

Sutton Archaeological Services

Evaluation Report

on

32a Russell Hill

Purley, Croydon, CR2
RSP 08: (TQ 3285 6205)

for

Mantle Developments UK Ltd

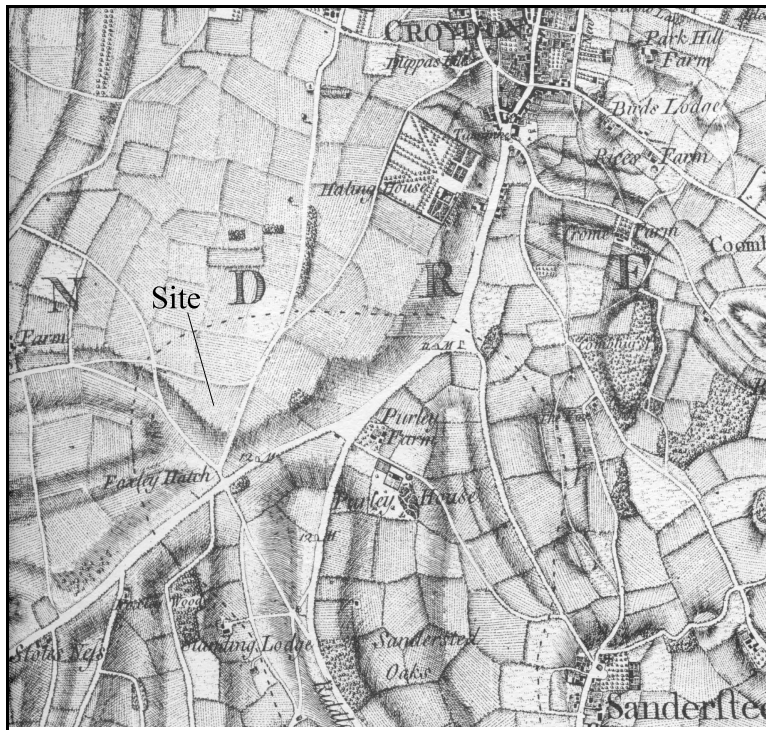


Fig. 1 John Rocque's map of Surrey (1768)

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London Borough of Croydon
RSP 08: (TQ 3285 6205)

by

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Summary

Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at 32a Russell Hill Road, Purley, Croydon, CR2 on 6th May 2008.

The site lay in an area of archaeological importance as defined in London Borough of Croydon's Unitary Development Plan. Research by Sutton Archaeological Services for the research design indicated that there was Prehistoric archaeology in the surrounding area. Two trenches were excavated revealing topsoil/made ground above the sub-soil which overlaid the natural chalk. No Prehistoric archaeology was found and the only finds were modern Ceramic Building Materials (CBM).

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage

CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Summary | I |
| Contents | ii |
| Illustrations and Plates | iii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Planning background | 1 |
| Archaeological discussion | 2 |
| Research objectives | 4 |
| Archaeological proposals | 5 |
| Archaeological Methodology | 6 |
| Evaluation results | 6 |
| Trench 1 | 6 |
| Trench 2 | 7 |
| Assessment and Interpretation | 7 |
| Archaeological potential | 8 |
| Conclusions and recommendations | 8 |
| Publications and dissemination | 8 |
| Archive | 8 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | | |
|--------|--|-------|
| Fig. 1 | John Rocque: Map of Surrey (1768) | cover |
| Fig. 2 | Location Plan | 1 |
| Fig. 3 | Site Location Plan | 2 |
| Fig. 4 | Development and trench location Plan | 6 |

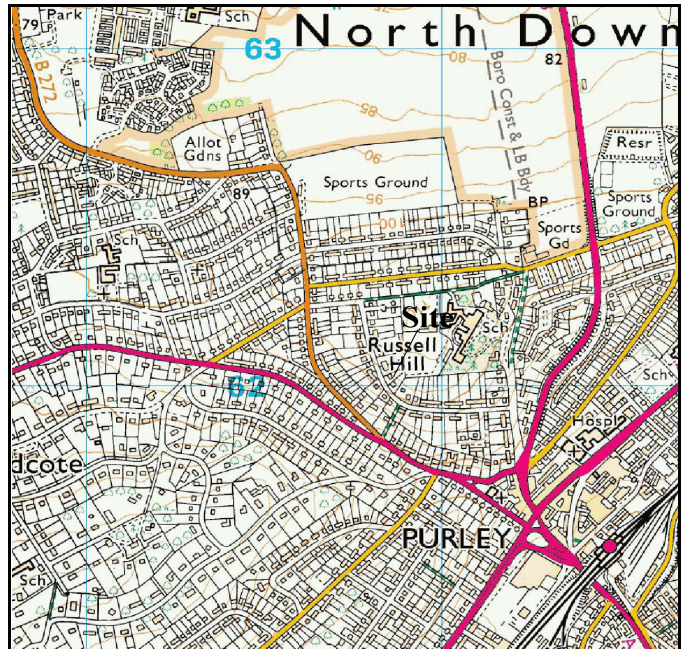
PLATES

| | | |
|---------|------------------------------|---|
| Plate 1 | Trench 1: west section | 9 |
| Plate 2 | Trench 2: east section | 9 |

Introduction

This report relates to the proposed development at 32a Russell Hill Road, Purley, Croydon, CR2.

Mantle Developments UK Ltd (the developers) commissioned Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) to carry out an archaeological evaluation and any subsequent archaeological work that may be necessary.



Location: The site is located in the London Borough of Croydon, near to the eastern boundary with Sutton. It is situated on the east side of Russell Hill, which runs southwards from Plough Lane to Russell Hill Road. A swimming pool and two schools about the eastern end of the property.

Fig. 2 Site Location © Crown Copyright MC/98/38

Topography: Russell Hill lies in an area of residential properties on the southern slope of the hill.

Geology: The site lies over chalk natural, with some head deposits, at a height of *c.* 101m aOD.

Planning background

The site consisted of a large bungalow (now demolished) set in substantial gardens.

The proposed development consists of a three storey building with basement parking comprising 11 two bedroom flats; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking.

Planning permission is being sought to develop the site which lies within an area of archaeological importance as defined in the London Borough of Croydon's Unitary Development Plan. English Heritage advised the borough that an archaeological condition under PPG16¹ should be included in any planning approval.

¹ Department of the Environment: Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning, HMSO, 1990.



Fig. 3 Site Location Plan

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which shall be submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.

Archaeological Discussion

Taken as a whole before the evaluation, the evidence suggests that there was a medium potential for Prehistoric settlement in the area of the site. There was a low potential for Roman, Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval archaeology in the area of the site.

Prehistoric: The area is of some archaeological importance in the Prehistoric period with a LBA (Late Bronze Age) site at Queen Mary's Hospital about 3½ km to the west. Fieldwork to the west of the site in Woodcote revealed extensive surface finds of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

flints². A Neolithic flint scraper and a collection of flint artifacts have also been found at Wallington High School for Girls³ and flint and stone artefacts in Purley⁴. A Bronze Age metalwork hoard is known from the Purley area⁵ and a small fragment of bronze sword was found close to Queen Mary's Hospital⁶. An excavation by the Museum of London in the High Street, Purley located Prehistoric finds⁷.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a medium potential for Prehistoric archaeology on this site.

Roman: Nearby Woodcote is famous in antiquarian studies as the supposed site of a major Roman settlement known as *Novioganvs*, recorded by Camden in the 17th century, but no archaeological evidence for this site has been found. The site could be the remains of the Medieval Woodcote village. There were 15 taxpayers there in 1332, but by 1586 the village was in ruins. A suspected Roman road runs about 1 km to the north of the site along with several Roman and Saxon burials. A suspected Roman road (A235) runs about 500m to the east of the site along the valley to Croydon.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Roman archaeology on this site.

Saxon: To the west of the site, the *Merebank*, part of the boundary between Sutton and Croydon appears to be Saxon in origin. A recent evaluation at the old Paines Poppets factory on Croydon Road found a Saxon burial close to the line of the *Merebank*.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Saxon archaeology on this site.

² Adkins, L. and Needham, S. 1985 New Research on a Bronze Age enclosure at Queen Mary's Hospital, Carshalton, *Surrey Archaeol Coll*, **76**, 11-50.

Adkins, L. and Adkins, R. A. 1986 Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age Flint Artifacts from Little Woodcote, *Surrey Archaeol Coll*, **77**, 187-196.

³ Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, ref 030238 and 030265.

⁴ Field, D. and Cotton, J. 1987 *Neolithic Surrey: a survey of the evidence*, p.84, in *The Archaeology of Surrey to 1540*, ed. Bird, J and Bird, D G.

⁵ Adkins, L. and Needham, S. 1985, op. cit., p.47.

⁶ Adkins, L. and Adkins, R. A. 1986, Late Bronze Age sword fragment from Little Woodcote, *Surrey Archaeol Coll*, **77**, 239

⁷ Filer, J. 1991 Excavation Round-up 1990: part 2, London Boroughs, *London Arch*, vol.6, no.11, p.302.

Medieval to Post-Medieval: On the earliest map of this area, the Beddington and Wallington Tithe map of 1840, the site lies within a large arable field of 35a.1r.9p being farmed with other lands by William Holmden of New Barn Farm and owned by Captain Charles Hallowell Carew, of Beddington Place (now Carew Manor). The Captain's son, Charles Hallowell Hallowell Carew, became heavily indebted and finally bankrupt in the 1850's, when much of the Carew estates were sold in 1859 and later developed for suburban housing. The New Barn Farm property was sold as lot 22 to James Watney, a member of the Watney brewery family who let the property to John Guy, a farmer. Soon after 1880 the tenancy passed to Gideon Smith and then finally to Philip Mighell, another local farmer who eventually purchased the farm after 1921. There was, however, some marginal development at the extreme south end of the farm's lands in the early years of the 20th century when two new roads, *Highfield* and *Lowfield* Road, were constructed. The lands immediately to the north became Beddington Aerodrome (later the famous Croydon Airport) and have not been essentially developed apart from the Roundshaw estate.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Medieval to Post-Medieval archaeology on this site.

Research objectives

In April 2008 Sutton Archaeological Services produced its research design. Based on our brief assessment of the evidence, we formed the objectives to look for signs of Prehistoric occupation and activity on the site, and if found to determine their extent, date, condition and significance.

The Institute of Field Archaeologists has defined the purpose of a field evaluation as follows.

“The purpose of field evaluation is to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including its presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy to mitigate a threat to the archaeological resource
- the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.”

Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, IFA, 2001

Archaeological Proposals

Usually, where development may destroy archaeology, an archaeological investigation is undertaken to identify the presence or absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened deposits and, where necessary, to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy.

SAS proposed excavate 2, 15m x 2m trenches .

Archaeological methodology

Standards: SAS carried out the archaeological evaluation in accordance with

- our research design dated April 2008. See below for changes we made to trench 2
- the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangement in Field Archaeology, Standards and Guidance for Field Evaluations
- the archaeological condition in the grant of planning permission
- the archaeological guidance papers issued by English Heritage.

Control: All excavation work was done under the control of the archaeologists on site.

Trenches: We dug 2 trenches as shown on fig 4. When Sutton Archaeological Services arrived on site the previous building that had occupied the site had already been demolished. The area of trench 2 had been fenced off to protect a colony of slow worms. The alignment of trench 2 was change to north to south to avoid the protected area.

We broke open the trench with a JCB 3CX Site Master, using a wide-bladed (1.50m+) smooth-edged ditching bucket.

Non-archaeological deposits: In each trench we removed by machine, in level spits of no more than 10-15 cm, the top and subsoil deposits. Work continued removing all overburden until we reached the first significant archaeological layer (or the natural deposits), at which point all machine work ceased in that trench. (We excavated up to 20cm into the natural to make sure we had reached true natural and not re-deposited material.) In this way we excavated the trench without finding any archaeological deposits.



Fig. 4 Development and trench location plan

Site records: We recorded all features as we proceeded, by written records, plans, sections and photographs. In all, we recorded 6 contexts - numbered [001] to [006] - in a single context recording system. The site was recorded in accordance with the Fieldwork Methodology in our research design, and using the Museum of London's recording system.

Levels: All levels were taken from an ordnance survey bench mark on 21 Russell Hill value 102.60

Backfilling: After excavating and recording we backfilled the trenches and roughly levelled the ground, leaving surplus spoil on site.

Evaluation results

Trench 1

Trench 1 was oriented roughly north to south. Context [004] was a made ground context filled with various deposits and with two milk bottles at the base (north: 104.54m aOD to south: 104.25m aOD). This covered the site to a depth of 46-48cm.

Underlying 004 was the sub-soil, a silty clay context [005] (north: 104.08m aOD to south: 103.7m aOD). The deposit had a depth of 54-74cm with a clear horizon to the natural chalk deposit.

Context **006** (north: 103.52m aOD to south: 103.03m aOD) was the natural chalk and extended across the whole of the trench. The upper surface of the chalk was very fragmented and was removed until more solid chalk was reached.

There were no archaeological finds or features of any period other than some fragments of CBM and two glass milk bottles.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was oriented roughly north to south and was located to the east of trench 1. Context **001** was an imported soil (north: 105.35m aOD to south: 105.31m aOD). This covered the site to a depth of 37-60cm. It was a friable, mid to dark brown silty clay containing 10-05% small to medium fragments of chalk and occasional small to medium flint pebbles.

Underlying **001** was the sub-soil, a silty clay context **[002]** (north: 105.04m aOD to south: 104.7m aOD). The deposit had a depth of 16cm with a clear horizon to the next context, the natural chalk deposit.

Context **003** (north: 104.86m aOD to south: 104.54m aOD) was the natural chalk and extended across the whole of the trench. The upper surface of the chalk was very fragmented and was removed until more solid chalk was reached.

There were no archaeological finds or features of any period other than some fragments of CBM.

Assessment and interpretation

The evidence from the SAS preliminary research indicated that there was Prehistoric archaeology in the surrounding area.

The evaluation only revealed topsoil or made ground above the sub-soil overlying the natural chalk in both trenches.

No Prehistoric archaeology was found and the only finds were modern.

Archaeological potential

Following the evaluation our revised view is that this site has no potential for archaeological remains of any period.

Conclusions and recommendations

Our findings set out above lead us to conclude that the proposed development probably did not threaten to destroy any archaeological remains of national, regional or local importance, deserving further investigation or preservation. Sutton Archaeological Services can not be certain, however, as the northern part of the site was stripped down to the chalk before we arrived on site.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage.

Publications and dissemination

The evidence is not worthy of publication but a note on the evaluation will be placed in the *London Archaeologist's* round-up and a copy of the report lodged in the local library.

Archive

The resulting archive, including all of the finds, will be donated by the developer and deposited with the Museum of London when the final report has been completed.



Plate 1

Trench 1: west section



Plate 2

Trench 2: east section



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