

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Ref: 105472.01 March 2016



#### **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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March 2016

Document Ref: 105471.03 Planning Application Ref: 14/07652



#### **Quality Assurance**

Project Code	105471	Accession Code		Client Ref.	
Planning Application Ref.		Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	399845 172890	)	

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date	
v01	Е	Susan Clelland	RAP	Naces	29/03/2016	
File:	X:\PROJECTS\105472\_Reports\105472_Watching Brief Report.docx					
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#### **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

#### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wiltshire Council to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne, Wiltshire (NGR 399845 172890). The watching brief was undertaken between the 16<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 and comprised the archaeological monitoring of works associated with the excavation of a drainage network in the area of the new pitch, tree and hedge removal, the excavation of a re-routed drainage ditch and hedge line and the topsoil stripping of an All Weather Pitch.

The watching brief revealed the area of the proposed All Weather Pitch to have been landscaped as part of the construction of the extant grass pitch. No subsoil was present within this area and a level natural horizon was found to be overlain by a 0.2m thick topsoil and turf horizon. To the north of the designated pitch area the excavation of the re-routed drainage ditch revealed that a layer of re-deposited natural material had been laid over the modern topsoil horizon and was presumably derived from the levelling of the original grass pitch. This was overlain by the extant layer of topsoil and turf.

Topsoil stripping at the southern extent of the new All Weather Pitch revealed the remains of several shallow (0.05m deep max) north east to south west aligned furrows. Previous landscaping across the centre of the new pitch had truncated these features however the continuation of these furrows were noted within the sides of the new drainage ditch at the northern end of the site. A layer of modern detritus including plastic was also recorded in the centre of the new pitch. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed.



#### **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

#### **Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Richard Pearce (Corporate Building Manager, Wiltshire Council) acting on behalf of Wiltshire Council for commissioning the work. The help and assistance of and Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger (County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Archaeology Service) is duly acknowledged.

The watching brief was undertaken by Piotr Orczewski and Jamie McCarthy. This report was written by Susan Clelland and the report illustrations were prepared by Elizabeth James. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Ruth Panes who edited this report.



#### **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Wiltshire Council (WC) to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne, Wiltshire (NGR 399845 172890) in advance of the construction of an All Weather Pitch (AWP) at the Beversbrook Sports Facility (hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 The watching brief follows on from earlier programmes of archaeological investigation in advance of, and during the development of the Beversbrook Sports Facility.
- 1.1.3 An archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) was carried out for the Site in August 2014 (WA 2014), established the potential for archaeological interest within the Site.
- 1.1.4 The County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council advised that a watching brief should be maintained during groundwork on the site of the proposed works to discharge the archaeological planning condition (Condition 3) which has been levied against application 14/07652/FUL. The planning condition relating to the archaeological resource is as follows:

No development shall commence within the area until:

- A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site
  work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results,
  has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and
- The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

- 1.1.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared (WA 2015) and was submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in advance of the watching brief being carried out.
- 1.1.6 This document presents the results of the archaeological watching brief which was undertaken between 16<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016.

#### 1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site comprises an irregular parcel of land of approximately 1.4 hectares located on the northern edge of the town of Calne, Wiltshire.



- 1.2.2 The Site is currently occupied by the Beversbrook Sports Facility and is part of an area of land which houses a number of sports pitches, buildings, a storage facility, a car parking area and associated facilities.
- 1.2.3 The proposed AWP is located on existing sports pitches. This land appears to have been associated with widespread modifications of the local topography associated with an earlier phase of landscaping and levelling works (WA 2014).
- 1.2.4 A mature hedgerow runs from east to west across the northern extent of the Site. Part of the proposed works is to translocate this hedgerow and ditch to the north to allow for the construction of the AWP. A second hedgerow runs north-west to south-east to the eastern extent of the Site (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.5 An access road leads to the central car parking area from the A3102 Beversbrook Road, which runs south of the Site. A parcel of land occupied by allotments is located to the south. The surrounding areas to the north, east and west of the Site are largely undeveloped.
- 1.2.6 The natural topography of the local area slopes down gently from an elevation of approximately 74m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the northern extent of the Site to 73m aOD at the southern extent. Natural ground levels have been subject to widespread modification in order to provide level surfaces for the existing sports pitches.
- 1.2.7 The underlying bedrock geology throughout the Site is mapped as Jurassic mudstone of the Ampthill Clay Formation and the Kimmeridge Clay Formation, while Jurassic limestone of the Stanford Formation is recorded in the northern-western edge of the Site (British Geological Survey).

#### 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Previous Work

- 2.1.1 An DBA was carried out in 2014 by WA, to assess the known and potential heritage resource within the Site and the surrounding area, and to assess the likely impacts of the proposed development on this resource (WA 2014). The DBA identified the Site as lying within an area of known archaeological potential and established that there is an archaeological interest within the Site. This is defined as the potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains, in particular relating to evidence of Romano-British and medieval activity.
- 2.1.2 The results of the DBA anticipated that some elements of the development proposals would entail a negligible risk of directly impacting on any buried archaeological remains. However, due to ambiguity over the extent of disturbance associated with prior development, the presence, location and significance of any buried heritage assets within the proposed location of the new 3g synthetic sports pitch (the AWP) could not be confirmed on the basis of the available information at the time.
- 2.1.3 Previous archaeological investigations in advance of, and during the development of the Beversbrook Sports Facility mean that the archaeological potential within the site is relatively well understood. A comprehensive list of all previous phases of archaeological investigations is detailed in the 2014 DBA (WA 2014). Previous investigations comprise of evaluations, a strip, map and record investigation, excavations and watching briefs carried out between 2007 and 2014.



2.1.4 A previous evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology in 2007 (Saunders and Alexander 2011) excavated two trenches within the current Site boundary in the location of the proposed AWP (Trench 4 and Trench 8, **Figure 1**)). These trenches revealed a modern pond (Trench 4) and an undated ditch (Trench 8).

#### Summary

- 2.1.5 Previous archaeological investigations within and in close proximity to the Site have identified multi-period archaeological remains, particularly relating to Romano-British and medieval activities peripheral to, or associated with settlement (WA 2014).
- 2.1.6 Prior development of the Beversbrook Sports Facility has entailed widespread landscaping and alteration of the natural topography within the Site in order to provide levelled surfaces for sports pitches. These activities are likely to have resulted in truncation or disturbance of any buried archaeological remains. Thus the potential of archaeological remains within the Site is contingent on the extent to which earlier disturbance has impacted upon any such remains.

#### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 With due regard to the ClfA *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), the generic aims of the project are to:
  - clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site that may be disturbed by development;
  - identify, within the constraints of the investigation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the Site;
  - assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits; and
  - produce a report which will present the results of the fieldwork.

#### 3.2 Health and Safety

- 3.2.1 Health and safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices override archaeological considerations at all times.
- 3.2.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992*, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

#### 3.3 Best practice

3.3.1 The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and guidance: archaeological field evaluation (CIfA 2014a), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

#### 3.4 Fieldwork methodology

3.4.1 The full detailed methodology of the archaeological watching brief was set out in the agreed WSI (WA 2015). The work comprised:



- The installation of a new land drain system (Figure 1);
- The translocation of a hedge and ditch formation located at the northern extent of the Site (**Figure 1**) this work involved the excavation of a receptor trench to relocate the hedge and the excavation of a subsequent parallel trench for the relocated ditch; and
- The construction of a 6,618m<sup>2</sup> All Weather Pitch (AWP).

#### 4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief area comprised the monitoring of the machine topsoil stripping of a 6,618m² All Weather Pitch preceded by the machine excavation of a drainage grid, the removal and replanting of a hedge/tree line and the excavation of an associated re-routed drainage ditch (**Figure 1**).
- 4.1.2 Eleven drainage channels approximately 0.4m wide and 0.5m deep were excavated at regularly spaced intervals across the proposed All Weather Pitch creating a drainage network (**Figure 1** and **Plate 1**) with four manholes measuring between 1.5m² and 2.4m² and approximately 1.5m deep incorporated into the corners of this network. The drainage network was cited within an existing grassed sports pitch and a consistent stratigraphic sequence was observed throughout. No subsoil was present within this area and a level natural horizon was found to be overlain by a 0.2m thick topsoil and turf horizon.
- 4.1.3 The removal and reinstatement of an extant hedge/tree line was observed (**Figure 1** and **Plate 3**). No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the tree planting holes and excavation of the hedge for reinstatement did not exceed the depth of the extant topsoil.
- 4.1.4 To the north of the watching brief area the excavation of a re-routed drainage ditch (Figure 1 and Plate 2) was also monitored. The new ditch was approximately 1.1m wide and between 0.8m to 1m deep. A consistent stratigraphic sequence was recorded in the sides of the ditch along its length and comprised a c0.2m thick layer of mid to light yellow brown clay loam subsoil overlying the natural clay deposits. A 0.05m to 0.1m thick modern buried topsoil overlay the subsoil and was sealed by a c0.05m thick layer of re-deposited natural material likely to have derived from the levelling of adjacent grass pitch. This levelling layer was overlain by the extant 0.2m thick layer of topsoil and turf (Plate 4). Several shallow and irregular undulations within the top of the subsoil horizon were found to be filled with topsoil and are thought to represent furrows.
- 4.1.5 Topsoil was removed across the extent of the new All Weather Pitch (**Plate 5**) and the area levelled for the proposed pitch. Topsoil stripping in some areas did not remove all of the topsoil deposits. At the southern limit of this area the remains of several shallow (0.5m wide and 0.05m deep max) north-east to south-west aligned furrows were noted. Previous landscaping across the centre of the new pitch had truncated these features, however the continuation of these furrows were noted within the sides of the new drainage ditch at the northern end of the site. A layer of modern detritus including plastic was also recorded in the centre of the new pitch. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed.

#### 5 DISCUSSION

5.1.1 The watching brief revealed the area of the All Weather Pitch to have been landscaped as part of the construction of the extant grass pitch. No subsoil was present within this area and a level natural horizon was found to be overlain by a 0.2m thick topsoil and turf horizon. To the north of the designated pitch area the excavation of the re-routed drainage



- ditch revealed that a layer of re-deposited natural material had been laid over the modern topsoil horizon and was presumably derived from the levelling of the original grass pitch. This was overlain by the extant layer of topsoil and turf.
- 5.1.2 Topsoil stripping at the southern extent of the new All Weather Pitch revealed the remains of several shallow (0.05m deep max) north-east to south-west aligned furrows. Previous landscaping across the centre of the new pitch had truncated these features however the continuation of these furrows were noted within the sides of the new drainage ditch at the northern end of the site. A layer of modern detritus including plastic was also recorded in the centre of the new pitch. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed.

#### 6 STORAGE AND CURATION

#### 6.1 Archive

- 6.1.1 The project archive will be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum. Prior to deposition the archive will be temporarily stored at WA's offices in Salisbury under Site Code 105472. Deposition of the archive with the museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.
- 6.1.2 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records and digital images, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Wiltshire Heritage Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013). Details of the Site will, on completion of the full programme of archaeological works, be submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.
- 6.1.3 All archive elements will be marked with the site/ code **105472**, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:
  - 1 x A4 folder

#### 6.2 Copyright

6.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1988 with all rights reserved. Wiltshire Heritage Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights* regulations 2003

#### 6.3 Security copy

6.3.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

#### 7 REFERENCES

#### 7.1 Bibliography

British Geological Survey data available at <a href="http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/services/digmap50wms.html">http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/services/digmap50wms.html</a>



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#### 8 APPENDIX 1: OASIS RECORD

#### OASIS ID: wessexar1-247793

#### **Project details**

Project name Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief

Short description of the project

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wiltshire Council to carry out an archaeological watching brief at Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne, Wiltshire (NGR 399845 172890). The watching brief was undertaken between the 16th February and 3rd March 2016 and comprised the archaeological monitoring of works associated with the excavation of a drainage network in the area of the new pitch, tree and hedge removal, the excavation of a re-routed drainage ditch and hedge line and the topsoil stripping of an All Weather Pitch. The watching brief revealed the area of the proposed All Weather Pitch to have been landscaped as part of the construction of the extant grass pitch. Topsoil stripping at the southern extent of the new All Weather Pitch revealed the remains of several shallow (0.05m deep max) north east to south west aligned furrows. Previous landscaping across the centre of the new pitch had truncated these features however the continuation of these furrows were noted within the sides of the new drainage ditch at the northern end of the site. A layer of modern detritus including plastic was also recorded in the centre of the new pitch. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Project dates Start: 16-02-2016 End: 03-03-2016

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes

105472 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes

105471 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Other 14 - Recreational usage

Monument type FURROW Uncertain

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Planning condition

#### **Project location**

Country England

Site location WILTSHIRE NORTH WILTSHIRE CALNE Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne,

Wiltshire

Postcode SN11 9FL



Study area 1.4 Hectares

Site coordinates ST 399845 172890 50.951358060513 -2.854487501422 50 57 04 N 002 51 16

W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 73m Max: 74m

**Project creators** 

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology

Project brief originator

with advice from County Archaeologist

Project design originator

Wiltshire Council

Project

director/manager

**Ruth Panes** 

Project supervisor

Piotr Orczewski

Type of

Name of

County Council

sponsor/funding body

Wiltshire Council

sponsor/funding body

**Project archives** 

Physical Archive

Exists?

No

Digital Archive

recipient

Not yet transferred

Digital Archive ID

105472 "other"

Digital Media

**Digital Contents** 

available

"Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive

recipient

Not yet transferred

Paper Archive ID

105472

Paper Contents

"other"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet", "Map", "Notebook - Excavation', 'Research', 'General

Notes", "Plan", "Report"

**Project** bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type



Title Beversbrook Sports Facility, Calne: Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Author(s)/Editor(s) Wessex Archaeology

Other bibliographic

details

105472.03

Date 2016

Issuer or publisher Wessex Archaeology

Place of issue or

publication

Wessex Archaeology - Salisbury

Description A4 bound report

URL http://www.oasis.ac.uk

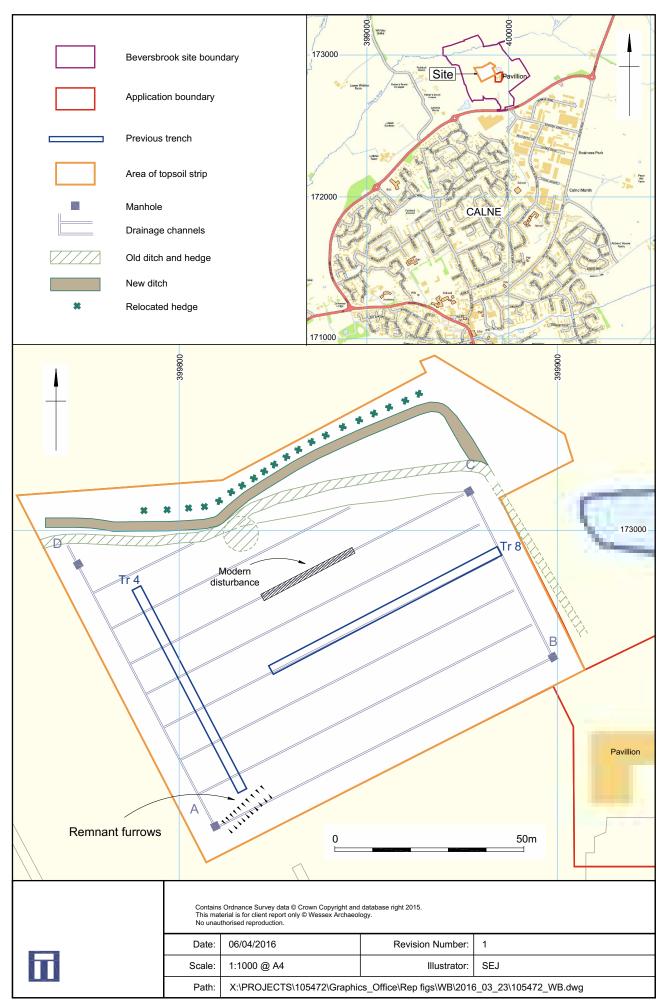




Plate 1: North west facing section of narrow drainage channel



Plate 2: View along new drainage ditch taken from the north east

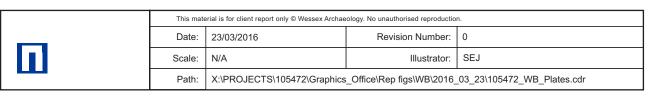




Plate 3: Machine excavation of new hedge line taken from the south east



Plate 4: New drainage trench showing stratigraphic sequence taken from the east

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Plate 5: Topsoil stripping of proposed sports pitch taken from the east

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