

**Whitchurch Reservoir
Near Whitchurch
Buckinghamshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief



for
Thames Water Utilities Ltd


CA Project: 660185
CA Report: 14359

August 2014

Whitchurch Reservoir
Whitchurch
Buckinghamshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 660185
CA Report: 14359

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date	24 July 2014
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date	11 August 2014
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signed	
date	12 August 2014
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Whitchurch Reservoir
Location: Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire
NGR: SP 8013 1988
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 3 July 2014
Location of Archive: Buckinghamshire Museum Service
Site Code: WHA14

In July 2014, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief at Whitchurch Reservoir, near Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire. The work, which was commissioned by Thames Water Utilities Ltd, was undertaken during groundworks associated with improvement works to the reservoir infrastructure. No archaeological deposits or features were encountered within the site and no archaeologically significant artefacts were noted in the excavated spoil.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2014, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Whitchurch Reservoir, near Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire (site centred on NGR: SP 8013 1988; Fig. 1). The work, which was commissioned by Thames Water Utilities Ltd (TW), was undertaken during groundworks associated with improvement works to the reservoir infrastructure.
- 1.2 The watching brief was requested by Claire Hallybone, TW's Senior Archaeologist (TWSA), as the site is located in an area of archaeological potential. This is in compliance with TW's *Code of Practice* and in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). A *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) was prepared for the works by CA (2014).
- 1.3 The project was carried out in accordance with the WSI, the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IfA 2008) and the English Heritage procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH1991) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.4 The site is located c. 600m to the south of the village of Whitchurch, in the parish of Whitchurch, approximately 6km to the north of Aylesbury town centre (Fig. 1). The proposed works were carried out in the south-west corner of a pasture field, adjacent to a pumping station that is accessed via a single-track road leading off the A413 to the east (Fig. 2).
- 1.5 The ground slopes gradually to the west, into the valley of a small stream, a minor tributary of the River Thames, and lies at an average height of c. 95m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 1.6 The solid geology of the site comprises Jurassic mudstone of the Kimmeridge Clay Formation, with mudstone of the Ampthill Clay Formation outcropping on the lower ground to the west of the site, in the base of the tributary valley (BGS 2014).

Archaeological background

- 1.7 There are no known archaeological sites within the area of the proposed works, although the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) contains three records of archaeological sites in the vicinity and the site lies close to the historic core of the village of Whitchurch. The records refer to a possible Roman and Saxon burial ground, said to be located in the north outer bailey of the castle, c. 600m to the north of the site, and approximately 500m to the north-east is the site of a former watermill, now a private residence. A windmill was located near the mill, but this was dismantled and moved to a new location in the 19th century.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.8 The objectives of the archaeological works, as outlined in the WSI (CA 2014), were:
- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
 - at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

Methodology

- 1.9 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2014). An archaeologist was present during all intrusive groundworks in the area shown in Figure 2. This comprised the stripping of topsoil over an area of pasture measuring approximately 13m by 30m (Figs. 3 and 4).
- 1.10 Written, graphic and photographic records of the deposits encountered were compiled in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2013). There were no finds and no deposits were encountered that were suitable for palaeoenvironmental assessment.
- 1.11 The archive from the watching brief, currently held by CA at their offices in Newport Pagnell, will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service. A summary of information from this project, as set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS

- 2.1 The geological substrate was mid yellowish-brown clay with patches of greyish-blue clay. This was sealed by dark greyish-brown humic sandy silt topsoil, approximately 0.18m thick (Fig. 4).
- 2.2 No archaeological features were present within the monitored area and no archaeologically significant artefacts were observed during visual scanning of the excavated topsoil. The only notable feature was the modern service trench for the existing water main.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 There were no archaeological features or deposits within the monitored area and no archaeologically significant artefacts were observed during visual scanning of the excavated topsoil.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

The fieldwork was undertaken by Caoimhín O 'Coileain. The report was written by Peter James, with illustrations prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by Caoimhín O 'Coileain and prepared for deposition by Emily Evans. The project was managed for CA by Simon Carlyle.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) Geology of Britain Viewer http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html, accessed 28 May 2014

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 *Whitchurch Reservoir, near Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

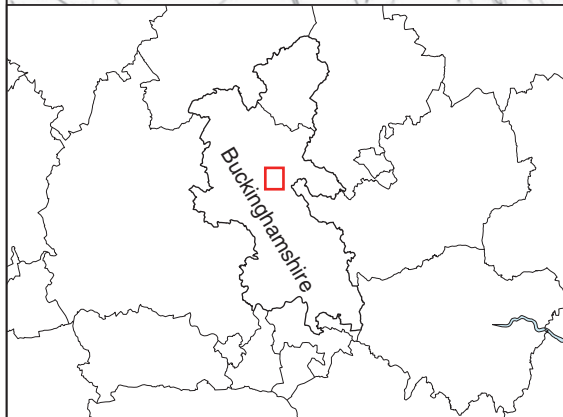
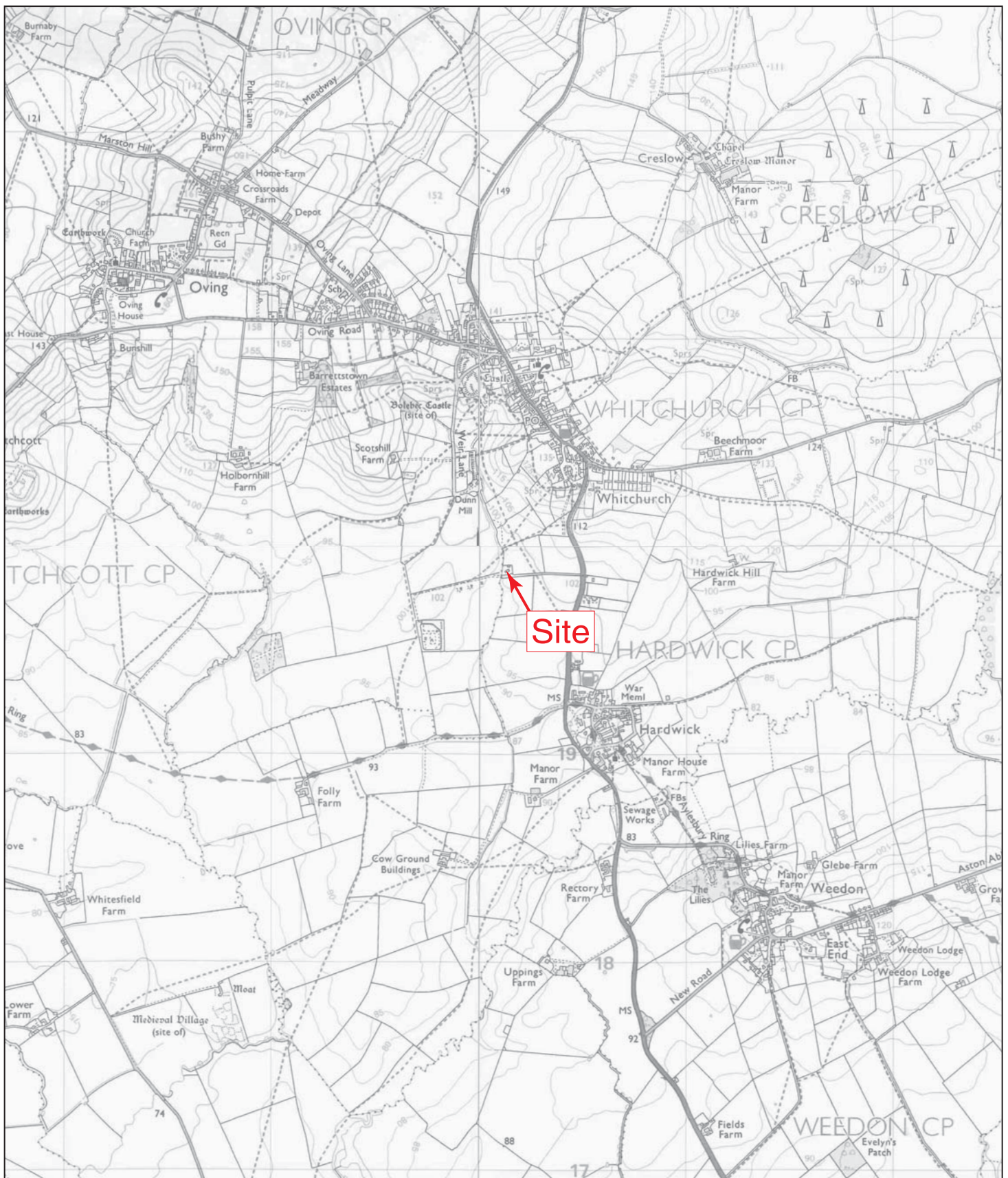


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown sandy silt	-	-	0.18	modern
101	Layer	Geology	Mid yellowish-brown clay with patches of greyish-blue clay	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Whitchurch Reservoir, Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire	
Short description	In July 2014, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief at Whitchurch Reservoir, near Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire. The work, which was commissioned by Thames Water Utilities Ltd, was undertaken during groundworks associated with improvement works to the reservoir infrastructure. No archaeological deposits or features were encountered within the site and no archaeologically significant artefacts were noted in the excavated spoil.	
Project dates	3 July 2014	
Project type	Watching brief	
Previous work	None	
Future work	None	
Monument type	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Whitchurch Reservoir, Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire	
Study area	390m ²	
Site co-ordinates	SP 8013 1988	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology (CA)	
Project Brief originator	-	
Project Design (WSI) originator	CA	
Project Manager	Simon Carlyle (CA)	
Project Supervisor	Caoimhín O'Coileian (CA)	
PROJECT ARCHIVE		
	Accession no: n/a	Content
Physical	Buckinghamshire Museum	-
Paper	Services	Site records and photos
Digital	Buckinghamshire HER	Report, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 <i>Whitchurch Reservoir, Near Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report 14359		



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PROJECT TITLE

Whitchurch Reservoir, Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 660185 DATE 14-08-2014
 DRAWN BY DJB REVISION 00
 APPROVED BY LM SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1



P:\660185 Whitchurch Reservoir Aylesbury Bucks \FB\Illustration\Drafts\660185 Whitchurch Reservoir Fig 2.dwg

SP



observed groundworks



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PROJECT TITLE
 Whitchurch Reservoir, Whitchurch,
 Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE
 location of observed groundworks

PROJECT NO.	660185	DATE	14-08-2014	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	DJB	REVISION	00	2
APPROVED BY	LM	SCALE@A4	1:500	



3



4

3 General view of the site before excavation, looking north

4 General view of the site after removal of topsoil, looking south-west



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PROJECT TITLE

Whitchurch Reservoir, Whitchurch, Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

PROJECT NO. 660185 DATE 14-08-2014
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FIGURE NO.

3 & 4