



LADG 16, Larkhill Camp, Larkhill, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**LADG 16,
LARKHILL CAMP, LARKHILL
WILTSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Figure 1: Site Location showing area of watching brief



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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Aspire Defence Capital Works to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork to construct a car park extension at Larkhill Camp. The area lay on the northern perimeter of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and is known to have produced traces of prehistoric occupation.

The watching brief demonstrated that only a thin strip of undisturbed natural Chalk remained along the north edge of the site, although this too may well have been reduced during the construction of military buildings which formerly occupied the southern part of the site. These buildings were demolished sometime after 1959. It is concluded that the work for their construction would have removed or heavily truncated any archaeological features and deposits which may have previously existed on the site.



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Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Aspire Defence Capital Works and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Mike Lockwood, Dimensional Control Manager for his assistance throughout the project.

The archaeological watching brief report was undertaken by Phil Harding who also compiled this report. The graphics were prepared by Elizabeth James and the project managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr.



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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Aspire Defence Capital Works (the Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at LADG16, Larkhill Camp, Larkhill, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 413590 144885 (hereafter the 'Site') (**Figure 1**).

1.1.1 Planning consent (S/2012/1317) was granted by Wiltshire Council for the construction of an extension to a parking area at the Site subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological works to be undertaken.

1.1.2 The Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council confirmed that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during the works due to both the location of the Site, being immediately to the north of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and the potential for archaeological remains to be present.

1.1.3 Wessex Archaeology prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2012) setting out the methodology for the work to mitigate the impact on any archaeological remains that may have been present during the development. This document was submitted to and approved by the Assistant County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council prior to any development commencing.

1.1.4 The watching brief was undertaken between 22nd and 24th October 2012.

1.2 The Site

1.1.5 The Site lay within the north-east corner of Larkhill Camp to the north of the Brackenbury Road and was centred on NGR 413375 144725 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.6 The Site comprised an area of maintained grassland that dipped to the south-west into a shallow coombe.

1.1.7 The area of the watching brief lay immediately north of an existing car park and comprised a rectangular plot of land measuring approximately 80m (east to west) by 28m (north to south). The specification for the project necessitated the southern margins of the area to be raised and the northern edge to be terraced into the natural slope.

1.1.8 The underlying geology of the Site is mapped as Upper Chalk (British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Solid and Drift Series, sheet 298).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 The Site lay immediately to the north of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site within the extensive and highly significant prehistoric funereal and monumental landscape of the Salisbury Plain, featuring many important sites and find spots of a predominantly Neolithic and Bronze Age date.
- 2.1.2 A number of military features have been identified from aerial photographs in close proximity to the Site by the Royal Commission of Historical Monuments and an earlier watching brief on a new football pitch to the north of the Site confirmed additional military features in the vicinity.
- 2.1.3 Knighton Barrow, a Neolithic long barrow, is recorded approximately 1.5km to the south-west of the Site and approximately 500m to the north, Bronze Age tools have been found. In addition, archaeological evaluation within Larkhill Barracks to the east of the Site identified two adjacent pits and a posthole. Although some truncation by later military activity had occurred, both pits produced worked and burnt flint, animal bone and Bronze Age pottery.
- 2.1.4 An archaeological watching brief undertaken (Wessex Archaeology 2009) during the formation of a car park within Alanbrooke Barracks to the south and west of the Site revealed evidence of probable prehistoric settlement in the form of approximately twenty-five postholes. Eight of the postholes formed what may be the remains of a sub-circular post-built structure, with an internal diameter of 4.6m. A single sherd of Late Bronze Age flint tempered pottery was retrieved from one of the postholes forming this structure. The structure was enclosed to the east by a north-south aligned fence line. A small assemblage of pottery, struck flint, burnt flint and animal bone was recovered from the prehistoric postholes.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 The watching brief aimed to establish the archaeological potential of the Site within the constraints of the agreed strategy. It sought to determine the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, and depth of any surviving remains which may be impacted by the proposed development.
- 3.1.2 In particular the watching brief intended to clarify the impact upon the archaeological resource of any groundwork necessary for the construction of the new development and to ensure their preservation by record.

4 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

- 4.1.1 The archaeological watching brief monitored the preliminary stages of ground work beneath the present surfaces. This involved the removal of topsoil to the natural Chalk or to sub surface deposits which were retained, unaffected by the formation level of the car park. The work was monitored continuously by an experienced archaeologist.
- 4.1.2 The watching brief provided a detailed mitigation strategy by which the discovery of archaeological deposits and features would be excavated and recorded. This included a written record using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, drawn plans and sections at appropriate scales (1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections) tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum. In addition a digital photographic record would be compiled recording the progress of the watching brief.

- 4.1.3 The WSI also included details covering retrieval of artefacts from spoil heaps and archaeological deposits as well as procedures for environmental sampling to meet the watching brief's objectives.

4.2 Best practice

- 4.2.1 The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (IfA 2008).

5 FIELDWORK RESULTS

- 5.1.1 The topsoil horizon comprised a thin, well-sorted, dark brown loam that overlay deposits of demolition rubble across most of the Site. This deposit formed part of a relatively recent phase of landscaping of the Site.
- 5.1.2 Areas of intact natural Chalk were restricted to a band approximately 2m wide along the northern edge of the stripped area. This was distinguished by bands of periglacial Chalk that ran obliquely down the slope. The Chalk comprised poorly structured material with solution pockets of brown silty clay.
- 5.1.3 Mapping dated to 1959 indicated that the eastern part of the Site was formerly occupied by the Unit Medical Centre, the footprint of which could be traced as truncated wall foundations. The southern elevation of this building lay beneath the existing car park. A small area of undisturbed natural Chalk, distinguished by periglacial stripes, was visible in the south-west corner of the building.
- 5.1.4 The southern end of a tarmac path, passing along the western edge of the building, was also observed. This feature is also recorded on the map of 1959. Its absence to the north suggests that this part of the Site may have undergone some degree of truncation during the demolition and landscaping of the Unit Medical Centre.
- 5.1.5 The foundations of an additional rectangular structure, which does not appear on the mapping of 1959, was present towards the western part of the Site. This building is likely to have been demolished by 1959 as its access is shown on the map of 1959. The area of disturbance extended northwards upslope beyond the building outline.
- 5.1.6 Removal of topsoil at the western end of the Site was restricted to the most recent deposit, which capped the natural soil profile. This area will be raised as a bund and no further work was undertaken to expose the underlying Chalk surface.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that the Site was occupied by military buildings that were largely demolished sometime after 1959. The construction work for these buildings is likely to have necessitated the removal of topsoil, installation of foundations and ancillary landscaping sufficient to remove or heavily truncate any archaeological features and deposits that might have previously been present. This work may have affected the strip of natural Chalk to the north, at the rear of the buildings, where the general ground level may also have been landscaped.

7 ARCHIVE

- 7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the fieldwork be deposited with Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project.
- 7.1.2 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records and graphics, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007).
- 7.1.3 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> has been initiated (**Appendix 1**) and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the WSHER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

7.2 Copyright

- 7.2.1 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), 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.

7.3 Security Copy

- 7.3.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Archaeological Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology. Alternatively, the security copy may be in the form of a pdf file.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

British Geological Survey information available at:

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/services/digmap50wms.html>

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**APPENDIX 1: STRATIGRAPHIC SUMMARIES**

bgl = below ground level

TRENCH 1			
Dimensions: 19.20x1.80m		Max. depth: 0.85m	Ground level: 77.52-77.65m aOD
Easting: 417655		Northing: 143939	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
101	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern ploughsoil. Dark brown-grey silty clay. 2% flint, sub-angular, <1-8cm. Occasional chalk flecks. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately loose and friable. Bioturbated. Overlies 102.	0.00-0.27 bgl
102	<i>Layer</i>	Colluvium. Mid orange-brown silty clay. 10% flint, sub-angular, <1-9cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact. Overlies 103.	0.27-0.70 bgl
103	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk geology with occasional flint nodules.	0.70+ bgl

TRENCH 2			
Dimensions: 26.80x1.80m		Max. depth: 0.96m	Ground level: 81.29-81.61m aOD
Easting: 417785		Northing: 143690	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
201	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Dark brown-grey silty clay. 2% flint, sub-angular, <1-8cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately loose and friable. Bioturbated. Under scrub vegetation. Overlies 202.	0.00-0.42 bgl
202	<i>Layer</i>	Levelling layer. Mid yellow-orange sand. Very loose and friable. Overlies 203.	0.42-0.48 bgl
203	<i>Layer</i>	Levelling layer. Hardcore. Pale grey silty sand. 20% stone, sub-angular, <1-5cm. Compact. Overlies 204.	0.48-0.59 bgl
204	<i>Layer</i>	Colluvium. Mid red-brown silty clay. 10% flint, sub-angular, <1-8cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact but friable. Overlies 205.	0.59-0.86 bgl
205	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk geology with occasional flint nodules.	0.86+ bgl

TRENCH 3			
Dimensions: 29.60x1.80m		Max. depth: 0.88m	Ground level: 83.34-84.24m aOD
Easting: 417836		Northing: 143586	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
301	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Dark brown-grey silty clay. 1% flint, sub-angular, <1-4cm. Fairly homogeneous. Loose and friable. Bioturbated. Under scrub vegetation. Overlies 302.	0.00-0.32 bgl
302	<i>Layer</i>	Levelling layer. Re-deposited chalk and topsoil. Overlies 303.	0.32-0.44 bgl
303	<i>Layer</i>	Colluvium. Mid orange-brown silty clay. 2% flint, sub-angular, <1-5cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact but friable. Overlies 304.	0.44-0.76 bgl
304	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk geology with occasional flint nodules.	0.76+ bgl

TRENCH 4			
Dimensions: 27.30x1.80m		Max. depth: 0.64m	Ground level: 84.26-84.97m aOD
Easting: 417862		Northing: 143554	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
401	<i>Topsoil</i>	Modern topsoil. Dark brown-grey silty clay. 1% flint, sub-angular, <1-4cm. Sparse chalk flecks. Fairly homogeneous. Loose and friable. Bioturbated. Under scrub vegetation. Overlies 402.	0.00-0.25 bgl
402	<i>Layer</i>	Levelling layer. Re-deposited chalk. Overlies 403.	0.25-0.35 bgl
403	<i>Layer</i>	Colluvium. Mid orange-brown silty clay. 2% flint, sub-angular, <1-6cm. Fairly homogeneous. Fairly loose and friable. Overlies 404.	0.35-0.56 bgl
404	<i>Natural</i>	Natural chalk geology with occasional flint nodules.	0.56+ bgl



TRENCH 5			
Dimensions: 15.40x1.80m		Max. depth: 1.20m	Ground level: 91.28-91.46m aOD
Easting: 417962		Northing: 143802	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
501	<i>Layer</i>	Levelling layer. Type 1 stone.	0.00-0.16 bgl
502	<i>Layer</i>	Made ground. Mixed layers of built up material from re-deposited chalk, occasional orange-brown sandy silt deposits. 10% stone and flint, sub-angular, <1-12cm. Compact. Overlies 503.	0.16-0.75 bgl
503	<i>Layer</i>	Made ground. Dark grey-brown silty clay. 5% flint, sub-angular, <1-5cm. Discontinuous. Overlies 504.	0.75-0.94 bgl
504	<i>Layer</i>	Made ground. Mixed layers of built up material from re-deposited chalk, occasional orange-brown sandy silt deposits. 8% stone and flint, sub-angular, <1-10cm. Compact. Not fully excavated.	0.94+ bgl

TRENCH 6			
Dimensions: 9.0x1.80m		Max. depth: 1.20m	Ground level: 93.50-93.69m aOD
Easting: 418030		Northing: 143754	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
601	<i>Layer</i>	Levelling layer. Type 1 stone.	0.00-0.16 bgl
602	<i>Layer</i>	Made ground. Mixed layers of built up material from re-deposited chalk, occasional orange-brown sandy silt deposits. 8% stone and flint, sub-angular, <1-12cm. Compact. Overlies 603.	0.16-0.30 bgl
603	<i>Layer</i>	Made ground. Mixed layers of built up material from re-deposited chalk and topsoil. 5% stone and flint, sub-angular, <1-8cm. Compact. Not fully excavated.	0.30+ bgl



APPENDIX 2: OASIS RECORD FORM

8.2 LADG 16, Larkhill, Wiltshire - Wessex Archaeology

OASIS ID - wessexar1-144092

Versions

View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	S Farr	s.farr@wessexarch.co.uk	19 February 2013

Completed sections in current version

Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

Validated sections in current version

Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1

File submission and form progress

Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s
Images submitted?	No	Image filename/s
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?



- Site outline
- Area of Watching brief
- Existing Car Park
- Building/area of disturbance



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Date:	30/10/12	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	1:20000 & 1:1250 @ A4	Illustrator:	SEJ
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Site location showing area of watching brief

Figure 1



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