

**60 GRANVILLE ROAD,
READING,
BERKSHIRE.**

NGR: SU 684 721

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Report No. 901

July 2013



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Quality Assurance

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GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purposes 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 *c.* 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.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period after *c.* AD 1500.

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.* 800 BC; *Iron Age* – *c.* 800 BC to AD 43.

Roman

The period traditionally dated AD 43 to *c.* AD 410.

Saxon

The period between *c.* AD 410 and AD 1066.

SUMMARY

In June 2013 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at 60 Granville Road, Reading, Berkshire (NGR: SU 684 721). The project was commissioned by Feltham Construction Ltd.

The project comprised the excavation and recording of four trenches within a proposed development area.

The archaeological works revealed a probable late Neolithic/early Bronze Age shaft-like pit within the southern part of the evaluated area, as well as a possibly related soil deposit. The shaft-like pit is directly comparable with features previously identified at the former Happy Prospect Public House, located approximately 450m to the southeast.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2013 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at 60 Granville Road, Reading, Berkshire (NGR: SU 684 721). The project was commissioned by Feltham Construction Ltd.
- 1.2 In accordance with the principles of NPPF12 (National Planning Policy Framework 2012) and the archaeological policies of Reading Borough Council, a programme of archaeological evaluation was required prior to development.
- 1.3 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Foundations Archaeology 2013), in accordance with a Brief issued by Ben Jervis of Berkshire Archaeology (29/01/2013). The Written Scheme of Investigation has been guided in its composition by the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (rev. 2008) and General Standards for Fieldwork Projects (Berkshire Archaeology n.d.).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It is proposed to undertake development works on land at 60 Granville Road, Reading, Berkshire (Planning Reference: 12/01248/FUL). The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 30 new homes with associated car parking and landscaping.
- 2.2 The site covered an area of approximately 0.44ha and was occupied, at the time of the fieldwork, by a derelict former residential building and areas of hard landscaping.
- 2.3 The underlying geology comprised *Lambeth Group*: clay, silt and sand.
- 2.4 The Berkshire Historic Environment Record has identified the site as being within an area of archaeological potential: A stray Palaeolithic hand-axe has been recorded from the corner of Appleford Road, approximately 300m west of the site. Prehistoric tools have been recovered from a site on Circuit Lane and Iron Age features have been excavated at Blessed Hugh Farringdon Roman Catholic School and on the Southcote House Estate.
- 2.5 A possible Iron Age or Roman flint-capped road surface has been identified at the junction of Southcote Lane and Circuit Lane and further Roman finds, including pottery and coins, have been recovered within 750m of the site.
- 2.6 Evidence for later activity is less abundant; however, a Saxon cremation burial has been excavated, approximately 1km east of the site, between Southcote Lane and Southcote Farm Lane. The site is located approximately 800m northwest of the 13th century occupation complex known as Southcote Manor.

- 2.7 The site therefore contained the potential for the presence of archaeological remains, predominately associated with the Iron Age and Roman periods. This did not prejudice the evaluation against evidence 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 location, date, character, extent, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains in order to provide mitigation through preservation by record. The evaluation also sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions, as well as to assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and surviving structures of archaeological significance.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i/ to determine the existence or absence of archaeological remains and, should these be present, to assess their general nature and significance;
 - ii/ to determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
 - iii/ to determine or confirm the approximate extent of the remains;
 - iv/ to determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains;
 - v/ to determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and /or vertical stratigraphy present;
 - vi/ to assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered, with reference to the historic landscape;
 - vii/ to determine the implications of the remains, with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity;
 - viii/ to determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present;
 - ix/ to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeo-environmental, geo-archaeological and/or economic evidence;
 - x/ to determine whether there is evidence relating to the Iron Age and Roman periods and, if present, establish its relationship to other remains of this date in the area. Interpretations should address themes outlined in the relevant sections of the Solent Thames Research Framework.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 In accordance with the WSI, a total of four evaluation trenches were excavated within the site. Due to space constraints and the presence of services, it was necessary to amend the locations and dimensions of the trenches, as shown in Figure 2.
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed to the top of archaeological deposits or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first, by use of a JCB type excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket, whilst under constant archaeological direction.
- 4.3 The southern part of Trench 2 was trowel cleaned in order to define archaeological deposits.
- 4.4 All subsequent hand excavation was undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI. In summary; a 20% sample of linear features and a 50% sample of discrete features were excavated. Where features were partially present within a trench, or were part of a potentially complex series of deposits, these were recorded in plan only, in order to allow any further investigation to be conducted under conditions pertaining to archaeological excavation. Feature [202] was not fully excavated, due to health and safety constraints.
- 4.5 All recording of archaeological features was undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in the WSI.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 5.1 A full description of all contexts identified during the course of the project is presented in Appendix 1. A summary discussion is given below:
- 5.2 The natural substrates were encountered at an average height of 50.46m OD (0.37m below Modern ground) at the northwest of the site and 49.30m OD (0.84m below Modern ground) to the south and east. There was no evidence for significant truncation, outside of the footprint of the extant buildings and, as such, the height differential of the natural deposits was most likely representative of natural slope.
- 5.3 The overburden varied across the site, with trenches containing a mixture of topsoil, subsoils and Modern dumped deposits.
- 5.4 The only archaeological features present within the evaluation trenches comprised a pit [202], a soil deposit (205) and a patch of clay sand (206); all of which were located at the southern end of Trench 2.
- 5.5 Feature [202] consisted of a shaft-like pit, which was cut into the top of the natural clay sand and was sealed directly beneath the Modern topsoil (Figures

- 3 and 4 - Photo A). The feature contained a small amount of Bronze Age pottery and a few probable struck flints.
- 5.6 Pit [202] was similar to, and most likely broadly contemporary with, late Neolithic/early Bronze Age shaft-like pits recently excavated at the former Happy Prospect Public House, Coronation Square, which were located approximately 450m to the southeast of the current site (Foundations Archaeology, report forthcoming; see Figure 4 - Photo B this report).
- 5.7 Soil deposit (205) occurred immediately to the east of pit [202], was similar to the upper fill (204) of the pit and possibly represented either a continuation of the pit, or an associated feature.
- 5.8 Clay sand patch (206) was relatively bright and totally devoid of artefacts or charcoal flecks and probably represented a natural feature.
- 5.9 Trenches 1, 3 and 4 were devoid of archaeological features; although, a few crumbs of possible Prehistoric pottery were recovered from soil layer (304) within Trench 3. No evidence was recovered for Iron Age or Roman activity.
- 5.10 The archaeological evaluation had identified a probable late Neolithic/early Bronze Age shaft-like pit within the southern part of the evaluated area. This is directly comparable with features previously identified at the former Happy Prospect Public House, located to the southeast.
- 5.11 The function of the shaft-like pits at both Happy Prospect and the current site is presently unclear; however, their occurrence at two sites over 400m apart indicates that they may represent a potentially highly specialised and significant phenomenon in this general part of Reading and other examples may be expected in the vicinity. Any further investigation of these features should include a specific research aim to elucidate their function and extent as a matter of priority.
- 5.12 The archaeological works have indicated that the southern part of the site has a high archaeological potential, whilst the potential for the remainder of the site may be considered as moderate.
- 5.13 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

6 BILIOGRAPHY

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7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1 – STRATIGRAPHIC DATA

Context	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	Description	Later than	Earlier than
				TRENCH 1; 10.5m long by 1.5m wide.		
				Natural (at average 50.46m OD) = orange beige sand, gravel and clay.		
101	na	na	0.2	Topsoil; dark brown friable clay sand.	102	na
102	na	na	0.17	Subsoil; dark brown friable clay sand, which contained frequent chalk lumps, occasional CBM fragments and occasional charcoal flecks.	nat.	101
				No archaeological finds or features were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 2; 20m long by 1.8m wide.		
				Natural (at average 49.22m OD) = orange beige sand, gravel and clay.		
201	na	na	0.34	Topsoil; dark brown friable clay sand.	207	na
[202]	1.7	1.5	>1.15	Sub-circular pit with steep sloping sides, which descended to a near vertical profile. Not fully excavated. Contained fills 203 and 204.	nat.	203
203	?	0.61	0.38	Fill of pit [202]; mid grey clay sand, which contained occasional flint, rare charcoal flecks and a probable struck flint.	[202]	204
204	1.48	0.5	0.85	Fill of pit [202]; mid orange brown soft clay sand, which contained occasional flint and occasional charcoal flecks and lumps, along with five possible struck flints and five small sherds/crumbs of Bronze Age pottery.	203	201
205	0.8	0.65	?	Deposit of mid orange brown soft clay sand, which contained occasional charcoal flecks. The deposit was situated to the east of pit [202] and was similar to fill 204. Not excavated.	?	201
206	0.57	0.38	?	Patch of bright orange brown clay sand. The deposit was devoid of charcoal or other inclusions and probably represented a natural feature. Not excavated.	?	201
207	na	9	0.61	Layer of Modern construction detritus; only occurred in the northern half of the trench and dissipated to the south.	nat.	201

Context	L(m)	W(m)	D(m)	Description	Later than	Earlier than
				TRENCH 3; 14m long by 1.8m wide.		
				Natural (at average 49.21m OD) = orange beige sand, gravel and chalk/clay.		
301	na	na	0.2	Topsoil; dark brown friable clay sand.	302	na
302	na	na	0.3	Layer of Modern soil, brick and clinker.	303	301
303	na	na	0.33	Dark brown clay sand, which contained occasional CBM	304	302
304	na	na	0.17	Mid orange brown mottled clay sand, which contained four small crumbs of possible Prehistoric pottery.	305	303
305	na	6	0.28	Layer of mid brown clay sand, which contained frequent chalk lumps.	nat.	304
				The layer only occurred at the south end of the trench for a distance of 6m and dissipated to the north.		
				No archaeological features were present within the trench.		
				TRENCH 4; 24m long by 1.8m wide.		
				Natural (at average 49.45m OD) = orange beige sand, gravel and chalk/clay.		
401	na	na	0.22	Topsoil; dark brown friable clay sand, which contained frequent Modern artefacts.	402	na
402	na	na	0.14	Light brown clay sand.	403	401
403	na	na	0.14	Mid brown clay sand, which contained frequent CBM fragments and frequent charcoal flecks.	404	402
404	na	na	0.24	Light brown clay sand.	nat.	403
				No archaeological features were present within the trench.		



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Site Code: GRR13
Accession Code:
FIGURE 1: Site Location



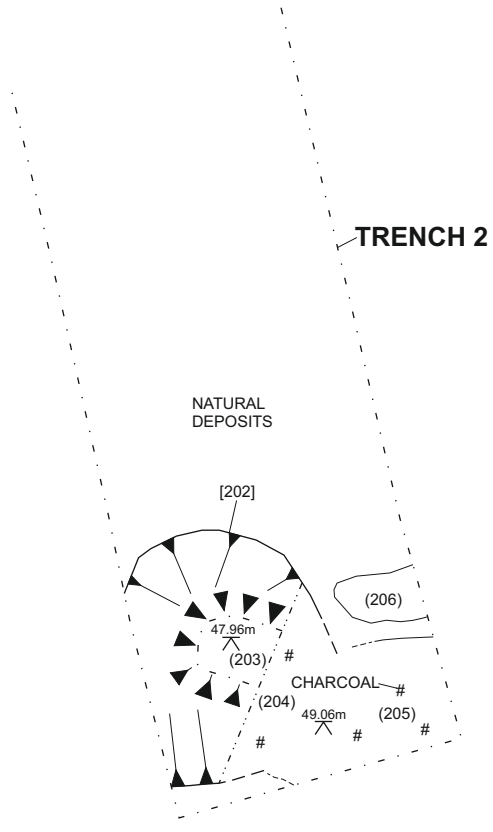
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Site Code: GRR13
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N

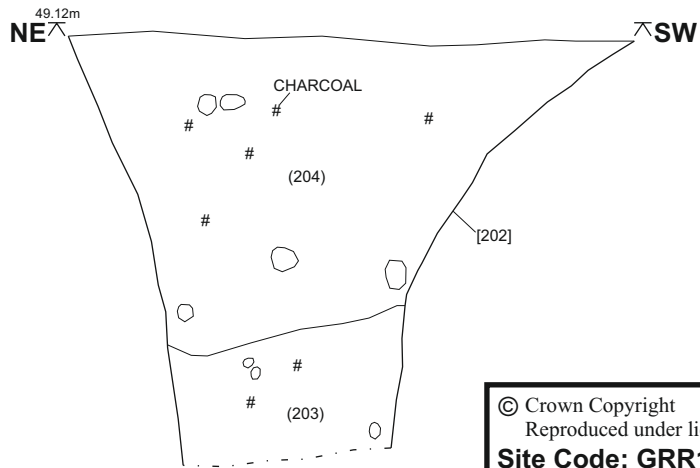
10m 20m

= PROPOSED TRENCH LOCATIONS
 = ACTUAL TRENCH LOCATIONS

FIGURE 2: Indicative Plan of Trench Locations



NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [202]



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N

0m 2m

PLAN

0m 1m

SECTION

FIGURE 3: Trench 2 Plan and Section

Detailed description: This block contains a copyright notice, site information, a north arrow, and two scale bars. The north arrow is a simple arrow pointing upwards, labeled 'N'. Below it are two scale bars. The first scale bar is labeled 'PLAN' and has markings for 0m and 2m. The second scale bar is labeled 'SECTION' and has markings for 0m and 1m. The entire block is enclosed in a black border.



PHOTO A: 60 GRANVILLE ROAD (GRR13): PIT [202] LOOKING SOUTHEAST



PHOTO B: HAPPY PROSPECT STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE (HPR12sms): PIT [1030] LOOKING NORTHWEST

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FIGURE 4: Feature Photographs