However, tall butter pots are not known later than the 18th century, presumably because butter was then sent to market in far more practical wooden or wicker tubs.
- 5.2.4 Given Elliott's association with decorative arts and crafts pottery, it is perhaps more likely that this vessel had a more ornamental function, perhaps as a tall vase. The triple handle is a common feature of arts and crafts vases, although they are usually attached diagonally rather than vertically, as in this elaborately slip-decorated example designed by Elliott for Ewenny.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

- 6.1.1 No material suitable for environmental analysis was present within the monitored areas.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 Lymington was a major salt production centre in the medieval period, until high taxation forced the closure of the majority of the salterns in the late 18th century.
- 7.1.2 Salt production of this period characteristically left only ephemeral archaeological remains, and no material of this date was recorded during this watching brief.
- 7.1.3 This absence does not confirm that the Site was not utilised for salt production at this time, but that later industrial activity, in particular the erection and demolition of a number of buildings relating to the former brickworks, and the infilling of the mill pond, may have removed all traces of this.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 Preparation and deposition

8.1.1 Arrangements will be made with the local museum for the deposition of the archive. Provision has been made for the cost of long-term storage.

8.1.2 The project archive was prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990). The archive, including photographs and written records, are currently held at the Wessex Archaeology offices under the project code 69191.

8.2 Copyright

8.2.1 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

9 REFERENCES

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Hydrock Consultants, 2008 *Geotechnical Report at Bridge Road, Lymington*.
Ref: R/07418/006

Institute of Field Archaeologists (2008) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

Wessex Archaeology (2008) *Former Webbs Factory Site, Bridge Road, Lymington, Hampshire: A Written Scheme of Investigation for a Watching Brief*.

Wessex Archaeology (2011) *Former Webbs Factory Site, Bridge Road, Lymington, Hampshire: A Written Scheme of Investigation for a Watching Brief*.

APPENDIX 1 – OASIS RECORD FORM**OASIS ID: wessexar1-109437****Project details**

Project name Former Webbs Factory Site, Bridge Road, Lymington

Short description of the project Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Redrow Homes Southwest Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground preparation at the site of the former Webbs factory, Bridge Road, Lymington, Hampshire (hereafter 'the Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 432790 095860. The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent (Application No. 82337) granted by New Forest District Council for a mixed use development of the Site. The Site's location on a spur of land jutting into the course of the River Lymington, suggested high potential for the survival of medieval salt working features such as salterns or storage 'granaries', related to the documented activity within the town from the 12th century. Works consisted of the monitoring of excavations made below the present ground surfaces for the purposes of ground preparation and landscaping in advance of a surcharge of material onto the Site by up to c. 4.0m aOD. The watching brief was initially maintained during trench excavation associated with the remediation of contaminated made ground deposits and subsequently during borehole drilling which included a series of 6 x 0.2m diameter boreholes distributed evenly throughout the central portion of the Site. Due to significant post-medieval and modern industrial development of the Site, the stratigraphy had suffered from heavy truncation and no in situ archaeological features or deposits were recorded. A tall, narrow, cylindrical earthenware pottery vessel, with three equally spaced, vertical looped handles was recovered during the trench excavation. A makers stamp of ELLIOT identified the vessel as that of Horace W Elliott, a designer and dealer in the arts and crafts movement of the late 19th century.

Project dates Start: 01-06-2008 End: 07-09-2011

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes 69191 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE NEW FOREST LYMINGTON AND PENNINGTON Former Webbs Factory Site
Postcode	SO41 9BY
Study area	0.70 Hectares
Site coordinates	0 0 432790 00 00 N 95860 00 00 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

Project creators

Name Organisation	of Wessex Archaeology
Project originator	brief Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project originator	design Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Sue Farr
Project supervisor	Simon Flaherty

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Name of CgMs Consulting
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive Hampshire County Museums Service
recipient

Physical Contents 'Ceramics'

Digital Archive Hampshire County Museums Service
recipient

Digital Contents 'other'

Digital Media 'Text'
available

Paper Archive Hampshire County Museums Service
recipient

Paper Contents 'other'

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research','
available General Notes','Plan','Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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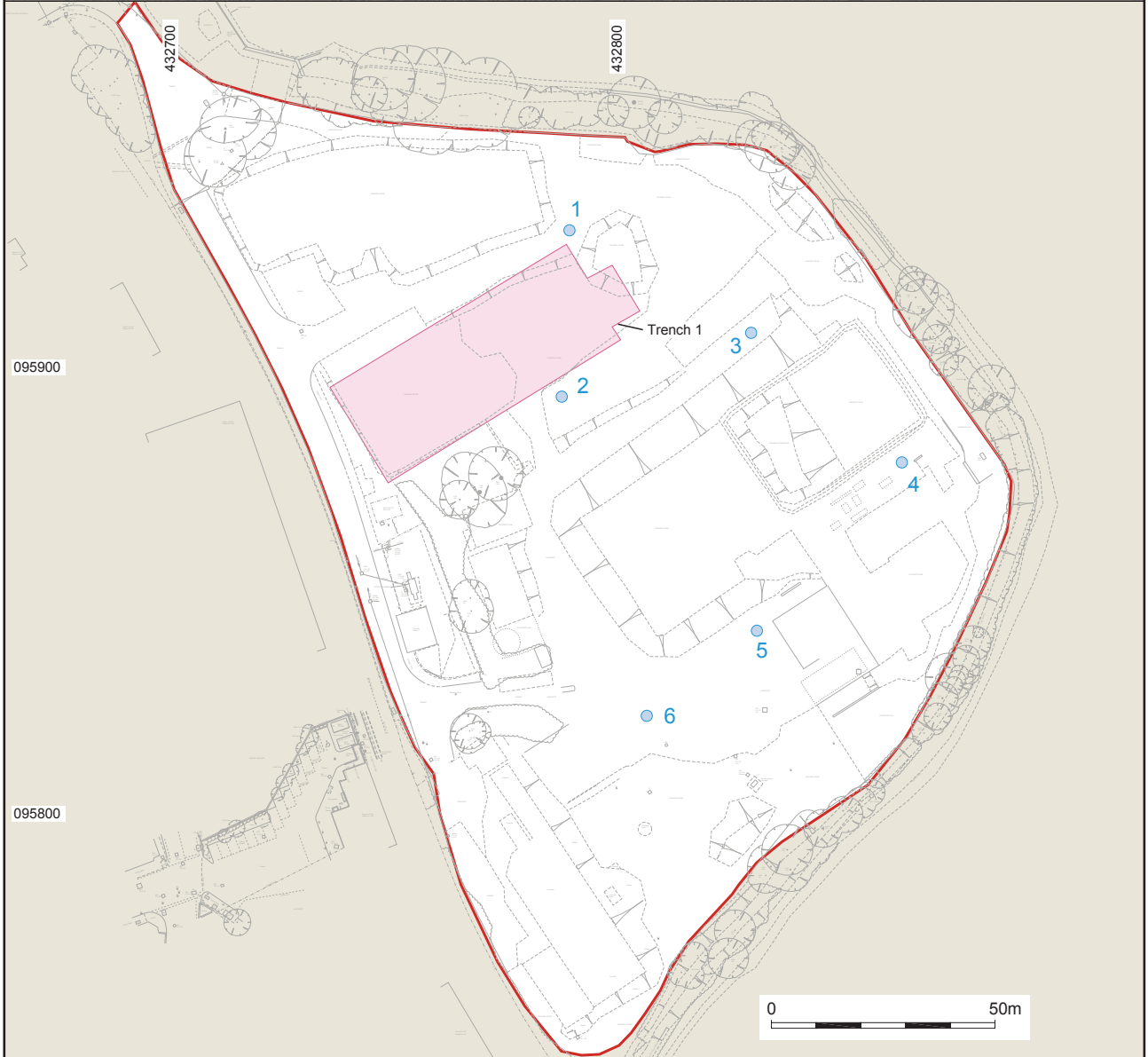
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Site location plan and approximate location of boreholes 1-6

Figure 1



Plate 1: West facing photograph of Trench 1



Plate 2: Makers stamp on base of pottery vessel



Plate 3: Pottery vessel showing triple handled design

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