

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
HAMBERLINS FARM
HAMBERLINS LANE
NORTHCHURCH
HERTFORDSHIRE**

on behalf of Mr J. Eames



Caroline Barclay BA

September 2006

ASC: 807/NHF/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	NHF	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	807
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Northchurch		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Northchurch		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 9661 0937		
<i>Present use:</i>	Farmland		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of new manege		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	4/2113/05		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Dacorum Borough Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	21 st -25 th August 2006		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr J. Eames C/o Faulkners 49 High Street Kings Langley Hertfordshire WD4 9HU		
<i>Contact name:</i>	T. Pickard - Faulkners		
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Internal Quality Check

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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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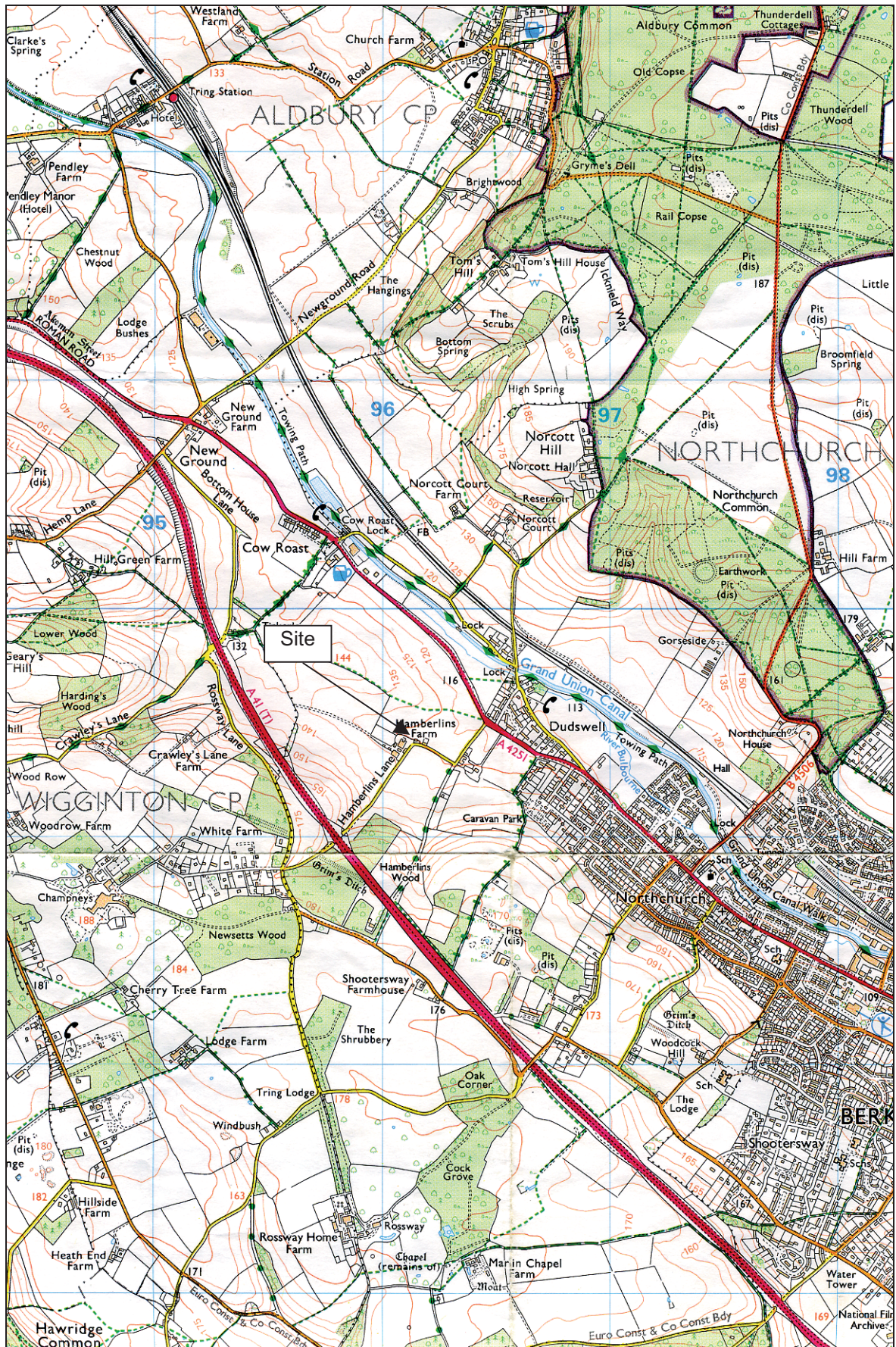


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In August 2006 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on a site at Hamberlins Farm, Northchurch, Hertfordshire. The project was undertaken during the clearing of an area behind the extant buildings for a new manege. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.

1 Introduction

1.1 In August 2006 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC)* carried out a watching brief at Hamberlins Farm, Hamberlins Lane, Northchurch, Hertfordshire (NGR SP 9661 0937: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr J. Eames, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (807/NHF/1), and a brief (Batt 2006) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Dacorum Borough Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Hertfordshire County Archaeology Office*. The relevant planning application reference is 4/2113/05.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief has been required as a planning condition under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16)*, in response to proposals for the construction of a new manege.

1.3 *Location*

The development site is located within the parish of Northchurch, at NGR SP 9661 0937, to the north west of the town of Berkhamsted (Fig. 1). The Grand Union Canal runs to the north and east of the site, while the A41 runs to the west of the development site.

1.4 *Description*

Access to the development site is from Hamberlins Lane, which runs to the south east of the site, and joins the A4251 to the north east of the site. There are several extant buildings on Hamberlins Farm, but none within the boundaries of the proposed development (Fig. 2).

1.5 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area are of the *Charity 2 Association*, and are characterised as *well drained flinty fine silty soils in valley bottoms. Calcareous fine silty soils over chalk or chalk rubble on valley sides, sometimes shallow*. The underlying geology comprises flinty and chalky drift over chalk (Soil Survey, 1983, 571m). The site lies at an elevation of c.127m AOD.

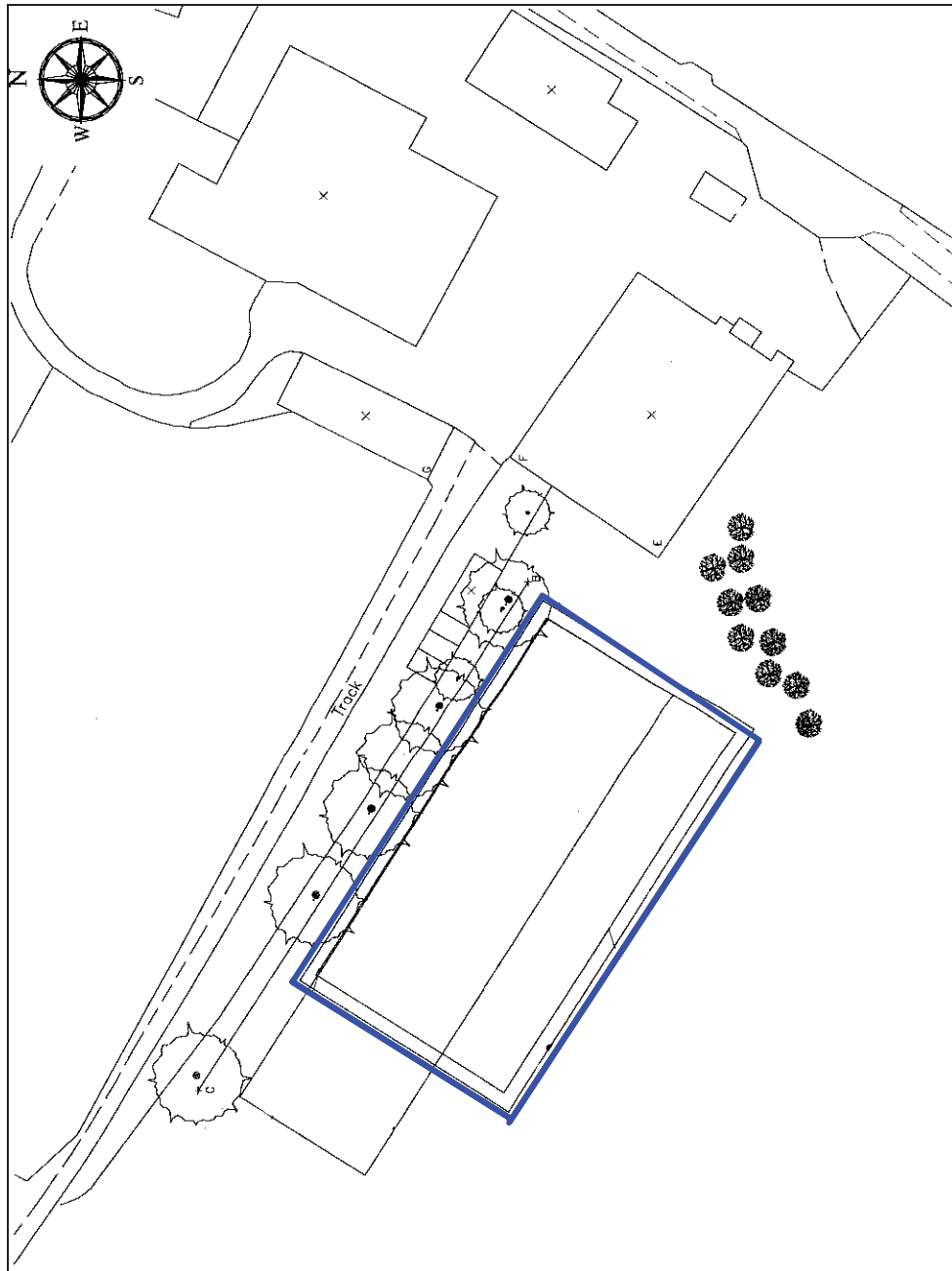


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1000)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief (Section 1), the aims of the watching brief were:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains
- 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.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), 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 own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 3), which required:

- Soil and overburden stripping under archaeological supervision
- Inspection of sub-soil deposits for archaeological features
- The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits
- Sub-soil stripping under archaeological supervision
- Examination of any service trenches and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits
- Examination of spoil heaps for archaeological material
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Hamberlins Farm lies within an area of archaeological interest. It has been designated by Hertfordshire County Council as an *Area of Archaeological Significance* (#24), as cropmarks of currently unknown date and function have been recorded in the area.

3.1.2 The site lies on the lower slope of the valley immediately above the flood plain of the River Bulbourne. The valley and surrounding plateaux have seen a considerable level of activity over the last two millennia. There is evidence for dispersed occupation dating from the late Iron Age and Romano-British period along the length of the upper Bulbourne valley (Morris and Wainwright 1995, 68-75). Sufficient evidence has been discovered in the last three decades to suggest that there was a managed landscape on the plateau, the valley slopes and valley bottom since the late Iron Age onwards. Surviving earth works in the woods above Northchurch all suggest that a similar system probably extended down towards the floor of the valley of the Bulbourne. Both to the east and west of the present site under consideration there have been discoveries of Romano-British occupation at several locations (*ibid*).

3.2 Iron Age and Roman

3.2.1 A small Romano-British settlement, now known as Cow Roast, was situated c.0.9km northwest of the site and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Evidence for occupation in the 1st century is abundant and includes both artefacts and features cut into the subsoil. There is structural evidence in the form of sequences of timber slots, post-holes, pits, wells and rectangular timber buildings (Thompson 2002, 7; Zeepvat 1997).

3.2.2 In the later Roman period Cow Roast shows a decline in activity, both in terms of structural evidence and economic indices (coin loss etc) and 4th century pottery occurs in comparatively small quantities. This is mirrored on the higher ground above the Bulbourne where little sign of occupation has been found.

3.3 Saxon and Medieval

3.3.1 Little is known of the area in the Saxon period. In the early 11th century Berkhamsted was held by *Eadmer*, a thane of Earl Harold. It is probable that the settlement that we call Northchurch was, at that time, a precursor of Berkhamsted (Doggett and Hunn 1985). The evidence for this comes from the fabric of St Mary's Church, otherwise known as St Mary's Berkhamsted, which has pre-Conquest stonework in its nave walls on the western and southern sides (Taylor and Taylor 1980, 462-63; Smith 1973).

3.3.2 With the construction of the castle in Berkhamsted c. 2km to the WSW, there developed an alternative settlement focus to Northchurch. This was due to its impact on the social and economic fabric of society. Northchurch continued to develop but at a much slower pace in the medieval period.

3.4 Modern

3.4.1 Hamberlins Farm dates from the 19th century. A single building, labelled as *New Barn*, is shown on the 1884 edition of the OS map, and the remaining farm buildings date to the late 19th or 20th centuries.

4 Results

- 4.1 Four visits were made to the site during August 2006, while the stripping of the topsoil and reduction of the ground level was monitored.
- 4.2 The natural stratum of the site, as far as could be observed, consists of flinty clay.
- 4.3 During the stripping of the soil, one feature was observed as an area of darker brown clay. This darker area contained small flecks of charcoal, bone, modern tile fragments and corroded iron. It was considered to be a modern feature and is not archaeologically significant.
- 4.4 The soil which was removed was scanned with a metal detector (Plate 3), but contained too much modern scrap metal for the results to have any meaning.



Plate 1: General view of site, pre-stripping; view looking north west



Plate 2: Completed topsoil strip; view looking north



Plate 3: Metal detecting the excavated area



Plate 4: The site during subsoil stripping; view looking north

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusions

During the course of the watching brief, no archaeological remains were observed, and no pre-modern artefacts were recovered. Although one possible feature was observed, this contained modern material and is not likely to be archaeologically significant. As a result, it seems likely that the site is outside the area of significant archaeology. It is unlikely that large quantities of significant archaeological features or artefacts are present in this location, and the development is unlikely to have had any major impact on any archaeological remains.

5.2 Confidence Rating

The watching brief was undertaken in mostly dry and generally overcast weather with sunny patches, and the conditions for the watching brief were good. Full co-operation was received from the contractors and a high confidence rating is attached to the results of the watching brief.

5.3 Relevance of site and results

As the area of the site appears to be outside any significant archaeological activity, this helps to further delineate the areas of archaeological significance within the region.

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mr J. Eames for commissioning the watching brief. We would also like to thank Mrs Kate Batt of the Hertfordshire County Council Archaeology Office for acting as curatorial officer.

Dr Jonathan R Hunn, BA PhD MIFA, undertook the fieldwork for ASC Ltd. The report was prepared by Caroline Barclay BA and edited by David Fell, BA MA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. List of photographs/slides
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Dacorum Heritage Trust.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.

Batt, 2006 *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording; Hamberlins Farm, Hamberlins Lane, Northchurch*

EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*. English Heritage (London).

IFA 2000 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

Secondary Sources

Doggett, N and Hunn, J. 1985: 'The Origins and Development of Medieval Berkhamsted', in *Hertfordshire's Past* no. **18**, 18-36.

Morris, M and Wainwright, A. 1995: 'Iron Age and Romano-British settlement, agriculture and industry in the upper Bulbourne valley, Hertfordshire: an interim interpretation', in Holgate (ed) *Chiltern Archaeology: Recent work*, 68-75. The Book Castle. Dunstable.

Smith, T. P. 1973: *The Anglo-Saxon Churches of Hertfordshire*. Phillimore. Chichester.

Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

Taylor and Taylor 1980: *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*. **1**, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Thompson, I. 2002: *The Roman Settlement at Cow Roast, Northchurch: Extensive urban survey project assessment report*. Archaeology Office, Hertfordshire County Council.

Zeepvat, R 1997: *The Roman Settlement at Cow Roast, Hertfordshire: Updated project design & assessment report* Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust unpublished report (Hertford).

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

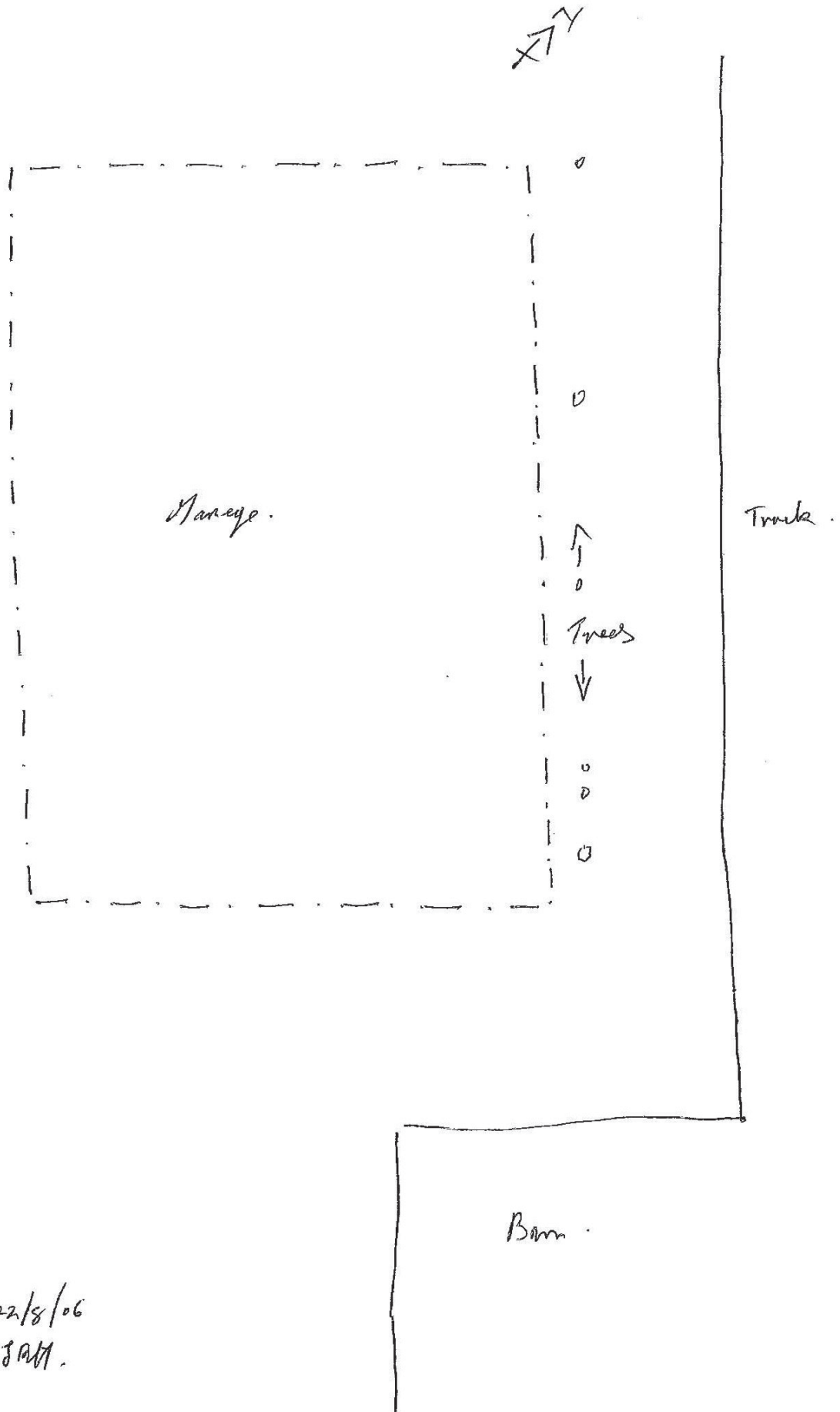
Project: <i>Mange, Hamberlins Farm</i>		Project No/Code: <i>807 1NHF</i>	Sheet: <i>1</i> of <i>4</i>
<i>Northchurch</i>		Date of visit: <i>21/8/06</i>	
Client/Developer: <i>J. Fames</i>			
Contact: <i>Jonk FAMES</i>		Phone: <i>07768-555888</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>11.05</i>	Finish:	
Completed by: <i>JMA</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify): <i>Terracing</i>
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dry but see Showers</i>			
Observations: <i>Observed an initial strip c. 6m x 15m in the south east corner of the mange. The soil is being removed to a depth of c. 0.3m which leaves a residue of 'lower plough soil', though there are occasional patches of 'natural clay' showing through. The horizon is all typical flinty loam (ploughsoil)</i>			
Comments: <i>Requires metal detector to do it justice.</i>			



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: <i>Manege, Hamberlins Farm</i>		Project No/Code: <i>8071 NHF</i>	Sheet: <i>2 of 4</i>
<i>Northchurch</i>		Date of visit: <i>22/8/06</i>	
Client/Developer <i>Jack Evans</i>			
Contact: <i>ditto</i>		Phone: <i>077 68-555 888</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>4.15 pm</i>	Finish: <i>6.30 pm</i>	
Completed by: <i>JRA</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dry + see sun</i>			
Observations: <i>Observed the entire footprint of the manege. It was 30.4m wide by 60.4m long and was adjacent to a line of deciduous trees (mostly oak and Field Maple and humber oak and ash). The average depth is about 300mm into the gravelly clay natural. There seems to have been some build up of soil on the lower slope near the trees - a mini Lynchell Syndrome. No obvious features and there seem to be few artefacts (pre-modern).</i>			
Comments: <i>Noted that the soil may be of use. The soil is being spread on the edge of the field to the north west 2-300m away.</i>			



22/8/06
JAH.



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: <i>Manege, Hamberlins Farm</i>		Project No/Code: <i>807 1NHF</i>	Sheet: <i>3 of 4</i>
<i>Northchurch</i>		Date of visit: <i>23/8/06</i>	
Client/Developer <i>Jawke Farm</i>			
Contact: <i>Ditto</i>		Phone: <i>07768-555888</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>2.05pm</i>	Finish:	
Completed by: <i>JR/A</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dull & dry at first.</i>			
Observations: <i>The ground is wet being taken down below the A horizon (topsoil). There is an area of darker brown clay about a third of the way up from the NE side. This doesn't look very natural. Appears to contain a piece of brick, tile fragments * and even iron (v. corroded). Could be the result of levelling. Too wide to be a man-made feature such as a ditch (Appears 16m wide, * Also plaster of charcoal).</i>			
Comments: <i>c. 6m strips on eastern side have been further reduced by some 200mm.</i> <i>The spoil heaps have been reworked detailed but too much Scaps not present to be meaningful.</i>			



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: <i>Manege, Hamberling Farm</i>		Project No/Code: <i>8071NHF</i>	Sheet: <i>4 of 4</i>
<i>Northchurch</i>		Date of visit: <i>25/8/06</i>	
Client/Developer: <i>Jack Fames</i>			
Contact: <i>Ditto</i>		Phone: <i>07768-555888</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>1.55pm</i>	Finish: <i>3pm</i>	
Completed by: <i>JRH</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dry & Sunny</i>			
Observations: <i>The area of the manege was still being excavated in its NW corner. The rest of the area had been built up using clay & flint soil (NW corner drains about 1.2m deep) & is thereby protecting any deposits. Photos taken.</i>			
Comments: <i>The drains have yet to be laid/dug but based on what has been observed to date no further visits are proposed</i>			

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NO/CODE: NHF/807			
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	+		General view of manege
2		+	Beginning of machine strip; NW; 21/08/06
3		+	Edge of work area; E; 21/08/06
4		+	General view, pre-stripping; NW; 21/08/06
5		+	Beginning of machine-strip; NW; 21/08/06
6		+	Landscape view; S; 21/08/06
7		+	Detail of machine-strip; NE; 21/08/06
8		+	Topsoil strip; SW; 21/08/06
9		+	General view of site; SW; 22/08/06
10		+	Ground reduction; W; 22/08/06
11		+	Southern end of manege; N; 22/08/06
12		+	General view of machine strip; NE; 22/08/06
13		+	General view; S; 22/08/06
14		+	General view; SSE; 22/08/06
15		+	Completed topsoil strip; N; 22/08/06
16		+	Completed topsoil strip; N; 22/08/06
17		+	Possible feature; NE; 23/08/06
18		+	Relationship of scrape with trees; NE; 23/08/06
19		+	Metal detecting excavated area; 23/08/06
20		+	Further ground reduction; NE; 23/08/06
21		+	Redeposited gravely clay; 25/08/06
22		+	Redeposited gravely clay; NE; 25/08/06

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name:	Hamberlins Farm					
Short Description:	<i>In August 2006 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on a site at Hamberlins Farm, Northchurch, Hertfordshire. The project was undertaken during the clearing of an area behind the extant buildings for a new manege. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.</i>					
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	DBA	FW	Geophys	Survey	Bldg Rec	Post-Exc
	WB	Strip&Rec	Trenching	Test pits	Exc	Other
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None		Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)		None	
Current land use:	Farming		Future work: (yes / no / unknown)		No	
Monument type:	-		Monument period:		-	
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	-					
PROJECT LOCATION						
County:	Hertfordshire		OS reference: (to at least 8 figures)		SP 9661 0937	
District:	Dacorum		Parish:		Northchurch	
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Hamberlins Farm, Hamberlins Lane, Northchurch, Hertfordshire					
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	60m x 30m		Height OD: (metres)		c.127m	
PROJECT CREATORS						
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd					
Project brief originator:	Kate Batt		Project design originator:		Calli Rouse	
Project Manager:	David Fell		Director/Supervisor:		Jonathan Hunn	
Sponsor / funding body:	-					
PROJECT DATE						
Start date:	21/08/06		End date:		25/08/06	
PROJECT ARCHIVES						
	Location (Accession no.)		Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)			
Physical:						
Paper:						
Digital:						
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)						
Title:						
Serial title & volume:						
Author(s):						
Page nos			Date:			

Appendix 4: SMR Summary Sheet

Site name and address: Hamberlins Farm Hamberlins Lane Northchurch Hertfordshire		
County: Hertfordshire		District: Dacorum
Village/Town: Northchurch		Parish: Northchurch
Planning application reference: 4/2113/05		
Client name, address, & tel. no: Mr J. Eames C/o Faulkners 49 High Street Kings Langley Hertfordshire WD4 9HU		
Nature of application: Development of a manege		
Present land use: Farming		
Size of application area: 60m x 30m		Size of area investigated: -
NGR (to 8 figures): SP 9661 0937		Site code:NHF/807
Site director/Organization: Jonathan Hunn / ASC Ltd		
Type of work: Watching brief		
Date of work:	Start: 21/08/06	Finish:25/08/06
Curating museum:		
Related SMR nos:-		Periods represented:-
Relevant previous summaries/reports -		
Summary of fieldwork results: <i>In August 2006 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on a site at Hamberlins Farm, Northchurch, Hertfordshire. The project was undertaken during the clearing of an area behind the extant buildings for a new manege. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.</i>		
Author: Caroline Barclay		Date: 14 th September 2006