

**LAND AT MANOR ROAD,
SWINDON,
WILTSHIRE.**

NGR: SU 1397 8419

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

July 2012
Report No. 810

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Foundations Archaeology on land at Manor Road, Swindon, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 1397 8419).

The archaeological works comprised the monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of a new residential development.

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the investigated area.

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.

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, in this case Kimmeridge Clay.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period from *circa* AD 1500 onwards.

Romano-British

Term used to define the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated AD 43 to *circa* AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between the 12th December 2011 and 16th February 2012, Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at Manor Road, Swindon, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 1397 8419). The work was commissioned by Mansell Partnership Planning.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2011). The WSI was based upon the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief and conforms to the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage, 2006).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (S/09/0928/TB) has been granted for the construction of 22 residential units with associated car parking and landscaped areas on land at Manor Road, Swindon (Figures 1 and 2).
- 2.2 The study area is situated in the Westcot area of Swindon, at a height of approximately 121m AOD. The solid geology of the study area comprises Kimmeridge Clay.
- 2.3 The site lies in an area where little archaeological investigation has previously been undertaken. It is known that the Medieval settlement of Westcote lies somewhere in the vicinity of the site area, although its precise location has never been ascertained. Westcot formed part of the earlier settlement of Nethercote, which was divided into Westcot and Eastcot in the mid-13th century and recombined in AD 1414.
- 2.4 The study area therefore contained the potential for archaeological finds, predominantly dating to the Medieval period. This did not prejudice the watching brief against the recovery of data relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief 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; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. 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 to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives, as stated in the WSI:

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 The monitored groundworks comprised the excavation of foundation and service trenches, along with limited areas of mechanical stripping.

4.2 All excavation was undertaken, under constant archaeological observation, by use of a mechanical excavator, which was equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Where potential archaeological features or deposits were present, they were manually investigated and, if necessary, recorded in accordance with the WSI. Spoil tips were scanned for unstratified finds. Any recovered archaeological artefacts were allocated a context reference number and retained. Modern artefacts were noted and discarded.

5 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 A detailed description of the deposits present within the foundation trenches is given in Appendix 1. The deposits encountered during the monitoring of the service trenches and mechanical stripping were essentially the same as those within the foundations and are, therefore, detailed in the site archive only.

5.2 The stratigraphic sequence comprised Modern tarmac/rubble deposits situated over made-ground, buried topsoils/subsoils or natural Kimmeridge clays. Frequent flooding occurred within the foundation and service trenches, and numerous discoloured and mottled clay deposits indicated that the site had potentially been subjected to flooding/waterlogging for a considerable period of time.

- 5.3 No archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the monitored areas.
- 5.4 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Swindon Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local archaeological journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire County Council and Ron Rouse of Mansell Partnership Housing for their help during the course of this project.

Appendix 1: Foundation Trench Stratigraphic Data

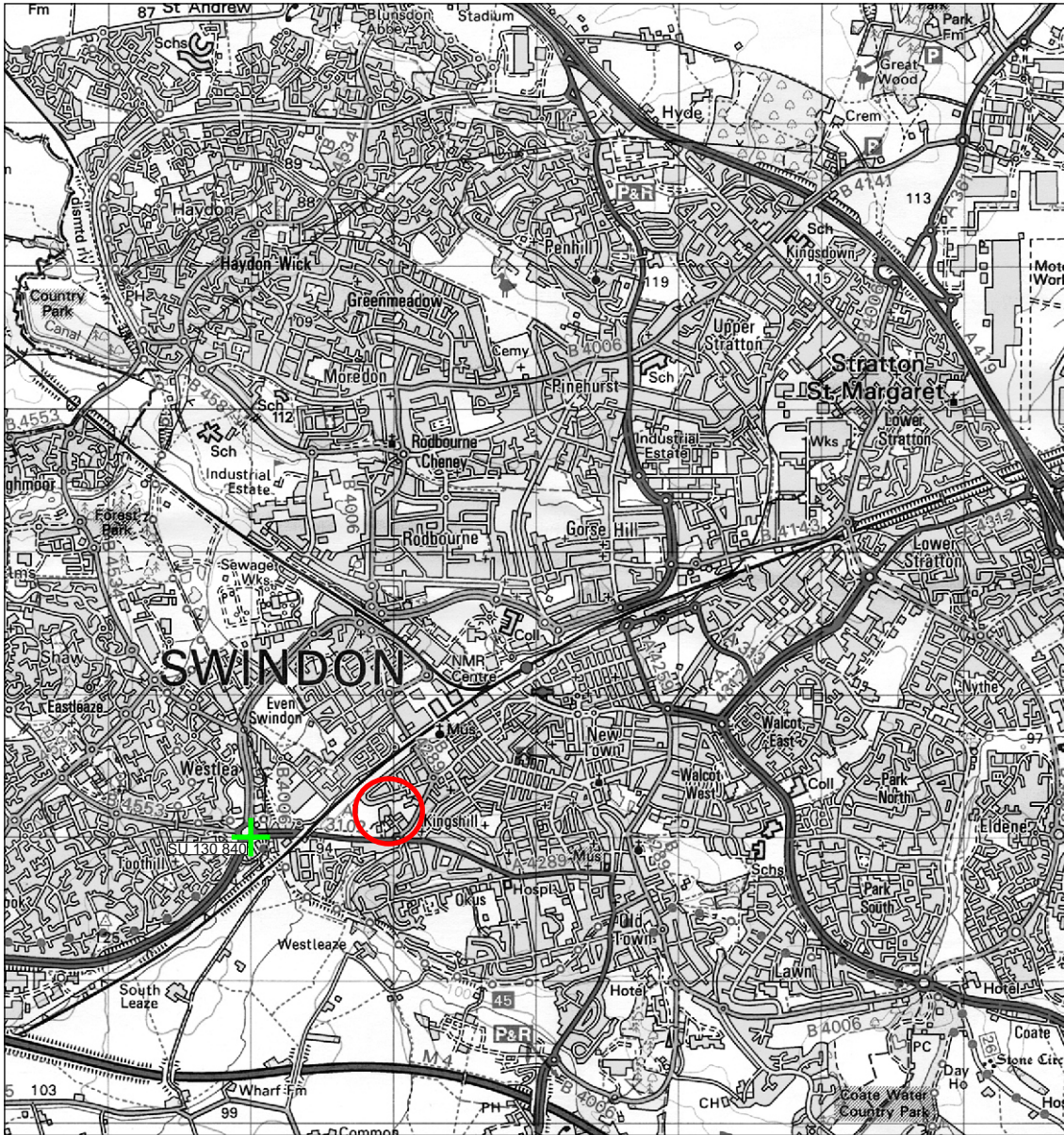
CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				PLOTS 1, 2 and 3 - footings 0.60m wide.		
1001	na	na	0.05	Made ground; mid brown clay silt, which contained frequent brick rubble.	1002	1005
1002	na	na	0.2	Dark brown-black clay silt, which contained occasional brick fragments.	1003	1001
1003	na	na	0.25	Blue-grey clay.	1004	1002
1004	na	na	>0.50	Orange-blue clay.	na	1003
1005	na	na	0.06	Tarmac. Removed prior to arrival on site.	1001	na
				No archaeological deposits or finds present.		
				PLOTS 4, 5 and 6 - footings 0.60m - 0.80m wide.		
1006	na	na	0.25	Brick, soil and concrete rubble.	1007	na
1007	na	na	0.2	Brown-black sand silt, which contained frequent roots.	1008	1006
1008	na	na	0.15	Yellow clay.	1009	1007
1009	na	na	0.15	Mottled grey-brown clay silt, which contained occasional charcoal flecks, occasional limestone fragments and occasional CBM flecks.	1010	1008
1010	na	na	0.3	Grey plastic clay, which contained occasional limestone fragments and occasional CBM fragments.	1011	1009
1011	na	na	>0.95	Plastic grey-brown clay.	na	1010
				No archaeological deposits or finds present.		

Land at Manor Road, Swindon, Wiltshire: Archaeological Watching Brief

CXT	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	DESCRIPTION	CUTS/LATER THAN	CUT BY/EARLIER THAN
				PLOTS 7 and 8 - footings 0.60m - 0.80m wide.		
1012	na	na	0.4	Concrete rubble.	1013	na
1013	na	na	0.5	Brown-black sand silt, which contained frequent roots.	1020, 1018	1012
1014	na	na	0.15	Mottled grey-brown clay. Occurred intermittently.	1015	1020
1015	na	na	0.5	Light brown-grey clay.	1016	1014, 1019
1016	na	na	0.6	Light grey clay.	1017	1015
1017	na	na	>0.50	Dark grey-black clay.	na	1016
1018	na	na	0.1	Mid brown loam. Occurred intermittently.	1019	1013
1019	na	na	0.15	Brown clay silt. Occurred intermittently.	1015	1018
1020	na	na	0.4	Blue-grey clay. Occurred intermittently.	1014	1013
				No archaeological deposits or finds present.		
				PLOTS 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 - footings 0.80m wide.		
1021	na	na	0.2	Concrete rubble.	1022	na
1022	na	na	0.3	Yellow pea-gravel.	1023	1021
1023	na	na	2.2	Dark grey-black clay.	1024	1022
1024	na	na	>0.60	Dark grey clay.	na	1023
				No archaeological deposits or finds present.		
				PLOTS 13 and 15 to 22 - footings 0.60m wide.		
1025	na	na	0.5	Concrete rubble.	1026	na
1026	na	na	>0.90	Green-blue clay.	na	1025
				No archaeological deposits or finds present.		

Appendix 2: Site Attendance Log

12 th Dec 2011	0825 – 0845	Jack Crennell
14 th Dec 2011	0830 – 1600	Jack Crennell
15 th Dec 2011	0825 – 1230	Jack Crennell
9 th Jan 2012	0930 – 1200	Diana King
10 th Jan 2012	0830 – 1540	Jack Crennell
11 th Jan 2012	0840 – 1525	Diana King
12 th Jan 2012	0830 – 1555	Hayley Nicholls
13 th Jan 2012	0840 – 1415	Hayley Nicholls
16 th Jan 2012	0900 – 1630	Andrew Hood/Hayley Nicholls
7 th Feb 2012	1100 – 1600	Hayley Nicholls
8 th Feb 2012	0830 – 1600	Hayley Nicholls
9 th Feb 2012	0830 – 1600	Hayley Nicholls
10 th Feb 2012	0830 – 0930	Hayley Nicholls
13 th Feb 2012	0830 – 1600	Phillip Matthews
14 th Feb 2012	1220 – 1600	Phillip Matthews
15 th Feb 2012	0800 – 0930	Phillip Matthews
16 th Feb 2012	0800 – 1200	Phillip Matthews



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Site Code: MRS11
Accession Code:
FIGURE 1: Site Location



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 Reproduced under licence AL523064A
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N

0m 20m

APPROXIMATE SCALE

FIGURE 2: Site Plan