



PVO600 Provost Offices Aldershot, Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**PVO600 PROVOST OFFICES
ALDERSHOT,
HAMPSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	74408	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	11/00560/ADRCPP	NGR		486696 1519252	

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I= Internal Draft E= External Draft F= Final

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mansell Construction Services Limited, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with redevelopment at Provost Barracks, Aldershot Camp, Aldershot, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 486696 1519252.

The watching brief was a requirement of the planning permission granted to the Client by Rushmoor Borough Council (Planning Reference 11/00560/ADRCPP) for the erection of a three storey headquarters office and store.

The watching brief monitored the excavation of a number of small trenches cutting through layers of modern made ground and truncated natural and the footprint of the proposed office. Only modern features associated with the previous use of the area were encountered within one of the trenches.

The fieldwork was carried out on the in September and October 2011.

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Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Mansell Construction Services Limited, and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Sarah Layson in this regard.

The fieldwork was carried out by Ray Kennedy and Simon Flaherty. This report was compiled by Sian Reynolds and Simon Flaherty and illustrations were prepared by Elizabeth James. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.

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Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mansell Construction Services Limited (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during development at Provost Barracks, Aldershot Camp, Aldershot (hereafter 'the Site'), during groundworks in advance of development centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 486696, 1519252 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was required as part of the planning permission granted to the Client by Rushmoor Borough Council (Planning Reference 11/00560/ADRCPP), the local authority, for the construction of a three storey headquarters office and attached single storey technical store with external infrastructure including car parking.
- 1.1.3 The application was submitted following the granting of Outline Planning Permission (03/00616/OUT) and forms part of the wider redevelopment of the Camp under Project Allenby/Connaught. Project Allenby/Connaught is a major Ministry of Defence (MoD) project involving comprehensive improvements to the built estate at five establishments around Salisbury Plain (Wiltshire) and at Aldershot.
- 1.1.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2011) covering the scope and methodology of the watching brief was submitted to, and approved by Hampshire County Council in advance of works commencing.
- 1.1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken on the 29th - 30th September and the 12th of October 2011.

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises a sub-rectangular parcel of land of approximately 0.1ha, centred on NGR 486696, 1519252 (**Figure 1**) and is bounded by Maida Road to the east and Queens Avenue to the west.
- 1.2.2 Aldershot itself is situated at the northern end of the Blackwater Valley, at the confluence of the River Blackwater and River Loddon. Surrounding and underlying the valley are Tertiary deposits with alluvial deposits along the flood plain of the River Blackwater.
- 1.2.3 The Site is generally flat and lies at approximately c. 83m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology of the Site is mapped as Barton Sand (British Geological Survey 1976).

1.3 Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 The Aldershot Military Camp forms an important cultural heritage landscape, with a range of locally and nationally significant sites which date from the prehistoric and post-medieval/modern periods. Three sites of national significance are recorded within the camp and comprise Prince Consorts Library, the Military Cemetery and a Bronze Age Barrow.
- 1.3.2 Aldershot Military Camp was built in response to strained French relationships during the 1850s and was of strategic national importance. At the beginning of the twentieth century the advent of the aeroplane led to the development of the Farnborough aerodrome (north-west of the Site). During WWI and WWII the camp trained soldiers from all over British Empire particularly Canada. After WWII the camp became a training centre for the National Service Army, and the Parachute Regiment was based at the camp for over 50 years. The camp at Aldershot represents the first military camp, solely for the training of a modern professional army, to be built since the Roman invasion.
- 1.3.3 There are 47 military sites within and in close proximity to the camp, which range from local to national significance. Eleven sites have statutory designations (nine Grade II, one Grade II* and one Grade I) and there are a further nine military buildings which are proposed to have statutory designations (Grade II).
- 1.3.4 The camp has been subject to a large amount of building and reorganisation over the past century, much of which will have impacted on potentially surviving archaeological deposits.
- 1.3.5 Four findspots are recorded within this part of the camp. The 19th century garrison church of St Michael and St George which is a Grade II Listed Building, lies to the west of the Site and three further non-statutory buildings are also recorded within Provost and comprise a complex of 19th century R.E workshops.
- 1.3.6 There is an unconfirmed potential for archaeological features/deposits of prehistoric and later date to be present on this part of the camp.

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, 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 or confirm the approximate extent of the remains.
 - To determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains.

- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- To prepare a report on the results of the watching brief

3 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 All works undertaken during the watching brief were conducted in accordance with the methods and standards outlined within the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2011), and the requirements of the Client and Hampshire County Council.
- 3.1.2 The WSI conformed with current best practice and the guidance outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE, English Heritage 2006)* and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008)*.

3.2 Fieldwork

- 3.2.1 The watching brief was maintained during the initial groundworks and comprised the excavation of the building footprint and services within the Site.
- 3.2.2 Groundworks were monitored by one experienced archaeologist and all machine excavation was carried out using a 360⁰ excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket.
- 3.2.3 All potential archaeological features and deposits were subsequently hand cleaned and sample excavated as per the methodology set out in the WSI (*ibid.*).
- 3.2.4 Features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets and a unique numbering system for individual contexts, and were planned at a scale of 1:20. Sections were drawn at 1:10. All principal strata and features were related to the Ordnance Survey datum. The monitored areas were located using a Leica GPS survey system. Following all investigation and recording, the areas were then backfilled.
- 3.2.5 A full photographic record was maintained during the watching brief using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

3.3 Health and Safety

- 3.3.1 All work was carried out in accordance with Health and Safety at Work *etc.* act of 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations of 1992 as well as all other relevant Health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time the work commenced.
- 3.3.2 In advance of the fieldwork, a Risk Assessment was prepared. All staff involved with the project signed and complied with this document.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 No archaeological features (beyond those of clearly modern date) were exposed during the intrusive works, and no artefacts were retained.

4.2 Stratigraphic Sequence

4.2.1 A similar stratigraphic sequence was recorded across the Site and comprised a layer of crushed stone overlying a lower made ground deposit comprising a mid black silty clay deposit (**Plate 1**). Modern material was visually inspected from both made ground contexts and included CBM (ceramic building material) and metal from decommissioned.

4.2.2 In some areas no natural geology was recorded before the maximum depth of excavation necessary was reached. Elsewhere within the Site, natural yellow sands, albeit heavily disturbed in isolated areas, were recorded below the made ground deposits.

4.3 Modern Features

4.3.1 Within Trench 1 a number of modern features were encountered. These included a line of circular pits that were east-west aligned and additional rectangular and sub-square pits (**Plate 2**) within the area.

4.3.2 A gully was also recorded within the centre of Trench 1, although it could clearly be seen truncating the made ground deposits within the trench section (**Plate 3**).

4.3.3 All features contained a deposit similar to the lower made ground deposit and comprised a mid black silty clay. Where modern material was not visible on the surface of the feature, pits were sample excavated/mattock tested and found to contain modern Ceramic Building Material (CBM) and modern glass.

4.3.4 No other archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the watching brief.

5 FINDS

5.1.1 No artefacts were retained during the watching brief.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

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

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.1 The results of the watching brief have confirmed extensive earthmoving has heavily impacted upon the archaeological potential of the area. Made ground and modern material was identified across the Site which directly sealed the natural sand geology.

- 7.1.2 The extent to which the original ground surface has been disturbed/reworked could not be ascertained, due largely to the absence of any buried topsoil or subsoil horizons.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 Preparation and Deposition

- 8.1.1 The archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's office building under the site code **74408**. The complete archaeological project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2007).
- 8.1.2 At a later date, the archive will be deposited with Hampshire County Council. The archive will be prepared in accordance with the Museum's archive preparation standards.

8.2 The Archive

- 8.2.1 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* (UKIC 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*.

8.3 Copyright

- 8.3.1 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-transferable 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

Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales), 1976, *Aldershot*, Sheet 285, Drift and Solid 1:50,000

IfA, 2008, *Standards and guidance: for an archaeological watching brief*

Wessex Archaeology, 2011, PVO600 Provost Offices, Aldershot, Hampshire, *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief*, Unpublished Client Report ref. 74408.01, September 2011.

10 APPENDIX 1 – OASIS RECORD FORM
PVO600 Provost Offices, Aldershot Camp, Hampshire - Wessex Archaeology
OASIS ID - wessexar1-120215
Versions

View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	S Farr	s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk	28 February 2012

Completed sections in current version

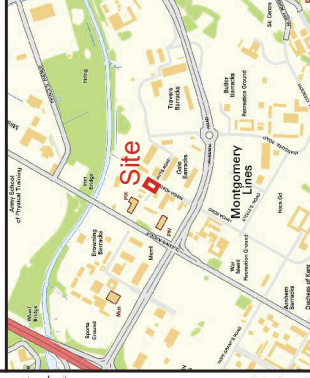
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Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

Validated sections in current version

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Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?



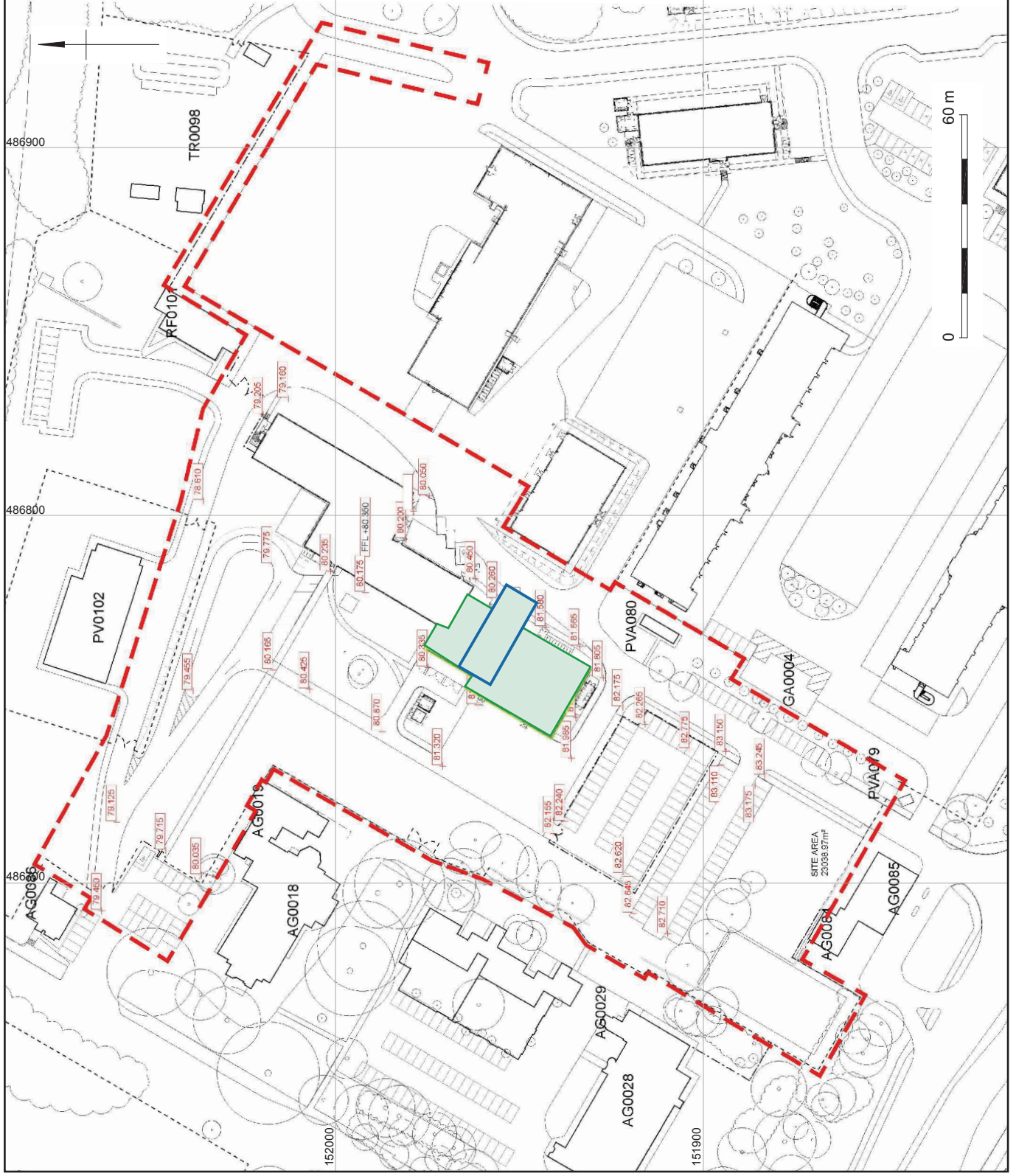
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- 124.920 EXISTING CONTOUR
- 124.750 NEW SPOT LEVEL
- 124.850 NEW CONTOUR
- 124.920 ASSET FINISHED FLOOR LEVEL

- The Site
- Trench 1

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Site location plan

Figure 1



Plate 1: Representative section of Trench 1



Plate 2: General view of Trench 1 from the south-east



Plate 3: View of modern service trench truncating made ground

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