



North Lodge, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, West Berkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**NORTH LODGE, HAMSTEAD MARSHALL,
NEWBURY, WEST BERKSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	79450	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	N/A	NGR	442297 166942		

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Alpha Environmental to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the removal by machine of contaminated topsoil on land at North Lodge, Hamstead Marshall. The site lies within the boundary of a Scheduled Monument which comprises two conquest period mottes and a bailey with associated features and a watching brief was required by English Heritage to ensure that any revealed archaeological remains would be appropriately investigated and recorded during the course of the decontamination works.

The watching brief monitored the removal of contaminated soil within a narrow strip of land which surrounded the foundation pad of the diesel tank and extended northwards down the eastern edge of the drive-way to the public road. This area was machine-excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50m over an area of approximate 35m².

Observations showed that the natural subsoil to the south of the entrance gateway into North Lodge had been truncated by former terracing to landscape the immediate environs of the house. The land to the north of the gateway, which forms the drive-way of the house, had also apparently been stripped of topsoil before hardcore and gravel had been laid to construct the access drive.

The excavations did not penetrate below the observed made ground deposits and no archaeological features or deposits were identified.

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Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Alpha Environmental and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Gavin Greenwood (Alpha Environmental), Chris Welch (English Heritage) and Sarah Orr (West Berkshire Council) for their help in this regard.

The watching brief and this report were undertaken and compiled by Phil Harding. The Illustrations were prepared by Linda Coleman and the project managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andy Manning.

**NORTH LODGE, HAMSTEAD MARSHALL,
NEWBURY, WEST BERKSHIRE****Archaeological Watching Brief Report****1 INTRODUCTION****1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Alpha Environmental to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation and removal of contaminated topsoil on land at the North Lodge, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, West Berkshire. The area of the works was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 442297 166942 (**Figure 1**), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.

1.1.2 North Lodge and associated outbuildings lies within the northern edge of a Scheduled Monument associated with two medieval motte and bailey castles (SM 19010) with extant earthworks located within 50m of the property (**Figure 1**).

1.1.3 In late 2010, an above ground fuel storage tank, which lies approximately 15m to the east of North Lodge, was vandalised, causing considerable fire damage to a potting shed and greenhouse. Fuel was discharged onto ground immediately surrounding the storage tank and flowed northwards down the eastern edge of the driveway to the public road resulting in localised ground contamination.

1.1.4 Alpha Environmental were commissioned to excavate and remove the contaminated material, which covered an area of approximately 35m² to a depth of 0.50m. Given the Scheduled Monument status of the Site, an application for Scheduled Monument Consent was submitted to English Heritage by agents acting for the client.

1.1.5 This application was approved on condition that an archaeological watching brief was carried out during the remedial work. This ensured that any archaeological features or deposits uncovered by the works would be subjected to an appropriate level of investigation and recording.

1.1.6 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2011) was prepared detailing the proposed methodology to be used for the archaeological watching brief and the reporting of the final results. This document was submitted to, and approved by, English Heritage before the commencement of the fieldwork, which took place on the 19th October 2011.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

1.2.1 North Lodge is situated in the valley of the River Kennet, immediately above the southern edge of the floodplain. It lies at a height of approximately 95m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and is situated on Reading Beds (mottled clay and sand) although previous fieldwork has noted occasional outcropping of plateau gravel in some areas.

- 1.2.2 The land in the immediate area of the watching brief is maintained as lawn with areas of driveway laid with gravel.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The West Berkshire HER records a total of 23 archaeological sites within a 250m radius of the Site. The majority of the entries relate to the monument and individual features recorded during fieldwork, especially a watching brief in 1993 during construction of a wall close to St Mary's church, approximately 250m to the southwest of the Site, which recorded a number of mainly post-medieval pits, potholes and a possible medieval hollow way (Ford 1993).
- 2.1.2 The Scheduled motte and bailey castles lie directly to the west and the south of North Lodge. The bailey associated with the motte directly to the south of the Site extends to within 50m of North Lodge.
- 2.1.3 A watching brief was undertaken by Thames Valley Archaeological Services (TVAS 2010) in 2009 during the re-excavation of drainage trenches that had been installed in 1985. Four of the trenches (Trenches 1-4) were located immediately to the north of the wall forming the boundary of North Lodge, very close to the area which was subsequently contaminated.
- 2.1.4 These four trenches observed localised made-ground deposits up to 0.70m thick in the general area, which related to the construction and levelling works associated with the existing building. No archaeological features or finds were observed, however it was accepted that the impacted areas were relatively small and that archaeological features may have survived at a greater depth.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 The project was required to;
- *record and establish the date, character, relationship, condition and significance of all surviving archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the area to be impacted*
 - *establish, where possible, the extent of significant archaeological remains or deposits within the area of the archaeological mitigation*
 - *place any identified archaeological remains within their context, particularly with reference to the Scheduled Monument*

4 METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 Methodology

- 4.1.1 The proposed works comprised the machine excavation and removal of fuel-contaminated topsoil, subsoil and the underlying natural within an area of 4.5 x 3 m around the fuel storage tank and a strip of land, 12 x 1 m, running

along the eastern edge of the driveway. Excavation was to a maximum depth of 0.50m below the present ground surface.

- 4.1.2 Removal of topsoil and overburden were undertaken using a tracked mechanical mini-digger with a toothless ditching bucket. All work was maintained under constant supervision by Wessex Archaeology staff. All contaminated overburden was removed to the required excavation level sufficient to remove all traces of fuel oil.
- 4.1.3 Recording was carried out in accordance with the agreed WSI using Wessex Archaeology's standard methods and *pro forma* recording system. A digital photographic record of the works was maintained.

5 FIELDWORK RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The entire extent of the watching brief area was overlain by made-up ground, which averaged 0.30 m thick and frequently contained brick rubble. This deposit was truncated by a number of service cables, pipes and a soakaway.
- 5.1.2 Undisturbed geological deposits were only observed in the section at the southern end of the watching brief. These deposits extended across the floor of the trench, coincident with the general level of made-up ground. This deposit comprised buff sandy silt ('brick-earth') which may be the Reading Beds, which are described as mottled clay and sand, but may also be reworked material related to the River Kennet or colluvium derived from the Reading Beds.
- 5.1.3 The clear contact surface of this material with the overlying made-up ground suggested that the upper part of the natural soil profile had been truncated at some time during the construction/redevelopment of the house, removing all superficial archaeological deposits.
- 5.1.4 The level of excavation became shallower to the north of the gate way along the east edge of the drive-way. The archaeological sequence here was consistent, comprising a surface deposit of gravel, which overlay a layer of 'hard core' containing quantities of brick rubble.
- 5.1.5 A 'test pit' excavated through the base of the gravel surface at the north end of the drive-way confirmed this sequence of drive construction. It seems likely that the approach to the house was stripped to the level of the natural geology before the hard core base was laid down.

6 FINDS

- 6.1.1 No artefacts were observed or collected.

7 PALAEOLO-ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

- 7.1.1 No features or deposits were identified which merited sampling.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1 The watching brief at North Lodge was designed to ensure that no archaeological features or deposits should be removed without sufficient record, or, that in their absence, some evidence could be produced demonstrating the current state of preservation.
- 8.1.2 The results of the project have indicated that most of the superficial deposits in the excavated area have been removed previously to construct the driveway, or, in the case of the rear of the Site, to terrace into the rising ground to the south of the Kennet valley. The latter is likely to have removed not only the surface deposits but also the upper parts of the natural geology and any archaeological features.
- 8.1.3 These conclusions suggest that most of the area immediately surrounding and fronting the property, to the road, has been heavily modified, either stripped, truncated or, as suggested by the watching brief of 2009 (TVAS 2010), made-up.
- 8.1.4 These observations have all been made on very limited areas and although they suggest that very few archaeological deposits and shallow features are likely to remain undisturbed they do not preclude the possibility that some deeper features may remain in situ.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1 Preparation and Deposition

- 9.1.1 The archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's office building under the site code **79450**.
- 9.1.2 In due course the archive will be deposited with the West Berkshire Museum, Newbury under the Site Code **79450**. The archive will be prepared in accordance with the Museum's archive preparation standards.

9.2 The Archive

- 9.2.1 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* (Walker 1990). It comprises a ring-bound file containing a watching brief attendance form, site 'day book', trench record sheets, photographic register and *Written Scheme of Investigation*.
- 9.2.2 Details of the Site will be submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.

9.3 Copyright

- 9.3.1 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.

10 REFERENCES

- Ford, S., 1993, Archaeological watching Brief at Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, Berkshire SAM no. 19010: TVAS Unpublished Client Report 93/09
- IfA, 2008, *Standards and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief*
- TVAS, 2010, North Lodge, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, West Berkshire: Archaeological Watching Brief, Unpublished Client Report HMN09/117, Feb 2010
- Wessex Archaeology, 2011, North lodge, Homestead Marshall, Newbury, West Berkshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Unpublished Client Report79450.01, Sept 2011
- Walker, K., 1990, *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage*, London; UKIC

APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

10.1 OASIS ID: wessexar1-114139

Project details

Project name	North Lodge, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, West Berkshire
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Alpha Environmental to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the removal by machine of contaminated topsoil on land at North Lodge, Hamstead Marshall. The site lies within the boundary of a Scheduled Monument which comprises two conquest period mottes and a bailey with associated features and a watching brief was required by English Heritage to ensure that any revealed archaeological remains would be appropriately investigated and recorded during the course of the decontamination works. The watching brief monitored the removal of contaminated soil within a narrow strip of land which surrounded the foundation pad of the diesel tank and extended northwards down the eastern edge of the drive-way to the public road. This area was machine-excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50m over an area of approximate 35m ² . Observations showed that the natural subsoil to the south of the entrance gateway into North Lodge had been truncated by former terracing to landscape the immediate environs of the house. The land to the north of the gateway, which forms the drive-way of the house, had also apparently been stripped of topsoil before hardcore and gravel had been laid to construct the access drive. The excavations did not penetrate below the observed made ground deposits and no archaeological features or deposits were identified.
Project dates	Start: 19-10-2011 End: 19-10-2011
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	79450 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	19010 - SM No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
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Site location	BERKSHIRE WEST BERKSHIRE HAMSTEAD MARSHALL North Lodge
Postcode	RG20 0JD
Study area	35.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 422 669 51.3990659946 -1.393320712750 51 23 56 N 001 23 35 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 94.50m Max: 95.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project originator	brief English Heritage
Project originator	design Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	A Manning
Project supervisor	PA Harding
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Alpha Environmental

Project archives

Physical Exists?	Archive	No
Digital recipient	Archive	West Berkshire Museum, Newbury
Digital Contents		'none'
Digital available	Media	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper recipient	Archive	West Newbury Museum, Berkshire
Paper Contents		'none'
Paper available	Media	'Context sheet','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	North lodge, Hampstead Marshall, Newbury, West Berkshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Harding, PA

Other bibliographic 79450.02
details

Date 2011

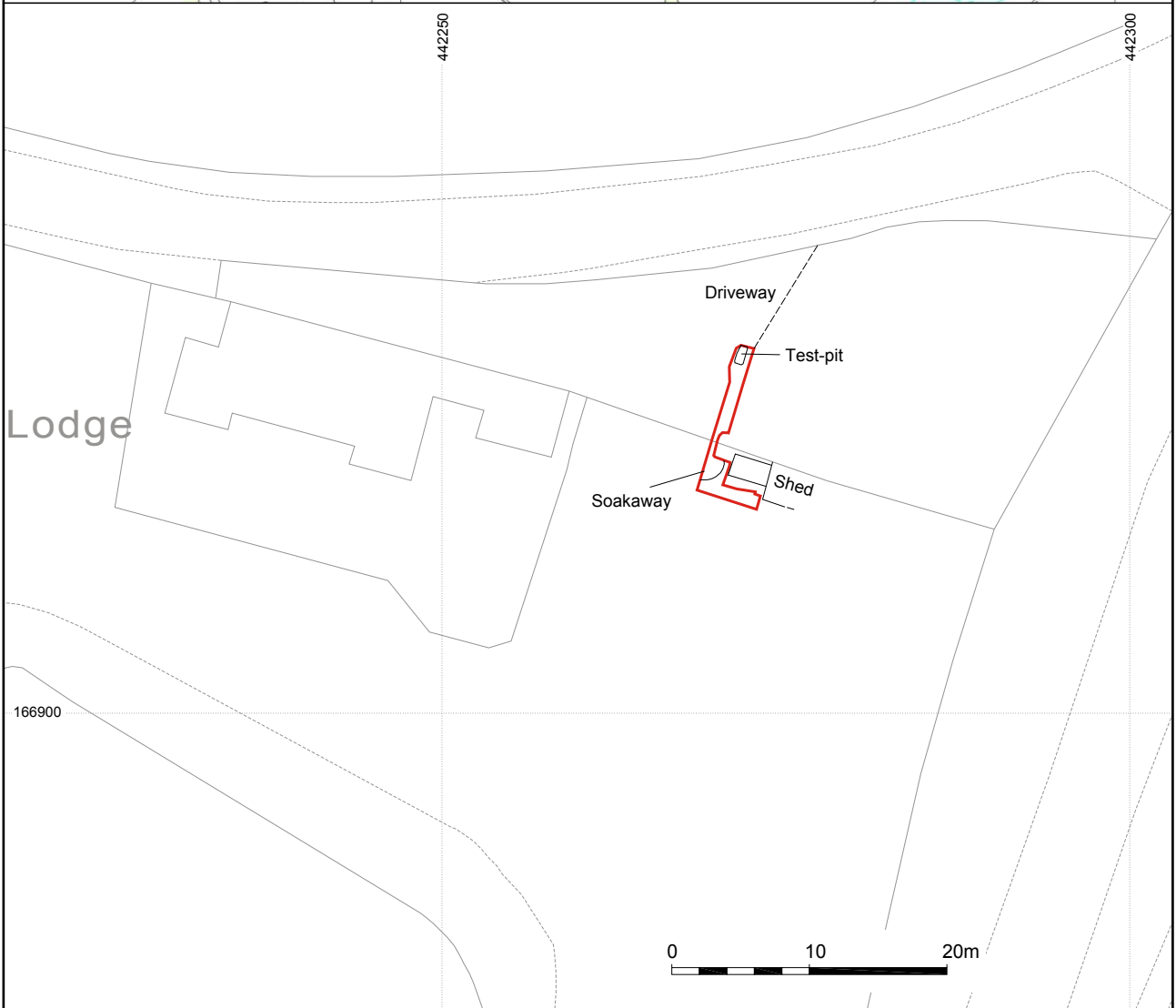
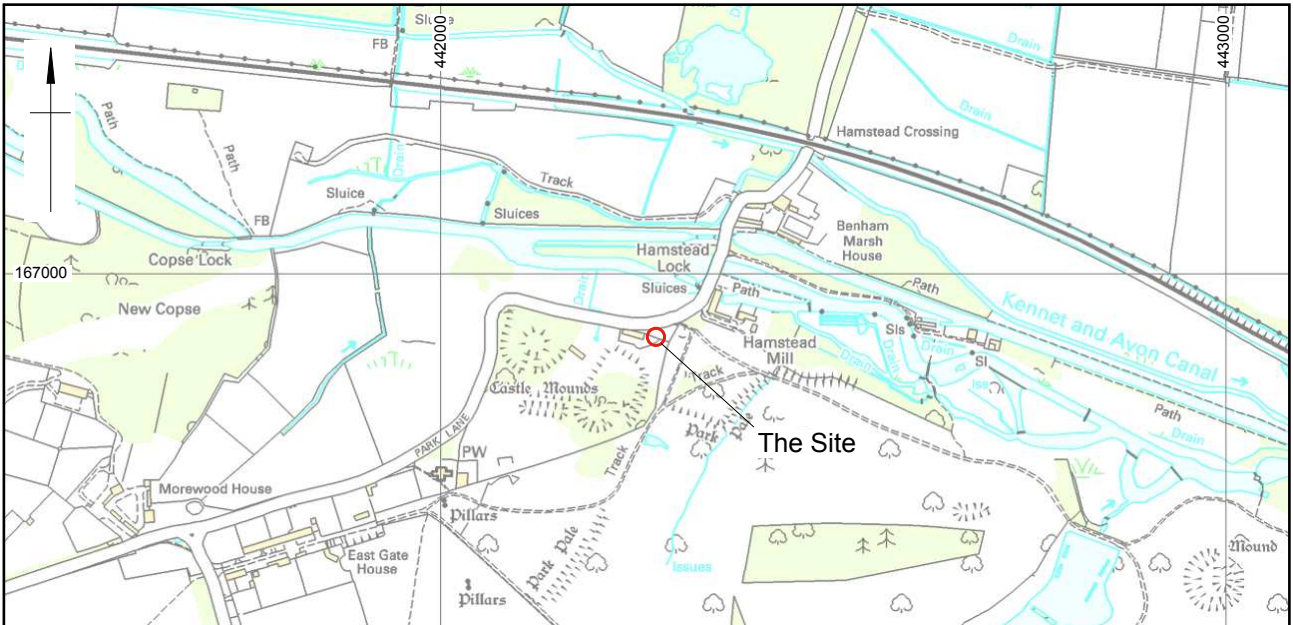
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Site location and excavation area

Figure 1



Plate 1: Truncated 'brickearth' as seen in north-east facing section and extending across the base of the trench



Plate 2: East facing section showing made ground lying directly over truncated 'brickearth'

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