



3 Manor Close Berkhamsted Hertfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



for Mr and Mrs Baker

CA Project: 660866 CA Report: 17244

June 2017



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SUMMARY

Project Name: 3 Manor Close

Location: Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire

NGR: 499464 207797 **Type:** Watching Brief

Date: 28-31 March 2017
Planning Reference: 4/02802/16/FHA

Location of Archive: Dacorum Heritage Trust

Site Code: MCLB 17

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with a single storey front, rear and side extensions at 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire (site centred at 499464 207797).

The watching brief revealed a buried soil horizon containing pottery of mid-12th to late 14th century date, which was not fully excavated due to health and safety constraints. The soil horizon was truncated by two later features, which contained pottery of a similar medieval date. The features comprised a possible large pit, which was only partially exposed and an east to west aligned ditch. The possible pit contained a single fill and may have originated as a domestic waste pit. The ditch was aligned broadly parallel to the High Street and it is considered likely that it functioned as a large drainage ditch and/or a boundary ditch.

There were no in-situ remains pre-dating the medieval period revealed during the investigations. However, residual Late Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered from the possible pit and ditch, indicating earlier activity within the wider vicinity.

Evidence for post-medieval/modern activity within the site was confined to a layer of probable garden soil and modern dumped deposits of brick rubble.

Overall, the site is generally characterised by evidence for outlying activity of medieval date comprising a possible rubbish pit and a drainage and/or boundary ditch.

1. INTRODUCTION

- In March 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire (centred at 390068 162869; Fig. 1). The watching brief which was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Baker was undertaken to fulfil a condition (condition 4) attached to a planning consent (Planning ref: 4/02802/16/FHA), granted by Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) for a single story front, rear and side extensions, as well as alterations to a front porch (Planning ref: 4/02802/16/FHA).
- 1.2 The scope of the watching brief was agreed during discussions between CA and Alison Tiniswood, Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Advisor (HCCHEA). The scope of the project was formalised in a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017). The WSI was approved by DBC, the Local Panning Authority (LPA) acting on the advice of Alison Tiniswood, Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Advisor (HCCHEA).
- 1.3 The project was carried out in accordance with the WSI and advised by Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief (ClfA 2014), the Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (English Heritage 1991) and the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (HE 2016).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area comprises an irregular shaped plot consisting of 3 Manor Close, Berkhampsted, Hertfordshire (Fig 1). The site comprises the existing two storey detached residential property and associated private garden. The site is bounded by similar residential properties to the north, east and south, and by Manor Close and adjoining residential properties to the west. The site lies at approximately 108m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), on fairly uniform level ground.
- 1.5 The site measures roughly 296m² in area and an area measuring approximately 40m² forming the footprints of the proposed extension was observed during the watching brief.

The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation, which formed in the Cretaceous Period. This was overlain by superficial deposits comprising gravel, sand and clay (BGS 2017).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The proposed development site lies within Berkhamsted Conservation Area. The site is also situated within Archaeological Alert Area 21, as defined in Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) Local Plan (2004). Alert Area 21 comprises the historic core of Berkhamsted and is focused on the medieval extent of the town, as well as areas of known prehistoric and Roman occupation.

Prehistoric (pre AD 43) and Roman (AD 43–410)

- 2.2 The route of the former Roman road, known as Akeman Street, which ran from St Albans (Verulamium) to Cirencester (Corinium) and may have followed the route of a late prehistoric trackway, lies to the south of the site. The line of Akeman Street is preserved by London Road/ High Street (the A4251).
- 2.3 An evaluation (CA 2015) at the site of the old police station on Berkhamsted High Street, did not uncover any prehistoric features; however, relatively large quantities of residual prehistoric worked flints were recovered from medieval pit fills, which might suggest that the medieval pits were cut through *in situ* prehistoric features or deposits.
- 2.4 Archaeological investigations undertaken 25m to the east of the site at New Manor Croft recorded a Roman ditch containing later 1st to mid-2nd century pottery sherds (HER17443).

Medieval (1066–1539)

2.5 In the medieval period, burgage plots extended to the north and south of the High Street. These plots were generally occupied by town houses fronting the road, with gardens to the rear. The proposed development site is located within the area of these former burgage plots. It has been suggested that land further south of the High Street lay beyond the area of the burgage plots and comprised medieval field systems (ASC 2013).

- 2.6 An evaluation at Church Lane to the west of the site revealed evidence of occupation during the 12th century comprising a burnt clay floor, cobbled surface, brick drain and a flint lined well, along with several later post medieval pits (ASC 2006).
- 2.7 The evaluation (CA 2015) and subsequent watching brief (ongoing 16) at the site of the old police station on Berkhamsted High Street, recorded rectangular pits containing 12th to 15th-century pottery, metal-working slag, charcoal and cereal grains. The artefactual evidence demonstrates that these pits were used for the disposal of domestic and small-scale industrial waste, which is typical of activity recorded within medieval burgage plot gardens.
- 2.8 Archaeological investigations undertaken 25m to the east of the site at New Manor Croft revealed substantial evidence for medieval occupation. This included a large ditch that may have demarcated the boundary of the medieval town along with gullies, pits and postholes, evidence of industrial activity and pottery of mid-11th to mid-14th century date (HER 16203).

Post-medieval

2.9 An evaluation at the Berkhamsted Collegiate School, to northwest of the site identified evidence for Victorian activity and it was concluded that Victorian and modern development had destroyed earlier activity across the area investigated (HN 2005).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works, as defined within the WSI, 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;
 - 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.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2017). Groundworks, associated with the construction of an extension (Fig. 2) were monitored. The footprint of the new extension (Fig.2) was stripped under archaeological supervision, using plant provided by the principal contractor. Excavators were fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The overburden was removed to a depth of 1.2m below the present ground surface.
- 4.2 Features and deposits were investigated and recorded in accordance with *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007).
- 4.3 The archive and artefacts from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited along with the site archive to the Dacorum Heritage Trust. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

5.1 The watching brief comprised monitoring the footprints of the proposed extension consisting of a c.40m² area (Fig. 2). This section provides an overview of the results including a summary of the general stratigraphy and archaeological features. Detailed summaries of the features and deposits encountered, the finds and palaeoenvironmental recovered are presented in Appendices A, B and C

respectively. Two environmental samples were taken but have not been processed at this time.

- 5.2 The natural geological substrate was not revealed at any point during the watching brief as the foundation trenches did not exceed beyond approximately 1.2m deep on the grounds of health and safety.
- 5.3 Extending across the full extent of the foundation trenches was a layer (103) which may have been a former buried soil horizon/garden soil. This deposit was not fully excavated and its full thickness remained unknown as did the presence of any remains sealed below this deposit. Deposit (103) produced pottery of mid-12th to late- 14th century date along with residual Roman and possible Late Iron Age pottery. It is thought likely that deposit (103) is of medieval date as it was truncated by featured dated to the medieval period.
- 5.4 Cutting into deposit (103) were two later features, both also containing artefacts of mid-12th to late 14th century date, as further detailed below.
- 5.5 Two archaeological features were revealed in the north-east to south-west aligned foundation trench, broadly centrally within the area (Fig 2.). At the eastern edge of the foundation trench a possible pit 104 was partially revealed. This feature is considered likely to represent a pit or the terminus of a ditch. Possible pit 104, as exposed measured roughly 1m wide by 0.75m deep. It contained a single fill (106), indicative of deliberate backfilling, rather than a gradual, natural infilling. It produced Roman and medieval pottery along with animal bone.
- In close proximity to the south of possible pit 104 a large broadly east to west aligned ditch 107, measuring 3.8m wide and up to 0.83m deep was revealed. The lowest fill (108) of ditch 107 contained medieval pottery of mid-12th to late 14th century date, residual Roman pottery and animal bone. A probable re-cut (109) was identified running on the same east to west alignment as ditch 107; it had steep/vertical sides, but produced no datable material. The fills of the later re-cut (109) suggest a possible slumping of deposits on the southern edge of the ditch, indicative of the presence of a former bank/up-cast along the southern edge.

5.7 Sealing possible pit 104 and ditch 107 was made ground layer (102). It is thought likely that deposit (102) represents a post-medieval/modern garden soil. Deposit (102) was overlain by a dump of modern brick rubble (101) and was truncated by a modern soakaway (as shown on Fig 3.), containing similar material to deposit (101). These were overlain by the topsoil (100).

6. THE FINDS

6.1 Artefactual material recovered from the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and discussed further below.

Pottery

A total of 48 sherds (983g) of Late Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval pottery was recovered from three deposits. The material is in moderate condition, with an average sherd weight of 20.3g. A sandy body sherd with combed external surface, recovered from medieval soil layer 103, could not be closely dated, but is probably of Late Iron Age date. The Roman pottery comprises body and base sherds, in sandy and greyware fabrics. The medieval pottery is all in sandy fabrics, with the rim fragments from necked jars recorded from medieval soil layer 103 and ditch 107, and an internally expanded rim from a bowl or dish from possible pit 104. No other finds were recovered.

7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Animal Bone

7.1 Twenty-two fragments of animal bone (579g) were recovered from three deposits dating from the medieval period to the modern period. The material was well preserved but highly fragmented, with both modern and historical damage rendering 54% of the assemblage unidentifiable to species. However, it was possible to confirm the presence of cattle (*Bos taurus*), sheep/goat (*Ovis aries/Capra hircus*) and domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*).

Medieval

- 7.2 Twenty fragments (491g) were recovered from deposits 106 and 108, the fills of possible pit 104 and ditch 107. Sheep/goat was identified from meat-rich skeletal elements such as the pelvis as well as such meat-poor elements as the bones of the lower limbs. No cut, chop or impact damage was observed to suggest an origin in butchery waste but, two sheep/goat horn cores displayed cuts indicative of removing the outer horn sheath prior to working. A single fragment of a tarso-metatarsus (from the lower leg) of a domestic fowl was also recovered from deposit 108.
- 7.3 A further two fragments (88g) were recovered from layer 103, one of which was identifiable as a metatarsal (from the lower hind limb) of a cow.

8. DISCUSSION

Prehistoric (pre AD 43) and Roman (AD 43-410)

8.1 Although no features were recorded that could be dated to these periods, the presence of residual material within later contexts attests to the presence of prehistoric and Roman activity in the vicinity. It is also possible that earlier features are preserved below deposit (103) beyond the area investigated.

Medieval (1066-1539)

Possible Pit 104

8.2 The original function possible pit 104 was unclear, though its single fill is indicative of deliberate backfilling and therefore may suggest a domestic waste pit. The full extent of possible pit 104 was not revealed and the feature continued to the east of the area investigated, accordingly it remains possible that it represents the terminus of a ditch.

Ditch 107

- 8.3 The orientation of ditch 107 was aligned roughly east to west. Any burgage plot boundary associated with the High Street would have been aligned on a north to south alignment, perpendicular to the High Street to the south of the site. Accordingly this demonstrates that ditch 107 is unlikely to have formed a burgage plot boundary.
- 8.4 Ditch 107 may have related to a property division fronting onto Castle Street to the west; this would account for the east to west alignment. However, the relatively large width of this ditch, possibly up to 3m wide in its original form and evidence for later re-cutting (109) on the same alignment indicate a more substantial function than a single property boundary. It is possible that ditch 107 was constructed as a drainage ditch serving the rear of the properties fronting the High Street. It may also have functioned as a larger boundary ditch, encompassing part of the medieval town.
- 8.5 The animal bone recovered from possible pit 104 and ditch 107 is typical for a domestic settlement, with slight evidence of small scale industry as represented by the processed sheep horn cores.

Post-medieval/modern

8.6 Evidence for post-medieval/modern activity within the site was limited to a layer of probable garden soil (102) sealing the earlier features and overlain by modern dumps of brick rubble and topsoil.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Ralph Brown. The report was written by Simon Sworn. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Grace Jones and Andrew Clarke respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Charlie Patman. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Michelle Collings.

10. REFERENCES

- ASC (Archaeological Solutions & Consultancy Ltd) 2006 Archaeological Excavation: Land Adjacent to 3-4 Church Lane, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire Report No. ASC: 656/BHC/02
- ASC (Archaeological Solutions & Consultancy Ltd) 2013 Archaeological Assessment: Stage
 1: Desk-Based Assessment: Land At And To the Rear of Hanburys, Berkhamsted,
 Hertfordshire (LocalAllocation 4) Report No. ASC: 1605/DHI/LA4
- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html Accessed 28 February 2017
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 Berkhamsted Police Station, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report **14589**
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 Berkhamsted Police Station, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation. CA report 15039
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
- DBC (Dacorum Borough Council) 2004 Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991–2011 (adopted 21 April 2004; acceded 8 September 2014)

HN (Heritage Network) 2005 Berkhamsted Collegiate School Berkhamsted, Herts HN538 Archaeological Evaluation Report Report No. 308

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown grey, friable, silty loam	11.6	6.1	0.42	
101	Layer		Subsoil	Dark greyish brown, friable, silty loam, with frequent flint and rubble.	2.2	Not recorded	0.21	
102	Layer		Ditch	Dark greyish brown, friable, silty loam, with frequent stone, moderate CBM	2.3	3.3	0.22	
103	Layer		Buried soil horizon	Mid yellow brown, friable, sandy silt	11.6	6.1	0.42	Medieval (MC12-LC14)
104	Cut		Cut of Pit	Sub circular, straight moderate sides, flat base	>0.53	2.3	0.78	
105	Fill	104	Fill of Pit	Mid brown orange, soft, sandy clay with moderate flint	>0.53	0.66	0.12	
106	Fill	104	Fill of Pit	Mid brown grey, soft, sandy silt with occasional flint and charcoal	>1.4	2.22	0.28	Medieval (MC12-LC14)
107	Cut		Cut of Ditch	Linear, straight steep NW side, stepped SW side with straight upper slope, unknown base. NW- SE Orientation	>1.4	4	>0.98	
108	Fill	107	Fill of Ditch	Mid brown grey, soft, sandy silt with occasional flint and charcoal	>1.4	0.84	>0.98	Medieval (MC12-LC14)
109	Cut		Ditch re-cut	Linear, sharp break top, sides sloping to SE and all fills sloping to the same orientation, unknown base. NW-SE orientation	>1.4	3.94	>0.62	
110	Fill	109	Fill of re-cut	Soft white chalk	>1.4	0.22	0.07	
111	Fill	109	Fill of re-cut	Soft white chalk	>1.4	1.84	0.06	
112	Fill	109	Fill of re-cut	Mid brown orange, soft, sandy clay with moderate flint	>1.4	3.04	0.2	
113	Fill	109	Fill of re-cut	Mid brown grey, soft sandy silt, with moderate flint and charcoal	>1.4	3.15	0.1	
114	Fill	109	Fill of re-cut	Soft white chalk	>1.4	3.22	>0.12	
115	Fill	109	Fill of re-cut	Mid brown grey, soft sandy silt, with occasional flint and charcoal	>1.4	2.52	>0.6	

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Table 1: finds concordance

Context	Class	Description	Count	Wt. (g)	Spot-date
103	Late Iron Age/Roman pottery	Sandy ware; combed surface	1	21	Medieval
	Roman pottery	Greyware	1	32	(MC12-LC14)
	Roman pottery	Grog-tempered ware	9	114	
	Roman pottery	Sandy ware; necked jar	1	26	
	Medieval pottery	Greyware	6	75	
	Medieval pottery	Sandy ware	5	139	
106	Roman pottery	Greyware	1	24	Medieval
	Roman pottery	Sandy ware	2	13	(MC12-LC14)
	Medieval pottery	Sandy ware	2	14	
	Medieval pottery	Greyware; bowl rim	1	18	
108	Roman pottery	Greyware	5	102	Medieval
	Roman pottery	Sandy ware	7	180	(MC12-LC14)
	Medieval pottery	Sandy ware	4	137	
	Medieval pottery	Greyware; jar	3	82	

APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Table 1: Identified animal species by fragment count (NISP) and weight and context.

Cut	Fill	BOS	O/C	GAL	LM	ММ	Ind	Total	Weight (g)
	Medieval								
104	106		3		2	1		6	166
107	108		5	1	3	5		14	325
103		1					1	2	88
Total		1	8	1	5	6	1	22	579
Weight		86	340	1	113	37	2	579	

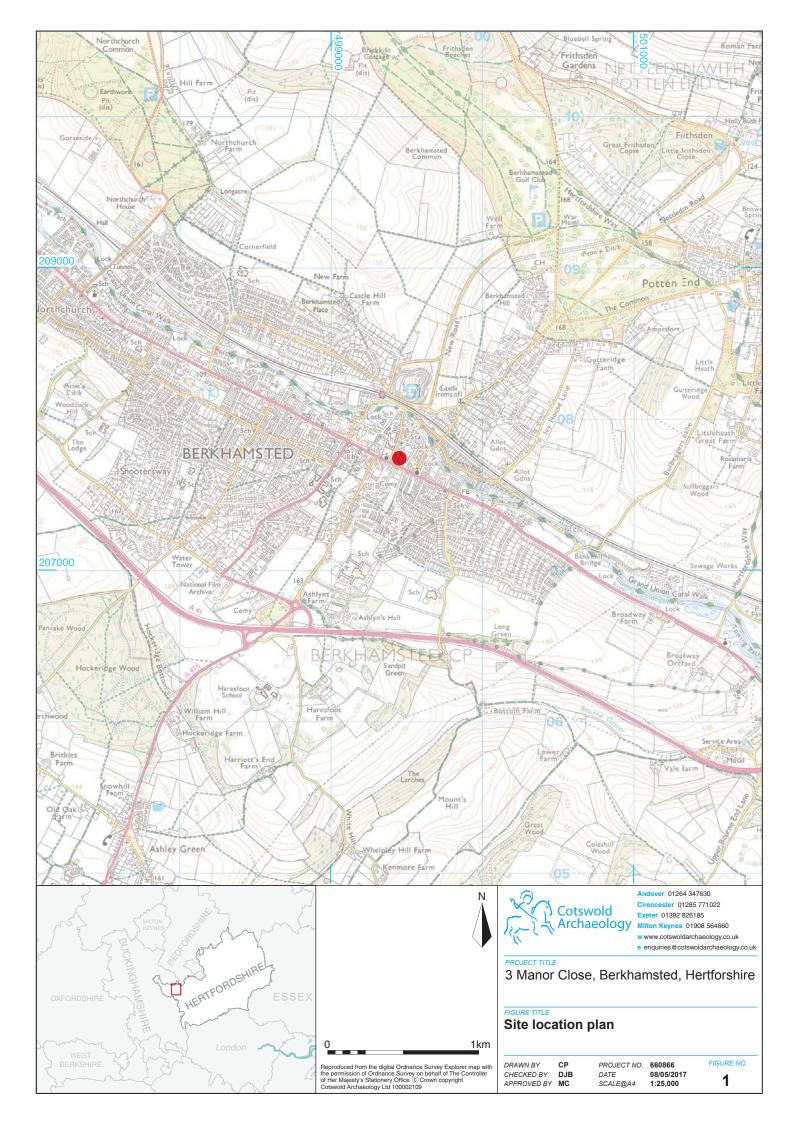
BOS = Cattle; O/C = sheep/goat; GAL = domestic fowl; LM= cow sized mammal; MM = sheep size mammal; Ind = indeterminate

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

Short description	Archaeology during groundworks ass					
	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with a single storey front, rear and side extensions at 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire (site centred at 499464 207797). The watching brief revealed a buried soil horizon containing pottery of mid-12 th to late 14th century date, which was not fully excavated due to health and safety constraints. The soil horizon was truncated by two later features, which contained pottery of a similar medieval date. The features comprised a possible large pit, which was only partially exposed and an east to west aligned ditch. The possible pit contained a single fill and may have originated as a domestic waste pit. The ditch was aligned broadly parallel to the High Street and it is considered likely that it functioned as a large drainage ditch and/or a boundary ditch. There were no in-situ remains pre-dating the medieval period revealed during the investigations. However, residual Late Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered from the possible pit and ditch, indicating earlier activity within the wider vicinity. Evidence for post-medieval/modern activity within the site was confined to a layer of probable garden soil and modern dumped deposits of brick rubble. Overall, the site is generally characterised by evidence for outlying activity of medieval date comprising a possible rubbish pit and a					
Project dates	drainage and/or boundary ditch. 28 – 31 March 2017					
Project type	Watching brief					
Previous work		None				
Future work	Unknown					
PROJECT LOCATION	Gillatown					
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Site Location Study area (M²/ha)	3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertford	296m ²				
, ,						
Site co-ordinates	SP 99461 07795					
PROJECT CREATORS						
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology					
Project Brief originator	N/A					
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology					
Project Manager		Michelle Collings				
Project Supervisor	Ralph Brown					
MONUMENT TYPE		None				
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	Contont				
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content				
Physical	Dacorum Heritage Trust	Ceramics/animal bone				
Paper	Dacorum Heritage Trust	Context sheets/trench sheets/photo register				
Digital BIBLIOGRAPHY	Dacorum Heritage Trust	Database/digital photos				

APPENDIX E: HERTFORDSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire	
County: Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum
Village/Town: Berkhamsted	Parish: Berkhamsted
Planning application reference: 4/02802/16/FHA	1 dilon. Derinamoted
HER Enquiry reference: N/A	
Funding source: Private	
Nature of application: Residential extension to ex	isting development
Present land use: Residential	,
Size of application area: 296m ²	Size of area investigated: 296m ²
NGR (to 8 figures minimum): SP 99461 07795	
Site code (if applicable): MCLB17	
Site director/Organization: Cotswold Archaeology	
Type of work: Watching Brief	
Date of work: Start: 28/3/17	Finish: 31/3/17
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum	:
Dacorum Heritage Trust	
Related HER Nos: N/A	Periods represented: Medieval
Trelated Field (100. 14/7)	T driede represented. Medieval
Relevant previous summaries/reports N/A	
0	
Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological watching brief was undertake	en by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks
associated with a single storey front, rear and s	side extensions at 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted,
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garden soil and modern dumped deposits of brick	rubble. evidence for outlying activity of medieval date
comprising a possible rubbish pit and a drainage	
comprising a possible rubbish pit and a drainage	and/or boundary ditch.
Author of auropean a L News	Data of automorphy 45/00/47
Author of summary: J. Newman	Date of summary:15/09/17





Section AA NE SW 140.6m├─ AOD 100 modern soakaway 114 113 112 109 115 103 108 103 107 110 113 114 Section BB SW NE 160.1m├─ AOD pipe shingle 102 115 Cotswold Archaeology Exeter 01392 826185 Milton Keynes 01908 564660 w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co. 3 Manor Close, Berkhamsted, Hertforshire

1:20

DRAWN BY CP PROJECT NO. 660866 FIGURE NO. CHECKED BY DJB DATE 08/05/2017 APPROVED BY MC SCALE@A3 1:20

Pit 104 and ditch 107: sections



General view of site, looking southwest



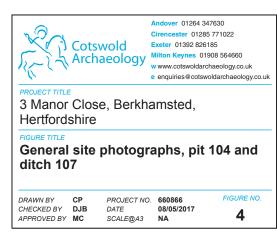
Ditch 107 in section, with later re-cut 109 showing as light brown and white lenses, looking northwest (scale 1m)



Possible pit 104 in section, looking southeast (scale 1m)



General view of trench with ditch 107 in background, looking southwest (scale 1m)





Andover Office

Stanley House Walworth Road Andover Hampshire SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11 Kemble Enterprise Park Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

Exeter Office

Unit 53
Basepoint Business Centre
Yeoford Way
Marsh Barton Trading Estate
Exeter
EX2 8LB

t: 01392 826185

Milton Keynes Office

41 Burners Lane South Kiln Farm Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire MK11 3HA

t: 01908 564660

