

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**STRIP, MAP & SAMPLE EXCAVATION:
MARLIN CHAPEL FARM
NORTHCHURCH LANE
BERKHAMSTED**

NGR: SP 96404 07091

on behalf of Dr Gill Hurt



Bob Zeepvat BA MfA

April 2012

ASC: 1482/BMC/2



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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	BMC	<i>Project no:</i>	1482
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	116904	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	pending
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Berkhamsted		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Berkhamsted		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 96404 07091		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.225 sq m (stripped area)		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Residential		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Landscaping and car port		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Dacorum Borough Council		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	4/01569/11/FHA		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	26/03 – 17/04 2012		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr & Mrs Hurt Marlin Chapel Farm Northchurch Lane Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 3VQ		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Dr G Hurt		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	19 th April 2012
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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	23 rd April 2012
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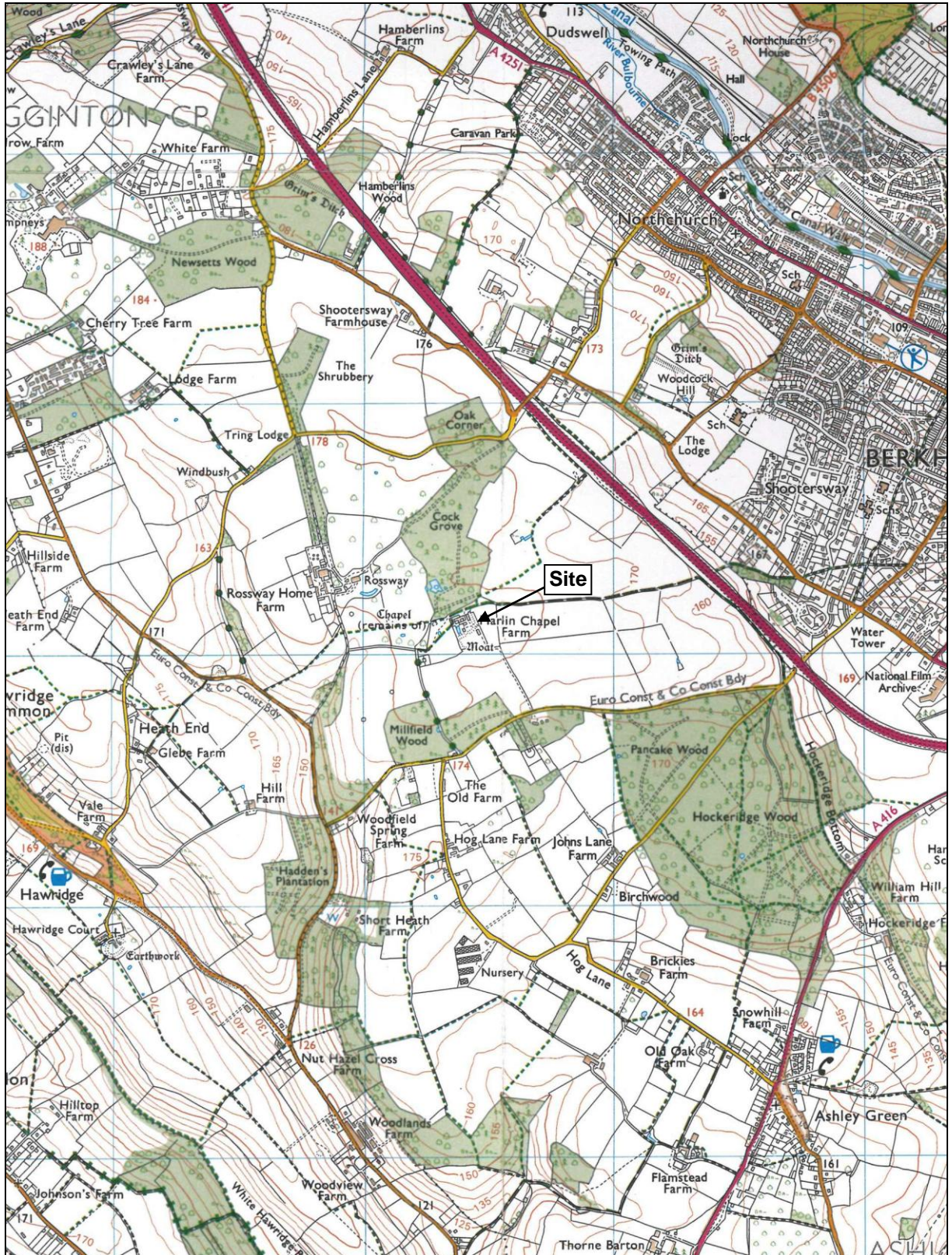


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In March and April 2012 a strip, map and sample excavation was carried out at Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch Lane, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, in advance of the construction of a detached garage and associated landscaping within the moated area of this scheduled ancient monument.

Removal of topsoil and overburden from the development site did not reveal any significant archaeology. The only feature present on the site was a possible flint wall footing of likely post-medieval date, probably originally supporting a boundary wall along the inside edge of the moat. A subsequent watching brief, maintained on excavations for footings and services, revealed an area of loose cobbles, possibly a yard surface or garden feature, just to the west of the excavated area.

1. Introduction

1.1 In March and April 2012 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a strip, map & sample excavation at Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch Lane, Berkhamsted, Herts. The project was commissioned by the owners, *Mr & Dr Hurt*, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Breeze-Chilcott & Fell 2012), and approved by the *Historic Environment Unit* of *Hertfordshire County Council*, archaeological advisors (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), *Dacorum Borough Council*, and *English Heritage* (EH). The relevant planning application reference is 4/01569/11/FHA.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This excavation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Statement 5* (PPS5), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site, and as a condition of scheduled monument consent.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

ASC is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *The Site*

1.4.1 *Location & Description*

The site is situated in the parish of Berkhamsted, in the administrative district of Dacorum, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It lies in a rural location to the south of the Berkhamsted, at the west end of Northchurch Lane and is centred on Ordnance Survey national grid reference SP 9640 0709 (Fig. 2). The site is a *Scheduled Ancient Monument* (no. 20621) and has been designated by the LPA as an *Area of Archaeological Significance* (no. 25).

Marlin Chapel Farm comprises a double-moated enclosure measuring c.70m NE to SW and c.80m NW to SE (Fig. 2). The interior of the moat is now

divided into four properties, of which the development site is the southernmost. A ruined building, known as *Marlin's Chapel* (section 2.3) is situated *c.*60m west of the outer moat. Access is from the north, via a track leading from Northchurch Lane. The land to the south and east is open farmland: to the west is woodland.

The excavation area was located in the east corner of the moated area, and measured *c.*15 × 15m. Prior to the excavation it was covered by a lawn.

1.4.2 *Topography & Geology*

The site is flat and lies at an elevation of *c.*175m OD. The natural soils of the area comprise the *Batcombe Association*, namely fine silty clayey soils over Plateau Drift and Clay-with-Flints (Soil Survey 1983, 582a). The underlying natural geology comprises Upper Chalk (BGS sheet 238).

1.4.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development comprises the construction of a garage at the east corner of the area within the moat, with associated landscaping and services (Fig. 3).

1.5 *Previous Archaeological Work*

A number of small-scale archaeological projects have taken place at Marlin Chapel Farm, but none have revealed traces of archaeological remains.

A trial trench evaluation was undertaken in 1987 in the northwest part of the moated enclosure in advance of the conversion of a post-medieval barn to residential use. No remains were revealed during these works (Godwin 1987). Another evaluation was undertaken during construction work on the site of the post-medieval manor house: this also failed to reveal evidence of archaeological remains (Humphrey 1987). Finally, a swimming pool was excavated to the south of the outer moat during 2002 where a watching brief was maintained (Hunn 2002). Monitoring of works revealed that the area had been levelled and artificially raised by between 0.5 and 1.0m, but no archaeological remains were observed.

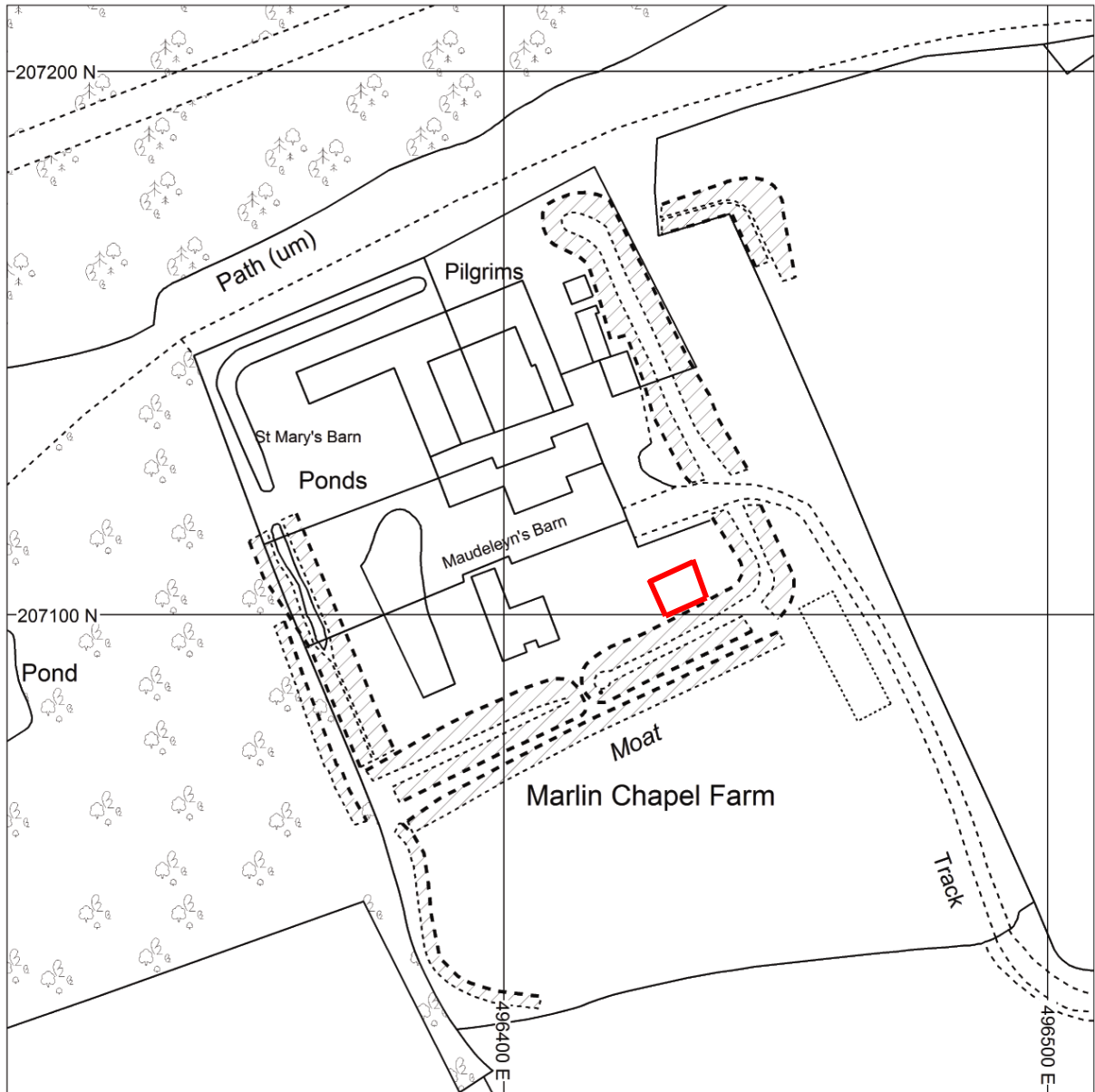


Figure 2: Site plan showing proposed location of garage (scale 1:1250)

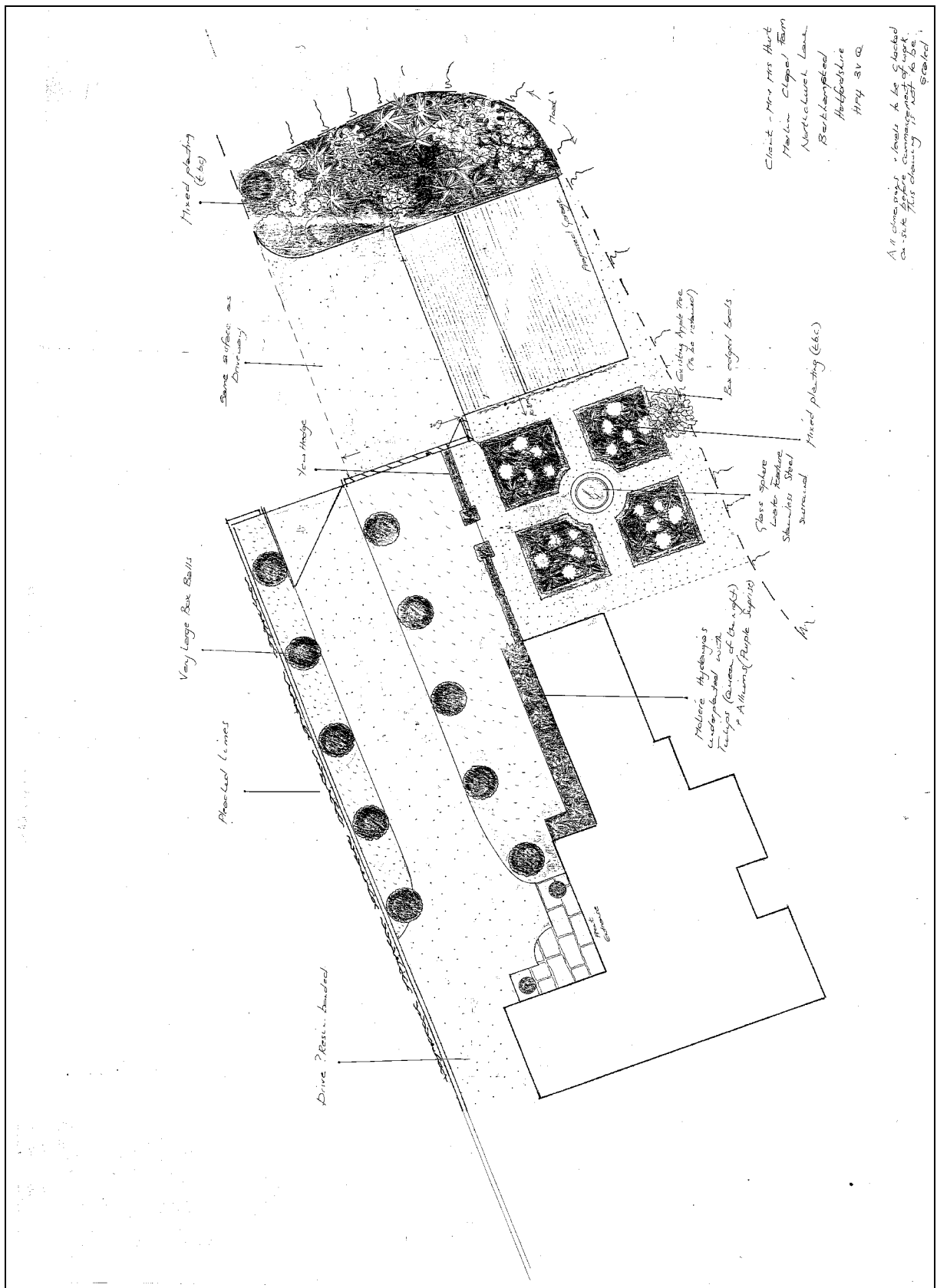


Figure 3: Plan of the proposed development (not to scale)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the project design, the aims of the excavation were:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to have an impact upon archaeological deposits.
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme.
- To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.
- To provide an adequately detailed project report that will place the findings of the monitoring and recording of the development programme in their local and regional context, having made reference to the relevant regional research agendas, and through cartographic, documentary and other research.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IfA 2008) and *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991; EH 2006), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the project design, which described a strip, map and sample excavation of the footprint of the footprint for the new garage.

2.4 Constraints

The work took place in fine weather, with full co-operation from the groundwork contractor. No constraints were encountered.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 Introduction

The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and the focus of attention is considered to lie in the medieval period.

This section has been compiled with information from ASC's in-house library and the *Historic Environment Record* (HER) of HCC (HER enquiry no. 256/11).

3.2 Prehistoric and Roman (before-c.450)

Little is known of the area around the development site during the prehistoric periods.

During the Roman period the area lay within the tribal territory of the *Catuvellauni*, with its capital at St Albans. Little is known of the area around the development site during this period but transport and communications were dominated by a major Roman road, now known as *Akeman Street* (HER 4595), which followed the line of the Bulbourne valley, to the east of the development site (Copeland 2009).

3.3 Medieval and Post-Medieval (c.450-1900)

The development site is situated to the southeast of Berkhamsted. The early history of Berkhamsted is not understood in detail but it is likely that a settlement developed in the Bulbourne valley, centred on the church of St Mary, Northchurch (Doggett & Hunn 1985).

Berkhamsted is included in the Domesday survey (1086) where it is referred to as *Berchhastede*. The land was held by the *Count of Moretaine* and was valued at £16 (Morris 1976, 136). The development site is situated on higher ground above the river, beyond the limit of the medieval and modern town.

Little is known of the origin and early history of the development site but the place-name *Marlin* may be derived from *Maudeleyns*, which was a sub-manor of the manor of Berkhamsted (Page 1971, 247-8). The moated site, now referred to as *Marlin Chapel Farm* (HER 2020) was probably constructed during the medieval period but there is currently no archaeological evidence for its date of construction. A ruined chapel which dates from the 13th century is situated to the west of the moated enclosure (HER 2021).

The north part of the moated enclosure is occupied by the buildings of *Marlin Chapel Farm* (HER 9432), which are shown on historic mapping. The buildings incorporated elements of a late medieval or early post-medieval manor house (HER 11727; HALS, Butler Prints) which was demolished during the 19th century and replaced during the early 20th century. The site was subsequently redeveloped in 1987 (Godwin 1987) and in 1998 (Humphrey 1997).

During the medieval period a dispersed pattern of settlement may have emerged in the area and a second moated site, known as *Marlin Farm*, developed c.400m northeast of the development site (HER 16090). The site is shown on 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps (Fig. 4) comprising a farmstead with a farmhouse on the west side of a

yard, with barns and other buildings around the other three sides, and further buildings around an open secondary yard to the northeast. Three irregular ponds lay north and east of the main yard, a long narrow pond along the south side of the yard and a rectangular pond at the western end of the long narrow one. It was demolished during the mid 20th century.

The development site is situated c.500m east of an estate known as *Rossway Park* (HER 15635). The estate is recorded from the 15th century but the present principal house was constructed c.1865-7.

3.4 *Modern* (1900-present)

A number of alterations and additions to the buildings within the development site were made during the 20th century, notably the construction of two generations of buildings on the site of the post-medieval manor house during the early 20th century and in 1987. The barns to the west were converted to residential use in 1987 and a number of new buildings and a swimming pool were laid out to the south during the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

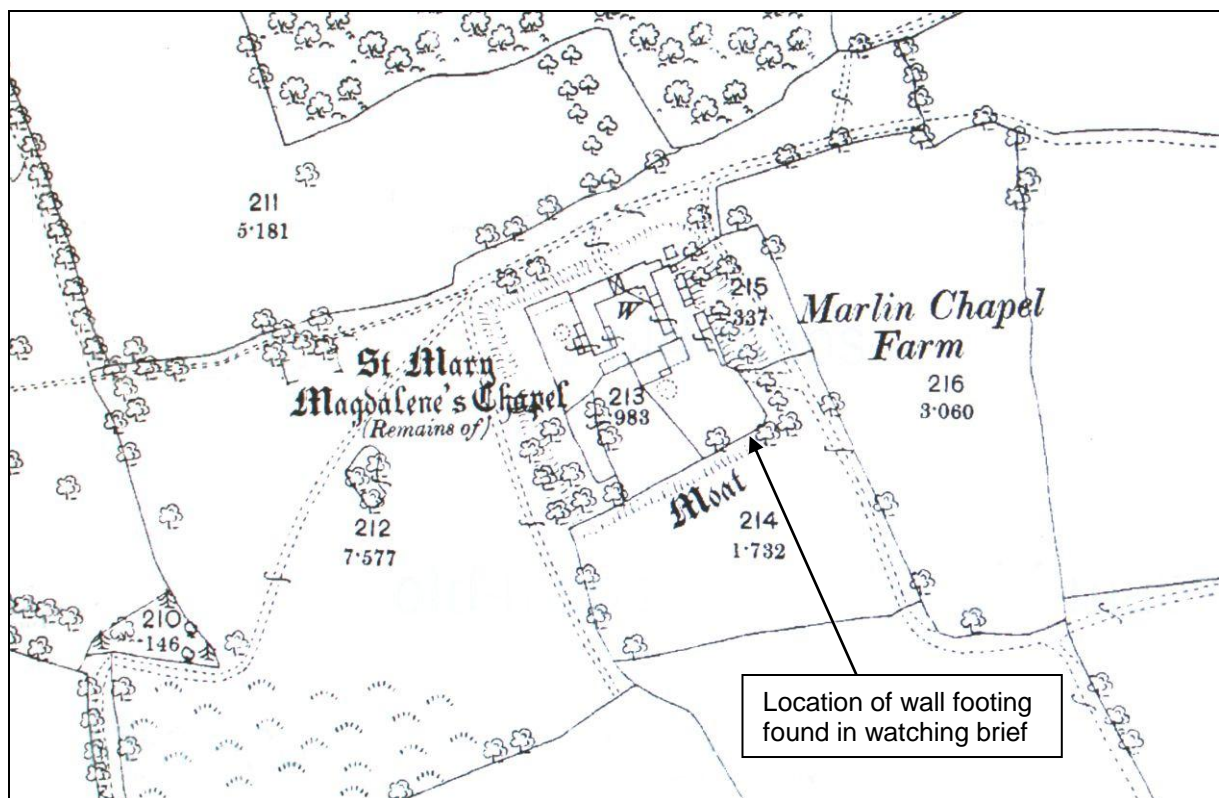


Figure 4: Extract from Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 25" sheet, 1887 (*not to scale*)

4. Results & Conclusions

4.1 *Results* (Fig. 5, Plates 1-3)

Topsoil and turf were mechanically stripped from the excavation area, revealing the natural orange-brown clay at a depth of c.200mm. On the south edge of the excavation area, a spread of loose flint overlying the natural clay may have been the remains of a dump of stone. It contained no dating material.

Partly overlain by the aforementioned flint layer, a linear feature was observed on the south-east side of the site, running parallel and close to the edge of the moat. The feature was at least 9.5m in length, and 0.8m wide, filled with medium-large flints and occasional clunch fragments in a chalky cobb-like matrix. No dating evidence was recovered. Subsequent sectioning of this feature by the footing trenches for the new garage showed it to be c.0.95m deep (Plate 2). This feature has been interpreted as the footing for a wall, probably a 19th-century boundary wall following the inner edge of the moat. The First Edition OS map (Fig. 4) shows a boundary in this location.

As the site strip did not reveal any significant archaeological features, observation was maintained on other groundworks related to the development. Observation of the footing trenches for the garage provided a section through the boundary wall footing described above. A watching brief on a service trench, dug across the north-west end of the site and south-westwards to the house, revealed an area of rough flint cobbling along c.5m of its length, outside but adjacent to the west corner of the excavated area, laid directly onto the natural clay. It is likely that this represented a yard surface or a garden feature. No dating evidence was observed for this feature.

4.2 *Conclusions*

The excavation revealed no significant archaeological features in the east corner of the area enclosed by the moat at Marlin Chapel Farm. The boundary wall footing and cobbled area that were recorded were probably both post-medieval in date, relating to the site as shown on early Ordnance Survey mapping. The absence of significant archaeology in this part of the site does not preclude the survival of features or deposits elsewhere within the moated area.

4.3 *Confidence Rating*

The excavation was carried out in generally good weather, with the close co-operation of the clients and their contractors. A high confidence rating is therefore assigned to the project.

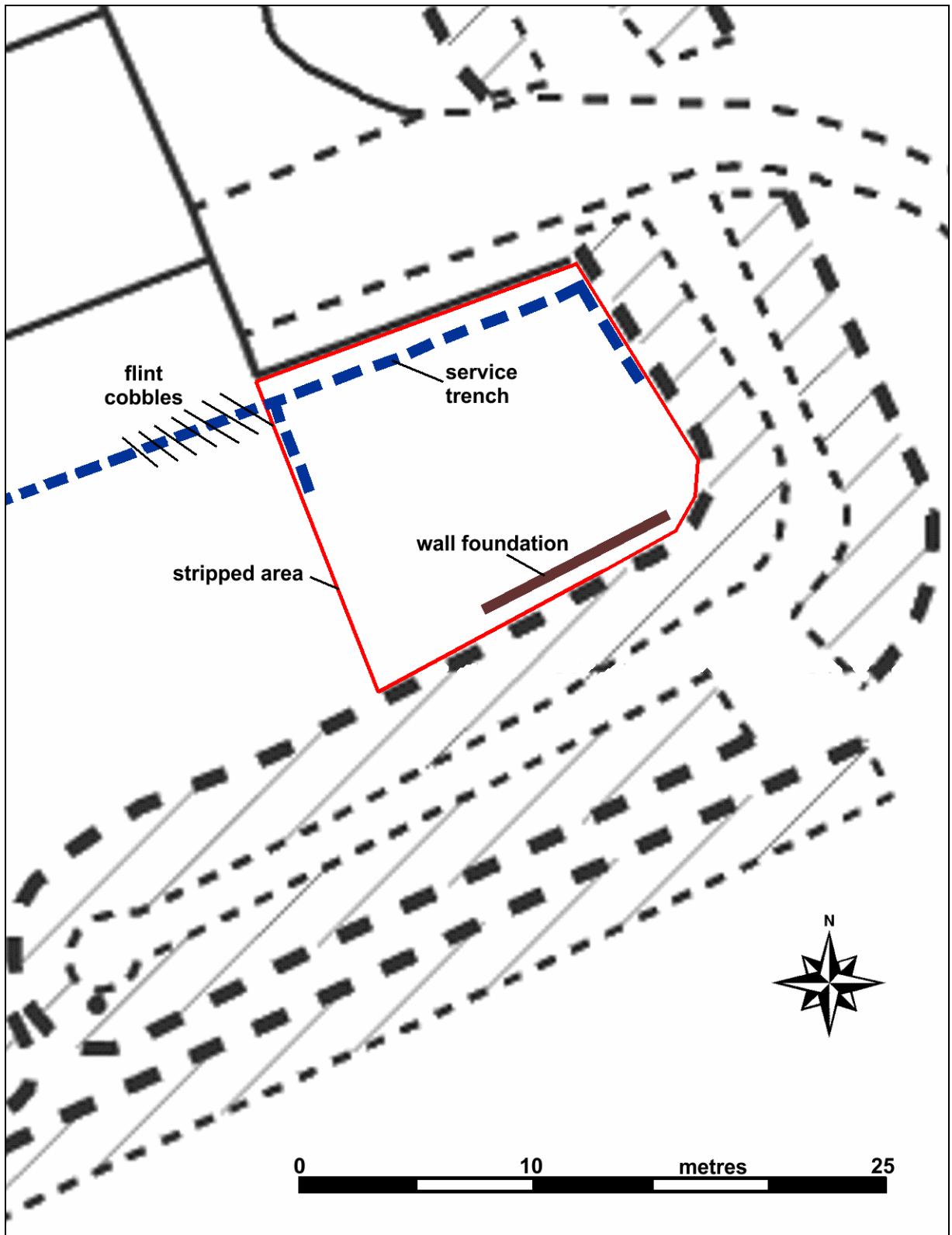


Figure 5: Excavation plan (scale 1:250)



Plate 1: South side of site after stripping



Plate 2: Possible wall footing in section, garage footing trench



Plate 3: Cobbles in section of service trench

5. Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by the client, Dr Jill Hurt, and was monitored by Kate Batt of the HCC Historic Environment Unit on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by Jonathan Hunn BA PhD MifA, who also carried out the fieldwork. The report was prepared by Bob Zeepvat BA MifA and edited by David Fell BA MA MifA.

6. Archive

6.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Project Design
2. Initial Report
3. Clients site plans
4. Site records
5. Site record drawings
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. Original specialist reports and supporting information
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

6.2 The archive will be deposited with Dacorum Heritage Trust.

7. References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- Breeze-Chilcott L & Fell D 2012 *Marlin Chapel Farm: Project Design for Strip, Map & Sample Excavation*. ASC doc ref. 1482/BMC/1
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*. English Heritage (London).
- EH 2006 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2008 Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (Reading).

Secondary Sources

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Copeland T 2009 *Akeman Street. Moving through Iron Age and Roman Landscapes*. The History Press
- Doggett N & Hunn J R 1985 'The Origins and Development of Medieval Berkhamsted' *Hertfordshire's Past* **18**, 18-36
- Godwin N 1987 *Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch: archaeological evaluation*. Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust
- Humphrey R 1997 *Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch; an archaeological evaluation*. Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust
- Hunn J R 2002 *Marlin Chapel Farm, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire; an archaeological watching brief* ASC rep. **BMF/305/2**.
- Morris J (ed.) 1976 *The Domesday Book. Hertfordshire*. History from the Sources. Phillimore
- Page W 1971 *The Victoria History of the County of Hertfordshire, 2*. Dawsons of Pall Mall
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

Appendix 1: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Marlin Chapel Farm, Berkhamsted			SITE NO/CODE: 1482/BMC
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		0291	The site looking NE 26.3.12
2		0292	The site looking west 26.3.12
3	yes	0293	South side of site showing flint spread looking east 28.3.12
4		0294	Close up of south side of site showing flint spread looking east 28.3.12
5	yes	0295	Detail of brick and flint <i>in situ</i>
6		0296	Reduced area of parterre looking east
7		0298	Water pipe trench area looking NE 3.4.12
8		0299	Water pipe trench looking NE 3.4.12
9		0300	Water pipe trench looking SW 3.4.12
10		0301	Water pipe trench to north of garage looking NE
11		0302	Corner of water pipe trench looking SW
12		0303	Terminal of water pipe trench by garage
13		0304	Area of flint cobbles shown in water pipe trench looking east
14	yes	0352	New stone path with garage beyond looking NE 17.4.12
15		0353	Southern foundation trench looking obliquely east
16	yes	0354	Detail of wall looking north
17		0355	Oblique view of flinty cobb wall foundation looking east
18		0356	Detail of eastern end of wall in section looking north
19	yes	0357	Detail of wall in eastern trench looking NE
20		0358	Location of wall in section at corner of garage looking west
21		0359	Detail of wall in section at corner of garage looking west
22		0360	View of southern foundation looking west
23		0361	Detail of west end of the southern foundation
24		0362	View of western foundation looking north
25		0363	View of eastern foundation looking north

Appendix 2: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Marlin Chapel Farm, Berkhamsted	OASIS reference:	116904
Short Description:	<p>In March and April 2012 a strip, map and sample excavation was carried out at Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch Lane, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, in advance of the construction of a detached garage and associated landscaping within the moated area of this scheduled ancient monument.</p> <p>Removal of topsoil and overburden from the development site did not reveal any significant archaeology. The only feature present on the site was a possible flint wall footing of likely post-medieval date, probably originally supporting a boundary wall along the inside edge of the moat. A subsequent watching brief, maintained on excavations for footings and services, revealed an area of loose cobbles, possibly a yard surface or garden feature, just to the west of the excavated area.</p>		
Project Type:	Excavation		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	Godwin 1987, Humphrey 1997, Hunn 2002	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	SAM 20621
Current land use:	garden	Future work:	unknown
Monument type:	Moated site	Monument period:	Medieval onwards
Significant finds:	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 9640 0709
Site address:	Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch Lane, Berkhamsted Herts HP4 3VQ		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	c.225 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	175
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	-	Project design originator:	L Breeze-Chilcott & D Fell
Project Manager:	J R Hunn BA PhD MifA	Director/Supervisor:	J R Hunn BA PhD MifA
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr & Dr Hurt		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	26/03/12	End date:	17/04/12
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Dacorum Heritage Trust	none	
Paper:		WSI, site records, photos, report	
Digital:		CD with all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Strip, Map & Sample Excavation: Marlin Chapel Farm, Northchurch Lane, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1842/BMC/2		
Author(s):	Bob Zeepvat BA MifA		
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