

# Keephatch Beech Lane (SANG) Wokingham Berkshire

*Archaeological Evaluation*



for  
Bellway Homes

CA Project: 770498  
CA Report: 17017

January 2017



# KEEPHATCH BEECH LANE (SANG) WOKINGHAM BERKSHIRE

## Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 770498  
CA Report: 17017



Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	11/1/17	Adam Howard	Jacek Gruszczynski	Internal Review	General edit	Richard Greatorex

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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Keephatch Beech Lane
<b>Location:</b>	Wokingham, Berkshire
<b>NGR:</b>	SU 83127 69439
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	3-11 January 2017
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	O/2014/2435
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	Currently at Cotswold Andover
<b>Site Code:</b>	KEE16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2017 at Keephatch Beech (SANG), North Wokingham, Berkshire. Twenty nine trenches were excavated totalling 550 linear meters at 1.8m wide.

The evaluation did not identify any archaeological remains. All trenches contained reinstated topsoil and made ground, and in seven the intact natural geology was not encountered at a safe excavation depth. The trenches, in which natural geology was encountered, did not reveal any archaeological remains and it was clear that the natural geology had been heavily truncated and impacted by previous machine movement. This was most likely caused by the construction of the A329(M) carried out between 1972 and 1975, which appears to have had a thorough impact on the site. It is likely the whole site was used as a compound area during the road's construction.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Bellway Homes at Keephatch Beech (SANG), North Wokingham, Berkshire (centred at NGR: SU (4)83127 (1)69439) hereafter referred to as 'the site', (Figure 1). The evaluation was undertaken to satisfy the archaeological conditions on the planning permission (ref. O/2014/2435) for the nearby residential development and a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), where the site is located.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Kathelen Leary, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, the archaeological advisor to Wokingham Borough Council. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). It was monitored by Kathelen Leary, including a site visit on the 4th January 2017.

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The proposed area of the SANG is approximately 7.87ha, and comprises a single arable field situated to the north of the A329(M). It is bounded on the west by Binfield Road. To the north and east it is bounded by further fields.
- 1.4 The site is relatively level and rises from 74m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north to 85m aOD in the south-eastern part of the site.
- 1.5 The British Geological Survey identifies the underlying solid geology in the south and eastern portion of the site as sands of the Bagshot Formation. A central band on a roughly east-west alignment is formed by sands, silts and clays of the Claygate Member. The geology in the northern and western portion of the site is identified as London Clay Formation (BGS 2016).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Although the area of the SANG was not subject to a separate desk-based assessment, the archaeological background of the site has been examined in detail in an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) for the main residential development at Keephatch Beech Lane (HC 2014) located immediately to the north. Only a succinct summary of the results is presented below.
- 2.2 The DBA determined that in general, there is limited evidence for any sustained settlement activity pre-dating the post-medieval period within the site's immediate environs. It is thought that Wokingham maybe of Saxon origin based on place-name evidence. Wokingham or the 'homestead of the people of Wocc' is a Saxon place name and it has been suggested that it was settled by people from the province of the Woccingas, possibly from nearby Woking in Surrey. However, aside from place name evidence there is no known evidence to suggest that Wokingham is of Saxon origin. There is also little evidence for medieval settlement outside the area of the town, which was part of the manor and parish of Sonning throughout the period.
- 2.3 A late medieval/early post-medieval ditch was revealed during fieldwork carried out to the immediate south of the site at Plough Lane. The north-south aligned ditch produced two sherds of pottery dating to the 15th to 16th century along with early post-medieval tile. The ditch ran parallel to an extant field boundary and was interpreted as the remains of an earlier field boundary or track way. A second ditch dated to the 16th to 17th century was recorded, also interpreted as a probable field boundary.
- 2.4 The remains of ridge and furrow have been identified from an aerial photography study undertaken for land at Bean Oak Farm, including land within the site. Ridge and furrow was identified in three of the adjacent fields, however these are described as levelled earthworks and heavily eroded. Although the ridge and furrow is no longer extant it is indicative of medieval and post-medieval ploughing and supports the suggestion that land within the site was probably in agricultural use during this period.
- 2.5 Evidence for agricultural activity including a former field boundary was identified by a geophysical survey carried out to the immediate south of the site, adjacent to Plough

Lane. Subsequently, intrusive fieldwork at Plough Lane, comprising land to the south of the site and land to the immediate northwest of Binfield Road falling within the site, revealed little archaeological evidence.

- 2.6 The area of the main residential development located immediately to the south of the site was subject to a geophysical survey undertaken within the site (PCG 2014), which revealed possible agricultural features. In the following trench evaluation (CA 2015) forty five trenches were excavated; of these fourteen contained archaeology and four contained modern disturbance. The archaeology identified, primarily, comprised post-medieval ditches probably associated with field systems. There was one posthole dating to the medieval period and one Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age gully (dated by a single sherd of pottery) suggesting that other than the post medieval field boundaries there was only sporadic/dispersed activity associated with earlier periods on the site. There was little correlation between the possible archaeology identified and the results of the geophysical survey. The results, however, tie in with earlier evaluations at Plough Lane in 2010 and 2013/14 (CA 2010/2014), emphasising an archaeological potential that is predominantly of a late medieval/post-medieval date.

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014). This information will enable the WBC to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).





## 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of twenty nine trenches of varying lengths (amounting to 550 linear metres) in the locations shown in Figure 2. **Trenches 1 to 9** were 10m long, Trench 10 was 40m long, **Trenches 11, 12 and 28** were 30m long and **Trenches 13 to 27** and **Trench 29** were 20m long. All trenches were 1.8m wide. **Trench 1** was moved 8m to the north from the location proposed in the WSI to avoid a barb-wire fence. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon, the natural substrate, or the safe depth of 1.2m, whichever was encountered first. No archaeological deposits suitable for hand excavation (CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*) were encountered.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits that required sampling were identified. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner archive will be deposited with an appropriate museum along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.





## 5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-5)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendices A.
- 5.2 No archaeology was observed and no finds predating the modern period were recovered.
- 5.3 The natural geology observed in trenches was consistent with the BGS mapping and consisted of silty clays, sandy clays and sand. A yellow silt/clay was exposed within **Trenches 4, 5, 20, 21, 22** and **24**, along the northern boundary of the site. The eastern and western part of the site produced grey sandy clay within **Trenches 2, 3, 19, 25** and **26**. **Trenches 16** and **17** contained orange sand with yellowish white veins throughout. **Trenches 28** and **29** contained orangey brown sand. The natural geology within **Trenches 4, 5** and **21** showed impact in the form of machine ruts. Seven trenches were excavated to a maximum safe depth of 1.2m but no natural geology was encountered. These trenches contained modern back fill and levelling layers associated with the embankment construction of the A329 (M). Only two trenches contained subsoil (**Trenches 24, 28** and **29**), which was c. 0.16m thick. All trenches were sealed by reinstated topsoil which was between 0.2 and 0.45m thick.
- 5.4 The depth of made ground varied across the site (Figure 2). In the south-west of the site, closer to the road (**Trenches 1, 2, and 7**) made ground was between 0.72m and 0.9m thick. In **Trenches 7** and **16** the made ground was between 0.64m and 0.9m thick. In the north-west of the site, away from the road (**Trenches 3, 4, 5, and 6**) made ground was between 0.21m and 0.68m thick. Within **Trenches 17, 18, and 19** located in the centre and towards the southern edge of the site, made ground was between 0.1m and 0.4m thick. **Trenches 25 to 29** contained between 0.1m and 0.8m of made ground. In the north-east of the site (**Trenches 20 to 24**) the thickness of made ground was between 0.46m and 0.8m. **Trenches 17, 18, 19** and **25** also contained a layer of yellow levelling sand which became thicker towards the A329(M). **Trenches 4** and **13** showed clear signs of hydrocarbon contamination.

## 6. THE FINDS AND THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

- 6.1 No finds predating the construction of the A329(M) were recovered. No samples were taken for processing.

## 7. DISCUSSION

7.1 The evaluation did not identify any archaeological remains. All trenches contained reinstated topsoil and made ground, and in seven the intact natural geology was not encountered at a safe excavation depth. The trenches in which natural geology was encountered, did not reveal any archaeological remains and it was clear that the natural geology had been heavily truncated and impacted by previous machine movement. This was most likely caused by the construction of the A329(M) carried out between 1972 and 1975, which appears to have had a thorough impact on the site. It is likely the whole site was used as a compound area during the road's construction.

## 8. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Adam Howard, assisted by Emily Stynes, Alice Jones and Timothy Street. The report was written by Adam Howard. The illustrations were prepared by Tilia Cammegh. The archive has been compiled by Andrew Donald, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Jacek Gruszczynski.

## 9. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain Viewer* [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology\\_viewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html) Accessed 11 January 2017

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Keephatch Beech Lane (SANG), Wokingham, Berkshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

HC (Heritage Collective) 2014 *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment Keephatch Beech, North Wokingham, Berkshire*

PCG (Pre-Construct Geophysics Ltd.) 2014 *Archaeological Geophysical Survey: Keephatch Beech, North Wokingham, Berkshire*

## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

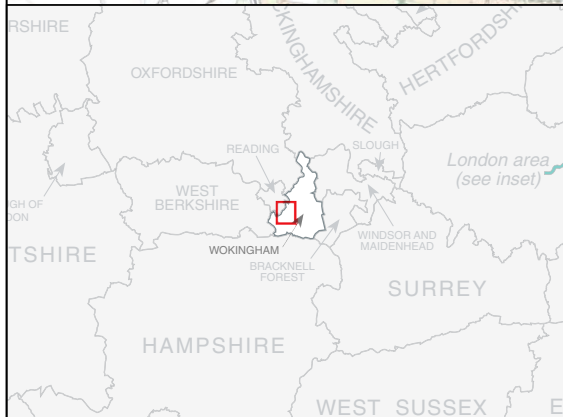
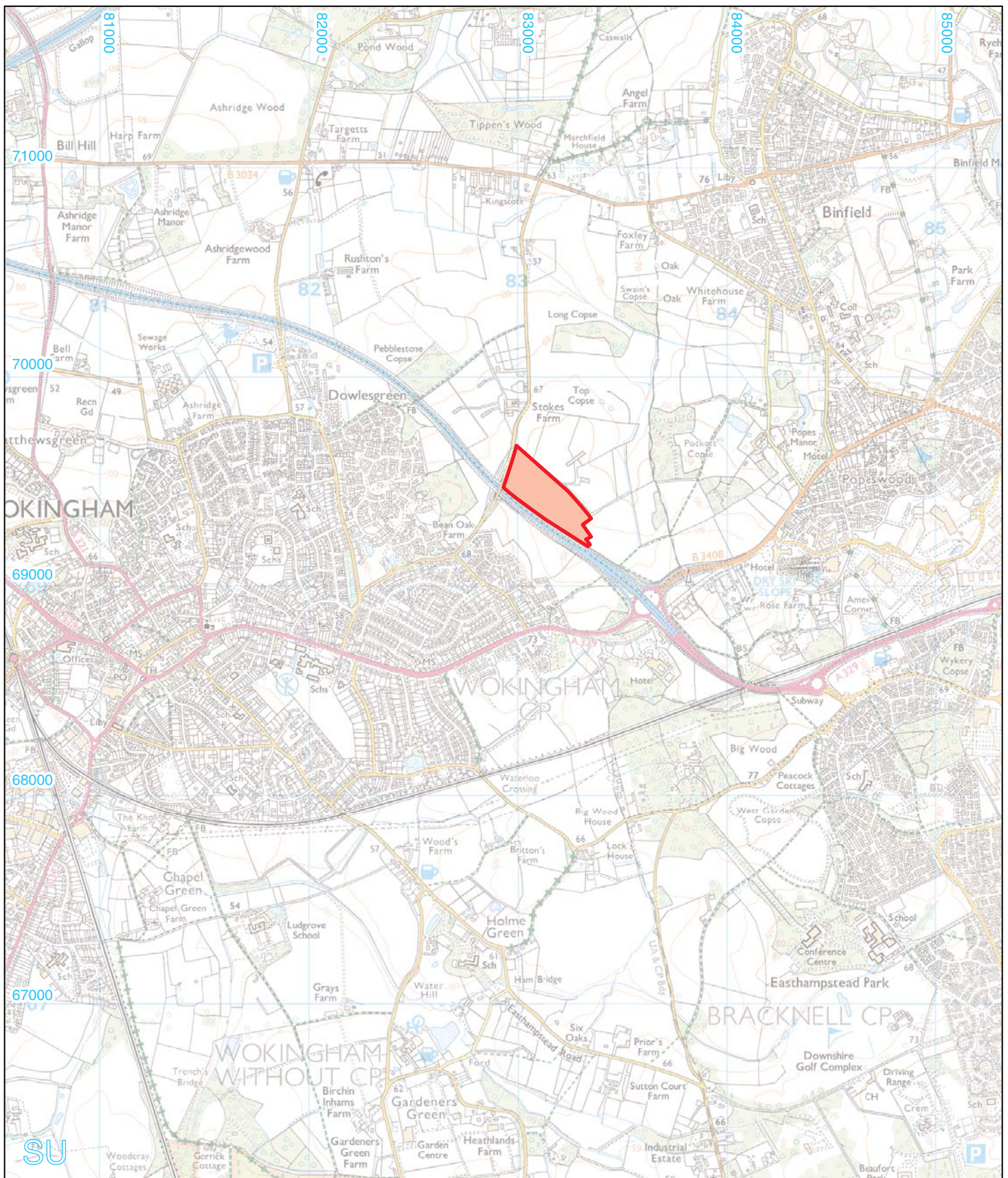
Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	100	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	23	1.85	0 - 0.47
1	101	Layer	made ground	mid greyish brown sandy clay	23	1.85	0.47 - 1.19
2	200	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	22	1.85	0 - 0.42
2	201	Layer	made ground	mid greyish brown sandy clay	22	1.85	0.42 - 1.17
3	300	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	22	1.85	0 - 0.32
3	301	Layer	made ground	mid greyish brown sandy clay friable soft	22	1.85	0.32 - 1
3	302	Layer	natural	mid blueish grey silty clay compact	22	1.85	1 - 1.10
4	400	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	30	1.85	0 - 0.44
4	401	Layer	made ground	mid yellow brown sandy clay firm	30	1.85	0.44 - 0.65
4	402	Layer	Contaminated ground	dark blueish brown sandy clay compact	30	1.85	0.44 - 0.82
4	403	Layer	natural	mid yellowish brown silty clay compact	30	1.85	0.83 - 1.20
5	500	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	21	1.85	0 - 0.2
5	501	Layer	made ground	yellow sand and green grey clay	21	1.85	0.2 - 0.65
5	502	Layer	natural	light yellow clay with grey blue mottling	21	1.85	0.65 - 0.8
6	600	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	12	1.85	0 - 0.26
6	601	Layer	made ground	mid yellowish brown sandy clay soft	12	1.85	0.26 - 0.78
7	700	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	15	1.85	0 - 0.32
7	701	Layer	made ground	mid yellowish brown sandy clay soft	15	1.85	0.32 - 1.22
8	800	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	23	1.85	0 - 0.31
8	801	Layer	layer	mix of yellow sand and green clay	23	1.85	0.31 - 0.95
9	900	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	23	1.85	0 - 0.32
9	901	Layer	made ground	mid yellowish brown sandy clay firm	23	1.85	0.32 - 1.12
10	1000	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	22	1.85	0 - 0.37
10	1001	Layer	made ground	mid yellowish brown sandy clay firm	22	1.85	0.37 - 1.13
11	1100	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	21	1.85	0 - 0.33
11	1101	Layer	made ground	mid yellow brown medium sand soft	21	1.85	0.33 - 1.10
12	1200	Layer	topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy clay friable	15	1.85	0 - 0.38
12	1201	Layer	made ground	mid yellow brown medium sand soft	15	1.85	0.38 - 1.10
13	1300	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	10	1.85	0 - 0.37
13	1301	Layer	made ground	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	10	1.85	0.37 - 1.2
14	1400	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	11	1.85	0 - 0.37
14	1401	Layer	made ground	mid greyish brown sandy clay friable firm	11	1.85	0.37 - 1.2
15	1500	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	22	1.85	0 - 0.30
15	1501	Layer	subsoil	mid black grey sandy clay firm	22	1.85	0.3 - 0.45
15	1502	Layer	made ground	mid yellow orange sand with patches of green sand and modern waste	22	1.85	0.45 - 1.1
16	1600	Layer	topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy clay soft	21	1.85	0 - 0.35
16	1601	Layer	made ground	mid yellowish brown sand soft	21	1.85	0.35 - 1.10
16	1602	Layer	natural	mid reddish brown sand soft	21	1.85	1.1 - 1.2
17	1700	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown sand clay friable	10	1.85	0 - 0.38
17	1701	Layer	levelling layer	light yellow brown sand y clay	10	1.85	0.38 - 0.64
17	1702	Layer	natural	dark orange sand compact	10	1.85	0.64 - 0.66
18	1800	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown sand clay friable	21	1.85	0 - 0.35
18	1801	Layer	levelling ground	light yellow brown sand y clay	21	1.85	0.35 - 0.55
18	1802	Layer	made ground	mid yellowish brown sand soft	21	1.85	0.55 - 0.75
19	1900	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown sand clay friable	22	1.85	0 - 0.38
19	1901	Layer	made ground	yellow silty sand soft	22	1.85	0.38 - 0.48
19	1902	Layer	natural	mid grey sandy clay compact	22	1.85	0.48 - 0.6

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
20	2000	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown sand clay friable	29.5	1.85	0 - 0.2
20	2001	Layer	made ground	mid grey silty clay firm	29.5	1.85	0.2 - 0.35
20	2002	Layer	made ground	mid greyish brown sandy clay firm	29.5	1.85	0.35 - 0.81
20	2003	Layer	natural	light brownish yellow silty clay compact	29.5	1.85	0.81 - 1.2
21	2100	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown sand clay friable	20.1	1.85	0 - 0.35
21	2101	Layer	made ground	mid orangey yellow sandy clay compact	20.1	1.85	0.35 - 0.42
21	2102	Layer	subsoil	dark greyish brown clayey sand soft	20.1	1.85	0.42 - 0.67
21	2103	Layer	natural	mid orangey yellow sandy clay compact	20.1	1.85	0.67 - 0.8
22	2200	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	29.5	1.85	0 - 0.28
22	2201	Layer	levelling ground	light yellow silty clay firm	29.5	1.85	0.28 - 0.39
22	2202	Layer	made ground	mid brownish grey silty clay compact	29.5	1.85	0.39 - 0.76
22	2203	Layer	natural	light brownish yellow silty clay compact	29.5	1.85	0.76 - 1.2
23	2300	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	11	1.85	0 - 0.4
23	2301	Layer	levelling sand	mid orangey yellow silt sand friable	11	1.85	0.4 - 0.55
23	2302	Layer	made ground	mid grey silty clay compact	11	1.85	0.55 - 1.05
23	2303	Layer	made ground	mid orangey brown with blueish grey patches	11	1.85	1.05 - 1.2
24	2400	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	22	1.85	0 - 0.48
24	2401	Layer	natural	mid yellowish brown sandy clay	22	1.85	0.48 - 0.53
25	2500	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	32	1.85	0 - 0.42
25	2501	Layer	made ground	light yellow sand soft	32	1.85	0.42 - 0.65
26	2600	Layer	natural	mid grey silty clay compact	21	1.85	0.65
26	2601	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	21	1.85	0 - 0.42
26	2602	Layer	made ground	yellow sand with grey clay inclusions soft	21	1.85	0.42 - 0.52
26	2603	Layer	natural	mid grey silty clay compact	21	1.85	0.52 - 0.67
27	2700	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	21	1.85	0 - 0.15
27	2701	Layer	subsoil	mid black grey sandy clay firm	21	1.85	0.15 - 0.43
27	2702	Layer	made ground	mid orange clay sand	21	1.85	0.43 - 0.6
28	2800	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	41	1.85	0 - 0.25
28	2801	Layer	subsoil	mid black grey sandy clay firm	41	1.85	0.25 - 0.6
28	2802	Layer	natural	mid orangey brown sandy clay friable	41	1.85	0.6 - 0.7
29	2900	Layer	topsoil	mid grey sandy clay friable	10	1.85	0 - 0.3
29	2901	Layer	subsoil	mid black grey sandy clay friable	10	1.85	0.3 - 0.46
29	2902	Layer	natural	mid orange brown sandy clay with blue grey patches	10	1.85	0.46 - 0.6

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Keephatch Beech Lane (SANG)	
Short description	The evaluation did not identify any archaeological remains. All of the trenches contained reinstated topsoil and made ground, of the trenches excavated seven did not encounter intact natural geology. The trenches that did contain intact natural geology did not reveal any archaeological remains and it was clear that the natural geology had been heavily truncated and impacted by machine movement. Construction work on the A329(M) was carried out between 1972 and 1975 which appears to have had a large impact on the site. It is likely the whole field was used as a compound area during the roads construction.	
Project dates	3 – 11 January 2017	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	None	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Keephatch Beech Lane (SANG) Wokingham Berkshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	7.87ha	
Site co-ordinates	SU (4)83127 (1)69439	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Organisation who wrote the brief	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Jacek Gruszczynski	
Project Supervisor	Adam Howard	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>		
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical		none
Paper	tbc	Trench Sheets Photographic register
Digital	tbc	Survey data, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 <i>Keephatch Beech Lane (SANG), Wokingham, Berkshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report <b>17017</b>		





 Site location

0  1km

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**PROJECT TITLE**  
Keephatch Beech Lane Wokingham,  
Berkshire

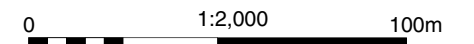
**FIGURE TITLE**  
Site location plan

<b>DRAWN BY</b>	TC	<b>PROJECT NO.</b>	770498	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b>	DB	<b>DATE</b>	17/01/2017	
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	JG	<b>SCALE@A4</b>	1:25,000	<b>1</b>





- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- Modelled depth of made ground (IDW projection)



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Keephatch Beech Lane Wokingham,  
 Berkshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
**Trench plan and modelled made  
 ground depth**

<b>DRAWN BY</b> TC	<b>PROJECT NO.</b> 770498	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b> DB	<b>DATE</b> 17/01/17	<b>2</b>
<b>APPROVED BY</b> JG	<b>SCALE@A3</b> 1:2000	

SU





Trench 4 looking north (2x 1m scales)



Trench 8 looking south-west (2x 1m scales)



Trench 12 looking north-west (2x 1m scales)



Trench 21 looking east (2x 1m scales)


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PROJECT TITLE  
**Keephatch Beech Lane Wokingham,  
 Berkshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench photographs**

DRAWN BY	TC	PROJECT NO.	770498	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	17/01/17	<b>3</b>
APPROVED BY	JG	SCALE@A3	N/A	





Level of rolled clay in Trench 22, looking east (2x 1m scales)



Re-excavated Trench 22, looking north-east (2x 1m scales)



Trench 25 looking north-east (2x 1m scales)


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PROJECT TITLE  
**Keephatch Beech Lane Wokingham,  
 Berkshire**

FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench photographs**

DRAWN BY	TC	PROJECT NO.	770498	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	17/01/17	<b>4</b>
APPROVED BY	JG	SCALE@A3	N/A	





North-east facing section through Trench 16, looking south-west (1m scale)



North-west facing section through Trench 20, looking south-east (1m scale)



North-east facing section through Trench 21, looking south-east (1m scale)



North-east facing section Trench 21, looking south-west (1m scale)

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