

Winnersh Relief Road Wokingham Berkshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



September 2006

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SUMMARY

In August 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief on the proposed site of the Winnersh Relief Road, Wokingham, Berkshire (NGR: SU 780 700). The work was commissioned by Mouchel Parkman Services Ltd., in advance of the construction of the Winnersh Relief Road. The watching brief revealed no archaeology.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 In August 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief on the proposed site of the Winnersh Relief Road, Wokingham, Berkshire (NGR: SU 780 700). The work was commissioned by Mouchel Parkman Services Ltd., in advance of the construction of the Winnersh Relief Road.

1.1.2 A verbal brief was agreed with Greg Pugh, Senior Associate Director of CgMs Consulting, detailing the requirements for the watching brief.

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The site is roughly located along the line of Longdon Road and the northern edge of the M4, in Wokingham, Berkshire (Fig. 1). It is bounded by a housing estate to the north. The proposed relief road runs for an approximate length of 800 m.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.

2.1.2 To preserve by record any significant archaeological deposits or remains that may be disturbed or destroyed during the course of the development.

2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The watching brief was maintained during the excavation of seven geotechnical test pits. These were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.7 m toothless bucket. Both the sections and any spoil were closely examined to determine the presence of dating evidence, archaeological features or deposits.

2.2.2 A plan showing the location of the test pits was maintained (Fig. 2), and any recorded sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All excavations and any recorded sections were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general

photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The stratigraphy exposed was homogenous throughout all the test pits and a sample description can be applied throughout.
- 3.1.2 A firm reddish brown gravel (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 17), was encountered at a maximum depth of 0.6 m below ground level. This was overlaid by a maximum 0.6 m thick layer of loose mid brown sandy loam (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 15), the present day topsoil.
- 3.1.3 An irregular shaped feature (14), was located within Test Pit 1. Upon investigation this was interpreted as a bio-turbation.
- 3.1.4 A modern manhole (18), was located within Test Pit 7.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No artefacts were observed during the course of the watching brief.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief revealed no archaeological features. The site appears to have been levelled to the natural gravel deposits during the construction of either the M4 to the south or the housing estate to the north.
- 4.1.2 It is possible that archaeology survives to the west of the test pits within woodland. Throughout the rest of the site however, it is probable that the natural gravels along Longdon Road and the housing estate has been truncated down to an average depth of 0.6 m below the ground level.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Extent</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.5 m		Topsoil		
2	Layer	>2.5 m		Natural gravel		
3	Layer	0.55 m		Topsoil		
4	Layer	>2.5 m		Natural gravel		
5	Layer	0.6 m		Topsoil		
6	Layer	>2.5 m		Natural gravel		
7	Layer	0.6 m		Topsoil		
8	Layer	>2.5 m		Natural gravel		
9	Layer	0.55 m		Topsoil		
10	Layer	>2.5 m		Natural gravel		
11	Layer	0.55 m		Topsoil		
12	Layer	>2.5 m		Natural gravel		
13	Fill	0.5 m	1.5 x 0.7 m	Fill of 14		
14	Cut	0.5 m	1.5 x 0.7 m	Bio-turbation		
15	Layer	0.2 m		Topsoil		
16	Fill	1.1 m	2 x 0.7 m	Fill of 18		
17	Layer	>2.5m		Natural gravel		
18	Cut	1.1 m	2 x 0.7 m	Modern manhole		

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

IFA 2001 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

OA 1992 *Field Manual* (1st edition. ed. D. Wilkinson)

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Winnersh Relief Road, Wokingham, Berkshire

Site code: WINRR06

Grid reference: SU 780 700

Type of watching brief: Machine excavation of test pits

Date and duration of project: 9th - 10th August 2006, 2 days

Area of site: Relief road length 800 m

Summary of results: No archaeology uncovered.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Reading Museums Service in due course.



Scale: 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location

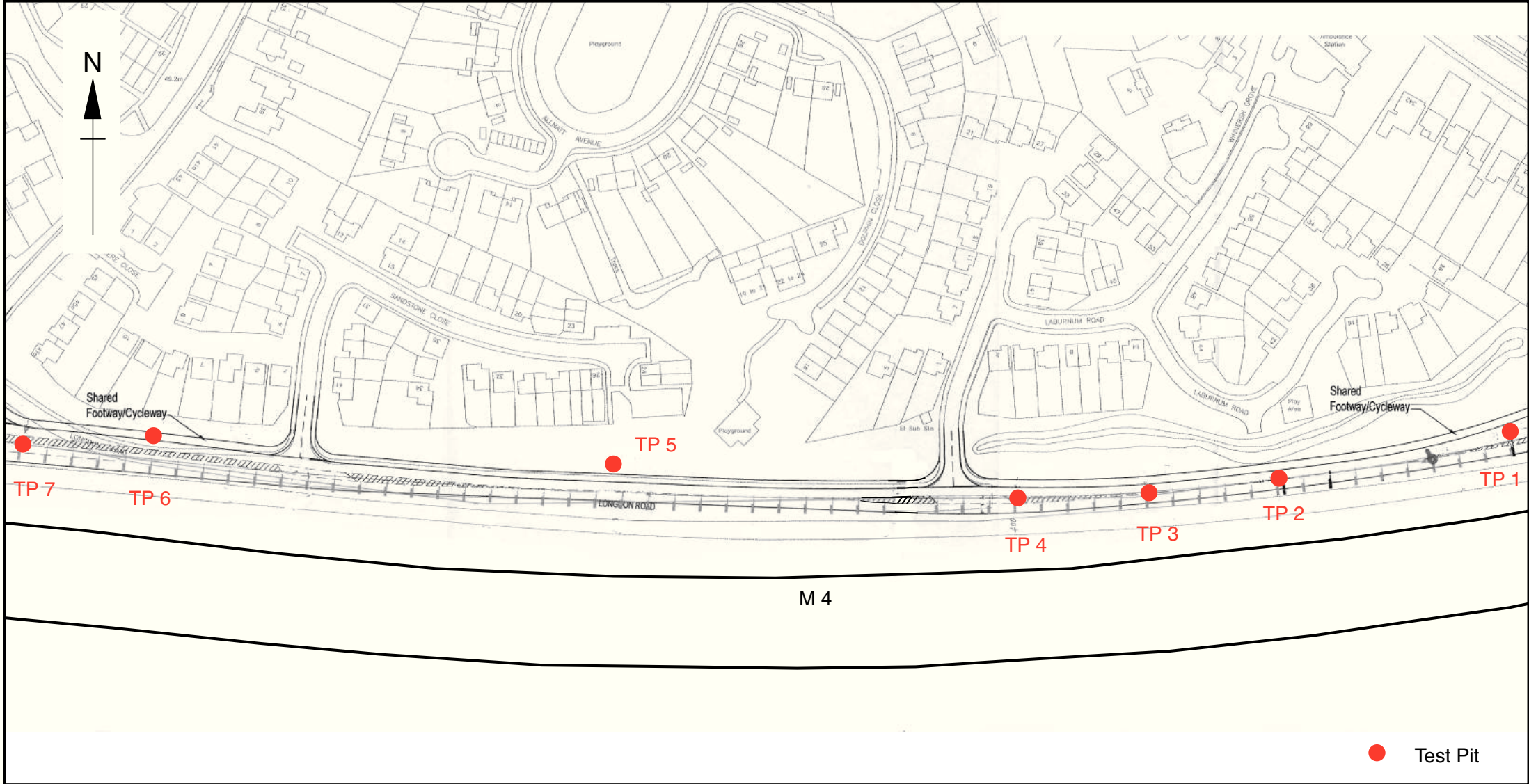


Fig 2: Test pit Locations