

**DRAKES MEADOW
DRAKES WAY
SWINDON**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

For

SDA ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS

on behalf of

CAMDEN VENTURES LTD

CA PROJECT: 2516
CA REPORT: 08215


NOVEMBER 2008



DRAKES MEADOW
DRAKES WAY
SWINDON

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CA PROJECT: 2516
CA REPORT: 08215

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date	21 November 2008
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date	24 November 2008
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signed	
date	27 November 2008
issue	01

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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks (1:500)

SUMMARY

Project Name: Drakes Meadow
Location: Drakes Way, Swindon
NGR: SU 1668 8530
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 29 April – 23 September 2008
Planning Reference: S/07/2221/HMC
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
Site Code: MEA 08

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a car dealership showroom with an outside display area and workshops at Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and no artefactual material was recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 From April to September 2008 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for SDA Architects and Designers on behalf of Camden Ventures Ltd. at Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon (centred on NGR: SU 1668 8530; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the construction of a car dealership showroom with an outside display area and workshops (Swindon Borough Council planning ref: S/07/2221/HMC). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.

1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2008) and approved by Ms Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist, Wiltshire County Council (WCC), archaeological advisor to Swindon Borough Council. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001), *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation* (WCC Archaeology Service 1995) and the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

The site

1.3 The site lies to the east of Swindon town centre, just north of Drakes Way. To the north-east the site is bounded by Penny Lane, to the north by open land and the River Cole, and to the south and west by industrial units.

1.4 The site is 0.7ha in area and was unoccupied land until works began.

1.5 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Kimmeridge Clays of the Upper Jurassic era (BGS 1974). This geology was encountered during excavation of the compound and in Area 1.

Archaeological background

1.6 The site lies to the east of the centre of Swindon within an area of industrial development. A Roman well was located at the Drakes Way Playing Field, approximately 120m to the west of the site, in the 1960s (Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) ref: SU18NE307). The site is also within 2km of the route of the Roman Road Ermine Street, with the Roman settlement of

Durocornovium (Wanborough) to the south-east. There is substantial evidence of Roman occupation to the north-east of the site around South Marston. Previous work at the Honda Plant development also to the north-east has uncovered evidence for Bronze Age, Iron Age as well as Romano-British activity.

Methodology

- 1.7 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2008). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising ground reduction in 2 areas: Area 1 (70m by 80m) and Area 2 (60m by 60m) (Fig. 2).
- 1.8 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.9 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery. 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.

2. RESULTS

- 2.1 The undisturbed natural geological substrate 1002 consisting of compacted clay was revealed in Area 1 at an average depth of 0.75m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by disturbed natural clays 1001 averaging 0.22m in thickness which in turn was covered by 0.3m of turf and topsoil. In Area 2 a layer of made up ground 2001, possibly resulting from construction of industrial units to the south-west had raised the ground level in this area by at least 0.3m above that seen in Area 1. This was sealed by modern topsoil averaging 0.3m in thickness.
- 2.2 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. This may mean that archaeological remains do not extend as far as

the site. Alternatively, they may have been removed in Area 1 when the natural substrate was disturbed, most probably during the construction of the industrial units in this area. As the groundworks in Area 2 did not extend below modern made ground archaeological remains may survive in this part of the site, but were simply not exposed by the works.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Ray Holt, Philippa Mitcheson and Neil Wright. The report was written by Philippa Mitcheson. The illustrations were prepared by Rachel Kershaw. The archive has been compiled by Philippa Mitcheson and Richard Young.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1974 *Geological Survey of Great Britain: Solid and Drift Edition, Swindon: Sheet 235*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 *Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Area 1

NFE= not fully excavated

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
1000	Layer	Turf and topsoil: dark red brown silty clay			0.45	Modern
1001	Layer	Redeposited natural substrate: mixed blue grey and yellow orange silty clay including rare pockets of gravel			0.3	
1002	Layer	Natural geology: dark grey blue compacted clay containing pockets of orange gravel			NFE	

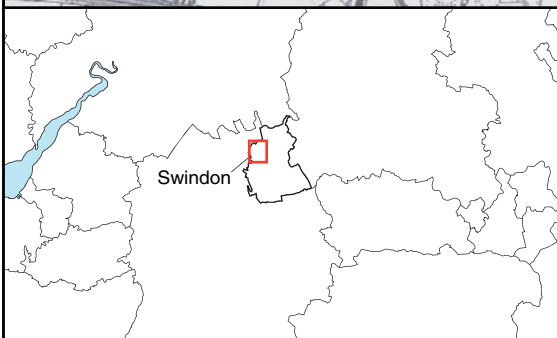
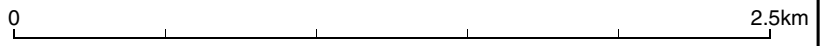
Area2


No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
2000	Layer	Turf and topsoil: dark red brown silty clay			0.3	
2001	Layer	Made up ground: brown silty clay with common inclusions of grey and yellow clay lenses, degraded stone fragments, rubble and silt pockets			NFE	

APPENDIX E: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a car dealership showroom with an outside display area and workshops at Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and no artefactual material was recovered.	
Project dates	29 April – 23 September 2008	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	N/A	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon, Wiltshire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.7ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SU 1668 8530	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Wiltshire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Richard Young	
Project Supervisor	Ray Holt, Philippa Mitcheson, Neil Wright	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery	Trench sheets, photographic registers, colour and black and white photographs, plans
Digital	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2008 <i>Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way, Swindon: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA Report No. 08215		

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 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
PROJECT TITLE Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way Swindon			
FIGURE TITLE Site location plan			
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- site
- area of observed groundworks



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

Drakes Meadow, Drakes Way Swindon

FIGURE TITLE

The site, showing location of groundworks

DRAWN BY

RK

SCALE

1:1250@A4

PROJECT NO.

2516

FIGURE NO.

2