

## Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

### **WATCHING BRIEF: NETHERWYLDE FARM RADLETT HERTFORDSHIRE**

*on behalf of Mr Howard Guard*



**Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA**

**MAY 2007**

**ASC: 918/RNF/2**

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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	RNF	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	918
<i>Event No:</i>	N/a	<i>Accession No:</i>	N/a
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Radlett		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Aldenham		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 1512 0121		
<i>Present use:</i>	Farm buildings & lawn		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Demolition of calf pens & erection of stables and store		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Hertsmere Borough Council		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	10/02/0495		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2007		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr Howard Guard Netherwylde Farm Watling Street Radlett Hertfordshire WD7 7HS		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mr Howard Guard		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	25 <sup>th</sup> May 2007
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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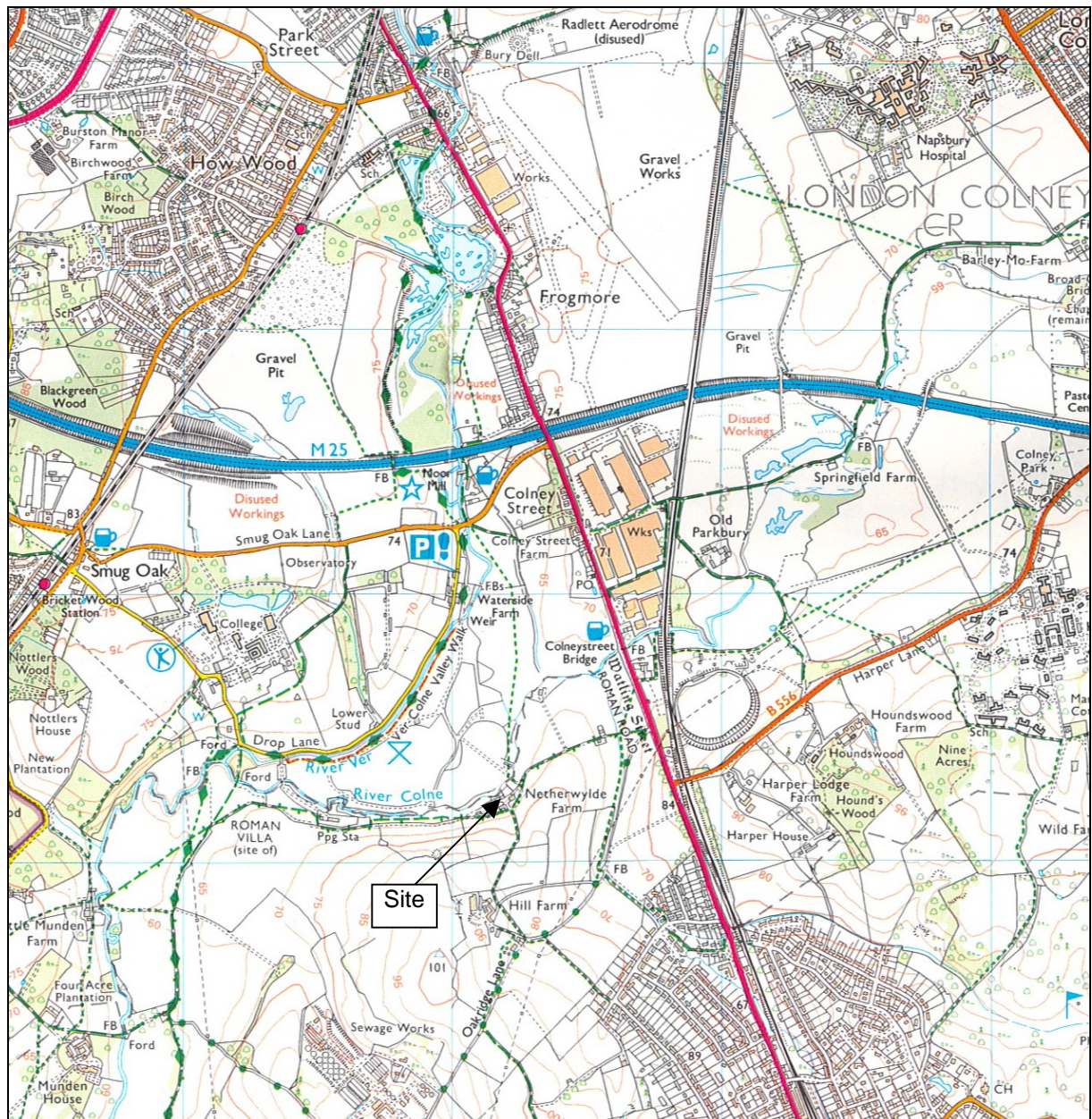
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**Figure 1:** General location (*scale 1:25,000*)

## Summary

*In May 2007 a watching brief was carried out on the excavation of footings for part of a new stable block at Netherwylde Farm, Radlett, Hertfordshire. The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, which includes the remains of two Roman villas, while the farm itself is of some antiquity and includes a number of listed buildings. The calf pens that the stables will replace date from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century at least. Observation of the footing trenches revealed a rough chalk surface of probable modern date, laid directly on undisturbed clay subsoil. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed in the watching brief.*

## 1 Introduction

1.1 In May 2007 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Netherwylde Farm, Radlett, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 1512 0121: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by the owner, Mr Howard Guard, and was carried out according to a brief (Instone 2007) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Hertsmere Borough Council*, by their archaeological advisors (AA), *Historic Environment Unit, Hertfordshire County Council*, and a project design prepared by ASC. The relevant planning application reference is 10/02/0495.

### 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 detached stable block.

### 1.3 *Location & Description*

The site is situated in the parish of Aldenham, in the administrative district of Hertsmere, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It is located to the north-west of the town of Radlett, west of the A5 Watling Street and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TL 1512 0121.

### 1.4 *Services, Buildings, Access, Etc*

Access to the site is from the east, via a track from Watling Street. The site is bounded to the north by the river Colne and is surrounded by farmland (Fig. 2). The site of the proposed stable block lies on the edge of the farm complex, west of the house, at the end of a row of existing barns and calf pens. The latter are to be demolished to make way for the stables.

### 1.5 *Geology & Topography*

The soils in the area of the site comprise the *Burlesdon Association*, consisting of “*Deep fine loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging associated with deep coarse loamy soils variably affected by groundwater. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged loamy over clayey soils. Landslips and associated irregular terrain locally*”. The underlying geology is Eocene and Jurassic loam and clay (Soil Survey 1983; 572j).

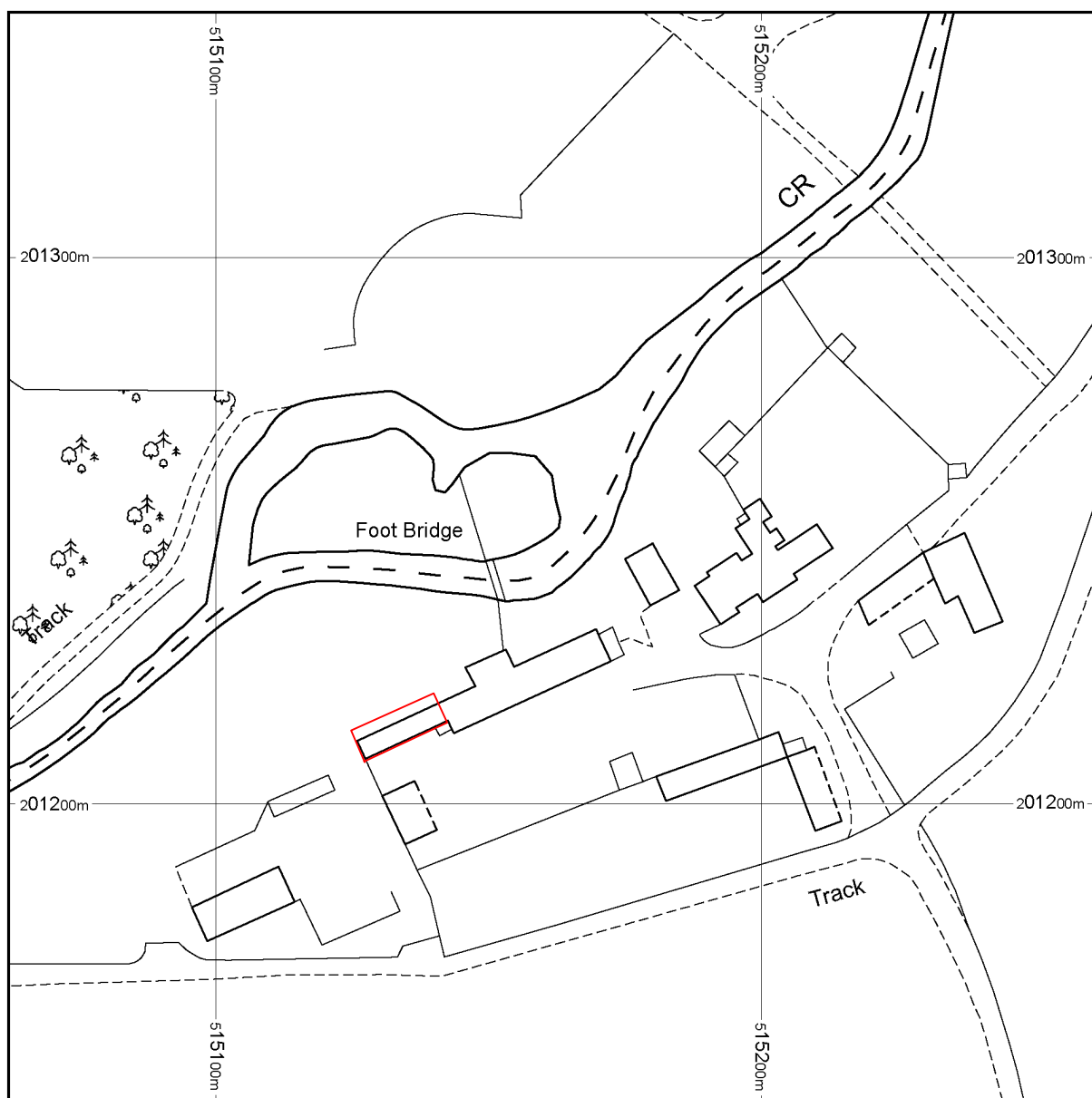
The site lies at an elevation of c.82m OD, on the south side of the valley of the river Colne. The river follows a meandering course past the farm, before its confluence with the river Ver c.1km west of the site.

## 1.6 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development comprises the demolition of the existing calf pens and the erection of detached stables and a store.

## 1.7 *Historical & Archaeological Background*

- 1.7.1 The site is within an area of considerable archaeological and historical interest and this has been recognised by the local authority by the designation of the area as an *Area of Archaeological Significance*. The site has the potential to reveal evidence of a variety of periods, but the focus of interest will probably lie in the Roman and medieval periods.
- 1.7.2 The site lies on the edge of the valley of the river Colne and a large number of Iron Age and Roman artefacts have been recorded in the river valley. There is an increasing body of evidence indicating that the valley was intensively farmed during the pre-Roman periods (Niblett 1995).
- 1.7.3 The area was of considerable importance during the Roman period (*ibid*). Settlement during this period was dominated by the Roman city of *Verulamium* (St Albans), situated c.5km north of Netherwylde Farm. A major Roman road, now known as *Watling Street*, passed c.0.7km east of the site, linking *Verulamium* with *Londinium* (London). Two substantial Roman villas have been recorded in the area of the farm: one about 1km to the west, on the south bank of the Colne, the other in the immediate vicinity of the farm (Scott 1993, 91, HT5 & HT6).
- 1.7.4 The early development of Netherwylde Farm is not understood in detail but it may have originated during the medieval period. The farm complex contains a number of listed buildings dating to the early post-medieval period.
- 1.7.5 The calf pens that the stable will replace are constructed of flint on brick footings, under a slate roof. Their exact date is uncertain, but they are shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey 25" sheet of 1871. The presence of stock brick in the upper walls, and four brick-built buttresses against the north wall, show that the building has been the subject of frequent repairs over a number of years. There is no cartographic evidence for any structures to the north, in the area of the proposed new build.



**Figure 2:** Site plan, showing location of new stable block (scale 1:1,250)

## **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*.

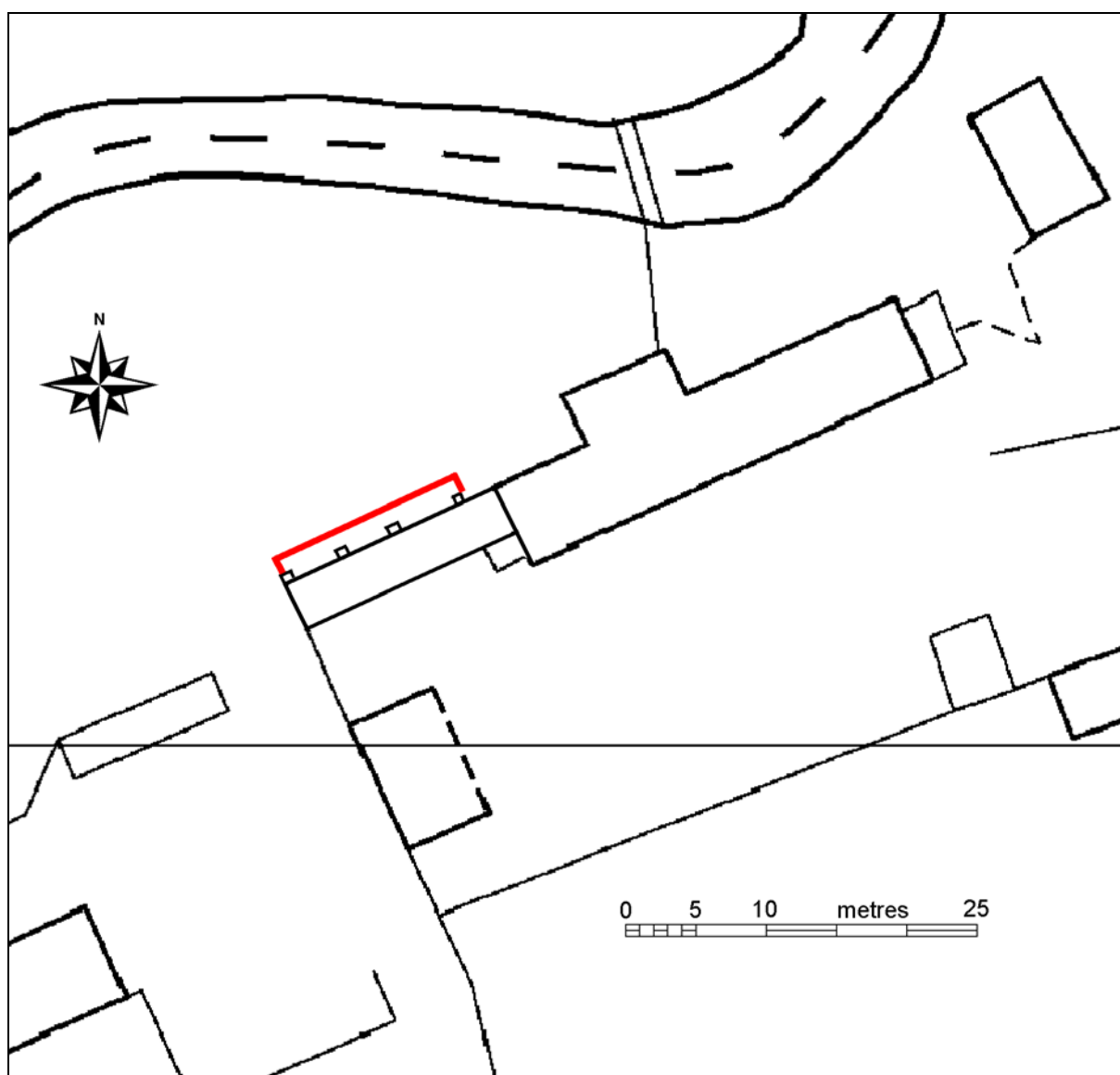
### **2.3 Methods**

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

- Site preparation, 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, etc., and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits
- Examination of spoil for archaeological material using metal detection equipment
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving, and publication

### **2.4 Constraints**

No constraints were anticipated and none were encountered during the fieldwork.



**Figure 3:** Extent of footing trench observed (*scale 1:500*)

### 3 Results & Conclusions

#### 3.1 Results

3.1.1 The watching brief comprised observation of the excavation of the footing trench for the north wall and parts of the west and east walls of the proposed stable block (Fig. 3). The remainder of the structure has the same footprint as the existing calf pens, on which it will be based. Footing trenches c.450mm wide and c.600mm deep were excavated mostly by machine, partly by hand. The area in which the footing trench was located was under grass.

3.1.2 The following layers were revealed in the trench (Plate 2):

- 1      *Topsoil*, 300mm deep at the west end of the site, reducing to 100mm depth at the east end.
- 2      *Surface*, chalk, 200mm deep at the west end of the site, reducing to 50mm depth at the east end.
- 3      *Natural*: undisturbed orange-brown clay, continuing below the base of the trench.

Close to the calf pens these layers were disturbed, probably by excavations for the construction of the buttresses on the north side of the existing building.

3.1.3 No archaeological features or finds were noted during the excavation of the trenches.

#### 3.2 Conclusions

The watching brief revealed that, prior to the laying of the present lawn, the area to the north of the calf pens had been covered by a rough chalk surface. While no dating evidence for this was recovered, chalk rubble from the construction of Radlett sewage works, c.1km south of the site, was commonly used for yards by local farmers in the 1950s (*pers. comm.* client). This surface was laid directly on the natural clay subsoil, and no evidence for any earlier structures or activity in this area of the farm was noted in the watching brief.

#### 3.3 Confidence Rating

The watching brief was carried out in good weather conditions, with full co-operation from the client and his staff. Consequently, a high confidence rating is assigned to the project.



**Plate 1:** Footing trench in relation to calf pens



**Plate 2:** Detail of layers, west end of footing trench

## 4 Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mr Howard Guard for commissioning the watching brief, and for his assistance with the project. The project was monitored on behalf of the local planning authority by Andy Instone of the Herts CC Historic Environment Unit. The watching brief was undertaken for ASC by the author, and the report was edited by David Fell BA MA MIFA.

## 5 Archive

5.1 The project archive will comprise:

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

5.2 The archive will be deposited with Bushey Museum.

## 6 List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Netherwylde Farm, Radlett			SITE NO/CODE: 918/RNF
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	Footing trench in relation to calf pens
2	✓	✓	Detail of layers, west end of footing trench
3	✓	✓	General view of footing trench, from south-west

## 7 References

### *Standards & Specifications*

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- Barclay C 2007 *Netherwylde Farm, Radlett, Hertfordshire: Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief*. ASC document 918/RNF/1.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Instone A 2007 *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* Historic Environment Unit Hertfordshire County Council

### *Secondary Sources*

- Munby L M 1977 *The Hertfordshire Landscape* Hodder & Staughton London
- Niblett R 1995 *Roman Hertfordshire* Dovecote Press Dorset
- Scott E 1993 *A Gazetteer of Roman Villas in Britain*. Leicester Archaeology Monographs **1** (Leicester).
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

## Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: Netherwylde Farm		Project No/Code: 918/RNF		Sheet: 1 of 1		
Radlett		Date of visit: 23/05/07				
Client/Developer Howard Guard						
Contact:				Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 8.35		Finish: 12.45		
Completed by: Bob Z.						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Dry, Sunny.						
Observations:						
Excavation of footing trenches for new build, partly by hand, mostly by machine.						
Surface - Grass						
Layers - 100 - 300 mm topsoil						
150 - 120 mm chalk surface						
Below this - orange-brown clay						
undisturbed nat.						
According to HG, chalk surfaces common in S05/60 on Wilt farms, <del>as</del> using chalk from construction of sewage works + tunnel to S. of farm.						
No Arch. Finds or Features						
Notified Andy Instone						
Comments:						
Nothing there - no further visit.						

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003

## Appendix 2: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Netherwylde Farm, Radlett		
Short Description:	In May 2007 a watching brief was carried out on the excavation of footings for part of a new stable block at Netherwylde Farm, Radlett, Hertfordshire. The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, which includes the remains of two Roman villas, while the farm itself is of some antiquity and includes a number of listed buildings. The calf pens that the stables will replace date from the mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century at least. Observation of the footing trenches revealed a rough chalk surface of probable modern date, laid directly on undisturbed clay subsoil. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed in the watching brief.		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None (but some buildings are listed)	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none
Current land use:	Farm buildings & curtilage	Future work:	no
Monument type:	N/a	Monument period:	modern
Significant finds:	Chalk surface, probably modern		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TL 1512 0121
District:	Hertsmere	Parish:	Aldenham CP
Site address:	Netherwylde Farm, Watling Street, Radlett, Herts, WD7 7HS		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c.25 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	82
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Andy Instone (HCC)	Project design originator:	C Barclay (ASC)
Project Manager:	B Zeepvat (ASC)	Director/Supervisor:	B Zeepvat (ASC)
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr H Guard		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	26/04/07	End date:	25/05/07
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	1 archive box	All records, documents, photos, project CD	
Paper:	none		
Digital:	CD (in archive box)		
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Netherwylde Farm, Radlett, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Reports 918/RNF/2		

Author(s):	Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA	Date:	25 <sup>th</sup> May 2007
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## Appendix 3: SMR Summary Sheet

Site name and address: Netherwylde Farm Watling Street Radlett, Herts, WD7 7HS		
County: HERTFORDSHIRE		District: Hertsmere
Village/Town: Radlett		Parish: Aldenham
Planning application reference: 10/02/0495		
Client name, address, & tel. no: Mr Howard Guard (address as above)		
Nature of application: Demolition of calf pens: construction of stable block		
Present land use: Calf pens (disused) and lawn		
Size of application area: n/a		Size of area investigated: c.25 sq m
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 1512 0121		Site code: 918/RNF
Site director/Organization: Bob Zeepvat / ASC Ltd		
Type of work: Watching Brief		
Date of work:	Start: 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2007	Finish: 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2007
Curating museum: Bushey		
Related SMR nos: none		Periods represented: modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports none		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>In May 2007 a watching brief was carried out on the excavation of footings for part of a new stable block at Netherwylde Farm, Radlett, Hertfordshire. The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance, which includes the remains of two Roman villas, while the farm itself is of some antiquity and includes a number of listed buildings. The calf pens that the stables will replace date from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century at least. Observation of the footing trenches revealed a rough chalk surface of probable modern date, laid directly on undisturbed clay subsoil. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed in the watching brief.</i></p>		
Author: Bob Zeepvat		Date: 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2007