Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF:
39 WOLSEY ROAD
MOOR PARK, NORTHWOOD
HERTFORDSHIRE

NGR: TQ 08516 93266

on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hathi

A. Thompson BSc

February 2008

ASC: 869/NWR/2

Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: office@archaeological-services.co.uk
Website: www.archaeological-services.co.uk

Site Data

ASC project code:	NWR	*ASC Project No:*	869/NWR/2
OASIS ref:	tbc	*Event/Accession no:*	n/a
County:	Hertfordshire		
Village/Town:	Moor Park		
Civil Parish:	Rickmansworth		
NGR (to 8 figs):	TQ 0851 9326		
Extent of site:	800 sq m		
Present use:	Residential		
Planning proposal:	Demolition of existing two-storey structure and construction of a new two-storey structure with basement		
Planning application ref/date:	8/06/0203 & 8/06/020		
Local Planning Authority:	Three Rivers District Council		
Date of fieldwork:	31/01/2007 – 04/01/2008		
Client:	Mr and Mrs S Hathi C/o Graham Seabrook Partnership Ltd The Studio Barn Bury Farm Courtyard Pednor Road Chesham Buckinghamshire HP5 2JU		
Contact name:	Julian G Seabrook		

Internal Quality Check

Primary Author:	Alex Thompson	*Date:*	11/02/2008

Revisions:		*Date:*	

Edited/Checked By:		*Date:*	

CONTENTS

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

Summary

Between October 2007 and January 2008 a watching brief was carried out by ASC during groundworks for a residential development at 39 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Northwood. No deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed, which suggests that the property is outside the known Roman sites at Moor Park. Evidence for post-medieval to modern quarrying on the site is present on the form of an extant earthwork and backfill to the rear of the property.

1. Introduction

1.1 In October and December 2007 and January 2008 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at 39 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Northwood, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by *Graham Seabrook Partnership Ltd* on behalf of *Mr and Mrs Hathi*, and was carried out according to a project design prepared to the requirements of the *brief* (Instone 2006) issued by *Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit,* archaeological advisors (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), *Three Rivers District Council*. The relevant planning application references are 8/06/0 203 and 8/06/2204.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the redevelopment of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

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 Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was carried out under the overall direction of **Jonathan Hunn** BA PHD MIFA, an established archaeologist with extensive experience in managing archaeological projects in England. Jonathan holds a first degree in Archaeology and History from the University College of North Wales (Bangor), and a PhD from the University of Southampton (Dept of Geography). Jonathan has held managerial posts with *English Heritage, Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust, Oxford Archaeological Unit* and *Tempvs Reparatvm Ltd,* and has acted as archaeological consultant for *Hertfordshire County Council* and *English Heritage*.

1.5 *The Site*

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is situated at the northern end of Moor Park in the administrative district of Three Rivers, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It is located to the south of the junction between Wolsey Road and Pembroke Road, and to the south east of

the Roman villa in Moor Park, at NGR TQ 0851 9326 (Fig. 2). The site comprises a house and extensive gardens on the Wolsey Road frontage.

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site is located at an elevation of *c.*61.9m 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).

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing two-storey house, and the construction of a new two-storey dwelling, with a basement, on a similar footprint (Fig. 3).

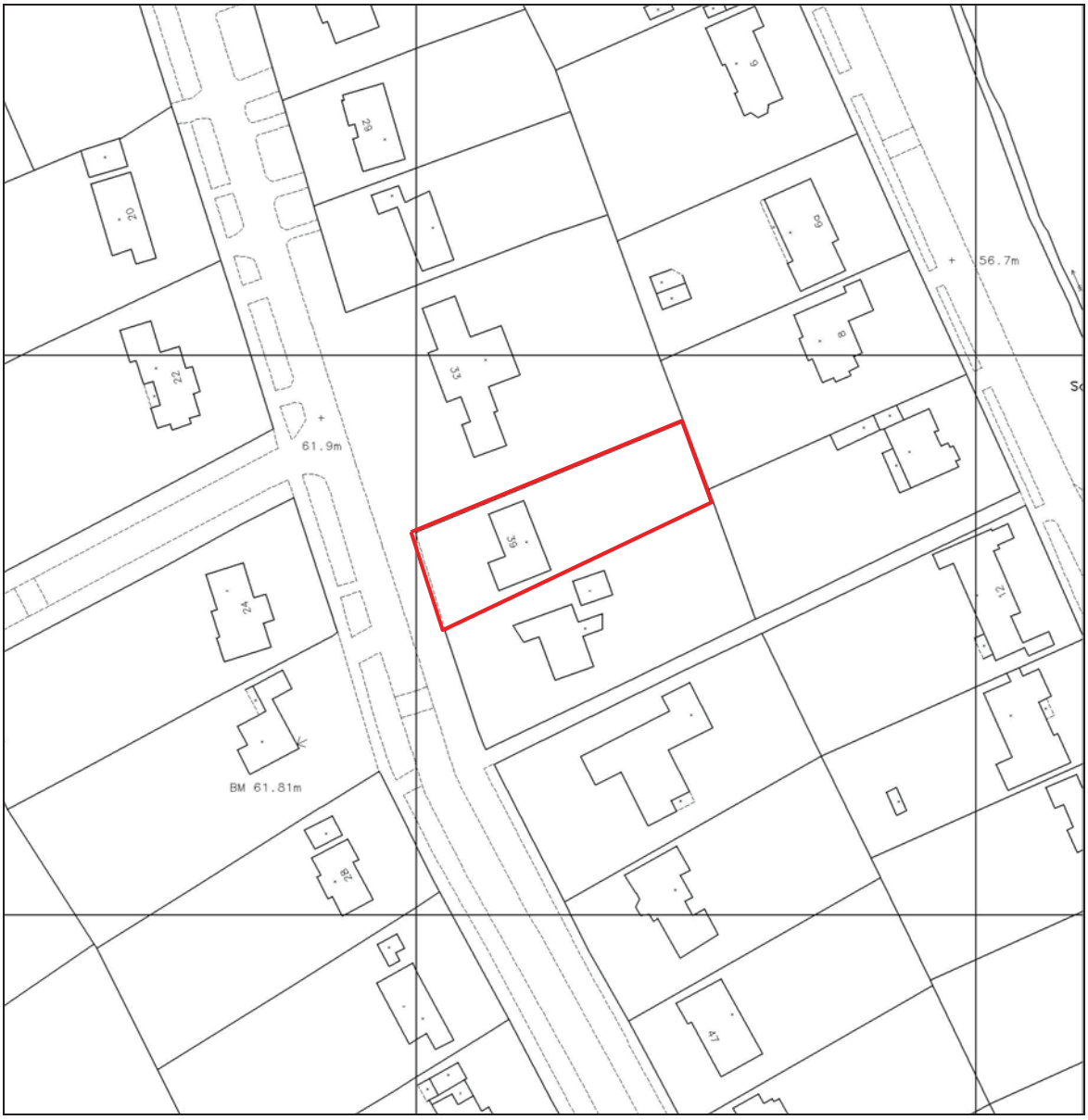


Figure 2: Site plan *(scale 1:1,250)*

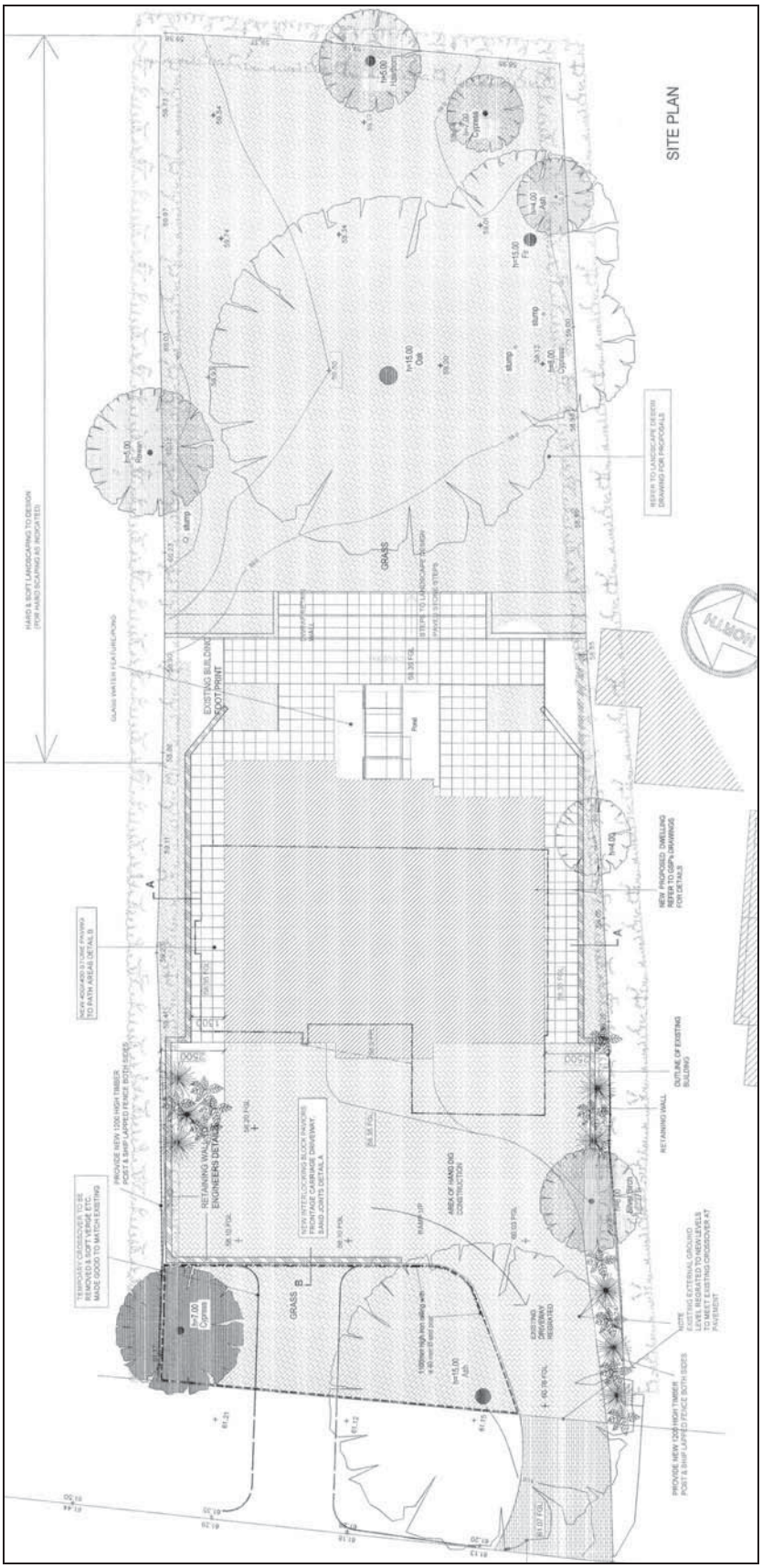


Figure 3: Plan of the proposed development *(not to scale)*

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

As described in the project design, the aims of the 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 requirements of the *brief*, and to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001) and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000a), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991), 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 project design, which required:

- Observation of topsoil and overburden and subsoil stripping under archaeological supervision, as required
- Inspection of sub-soil deposits for archaeological features
- Archaeological features/deposits were present to be recorded
- Examination of any service and foundation trenches and recording of any exposed archaeological deposits
- Examination of spoil-heaps for any archaeological material
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.

2.4 *Constraints*

There were no constraints experienced during the watching brief which required any deviation from the works specified.

3. Historical & Archaeological Background

The site is situated between *Areas of Archaeological Significance 13, 14, and 15*, as designated in the Local Plan. These note the extensive prehistoric and Roman activity in the area of Moor Park Golf Course, Sandy Lodge Golf Course, and along the Colne valley. Although the proposed development site lies outside the above areas, it is clear from the abundance of Roman and prehistoric spot finds from the vicinity that the entire area of Moor Park was a prehistoric and Roman landscape of some importance. In addition, the proposed development site is close to the projected line of a Roman road.

4. Results

4.1 At the southern property boundary the ground was more or less level. Thereafter it sloped down towards the existing house, which was approximately 2m below the level of the road. To the rear of the property a 1.5m high bank was apparent at the north-western corner. This may be the result of former quarrying rather than garden landscaping, as this area is derelict and overgrown (Plate 1).

4.2 The initial groundworks involved the creation of a temporary access route for the construction works, from Wolsey Road into the south-west corner of the site. The topsoil in this area was up to *c.*200mm thick (Plate 2) overlying a brown silty subsoil up to 500mm deep. The underlying natural exposed was yellowish-brown clay containing occasional flint and comminuted chalk fragments (Plate 3). Neither deposit contained any archaeological artefacts. A modern water main orientated east- west and an oblique line of recent mortar were the only features observed in this area.

4.3 The former residential structure was demolished and the footings removed within an approximate 16m square area. The resultant spoil heap obscured the central area of the site and steel shuttering securing the sides of the excavated area obscured most of the exposed sections. However, parts of the section remained visible to a depth of at 1east 1.20m at the western and eastern sides. Under most of the topsoil (up to 0.30m deep) the subsoil overlay a natural horizon of mixed gravely clay, silty/sand clay and gravel (Plate 4). In the north-west corner there were traces of a possible cut containing redeposited natural and subsoil: this may be backfill within a quarry pit, coincident with the corner of the earthwork (Plate 5). Fragments of red brick and tile were observed in the section suggesting a post-medieval to modern date for the feature. Piles for the new building were driven to a depth of 3.1m below the original ground level. No other features were noted at this stage.

4.4 Both spoil and natural deposits were removed from the imprint of the new building to a depth of *c*3.5m, exposing chalk, chalky clay and pebbly clay. In the north-west corner of the building footprint was the base of the quarry pit observed earlier (Plate 6). On the eastern side of the site there was a similar pocket of pebbly clay deposited over fine layers of a yellowish-brown, possibly wind-blown sand (Plate 8).

4.5 The gaps between the shuttering and the sides of the excavation were infilled with concrete to form the foundations, whilst the excavated area in between formed the new basement room.

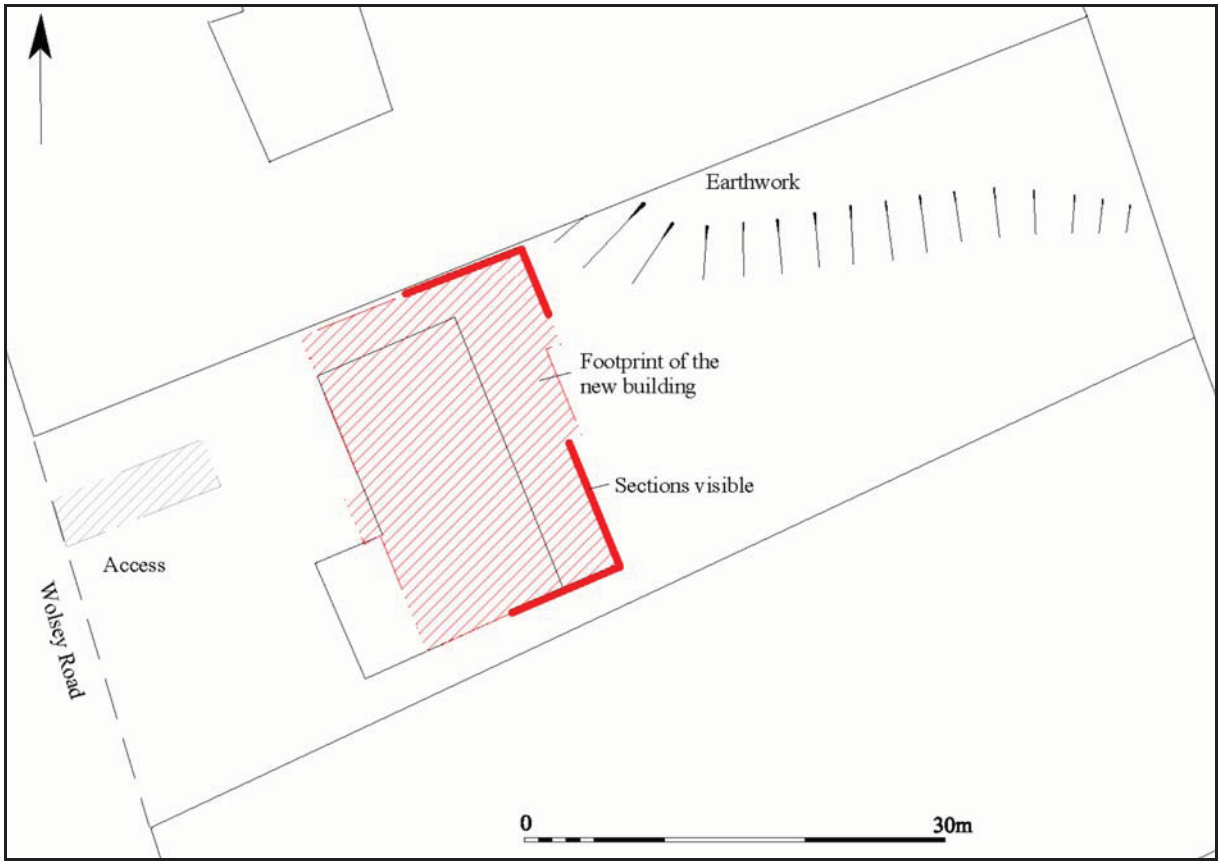


Fig. 4: Plan of watching brief areas *(scale 1:500)*

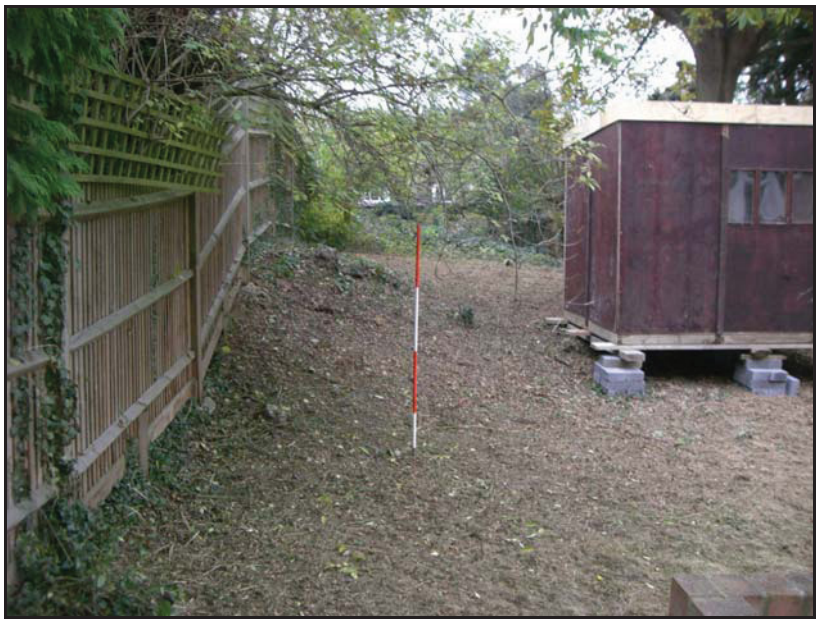


Plate 1: View of the earthwork to the rear of the property. Scale 2m

Plate 2: Section of topsoil/subsoil and natural in the access road corridor. Scale 1m

Plate 3: The access corridor as stripped, looking north.

Plate 4: Section showing gravely clay natural horizon below topsoil. Scale in 50cm increments.

Plate 5: Section showing possible quarry pit fill. Scale in 50cm increments.

Plate 6: Section of possible quarry pit on the edge of the earthwork. Scale 1m

Plate 7: Surviving section of wind-blown sand below gravel. Scale 1m

5. Conclusions

5.1 No archaeological deposits were observed in the groundworks within the footprint of the new building or its associated access road. Although it does not however preclude the possibility that archaeological remains are present elsewhere on the site, the lack of artefacts of any date does tend to suggest that the site genuinely does lie outside the limits of Roman activity known at Moor Park to both the east and west. The scope for the survival of archaeological remains would be very limited at the northern and western side of the site where an earthwork and the groundworks have suggested that there has been post-medieval or recent quarrying.

5.2 Due to the unusual depth of works, there was also an opportunity to record some of the Pleistocene deposits which overlay the natural chalk. It is not certain whether gravel pockets from river and or glacial action were deposited in solution hollows in the surface of chalk along with clay or whether these were mainly horizontally bedded in interleaved layers, as was the case with the surviving section of possible wind-blown sand or Loess.

6. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by Graham Seabrook Partnership Ltd on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hathi. The project was monitored by Andy Instone of the *Hertfordshire CC Historic Environment Unit,* of on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by Jonathon Hunn BA PhD MIFA, who also carried out the fieldwork. The report was prepared by Alex Thompson BSc and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

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

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the Three Rivers Museum.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

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

Allen J L & Holt A St J, 1986 (with later updates) *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology.* Standing Conference of Unit Managers (London).

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

EH 2002 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation.* English Heritage (London).

Ferguson L.M. & Murray D.M. 1997 *Archaeological Documentary Archives: Preparation, Curation and Storage.* Institute of Field Archaeologists' Paper **1** (Manchester).

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*

Instone A 2006 *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* Historic Environment Unit Herts C.C.

MGC 1992 *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections.* Museums and Galleries Commission (London).

SMA 1995 *Towards an accessible archaeological archive - the transfer of archaeological archives to museums: guidelines for use in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.* Society for Museum Archaeologists (London).

Walker, K. 1990: *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage.* United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section (London).

Watkinson D & Neal V 1998 *First Aid for Finds* (third edition). Rescue (Hertford & London).

Secondary Sources

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

Appendix 1: ASC Watching Brief Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD — **ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD**

Project: 39, Wolsey Rd Moor Park	Project No/Code: 569 IMWR	Sheet: 1 of 3
	Date of visit: 31/10/07	
Client/Developer: Mr & Mrs Hathi		
Contact: Tony Tull (site foreman)	Phone: 07718587361	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 2pm	Finish: 4.30pm
Completed by: SRM		

Development Type:

Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
		✓				

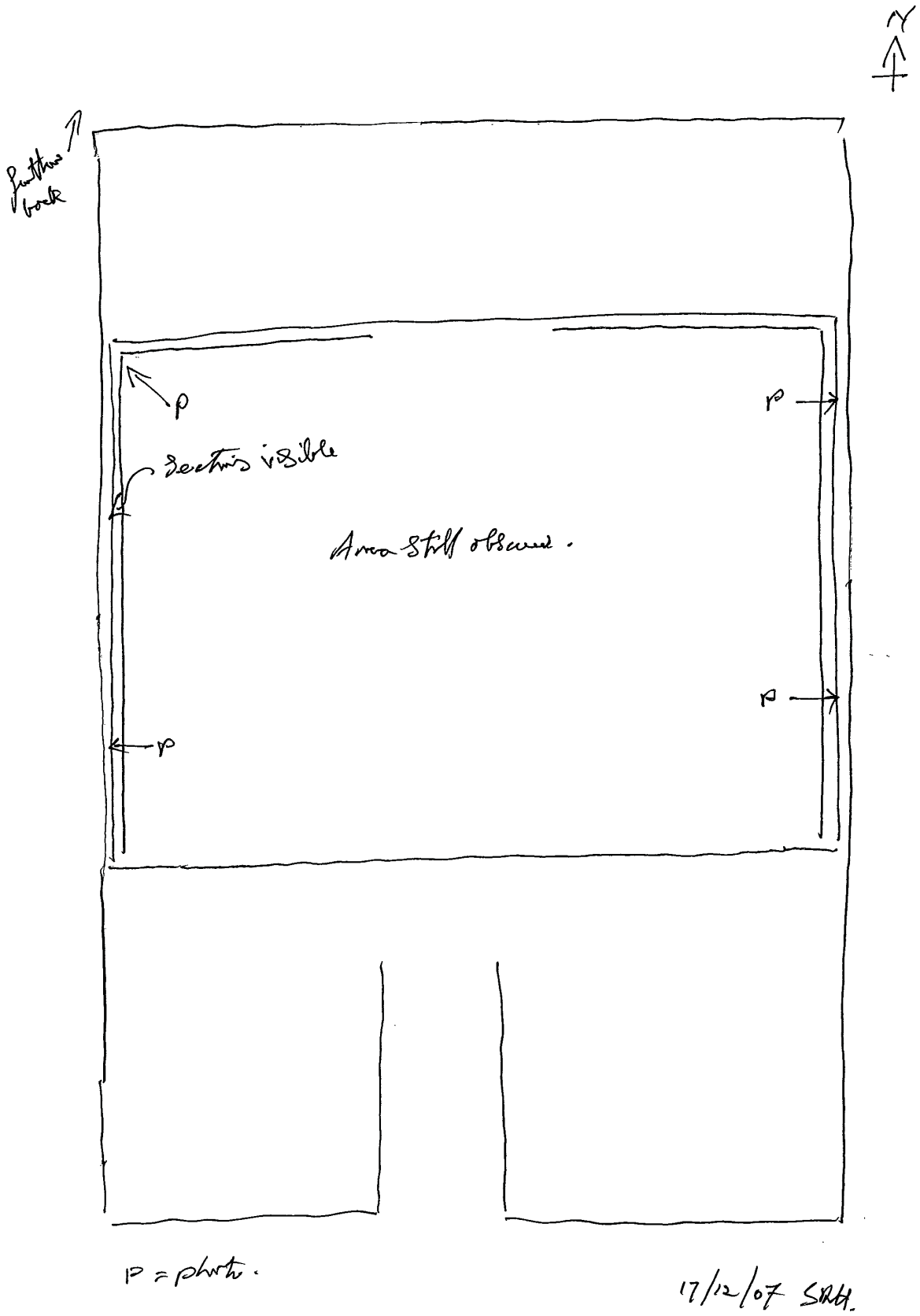
Site & weather conditions:
Dull, damp and mild.

Observations:
Observed a good proportion of the access route (temporary, to avoid the tree roots). It was c. 3.5m wide and about 10m in length; depth was more than 0.7m. The terrain is more or less level with the edge of the property touching it slopes down towards the level with the existing house (soon to be demolished). The subsoil consists of a yellowish brown clay with occasional flints and patches of semi-decomposed chalk. Apart from an E-W water main (50mm dia) and an oblique line of modern, metal pipe, there were no man made features or artefacts noted.

A-B area sloped up 1.5m in a distance of 6.5m. Only recorded flint patches and still – v. little topsoil.

Comments:
The house is about 2m below the level of the road. To the rear of the property there is an overgrown garden area with a bank about 1.5m high on its western side. This is v. pebbly and could conceivably be the remnant of some quarrying activity in the past.

For sketch plan, use reverse


N
Further back
P
P
Section visible
Area still obscured.
P
P
P = photo.
17/12/07 SRH.

A.S.C. LTD **ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD**

Project: 39, Wolsey Rd Moor Park	Project No/Code: 869 / NWR Date of visit: 17/12/07	Sheet: 2 of 3
Client/Developer: Mr & Mrs Hotti		
Contact: Tony Till	Phone: 07718587361	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 1.20 m	Finish:
Completed by: JRA		

Development Type:

Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):

Site & weather conditions:

Dull and overcast, dry

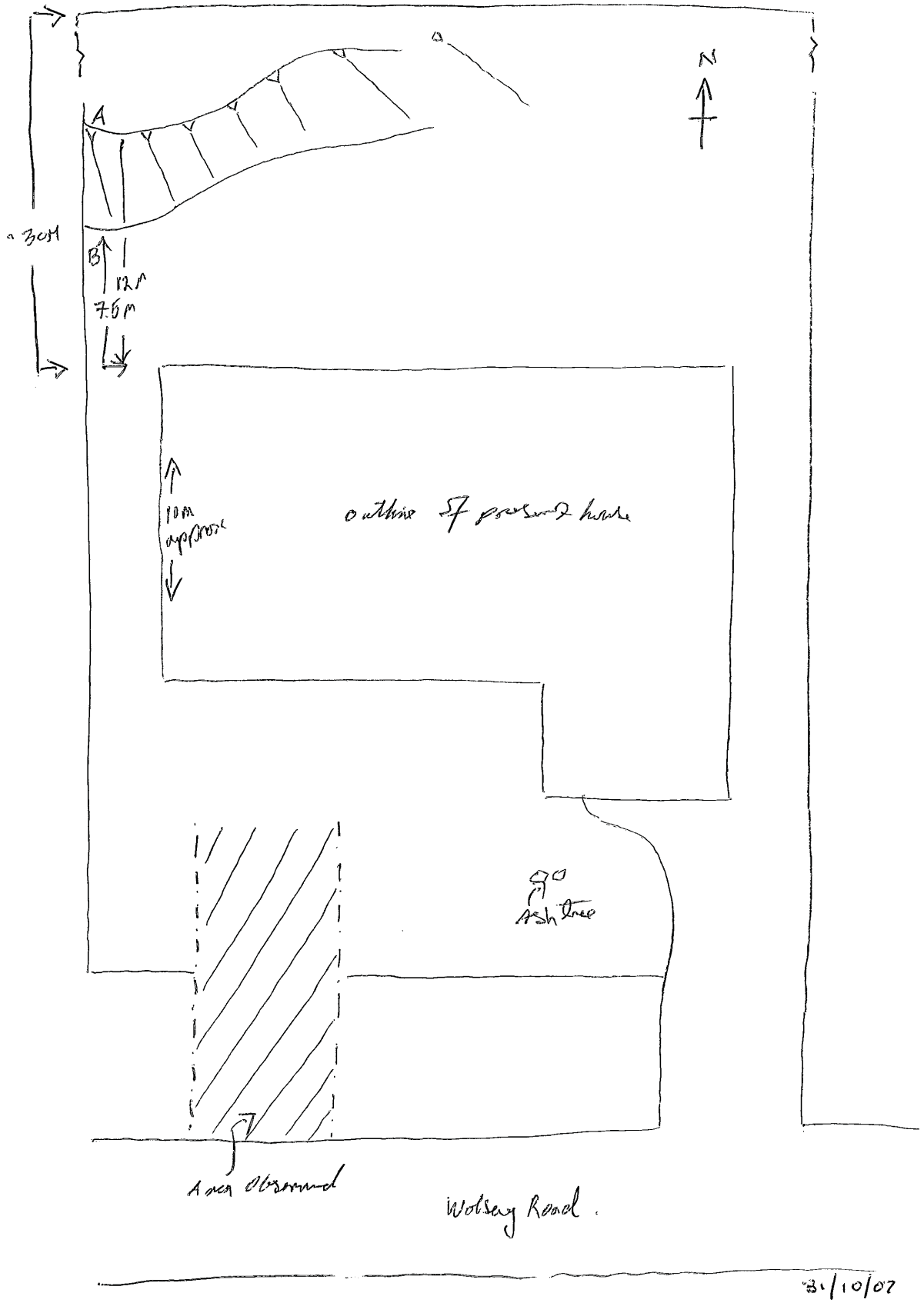
Observations:

The area had been cleared of the former building but the central area was still obscured by the spoil heap. However, around the periphery the piling sheets had been inserted and a narrow trench, enough for visibility, retained clean to a depth of c. 1.2m. Beneath the [illegible] of the upper A horizon (0.3m more) was a variable mix of gravelly clay, silty/sandy clay and gravels. The piling sheets enclose an area roughly 16m sq. In the north west corner there were signs that there may have been some former disturbance – gravelling? but it was too [illegible] to be certain. The piles go down about 3.1m

Comments:

No man-made features or artefacts noted.

For sketch plan, use reverse ©ASC, 2003


N
A
B
~30M
12M
7.5m
10m approx
outline of proposed house
Ash tree
Area observed
Wolsey Road
31/10/07

A.S.C. LTD **ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD**

Project: 34, Wolsey Rd Moor Park	Project No/Code: 869 1MWR	Sheet: 3 of 3
	Date of visit: 4/1/08	
Client/Developer: Mr & Mrs Hatch		
Contact: Tony Till	Phone: 07718587361	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 11.25	Finish: 1.45
Completed by: JRH		

Development Type:

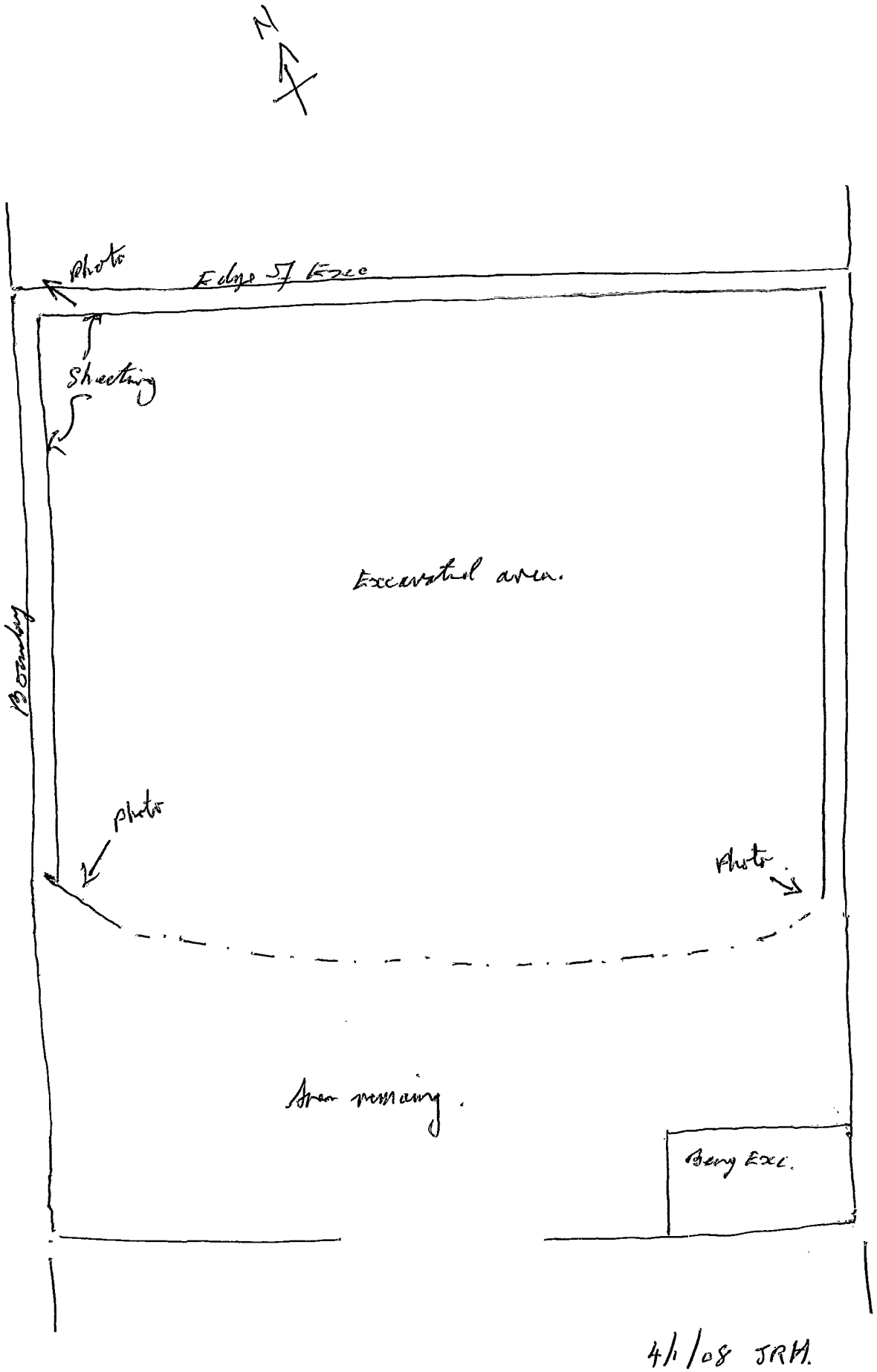
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
✓						

Site & weather conditions:
Dull and grey, mild & dry.

Observations:
The house has been excavated to about 75% of its eventual area. At the base, which is some 3.5m below existing ground level, the ground is composed of chalk, chalky clay and pebbly clay. In the northern corner a deposit of greyish brown pebbly, sandy-clay was seen rising up to the surface. These appear to be pockets set amidst the chalk and clay matrix. On the eastern side a pocket of pebbly clay overlies a 'plug' of yellowish brown sand which looks almost as if it might have been wind-blown since there are a suggestion of fine layers. Apart from the geology there is nothing of interest. No man made features or artefacts noted.

Comments:
No further visits required

For sketch plan, use reverse


N
Photo
Edge of Exc
Sheeting
Excavated area.
Boundary
Photo
Photo
Area remaining.
Bore Exc.
4/1/08 JRH.

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: 39 WOLSEY ROAD, MOOR PARK, NORTHWOOD RICKMANSWORTH			SITE NO/CODE:NWR/869
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✔	✔	31/10/2007: Property as existing, from Wolsey Road
2	✔	✔	31/10/2007: Access road as stripped
3	✔	✔	31/10/2007: Section of the access road as stripped
4	✔	✔	31/10/2007: Eastern end of the access road showing slope of ground
5	✔	✔	31/10/2007: The property as existing
6	✔	✔	31/10/2007: The property as existing
7	✔	✔	31/10/2007: Earthwork to the rear of the property
8	✔	✔	17/12/2007: The spoil heap
9	✔	✔	17/12/2007: Steel shuttering at the NW side of the property
10	✔	✔	17/12/2007: Detail of shuttering
11	✔	✔	17/12/2007:Section detail of undisturbed natural
12	✔	✔	17/12/2007: general view of the section
13	✔	✔	17/12/2007: Section at the edge of the earthwork (NE corner)
14	✔	✔	17/12/2007: General view of shuttering at the ?south side
15	✔	✔	17/12/2007: Detail of section showing quarrying
16	✔	✔	4/1/2008: The up-cast soil from the basement
17	✔	✔	4/1/2008:The excavated basement
18	✔	✔	4/1/2008: Detail of basement, shuttering and foundations
19	✔	✔	4/1/2008: Detail of section at the earthwork, quarry fill?
20	✔	✔	4/1/2008: Detail of natural strata – chalk, clay and gravel
21	✔	✔	4/1/2008: Detail of natural strata: Loess?

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	39 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Northwood Hertfordshire		
Short Description:	*In October and December 2007 and January 2008 watching brief was carried out by ASC Ltd during groundworks for a residential property at 39 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Northwood. No deposits or finds of archaeological significance were revealed, which suggests that the property is outside the known Roman sites at Moor Park. Evidence for post-medieval to modern quarrying on the site is present on the form of an extent earthwork and backfill to the rear of the property.*		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Site status:	None	Previous work:	None
Current land use:	Residential	Future work:	Not known
Monument type:	None	Monument period:	None
Significant finds:	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TQ 08516 93266
District:	Northwood	Parish:	Moor Park
Site address:	39 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Northwood, Hertfordshire		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	83m x 29m	Height OD: (metres)	Not known
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	A. Instone	Project design originator:	Caroline Barclay
Project Manager:	Jonathon Hunn	Director/Supervisor:	Jonathon Hunn
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr and Mrs Hathi		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	8/11/2007	End date:	4/12/2007
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	None	None	
Paper:	Three Rivers Museum	Watching sheet monitoring forms, project design, report	
Digital:	Three Rivers Museum	CD of all digital data including photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: 39 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Wolsey, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 869/NWR/2		
Author(s):	Alex Thompson		
Page nos	26	Date:	February 2008