

**LAND SOUTH OF COWLEY MILL ROAD,
UXBRIDGE.**

NGR: TQ 05052 83006

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Quality Assurance

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Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Archaeological Evaluation

Site name: Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge
Site code: CMR12
Grid reference: TQ 05052 83006
Site activity: archaeological evaluation
Date of fieldwork: 5th and 6th March 2012
Site area: approximately 4 hectares
Project manager: Andrew Hood
Site supervisor: Andrew Hood
Archive location: LAARC
Accession code: to be advised

SUMMARY

Between 5th and 6th March 2012 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land south of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge (NGR: TQ 05052 83006). The project was commissioned by Waterman on behalf of Kier Group plc.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of four 20m evaluation trenches within a proposed development site.

The archaeological evaluation revealed natural gravel and shingle substrates at an average depth of 1.20m below Modern ground.

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the trenches.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period between *circa* AD 1500 and AD 1900.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43. Traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – *c.* 500,000 BC to *c.* 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – *c.* 12,000 BC to *c.* 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – *c.* 4,500 BC to *c.* 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – *c.* 2,000 BC to *c.* 700 BC; *Iron Age* – *c.* 700 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period between AD 43 and AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken between 5th and 6th March 2012 on land south of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge (NGR: TQ 05052 83006). The project was commissioned by Waterman on behalf of Kier Group plc.
- 1.2 The archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (2012), the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008) and GLAAS Archaeological Guidance Papers 3 (*Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London*), 4 (*Reports*), issued by English Heritage (2009).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site comprises a former gas works with associated yards and hardstanding areas, which have been cleared and remediated. Planning Appeal Decision **APP/R5510/A/01/1077460** of the Planning Inspectorate has allowed redevelopment of the site.
- 2.2 The study area is located on the western edge of the London Borough of Hillingdon and to the southwest of Uxbridge town centre. It is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 05052 83006 and covers an area of approximately four hectares. The site is bounded to the west by The Grand Union Canal and a Royal Mail sorting office, to the north by the gardens of houses fronting onto Cowley Mill Road, to the east by industrial units and woodland and to the south by Cowley Business Park.
- 2.3 The site topography is generally level, lying at around 30m OD. The study area is located within part of an unclassified urban area on the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW 1983), but land immediately to the west of the site occupies an area of chalky and gravelly river alluvium, with overlying soils of the Frome association which are shallow calcareous and non-calcareous loamy soils over flint gravel affected by groundwater. At the time of the fieldwork, the site surface comprised areas of made ground and dumped material, along with numerous large soil and rubble stockpiles.
- 2.4 The study area has been subject to an archaeological desk based assessment (CPM 2005). The assessment noted that there are no recorded archaeological sites or findspots within the site area. A number of Prehistoric sites and findspots, probably mainly relating to agricultural activity, have been previously observed in archaeological evaluations to the south and southeast, these were mainly in the form of ditches and a small number of worked flints. A possible Medieval or Post-medieval mill is also recorded to the north east of the site, although there is no evidence that any structure relating to this extended within the site. The two main foci for Medieval and Post-medieval settlement within the area were Uxbridge town centre, around a kilometre to the north east, and Cowley around 0.4km to the southeast.

- 2.5 Historic cartographic evidence indicates that the site was used as agricultural land from at least the early 19th century, when a part of it was enclosed. Later maps show that the northern part of the site has been subject to phases of industrial development, demolition and partial redevelopment during the past 150 years.
- 2.6 The southern part of the site has been utilised as a storage area and, therefore, it was noted that there was a greater potential for survival of archaeological remains in this part of the site.
- 2.7 The study area therefore contained the potential for the presence of archaeological remains, predominately dating to the Prehistoric, Medieval and Post-medieval periods. This did not prejudice the evaluation against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits, in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains. In turn, this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed works.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site and date these, where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site;
 - iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence, which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
 - iv) to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, four 20m by 1.8m trenches were excavated, as shown in Figure 2. Trench 1 was relocated due to the presence of services and Trench 3 was realigned in order to avoid excavating into a large soil and rubble stockpile.

- 4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of the archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved by the use of a tracked mechanical excavator, equipped with a toothless grading bucket, whilst under constant archaeological direction. Thereafter all additional investigation was conducted manually by archaeologists. All clay/soil patches were manually investigated in order to determine if they were of natural or archaeological origin.
- 4.3 Due to severe flooding and unstable sections, Trench 1 was excavated in segments; each segment was recorded and back-filled immediately, prior to further excavation of the trench. All amendments to the WSI methodology were agreed with Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage.
- 4.4 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 5.1 A full stratigraphic description of all the contexts identified in the course of the project is presented in Appendix 1, along with a copy of the OASIS form in Appendix 2. A summary discussion is given below.
- 5.2 Natural gravel, sand and shingle substrates were present at an average depth of 1.20m (29.60m AOD) below Modern ground. In Trenches 1, 2 and 4, the natural was directly overlaid by dumped Modern building detritus, which indicated that the areas around these trenches had previously been stripped. The occurrence of an alluvial clay subsoil in Trench 3 suggested that the area around this trench was relatively undisturbed. There was no evidence for extensive areas of reduced or truncated natural deposits, although significant Modern truncation was noted at the northern ends of Trenches 1 and 2.
- 5.3 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the trenches.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The archaeological works have indicated that natural substrates are present approximately 1.20m below Modern ground levels. The majority of the site had been previously stripped, although not necessarily extensively reduced. In light of the complete lack of archaeological finds or deposits within the trenches, the archaeological potential for the site is considered low.
- 6.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with LAARC. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

CPM. 2005. *Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*. Unpublished.

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Foundations Archaeology. 2012. *Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished.

Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Unpublished.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage, Richard Stockwell of Waterman, Aaron Webb of Kier Group plc and Kim Stabler of GLAAS for their assistance during the course of this project.

Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Data

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				Trench 1 = 20m by 1.8m; natural deposits at 29.72m OD (average).		
101	na	na	N end of tr: >1.8	Modern overburden; layered deposits of loose, mixed concrete rubble and tarmac, which contained frequent Modern	natural	na
			S end of tr: 1.0	detritus. Severe flooding encountered at approximately 1m below ground level. Deposit not penetrated at north end of trench. No archaeological finds or features were present within the trench.		
				Natural = dark grey (stained) gravel and shingle.		
				Trench 2 = 20m by 1.8m; natural deposits at 29.62m OD (average).		
201	na	na	NE end of tr: 1.7	Modern overburden; mixed brick, concrete, tarmac and hard core fragments, which contained frequent Modern	natural	na
			SW end of tr: 1.2	detritus. No archaeological finds or features were present within the trench.		
				Natural = light orange gravel with occasional clay patches.		
				Trench 3 = 20m by 1.8m; natural deposits at 29.40m OD (average).		
301	na	na	SE end of tr: 0.43	Modern overburden; layered concrete and tarmac rubble.	302	na
			NW end of tr: 0.67			
302	na	na	SE end of tr: 0.62	Beige brown alluvial silt clay, which contained frequent shell fragments.	natural	301
			NW end of tr: 0.32	No archaeological finds or features were present within the trench.		
				Natural = beige gravel, sand and shingle.		
				Trench 4 = 20m by 1.8m; natural deposits at 29.64m OD (average).		
401	na	na	W end of tr: 1.09	Layered, Modern construction debris, which included concrete, metal and plastic.	natural	na
			E end of tr: 0.72	No archaeological finds or features were present within the trench.		
				Natural = light orange gravel and sand.		

APPENDIX 2: OASIS Form

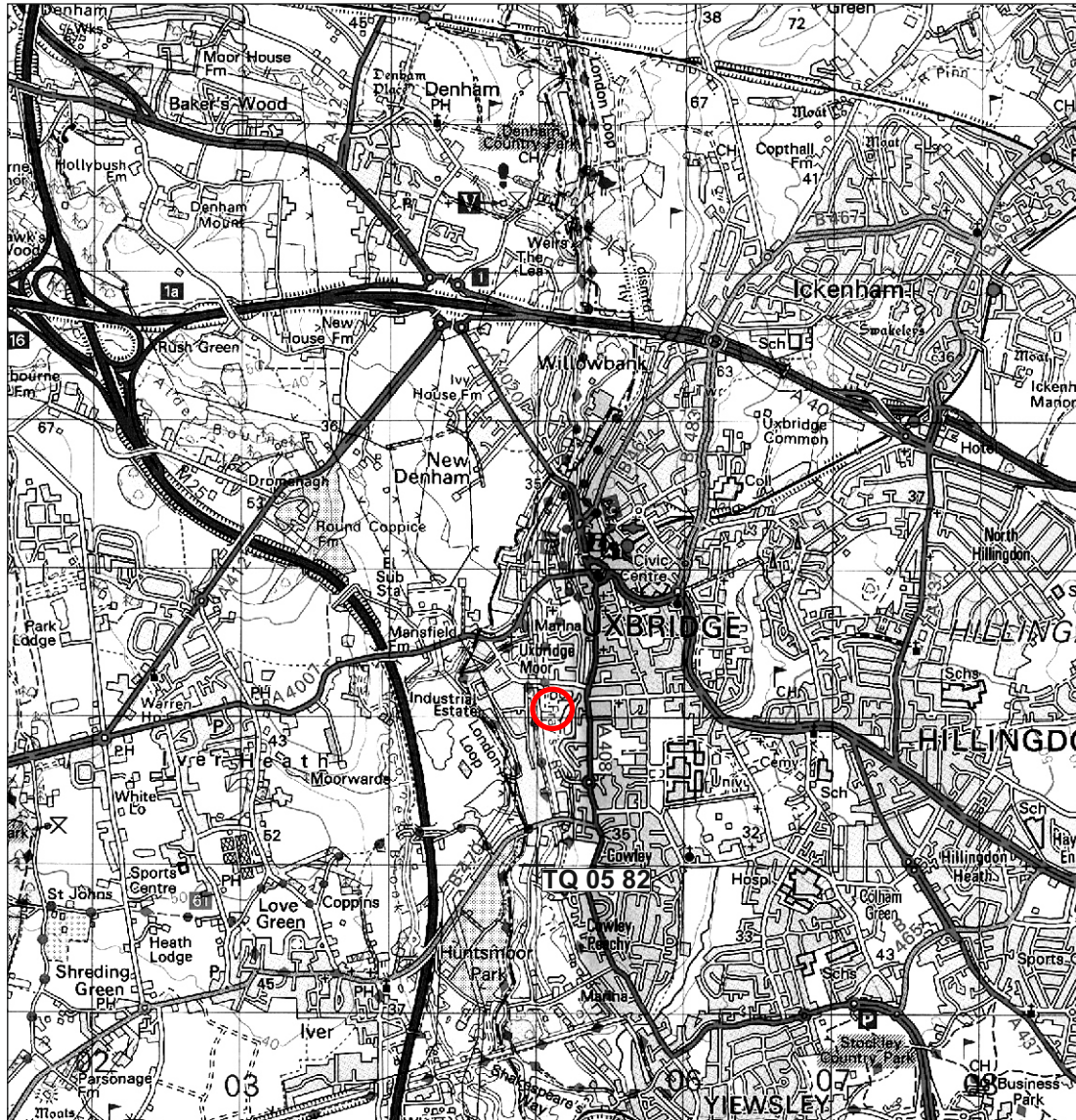
OASIS ID: foundati1-120544

Project details

Project name	Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of four 20m evaluation trenches within a proposed development site. The evaluation revealed natural gravel and shingle substrates at an average depth of 1.20m below Modern ground. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the trenches.
Project dates	Start: 05-03-2012 End: 06-03-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	CMR12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HILLINGDON UXBRIDGE Land South of Cowley Mill Road
Study area	4.00 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 05052 83006 51.5356851046 -0.485191450563 51 32 08 N 000 29 06 W Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Foundations Archaeology

Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Archaeological Evaluation

Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Foundations Archaeology
Project director/manager	Andrew Hood
Project supervisor	Andrew Hood
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report'
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land South of Cowley Mill Road, Uxbridge: Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hood, A.
Other bibliographic details	Report No. 785
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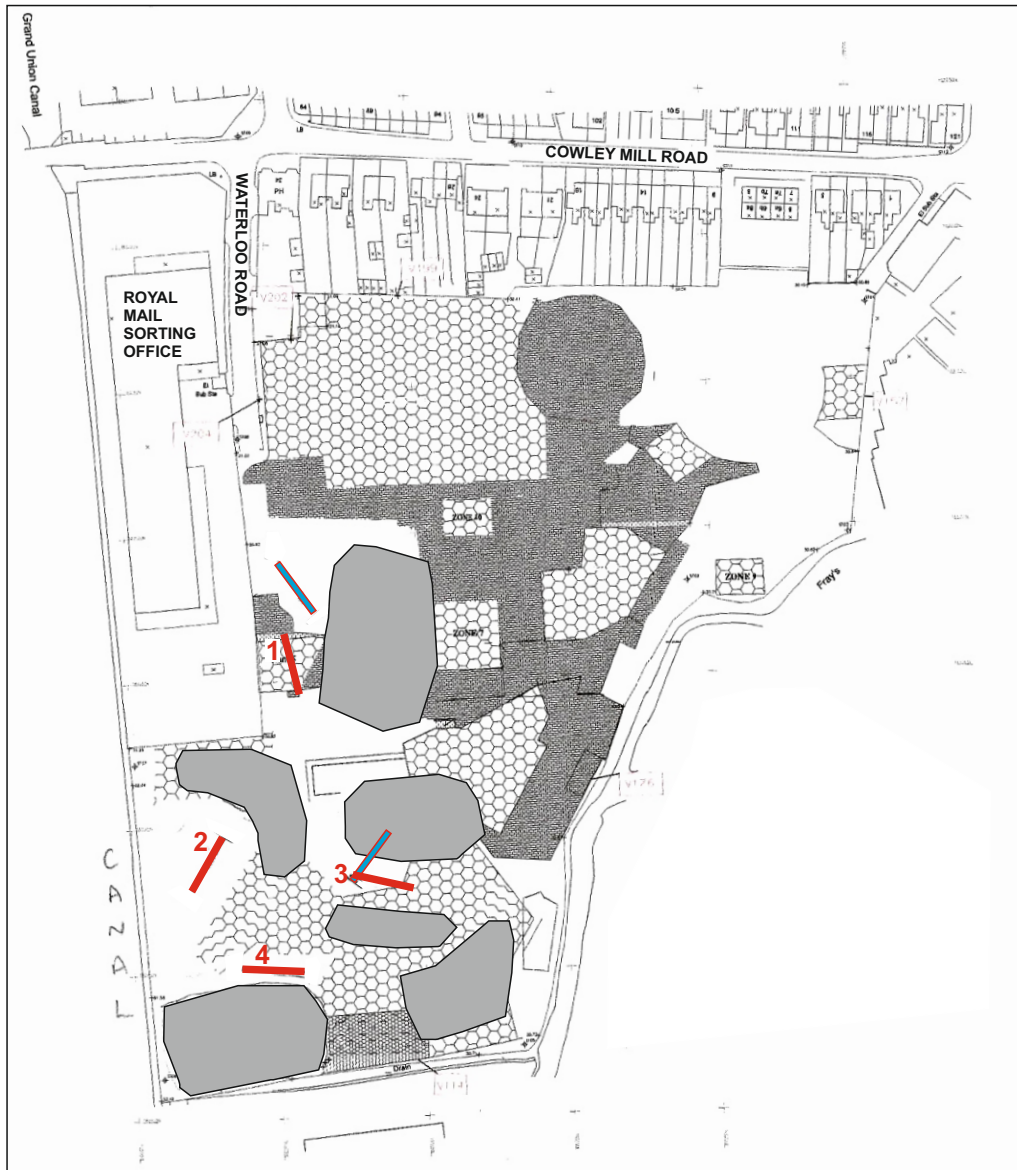





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Site Code: CMR12

Accession Code:

FIGURE 1: Site Location



-  = PROPOSED TRENCH LOCATION
-  = ACTUAL TRENCH LOCATION
-  = APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF STOCKPILE SOIL

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Site Code: CMR12
Accession Code:

N

0m 100m

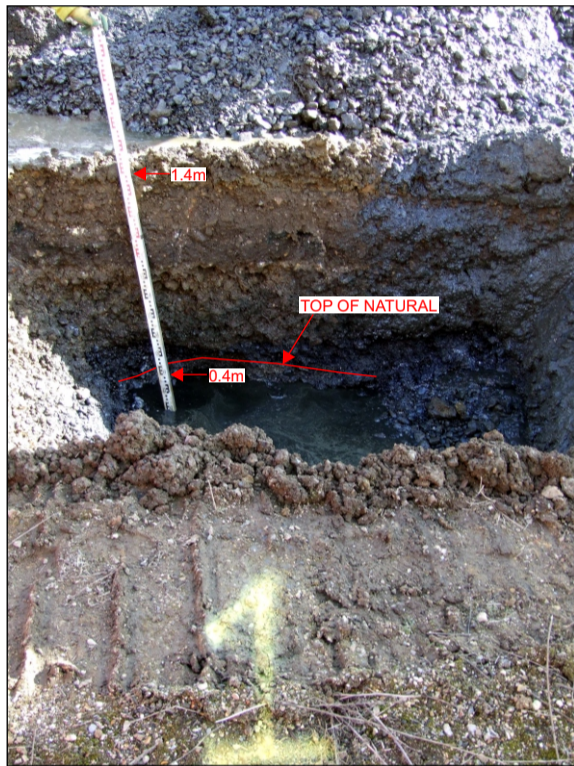
FIGURE 2: Site Plan



TRENCH 1: EXCAVATION INTO (101) AT THE NORTH END OF THE TRENCH



TRENCH 1: FLOODING DURING EXCAVATION



TRENCH 1: TOP OF NATURAL GRAVELS OVERLAID BY (101) AT SOUTH END OF TRENCH



TRENCH 2: LOOKING NORTHEAST
HORIZONTAL (digital) SCALE TOTALS 1m, VERTICAL SCALE TOTALS 2m



TRENCH 3: LOOKING NORTHWEST
HORIZONTAL (digital) SCALE TOTALS 1m, VERTICAL SCALE TOTALS 2m



TRENCH 4: LOOKING EAST
HORIZONTAL (digital) SCALE TOTALS 1m, VERTICAL SCALE TOTALS 2m