

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
8 RUSSELL ROAD
MOOR PARK
HERTFORDSHIRE**

on behalf of Mr Mohammed Dewji



Jonathan R Hunn BA PhD MIFA

August 2007

ASC: 872/MPR/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	MPR	<i>Project no:</i>	872
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Moor Park		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Rickmansworth (unparished)		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TQ 08332 93246		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	100 × 50m		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Residential		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Swimming pool enclosure		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Three Rivers District Council		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	8/06/0324		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	June-August 2007		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr Mohammed Dewji C/o LP Architects Islington Green Studios 79 Essex Road London N1 2SF		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Edward Lipton (LP Architects)		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Jonathan R Hunn	<i>Date:</i>	23/8/07
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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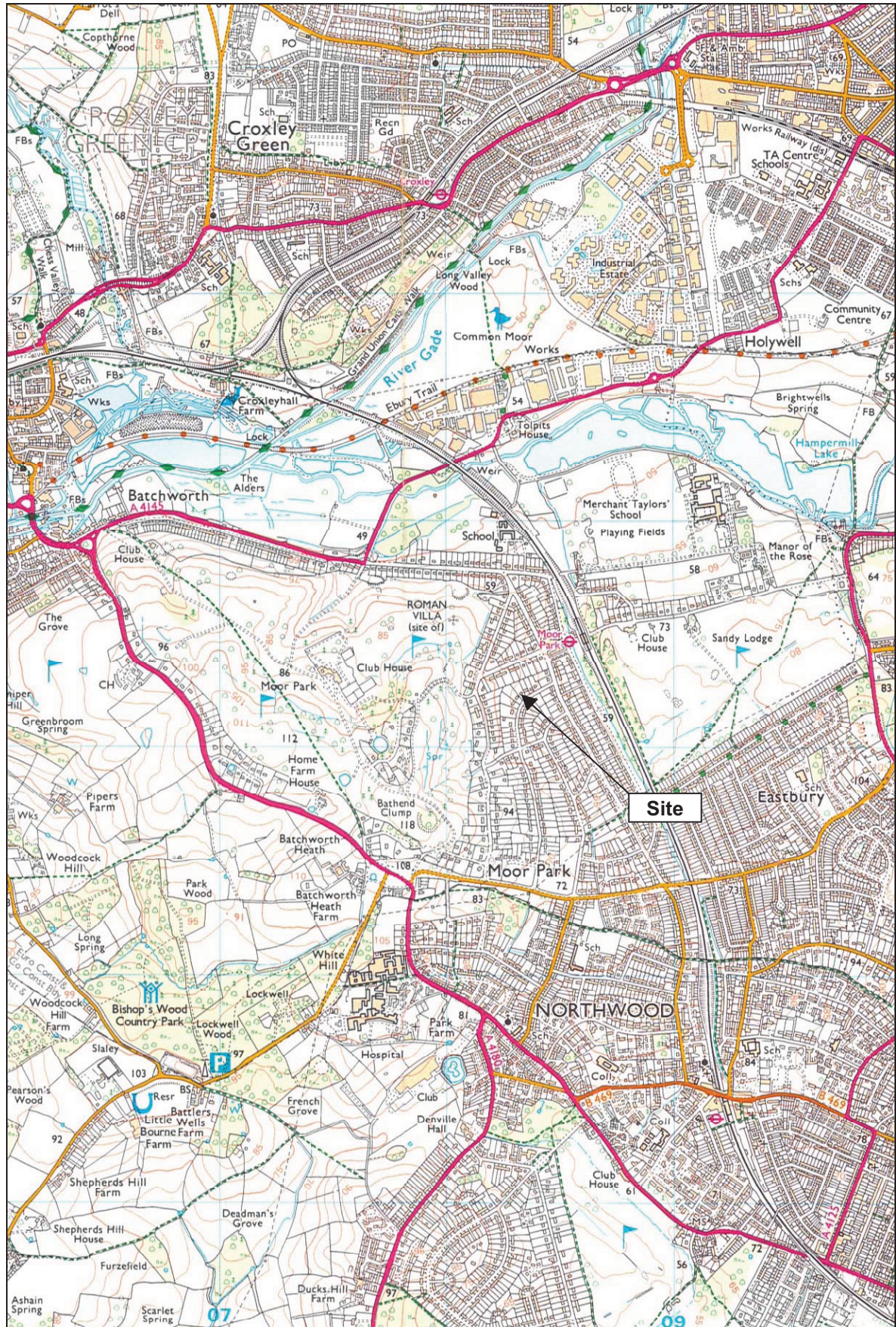


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

Between early June and mid August 2007 a watching brief was undertaken on a development at 8 Russell Road, Moor Park, Hertfordshire. This consisted of an enclosed swimming pool cut into the gently sloping terrain. No features or artefacts were observed within or adjacent to the site.

1 Introduction

1.1 Between June and August 2007 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at 8 Russell Road, Northwood, Hertfordshire (NGR TQ 08332 93246: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by *LP Architects* on behalf of the client, Mr Mohammed Dewji. The work was carried out according to a brief (Instone 2006) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Three Rivers District*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), the *Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Winter 2006). The relevant planning application reference is 8/06/0324.

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 an indoor swimming pool.

1.3 *Location*

The site is located in Moor Park, in the administrative district of Three Rivers, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It is situated on the north west side of Russell Road, at National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 08332 93246 (Fig. 2).

1.4 *Description*

The site is located in a suburban area with access from Russell Road to the east. The garden is mostly down to lawn and there is a belt of conifer trees immediately adjacent, on the northern side of the new development.

1.5 *Geology & Topography*

The site is located at an elevation of *c.*65m OD on gently sloping terrain. The soils of the locality belong to the *Essendon Association*. These are described as being plateau and river terrace drift, consisting of “slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged loamy coarse loamy over clayey soils. Associated with similar fine loamy over clayey and fine silty over clayey soils” (Soil Survey 1983, 714d).

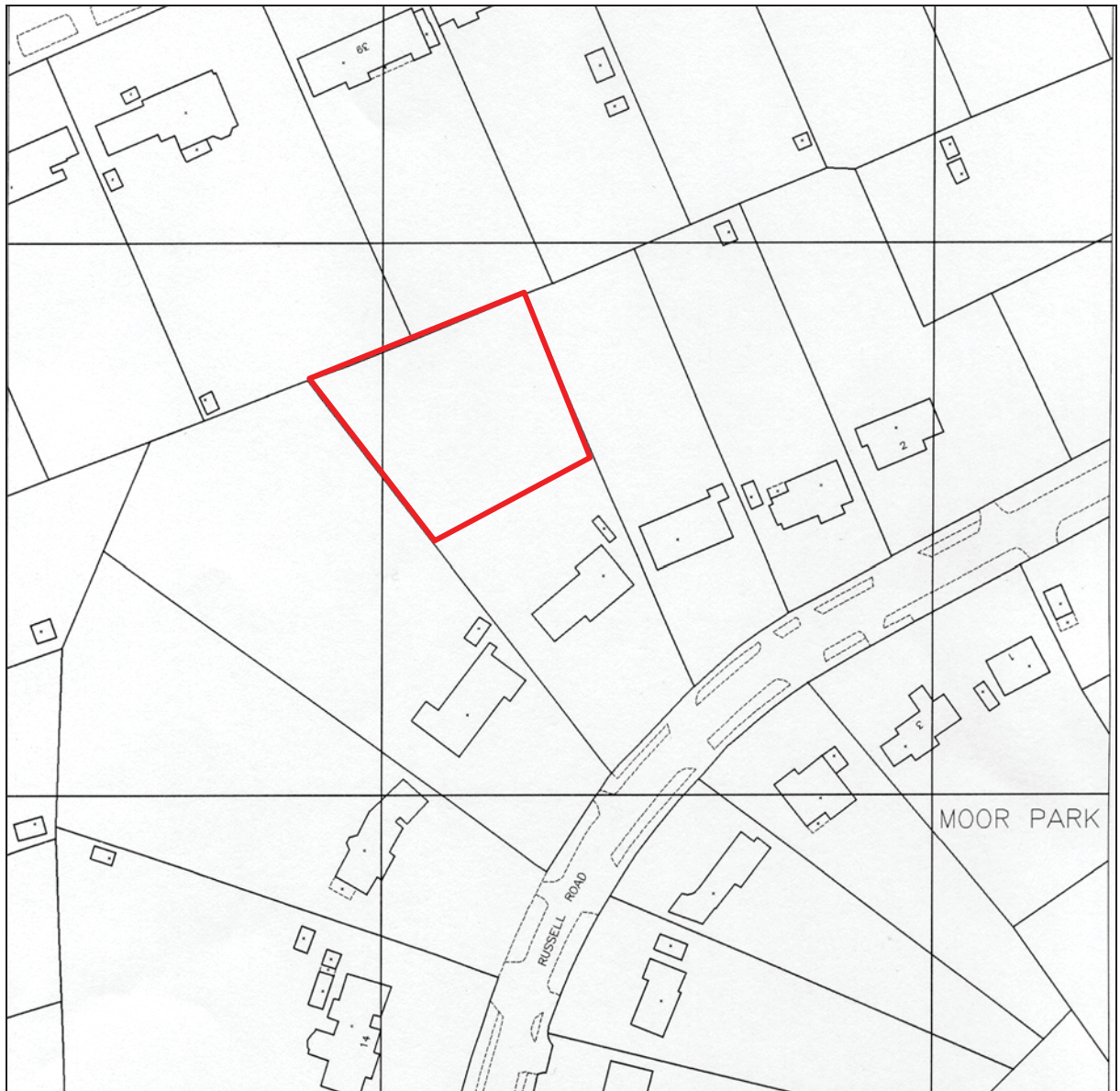


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1,250)

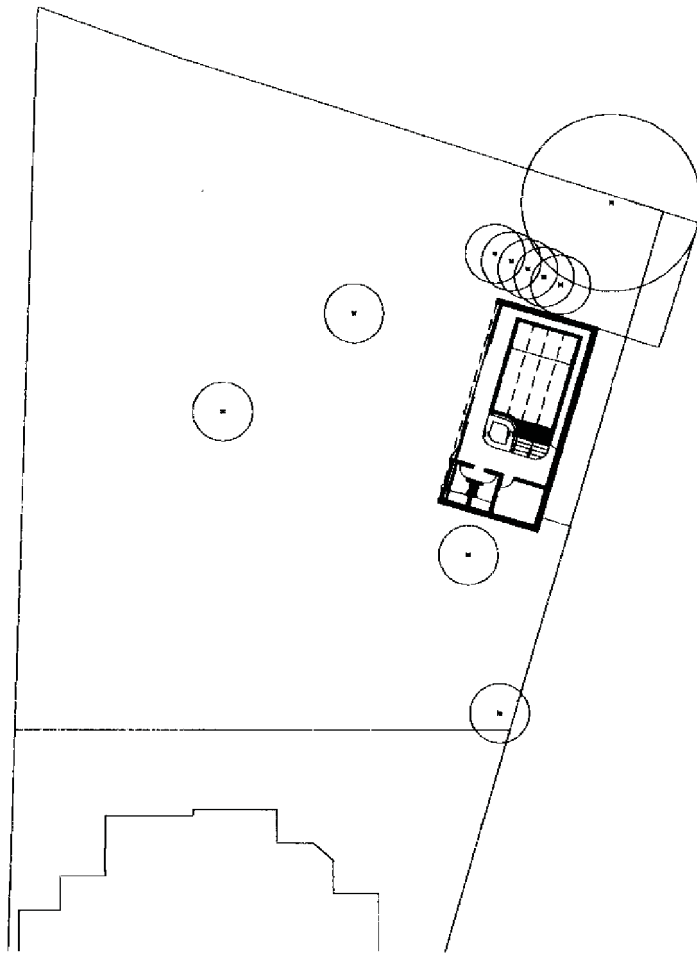


Figure 3: Plan of the proposed development (*scale 1:500*)

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 subsoil deposits for archaeological features, before development continues.
- The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits.
- Subsoil stripping under archaeological supervision followed by a rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits before development continues.
- Examination of any service and foundation 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.

2.4 Constraints

No constraints were encountered during the course of this watching brief.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

The Moor Park and Northwood areas are considered to be areas of archaeological significance. The site is adjacent to *Areas of Archaeological Significance 13, 14 & 15*, as designated in the Local Plan.

3.1 Prehistoric (before 600BC)

The valley of the river Colne lies c.1.5 km to the north of the development site, and has produced abundant evidence of prehistoric settlement and related activities. Gravel extraction in the 1930s in the Hampermill area revealed evidence of activity from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. The Moor Park area has also produced evidence of a Mesolithic-Neolithic settlement at Bathend Clump (Derricourt & Jacobi 1970).

3.2 Iron Age (600BC-AD43)

There is little evidence for settlement in the area surrounding the site during the Iron Age. The possible line of Grim's Dyke to the west of Cuckoo Hill, Pinner, is recorded c.4 km to the southeast of the development site, but no other activity is recorded in the area (Kendall 2000).

3.3 Roman (AD43-c.450)

The Roman period was a time of prolific development throughout the Greater London area, particularly towards *Londinium*. The area surrounding the development site does not appear to have been heavily inhabited during the Roman period, but there is evidence for activity within the area of Northwood, where a coin hoard was uncovered on Pinner Road (Kendall 2000). Further away from the site, c.0.5 km to the north, is the site of the Moor Park Roman villa. The villa was constructed c.130 AD, and provides more concrete evidence for Roman activity in the area (Scott 1993).

3.4 Saxon (c.450-1066)

The area surrounding the development site also appears largely devoid of activity during the Saxon period. It has been suggested that settlement during the early Saxon period in the Greater London area was heavily influenced by the topography of the area. The early settlers either preferred or were restricted to the easily cultivated fertile soils of the river valleys, as opposed to the possibly more heavily wooded claylands (Kendall 2000), where the development site is located. It is therefore logical to assume that this area remained unsettled throughout the whole Saxon period.

3.5 Medieval (1066-1500)

The early medieval landscape evidence is uncertain, but the area was probably part of a holding belonging to the abbey of St Albans (Page 1908, 375). The site would have lain within a landscape that had been emparked from at least the 15th century.

3.6 Post-Medieval (1500-1900)

It appears that the present Moor Park was medieval in origin, when it formed part of the holding of the Manor of the Moore, being used for the conservation and hunting of game (Falvey 1993, 9). In 1426 the king granted a licence to inclose 600 acres of land in Rickmansworth and Watford to make a park and to embattle the site of the Moor (Chauncy 1700, II, 344). However, it was not until the mid-16th century that this ceased to be maintained (Falvey 1993, 14). The property was granted to Francis Russell (Earl of Bedford) in 1576, but it was not until 1617 that a new house was built within the present park (Williamson 2000, 11). Associated with this house was what was described by Sir William Temple as the ‘perfectest figure of a garden I ever saw, either at home or abroad’ (Strong 1979, 141). Nothing remains of the 17th century garden at Moor Park as it was swept away by Capability Brown (Strong 1979, 146).

In essence, the present park is an 18th century creation overlain by later additions and impositions. The avenues were planted in 1725 (Pevsner 1977, 253), contemporary with the re-building of the mansion by its new owner Benjamin Styles (Williamson 2000, 26). This work is generally attributed to Charles Bridgeman (Williamson 2000, 28). In less than a generation, further additions were made to the park by Capability Brown under the patronage of Admiral Anson (Williamson 2000, 42). Ten years separated the harsh criticism of Horace Walpole who dismissed the landscaping as being ‘*as unnatural as if it were drawn with a rule and compass*’ from the praise of Thomas Whateley (Williamson 2000, 43). Many of the 17th century and 18th century avenues were left untouched. Bridgeman’s canal and octagonal basin were removed and a more naturalistic setting created for the house. It has been suggested that the next owner of Moor Park, Sir Laurence Dundas had further work done by one of Brown’s co-workers, William Ireland (Williamson 2000, 44).

3.7 Modern (1900-present)

The estate was broken up in 1919 and Lord Leverhulme acquired the mansion and park of 473 acres. In 1937 the golf course was purchased by Rickmansworth Urban District Council and a new club house built in the park (Williamson 2000, 89). By this time the eastern side of the park had been sold off for housing.

4 Results & Conclusions

- 4.1 The monitoring visits undertaken in June 2007 showed that the site had a natural soil profile consisting of about 0.3m of topsoil (A horizon) and a sub-soil (B horizon) of a stoneless, silty brown clay across an area approximately 5m x 10m. No pre-modern features or stray artefacts were noted either within or adjacent to the footprint of the development.
- 4.2 To judge from the description of the earlier monitoring visits, both verbal and textual, no evidence of archaeological features or artefacts was observed. To what extent this is a true reflection of the surrounding area is difficult to say. It is only safe to conclude that in this instance, no significant finds were made.



Plate 1: Setting of the new swimming pool



Plate 2: Current state of new pool



Plate 3: Nature of the subsoil

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Edward Lipton of LP Architects for commissioning this report on the client's behalf. Thanks are due to Andrew Instone of the Historic Environment Team of Hertfordshire County Council for his advice. The watching brief was led for ASC by the author, and carried out by the author and Chris Swain. Thanks are due to Mark Winter for compiling the project design and to Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA for editing the report.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

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

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Three Rivers Museum, Rickmansworth

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd 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)*.

Secondary Sources

- Derricourt R.M. & Jacobi R. M 1970 *Mesolithic finds from Hampermill, Watford*. Hertfordshire Archaeology 2, 1-5.
- Falvey, H. 1993: The More: Rickmansworth's Lost Palace. *Hertfordshire's Past* 34, 2-16.
- Kendall (ed) 2000 *The archaeology of Greater London: An assessment of archaeological evidence for human presence in the area now covered by Greater London*.
- Page, W. 1908: *The Victoria County History of Hertfordshire*. Dawsons of Pall Mall. Folkestone & London.
- Pevsner, N. and Cherry, B. 1977: *The Buildings of England: Hertfordshire*. Penguin. Harmondsworth.
- Scott, E 1993 *A Gazetteer of Roman Villas in Britain* University of Leicester
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Strong, R. 1979: *The Renaissance Garden in England*. Thames and Hudson (London).
- Williamson, T. 2000: *The Parks and Gardens of West Hertfordshire*. Hertfordshire Gardens Trust.

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: 3 RUSSELL ROAD MOOR PARK, HERTS		Project No/Code: 972 1MPR		Sheet: 1 of 3		
Client/Developer: L.P. ARCHITECTS		Date of visit: approx 7 June 2007				
Contact: EDWARD LIPSON		Phone: 01280 7288 1333				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 11.00	Finish: 4.00		Completed by: CHRIS		
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify): POOL
Site & weather conditions: WET						
Observations: VISITED AT 2.00 PM WORK NOT STARTED, NO MACHINERY ON SITE						
Comments:						

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003



A.S.C. LTD

SITE VISIT RECORD

Project: MOOR PARK - 872	Project No/Code:
	Date of visit: 4/6/7
Client/Developer	Tel:
Owner/Tenant:	Tel:
Purpose of visit: WATCHING BRIEF	
Visit made by: CHRIS, ZOE 2 of 3	

SITE DETAILS (circle whichever apply)

TERRAIN	<u>Slope</u>	Gentle slope	Steep slope	Other	
	Level	Undulating	Cut terrace	Built terrace	
LAND USE	<u>Residential</u>	Commercial	Industrial	Educational	Recreational
	Quarrying	Military	Agricultural	Transport	Other
	Managed	Natural	<u>Urban</u>	Suburban	Rural
VEGETATION	Wild	Overgrown	Grass (imp)	Grass (unimp)	Arable
	Shrubs	Wood (decid)	Wood (con)	Wood (mixed)	Waste (none)
EARTH-WORKS	R & F	Lynchets	Bank & ditch	Pond	
	Hollow way	House platform	Moat	Fishpond	
	Motte / bailey	Mill mound	Pillow mound	Tumulus	
	Water meadow	Cress bed	Mill stream/pond	Other	
	Military	Transport	Industrial	None	
CONSTRAINTS	O/H cables	Buried services	Structures	Function	Other
BOUNDARIES (describe)	GARDEN FENCE				
ACCESS (describe)	THROUGH GARDEN GATE				

OTHER DESCRIPTION / COMMENTS

ARRIVED AT APPROX. 2.30pm. WORK ALREADY STARTED, USING MINI DIGGER NO ARCH NOTED

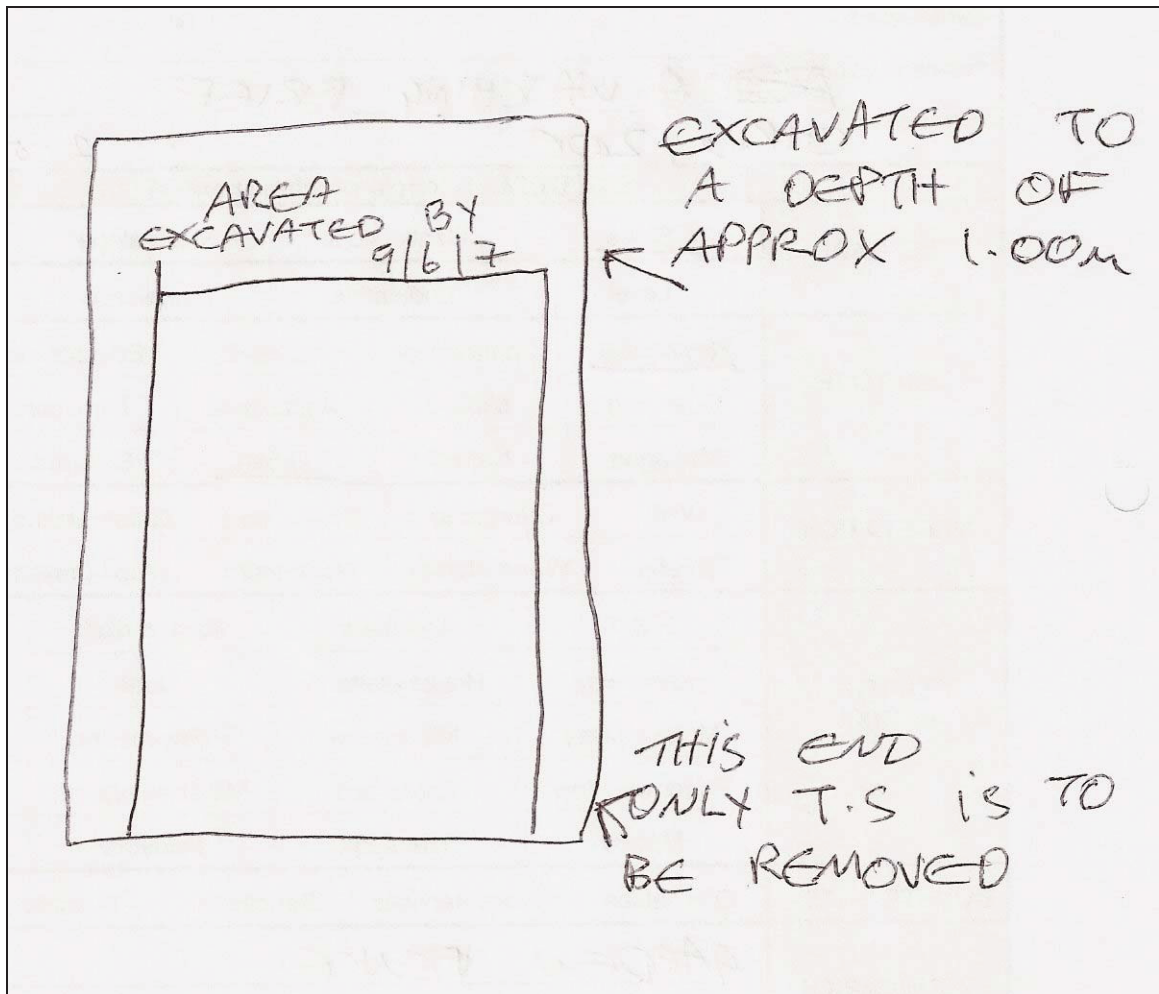
P.T.O

CONTRACTOR SAID ~~WAS~~ EXCAVATING WOULD FINISH BY 14/6/7

NO PHOTOS TAKEN BECAUSE WE DIDNT HAVE A CAMERA.

For sketch plan, use reverse

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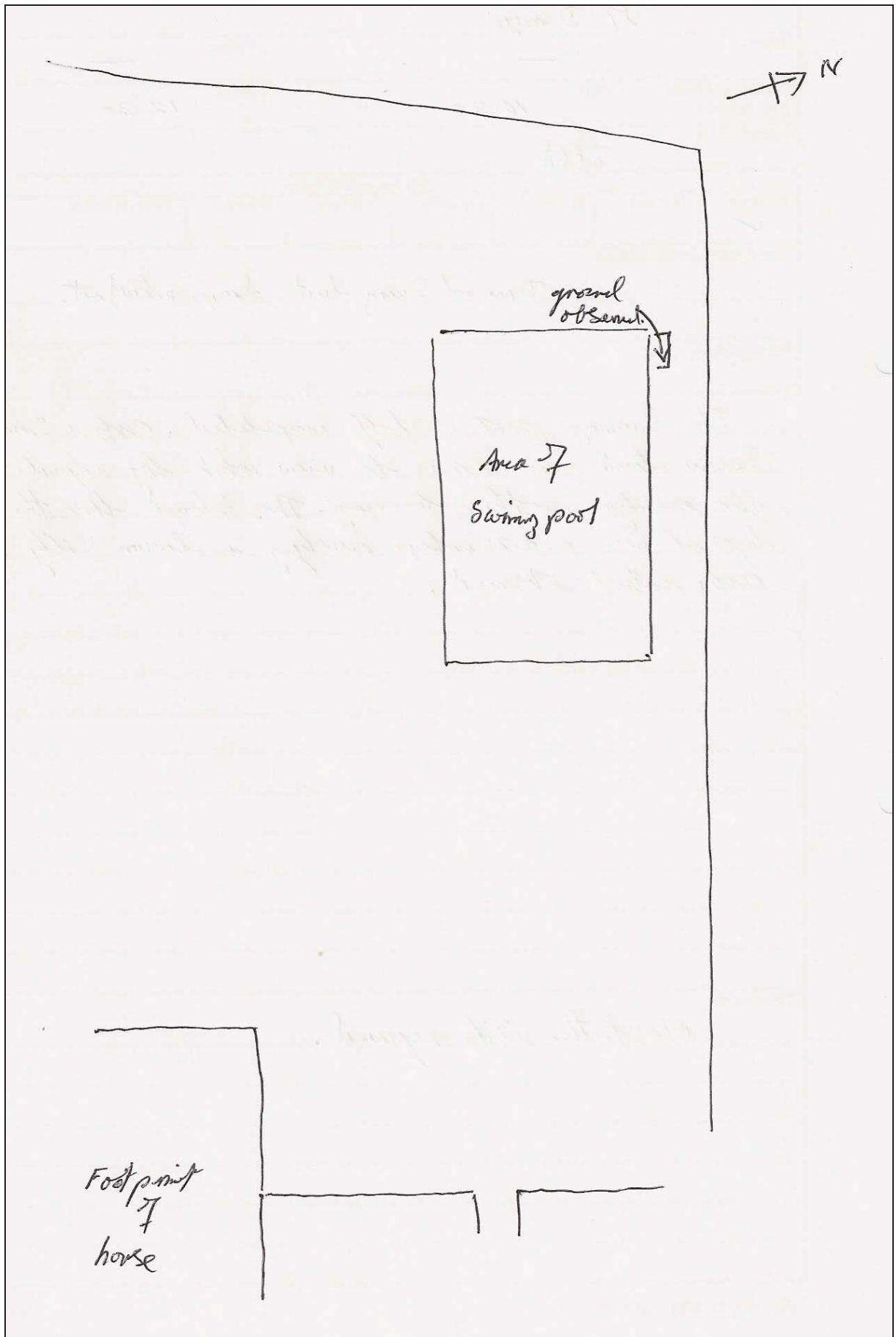
A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: 8, Russell Rd, Moor Park		Project No/Code: 872 1MPR	Sheet: 3 of 3
Client/Developer M. Dewji		Date of visit: 16/8/07	
Contact: —		Phone: —	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 10.30	Finish: 12.30	
Completed by: SRM			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Dry and Sunny but clouds overhead.			
Observations: The Saining post is half completed. Only a small section that was open to view which lay adjacent to the existing northern boundary. This showed that the topsoil is c.0.25m deep overlying a brown silty clay only about 1m deep.			
Comments: No further visits required.			

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003



Appendix 3: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: 8, Russell Road, Moor Park			SITE NO/CODE: 933/MPR
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		2155	Setting of swimming pool looking north
2		2156	Current state of development on 6/08/07
3		2157	Detail of sub-soil
4		2158	East elevation of the house

Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	8 Russell Road, Moor Park, Hertfordshire		
Short Description:	<i>Between early June and mid August 2007 a watching brief was undertaken on a development at 8, Russell Road, Moor Park, Hertfordshire. This consisted of an enclosed swimming pool cut into the gently sloping terrain. No features or artefacts were observed within or adjacent to the site.</i>		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	none	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none
Current land use:	garden	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	no
Monument type:	N/a	Monument period:	N/a
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TQ 08332 93246
District:	Three Rivers	Parish:	Rickmansworth
Site address: (with postcode if known)	8, Russell Road, Moor Park, Hertfordshire		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c. 50 sq. m.	Height OD: (metres)	65m
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	A. Instone	Project design originator:	Mark Winter
Project Manager:	D. Fell	Director/Supervisor:	J. Hunn
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr Mohammed Dewji		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	8/6/07	End date:	16/8/07
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	No	No	
Paper:	yes		
Digital:	yes		
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: 8 Russell Road, Moor Park, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC doc. ref. 8782/MPR/2		
Author(s):	Jonathan Hunn BA PhD MIFA		
Page nos	N/a	Date:	21/8/07