Cheam Day Centre Springclose Lane, Cheam, SM3 8PU

Archaeological Evaluation Report



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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation, commissioned by George H Austin (Builders) Ltd and carried out by Wessex Archaeology (London) prior to the redevelopment of land at the former Day Care Centre, Springclose Lane, Cheam, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 524350 163924.

The programme of works involved the excavation of three trenches, two measuring c. 12 x 2m and one measuring c.10 x 2m to a depth of between 0.70m and 1.20m below the present ground level and took place between 4^{th} and 9^{th} December 2008. The execution of the proposed fieldwork (Wessex Archaeology 69991.01) differed significantly to that outlined in the written scheme of investigation due to previous geotechnical investigation on the site and the presence of services.

The work was carried out as a means to discharge a pre-determination condition requested by GLAAS who are the archaeological advisors for the London Borough of Sutton.

The work was requested due to the Site's proximity to several known archaeological sites. The area immediately to the west of the Site is known to contain archaeological remains of Saxon and medieval date. A small portion of the Site lies within an area formerly part of the cemetery associated with St Dunstan's Church.

Drift geological deposits consisting of fine sandy silty clay gradually changing to sandier deposits to the north were encountered in all trenches at a depth of between 0.50m and 0.60m below ground level.

Aside from the geological strata all of the deposits observed throughout the evaluation are believed to date to the post-medieval period or due to the lack of dateable material are of unknown origin.

The principal feature on the site was a large post-medieval pit (111) found at the northern end of trench 1. The upper fill of this feature contained fragments of post-medieval roofing tile a dump deposit probably following either the demolition of a nearby building or the reproofing of a nearby building.

No other archaeological deposits or remains were uncovered and the report concludes that, aside from the post-medieval pit, nothing of archaeological significance will be impacted upon by the development.

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Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Rod Cornwell George H Austin (Builders) Ltd. Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Mr Cornwell (Austins) and his site staff for their assistance and co-operation on site.

Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Dianne Walls of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service for advice and monitoring the work.

The Site investigations were undertaken by Cornelius Barton who also with Peter Reeves co-compiled this report. Illustrations were prepared by Kitty Brandon.

The ceramic assemblage, pottery and tile, was studied by Lorraine Mepham, the two bone fragments from the site were analysed by Jackie McKinley, both Wessex Archaeology. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Peter Reeves.

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of Document

- 1.1.1 George H Austin (Builders) Ltd (the Client) commissioned Wessex Archaeology (London) to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Springclose Lane, Cheam, in the London Borough of Sutton (hereafter 'the Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 524350 163924 (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 This document presents the results of the trial trench evaluation which was completed on the 9th December 2008.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 The programme of archaeological work was undertaken in fulfilment of pre-planning determination works requested by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) to enable them to make an informed decision on the planning application on behalf of the London Borough of Sutton.
- 1.2.2 The condition was required due to the Site's proximity to several known archaeological sites and its location within an Archaeological Priority Area (Wessex Archaeology, 2008a, 2008b).
- 1.2.3 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology, 2008b ref 69991.01) and approved by Dianne Walls (GLAAS).

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 2.1.1 The Site area, centred on NGR 524350 163924, is bordered to the south by Church Farm Lane, to the east and north by existing developments, and to the west by St Dunstan's cemetery (**Figure 1**). The Site is located to the north of Cheam High Street.
- 2.1.2 The majority of the area of the Site available for evaluation is currently covered by hard standing and the existing former day Care Centre. A significant part of the southern area of the car park has been previously truncated by service runs.
- 2.1.3 The Site is artificially level and lies at a height of approximately 59m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).



2.1.4 The underlying geology within the Site has been identified as Clay, part of the Lambeth Group, overlying Thanet Sands (British Geographical Survey Sheet 270, 1998).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 A desk based archaeological assessment has been undertaken at this Site On behalf of the client by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 69990). The results of the assessment are summarised below.
- 3.1.2 No previous archaeological work has taken place on Site.
- 3.1.3 A number of archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic to Post-medieval periods have been found in the Cheam area.

Palaeolithic (500,000-10,000 BC)

3.1.4 No material from this period is known from the Site or its immediate surrounds.

Mesolithic (10,000-4,000 BC)

3.1.5 No material from this period is known from the Site or its immediate surrounds.

Neolithic (4,000-2,400 BC)

3.1.6 A mixed assemblage of struck and burnt flint thought to be Neolithic in date has been found 160 m to the south of the Site.

Bronze Age (2400-700 BC)

3.1.7 No material from this period has been found in the area.

Iron Age (700 BC-AD 43)

3.1.8 No Iron Age finds, deposits or structures have been found in the area.

Romano-British (AD 43-410)

3.1.9 A single Roman coin was found during the excavation of a grave in the adjacent cemetery in 1949, no other evidence for a Roman presence in Cheam has been recorded.

Saxon-Medieval (AD 410-1499)

- 3.1.10 A church is recorded as being founded in the 6th Century AD, a church, the remnants of which exist to the west of the site is also recorded in the Domesday Book (dated 1086). It is possible that the original cemetery associated with the early churches may extend into the proposed development area.
- 3.1.11 Previous archaeological investigations along Cheam High Street located c.160m to the south recorded significant medieval remains relating to the Surrey pottery industry dating to the 13th and 15th centuries.



- 3.1.12 A significant burial within a stone coffin, interred with coins and a pewter chalice has been recorded from the adjacent St Dunstan's churchyard.
- 3.1.13 Previous archaeological investigations along Cheam High Street located c.160m to the south recorded significant medieval remains relating to the Surrey pottery industry dating to the 13th and 15th centuries.

Post-medieval-modern (1499-present)

3.1.14 Until the post war period Cheam remained relatively undeveloped. The previously submitted desk based assessment (Wessex Archaeology report reference 69990) records a scattering of post-medieval pottery, animal and garden soils located during various archaeological investigations in the locality however the heart of post medieval settlement and associated activities is located to the west and along the High Street.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The aims of the evaluation were to:
 - To identify the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving archaeological remains found within the trenches.
 - In particular to determine whether elements of the Saxon church and/or the cemeteries that would have been associated with either this or the Norman church extend into the Site
 - To determine whether any archaeological structures or deposits relating to the medieval Surrey Ware pottery industry are present on the site
 - To determine where possible the level of truncation that the site has undergone through previous episodes of landscaping and hard surfacing areas of the Site.
 - To produce a report to present the project in sufficient detail to allow interpretation of the results without recourse to the project archive.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Methodological Standards

- 5.1.1 The evaluation and preparation of this report have been undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation document (WSI), which was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology, 2008b). This was approved by the GLAAS prior to commencement of the work.
- 5.1.2 All archaeological works were undertaken in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2001) and English Heritage's London Region *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* (1998).

5.2 Health and Safety

- 5.2.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 5.2.2 The work was undertaken in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislations, regulations and codes of practice which are in force.
- 5.2.3 A Risk Assessment was produced by Wessex Archaeology prior to the commencement of work. This was reviewed as the project progressed.
- 5.2.4 As part of the project briefing, all staff were made aware of their responsibilities and site specific hazards identified under the Risk Assessment.

5.3 Fieldwork

- 5.3.1 Three trenches (labelled Trench 1, combined Y shaped trench, and 2 in the site records and this report) were excavated using a tracked 5T excavator fitted with a toothless ditching or grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Areas of hard standing were removed with a breaker prior to the underlying deposits being excavated using a toothless bucket.
- 5.3.2 An additional three geotechnical test pits were previously excavated by Tweedie Evans Consulting totalling c. 9m.
- 5.3.3 Where safety restraints allowed all archaeological features and deposits were excavated and were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.
- 5.3.4 All spoil was visually scanned for finds.
- 5.3.5 A complete drawn record of all the trial trenches was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections).
- 5.3.6 The trenches were located by digital survey using a GPS system and tied in to the Ordnance Survey.
- 5.3.7 A photographic record was also compiled using colour slides, black and white and digital images.
- 5.3.8 The programme of work was monitored by the GLAAS. Upon completion of archaeological work the trenches were backfilled with the agreement of the GLAAS.
- 5.3.9 Excavated material was backfilled and levelled in the approximate order in which it was excavated. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was required.

5.4 Finds Collection and Retention

5.4.1 All Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

- (2001), the UK Institute of Conservators' Guidelines Conservation Guideline No 2 and the Museums and Galleries Commission's Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (1991), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 5.4.2 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date. No finds were, however, discarded without the prior approval of the GLAAS. In such circumstances, sufficient artefacts were retained in order to elucidate the date and/or function of the feature or deposit.

5.5 Environmental Sampling

5.5.1 A strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits was developed in consultation with Wessex Archaeology's environmental manager and was set out in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology, 2008b).

5.6 The Archive

- 5.6.1 The project archive, covering both phases of archaeological work, is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in London under the Wessex Archaeology project code WA 69991(MoL Code:SGX08).
- 5.6.2 The project archive will be 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).
- 5.6.3 The resulting archive will be put onto microfiche to the standards accepted by the National Monuments Record (NMR).
- 5.6.4 Following the conclusion of the project and with the permission of the landowner the archive will be prepared for deposition with an appropriate Museum.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The following section narrates the archaeological sequence on Site.
- 6.1.2 Context numbers are shown as bold in the text.
- 6.1.3 Trench 1 was aligned north west to south east along the edge of the grassy area and was excavated to a depth of 0.70m below the present ground level. Due to the restrictive nature of the area available for evaluation a second trench of similar length was cut leading to the east off the northern end of Trench 1. For ease of interpretation the two cuts are treated as a single unit. A third trench (labelled in this report Trench 2) was excavated at the east of Trench 1 to a depth of 0.50m below the present ground level (**Figure 2**).
- 6.1.4 Trench 2 is located on the southern edge of the Site and was aligned east to west.
- 6.1.5 The upper deposits recorded across the Site and in all trenches were fairly uniform in depth and makeup. Although the topsoil in trench 2 was completely absent. Within trench 2 the entire deposit sequence is made up of a series of made ground layers

- (201, 202 and 203). 201 and 202 contain builders rubble and appears to be very recent whereas 203 contains chalk rubble (identical to layer 102 in trench 1) and would appear to relate to an earlier terracing event. These deposits are illustrated in Section 4, Figure 3 and shown in Plate 2.
- 6.1.6 Within trench 1, both arms, the uppermost layer consisted of a fine homogeneous topsoil (100) with occasional small intrusive elements of coal, brick and roofing tile. The topsoil in turn overlay a deposit (101) that appears to represent a levelling up of the Site and was clearly observed in all sections of the trench (Section 1 and 3, Figure 3, Plates 1 and 4)

Geology

6.1.7 The deposits exposed in all trenches comprised a layer of reddish brown sandy clay (108, and 205) representing the upper facies of the drift geology underlying the Site. Patches of sub angular flint gravels were observed throughout. The upper surface of the geology was observed at a height of between 0.75m and 0.88m below the present ground level.

B-Horizon

6.1.8 The drift deposits were sealed by a variably disturbed B-Horizon (Subsoil) **103/204**. This was cut at the northern end of trench 1 by a large post-medieval pit (**111**).

Post-medieval Pit

6.1.9 Pit **111** is the only feature on Site to contain dateable artefacts. The pit was excavated to a depth of 0.96m and covered the width of the trench (2m). The upper fill of the pit (**116**) proved to be a dump ceramic roof tiles and chalk rubble of post-medieval date. The fill overlay **112**, a dark grey-brown sandy clay containing inclusions of flint gravel, brick and tile fragments (Section 3, **Figure 3** and **Plate 3**).

Other Features

- 6.1.10 A small sub rectangular feature (104) was excavated in the southern end of trench 1. The feature had a single fill (105) barely indistinguishable from the surrounding subsoil. The excavated section through this feature is shown in Section 1, Figure 3 and illustrated in Plate 1.
- 6.1.11 A small shallow sub-circular feature (106) was located to the north of 104. Again the single fill was very similar to the subsoil (103). The excavated section is illustrated as Section 2, Figure 3.
- 6.1.12 A small and shallow oval cut (**109**) was recorded at the juncture of the two parts of trench 1. The fill (**110**) was of a mid-grey brown coloured fine sandy silt.
- 6.1.13 Following the site monitoring visit Wessex Archaeology were requested to investigate two patches of material observed in the eastward arm of trench 1 (113 and 115, Figure 2). Both patches proved to be variations within the drift geology.

6.2 Finds

6.2.1 All material observed in the up cast from the excavations was of obvious post-medieval and modern origin. They were therefore noted and discarded.

- 6.2.2 A small quantity of finds was recovered, deriving from two contexts (**103** and **112**), and are of medieval or post-medieval date.
- 6.2.3 Two pieces of sheep bone and two sherds of early medieval coarse ware pottery were retrieved from the subsoil (**103**) during the cleaning of trench 1. The pottery is dated to the 11th/12th century. The bones represent the tibia and femur from immature sheep/goat.
- 6.2.4 Nine fragments of tile retrieved from (112) are dated to the late medieval or early post-medieval period. Three sherds of red post-medieval coarse ware were also identified from this deposit.

6.3 Environmental Sampling

6.3.1 Due to the absence of suitable deposits, no samples were taken for environmental analysis.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 Drift geology deposits, predominantly sandy clays (**108** and **205**), were observed in both trenches at a depth of 0.75m to 0.88m below the present ground level.
- 7.1.2 All of the deposits observed during the evaluation are considered to be post-medieval or modern in origin.
- 7.1.3 The Site at some point appears to have undergone terracing on a large scale. The event is chronicled in the archaeological record by **101** and **203**. Although a date for this event cannot be assigned it should be noted that the large pit (111) dated to the post-medieval period cuts this horizon. The cut relationship is illustrated in Section 3, **Figure 3** and in **Plate 4**.
- 7.1.4 The upper most fill of **111** (**116**) would appear to be a single event dump of building material representing either, the demolition of a nearby building or, the replacement of a roof on a nearby building. The fill of this feature also contained fragments of post-medieval pottery.
- 7.1.5 Other features found on site were inconclusive as to date and function.
- 7.1.6 Despite its location adjacent to the cemetery of St Dunstan's church no evidence of burials or isolated human remains were recorded throughout the course of the excavation.
- 7.1.7 No other archaeological deposits or remains were uncovered and the evaluation suggests that nothing of archaeological significance will be impacted upon by the construction of the development. The decision for any additional work lies with the GLAAS Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Sutton.

8 REFERENCES

English Heritage London Region (1998) *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3

Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) Standards and Guidance for Archaeological

Museum of London (2000), The archaeology of Greater London: An assessment of archaeological evidence for human prescience in the area now covered by Greater London

Weinreb, B and Hibbert, C (1983), The London Encyclopaedia

Wessex Archaeology (2008a) Former Day Care Centre, Cheam, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment. (Unpublished Report) Reference 69990

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9 APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLES

Trench 1

Direction: East - West

Dimensions: 12.37m x 1.80m (T-shaped trench see **Fig 1**) + 12.10m x 1.80m

Context No	Туре	Description	Interpretive keywords	Depth below present ground level
100	Layer	Mid grey-brown, loose homogeneous fine silty clay. Occasional small sub-rounded to well rounded, coal, brick, red roofing tile, and rubbish. Upper 50mm made up of turf grass rootlets	Topsoil. Cultivation	0.0-0.15m
101	Layer	Mixture of brick and chalk building rubble with 20 th century rubbish inclusions - made ground	Made ground	0.13 – 0.31m
102	Layer	Yellowish-brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions, building rubble and chalk fragments	B-horizon subsoil	0.31- 0.59m
103	Layer	Reddish-brown silty clay with <5% sub- angular flint gravel. As 102 but without intrusive material	Subsoil	0.59 -0.75m
104	Cut	Cut of sub-rectangular feature aligned e-w. Sides sloping c.45°, base concave, interface clear.	Pit/construction.	0.75 – 1.11m
105	Fill	Dark reddish brown silty clay with <10% sub-angular flint gravel. No finds. Interface with 103 (above) very diffuse.	Secondary fill of 104	0.75 – 1.11m
106	Cut	Small sub-circular cut. Shallow with single fill. Function unknown.	Construction	0.75 – 0.88m
107	Fill	Dark reddish-brown silty clay with <10% sub-angular flint gravel. No finds.	Use/disuse	0.75 – 0.88m
108	Layer	Dark reddish-brown sub-angular flint gravel with sandy clay patches	Natural	00.75m+
109	Cut	Small, sub-oval cut. Interface clear. Function unknown.	Cut/construction	0.75 – 0.86m
110	Layer	Mid grey-brown fine sandy silt	Secondary fill of 109	0.75 – 0.86m
111	Cut	Large cut at north end of trench. Full dimensions unknown. Fill contains dump of post-med tiles. Cut through 101 .	Construction	0 30– 0.96m+
112	Layer	Dark grey-brown sandy clay with flint gravel, tile and brick fragments	Backfill	0.30 – 0.96m+
113	Cut	Large, irregular feature- patch in natural	Natural	0.75m+
114	Layer	"fill" of 113	Natural	0.75m+
115	Cut	Large irregular feature- patch in natural	Natural	0.75m+
116	Layer	Dump of ceramic tiles and chalk rubble – upper fill of 111	Backfill	0.30 – 0.64m

⁽⁺⁾ Indicates deposit/feature not fully excavated

Trench 2

Direction: East - West

Dimensions: 9.35m x 1.80m

Context No	Туре	Description	Interpretive keywords	Depth below ground level	
200	Layer	Tarmac cap	Hard standing	0 – 0.10m	
201	Layer	Coarse, dark yellow builders sand	Made ground	0.10-0.20m	
202	Layer	Dark yellow-brown sandy clay with brick rubble and rubbish	Made ground	0.20– 0.30m	
203	Layer	Dark grey-brown clay with 60% chalk rubble	Made ground	0.30 – 0.42m	
204	Layer	Dark red-brown silty clay with <15% sub- angular flint gravel	Subsoil	0.42 – 0.88m	
205	Layer	Dark red brown sandy clay with flint gravel patches	Natural	0.88m+	

⁽⁺⁾ Indicates deposit/feature not fully excavated

10 APPENDIX 2 – WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY FINDS REPORT

69991/SGX08 SPRINGCLOSE LANE, CHEAM

FINDS

A small quantity of finds was recovered, deriving from two contexts (103 and 112). All finds are of medieval or post-medieval date.

Finds from subsoil layer **103** comprise two sherds of early medieval coarseware pottery, dated as late 11th/12th century (LCOAR); a fragment of plain clay tobacco pipe stem; and two sheep/goat bones (tibia and femur from immature individual(s)).

From layer **112** came three sherds of post-medieval coarse redware (PMR), and nine fragments of late medieval or early post-medieval ceramic roof (peg) tile.



Plate 1: Section 1 from east with 0.5m scale



Plate 2: north-west facing section in Trench 2 with 0.5m scale, showing chalk dump layer

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Plate 3: post-medieval pit 111 from north-east



Plate 4: east-facing section of pit 111 with 0.5m scale - shows pit cut through chalk dump layer

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