

**DEVELOPMENT ACCESS ROAD
BLUE MOUNTAIN GOLF COURSE,
BINFIELD, BRACKNELL FOREST
BERKSHIRE.**

NGR: 485100/170400 (centred)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

January 2017
Report No. 1175



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

1st Floor, Shaftesbury Centre, Percy Street, Swindon, Wilts. SN2 2AZ Tel: 01793 525993 Email: admin@foundations.co.uk

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Quality Assurance

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Author: Diana King BA MCIfA

Date: 26th January 2017

Approved: Roy King BA MCIfA

QA Checked: Tracy Michaels BSc ACIfA

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SUMMARY

Between 1st October and 9th December 2016 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new access road from Temple Way to the new Learning Village. The access route forms part of the redevelopment of the former Blue Mountain Golf Course, Binfield, Bracknell Forest, Berkshire (NGR: 485100/170400 (centred)). The work was commissioned by BSA Heritage on behalf of Luff Developments.

The watching brief comprised the archaeological monitoring of a topsoil strip along the route of the new access road and the subsequent excavation of a pipe trench along its length.

The monitoring work revealed 0.20-0.30m of topsoil over natural ground, with the exception of the area immediately adjacent to Temple Way at the south end of the access route, where modern made ground was observed beneath the topsoil. No significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were present within the monitored areas.

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 *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 from *c.* AD 1500 onwards.

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.

Romano-British

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

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between 1st October and 9th December 2016 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new access road from Temple Way to the new Learning Village. The access route forms part of the redevelopment of the former Blue Mountain Golf Course, Binfield, Bracknell Forest, Berkshire (NGR: 485100/170400 (centred)). The work was commissioned by BSA Heritage on behalf of Luff Developments.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2016). The WSI was produced in accordance with the general principles of NPPF12 (*National Planning Policy Framework 2012*) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological works and complies with the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage, 2006).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site consisted of a former golf course, with a number of residential and commercial properties, located to the southeast of Binfield and approximately a mile north west of Bracknell town centre. The site area is centred at NGR: SU 849 708 and comprised an area of approximately 50 hectares in total, although the watching brief for this phase of works concentrated on the access route from Temple Way to the new Learning Village (Figure 2). The wider site lies on undulating ground, but generally rises up from the east to the west, with a range of circa 50m AOD in the east to approximately 75m AOD to the west.
- 2.2 There is currently hybrid planning permission (16/00020/OUT) for residential, education and related development at this location, with the access route and Learning Village agreed. This current project related solely to the watching brief during the construction of a new access route from Temple Way to the new Learning Village, with monitoring undertaken during the initial groundworks for the access road.
- 2.3 A desk-based assessment of the study area was undertaken by BSA Heritage in 2015. This document should be read in conjunction with this report, however, a summary of the results are presented below:
 - 2.3.1 The entire site area was subject to archaeological evaluation in the late 1980s and 1990s ahead of its development as a golf course and residential development to the south. This work involved fieldwalking, more detailed

recovery of flintwork where the fieldwalking suggested concentrations and also trial trenching.

- 2.3.2 Two foci of Mesolithic activity were located on the higher, north western slopes to the west of the access route. Although remains were limited to flint within the ploughsoil, useful data was recovered.
- 2.3.3 An Iron Age and Romano-British settlement was excavated south east of the LV site, but there was little indication of anything more than agricultural activity within the rest of the site.
- 2.3.4 Within the area of the Learning Village north of the access route, a total of twenty six trial trenches and two areas of shovel pit testing have been completed, in the late 1980s and 2016. These found very little, although two isolated and undateable pits were recorded in separate trenches in the 1980s. More recent work found no actual features, but a total of 28 fragments of burnt flint were recovered from the spoil tip of Trench 1, in the north of the site. None of the flints, however, exhibited signs of anthropogenic alteration and the flints were in a redeposited context. Evidence for ground disturbance and raising during the golf course construction was also recorded.
- 2.5 The underlying geology is recorded as *London Clay Formation* – clay, silt and sand (BGS on line viewer).
- 2.6 In the light of the conclusions of the desk-based assessment and the limited evaluation works completed to date, the archaeological advisor to Bracknell Forest Borough Council recommended that a programme of archaeological monitoring should be undertaken during the groundworks for the access road.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological recording were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits.
- 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 of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Initial intrusive groundworks were monitored and recorded in order to identify any archaeological finds, features or deposits. Initial groundworks comprised a topsoil strip of the access route, to a depth of 0.20m-0.30m below existing ground level, as marked on Figure 2. The topsoil strip measured 20m in width on average. The initial phase of the topsoil strip was carried out under the constant supervision of the archaeologist. A toothless grading bucket was employed during these works.
- 4.2 Following the topsoil strip, a pipe trench along the access route was excavated. The pipe trench measured 1.5m on average in width and was excavated to a depth of 2m on average below the existing ground level. The entirety of the excavated pipe trench was observed, as was the completed area of topsoil strip along the access route.
- 4.3 Appropriate sections were recorded to be able to characterise the stratigraphy of the area impacted by the groundworks.
- 4.4 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 5.1 Natural deposits comprising brown beige clay with occasional gravel patches, were encountered along the length of the route of the access road route, with the exception of the area immediately adjacent to Temple Way at the southern end of the access route. In this area, up to 50m north of Temple Way, modern made ground was encountered. The natural and made ground were overlain by topsoil (101), 0.20m-0.30m in depth, which comprised brown sandy silt with frequent pebble inclusions.
- 5.2 At the extreme southern end of the topsoil strip two sub-circular areas of dark soil were present. Hand-excavation revealed patches of decomposed organic material within the areas which were consistent with tree holes in the top of the made ground.
- 5.3 No significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed during the monitoring works.

6 ARCHIVING, STORAGE & PUBLICATION

- 6.1 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited in due course with the local East Berkshire museum once one becomes available. Copies of the report in paper and digital format will be

supplied to Berkshire Archaeology and an additional copy will be deposited with the site archive.

- 6.2 The report will be published in an appropriate form in a relevant journal, within 12 months from completion of fieldwork. An OASIS record will also be completed and submitted on completion of the project.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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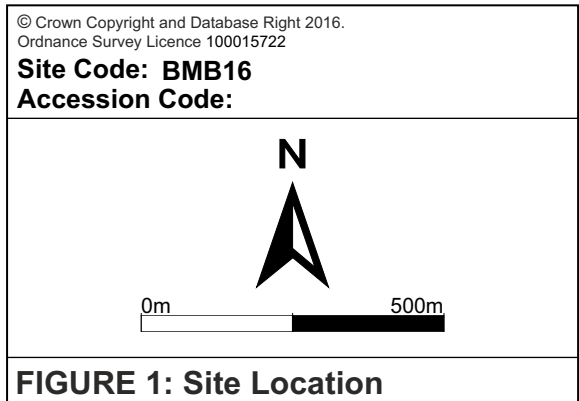
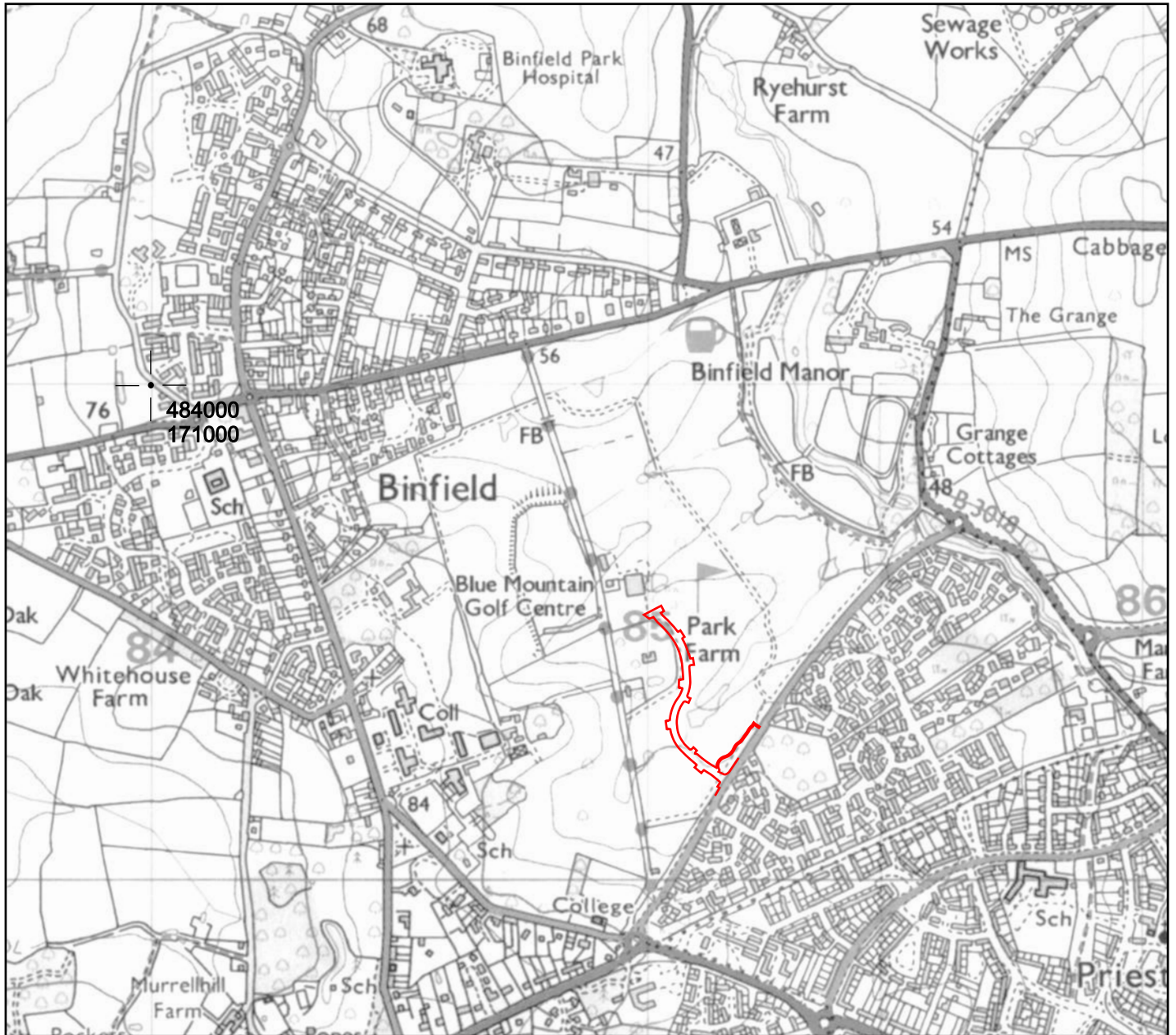
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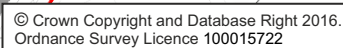
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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Ben Stephenson of BSA Heritage and the on-site groundworkers for their help during the course of the project.





Site Code: BMB16

Accession Code:





-  AREA OF NEW ACCESS ROAD
 MONITORED AREA
 AREA OF MADE GROUND

FIGURE 2: Access Road Layout