

Land at Barnhill Road, Phase 4 and 5, Chipping Sodbury, South Gloucestershire, BS37 6BN

NGR: 327560, 182566

Results of an archaeological watching brief

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On behalf of:

Bloor Homes

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archaeology

LAND AT BARNHILL ROAD, PHASE 4 AND 5, CHIPPING SODBURY, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE, BS37 6BN

NGR 372560, 182566

Results of an archaeological watching brief

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by AC archaeology Ltd, during the groundworks associated with the construction of new dwellings and infrastructure, in October 2014. The monitoring work was commissioned by CgMs on behalf of the developer, Bloor Homes, as a condition of planning consent. The majority of the new dwellings are to be constructed in the disused Barnhill Quarry; the quarry has been backfilled to a significant depth prior to the development. The archaeological monitoring was conducted on two areas either side of Drovers Way at its eastern extent; here the unquarried areas had been largely buried under a spread of overburden and/or construction waste material. A short length of stone wall foundations, believed to relate to a former quarry structure was recorded on the north side; no other archaeological deposits or finds of significance was observed during the groundworks.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out during the groundworks associated with the construction of new dwellings and associated infrastructure, including access routes and services, on land at the former Barnhill Quarry, Barnhill Road, Chipping Sodbury, South Gloucestershire (centred on NGR 372560, 182566). The site location is shown on Fig. 1.

1.2 The work was undertaken by AC archaeology Ltd during October 2014 and was commissioned by CgMs on behalf of the developer, Bloor Homes, in compliance with Condition 16 of the approval granted by South Gloucestershire of the planning application (No. PK14/0612/RM).

1.3 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with an archaeological Project Design prepared by AC archaeology Ltd. (Cox, 2014: ACW701/1/0).

1.4 According to the British Geological Survey (1:50 000 map) the underlying geology comprises Westbury Formation and Cotham Member (Undifferentiated) Mudstone of Triassic age and is close to, or at, the boundary with Clifton Down Limestone Formation of Carboniferous age. No superficial deposits are described.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The development lies close to, but not within, the Chipping Sodbury Conservation Area which contains a number of listed buildings and forms part of the historic core of the town.

2.2 The development area lies within an area of archaeological potential with prehistoric and Romano-British activity recorded in the vicinity. A Late Bronze Age socketed axe was recovered during blasting at the quarries sometime between 1919 and 1921 (SGHER no. 2090). A scatter of Roman artefacts has also been recorded to the west of the quarry (SGHER no. 2100). These comprised tegula, tiles, Samian pottery sherds and coarsewares and these may represent a form of Romano-British settlement in the vicinity, although the precise location of the asset is unknown.

2.3 The development lies on the site of the former Barnhill Quarry (SGHER nos. 16555, 16556 and 16566). This is a post-medieval quarry, now disused. The quarry is recorded on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map with extensions recorded on subsequent mapping (SGHER no. 18594). Adjacent to the development site is a post-medieval cemetery (SGHER no. 13491), constructed when pressure for space in the local churchyard resulted in the creation of this one acre extension. The cemetery was consecrated in 1865 and extended between 1921 and 1964. It will not be affected by the development.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological monitoring were:

- To record, during the groundworks associated with the development, any potential archaeological features and finds revealed or disturbed during the works, and;
- To provide an interpretive report on the results of the monitoring.

3.2 Site observations were recorded using the standard AC archaeology Ltd. pro-forma recording system, comprising written and graphic records, including a photographic record and in accordance with ACarchaeology Ltd. *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*.

3.3 The archive has been prepared using unique site code ACW701.

4. RESULTS

4.1 The majority of the new dwellings and associated infrastructure are to be constructed within the now disused Barnhill Quarry. The quarry site has been backfilled to a considerable depth and archaeological monitoring is not required (Plate 1).

4.2 The extent of the archaeological monitoring that was carried out is outlined in Fig. 2 and comprised two areas to the north and south of the road known as Drovers Way, at its eastern extent, at the junction with Wickwar Road.

North of Drovers Way

4.3 The area north of Drovers Way (Plate 2) is on the eastern boundary of the disused Barnhill Quarry and is situated on the upper bench of the quarry. It is flanked to the east and south by the Wickwar Road and Drovers Way respectively. The site comprised a gradually sloping site, upwards to the north. The east side has a grass covering with little or no overburden material, while the west side is largely open overburden material. To the north of the monitoring area is an existing tree

canopy comprising relatively mature trees, shrubs and associated undergrowth, it is likely this tree canopy once extended further to the south and has been cleared to facilitate the development.

Reduced level dig

4.4 During the reduced level excavation a short section of wall (Plate 3) was revealed close to the development boundary. The wall is considered to be of relatively modern construction and is believed to relate to the foundation of a former quarry building or boundary wall. A structure is shown in the vicinity on the 1st edition OS map (an extract of which is reproduced in the inset on Fig. 2). The reduced level excavation was only partial and, as a consequence the natural ground or any potential historic surface was not fully revealed (Plate 4); as a consequence the excavation of the foundation trenches was then observed.

Foundation trench excavation

4.5 The soil sequence as exposed at the northern extent of area can be seen in Plate 5 and a detailed description of the sequence is given below in Table 1.

4.6 During the excavation of the foundation trenches for the dwellings, a short section of service trench was exposed, the fill of which contained plastic waste; the service trench was likely to be associated with the modern structure previously noted. The excavation for the garage foundations was also inspected and observation of the drainage trenches to the west of the dwelling foundations revealed them to be shallow relative to the foundation trenches and they were excavated within reworked material. No pre-modern archaeological deposits were observed during these phases of the groundworks.

Depth (mbgl)	Thickness (m)	Description
0.0	0.30	Grass and herbaceous plant growth over SOIL: firm to stiff dark brown silty loam with some fine to coarse gravel and occasional cobbles; abundant organic material including roots (c.75mm dia.) and rootlets
0.30	0.90	Very stiff mottled blue-grey and olive-green CLAY; appears to be reworked, overburden material
1.20	0.10	Medium dense rusty orange and brown sandy fine GRAVEL; iron stained
1.30	Not determined	Very stiff pale yellow-brown slightly sandy SILT/CLAY; low plasticity; NATURAL

Table 1: Soil sequence exposed in north-facing section of the foundation trenches at northern extent of the area of investigation to the north of Drovers Way

South of Drovers Way

4.7 The area south of Drovers Way (Plate 6) comprised relatively level waste land with mixed crushed rock aggregate, quarry waste, building debris, etc. The area has bunds to the north and east perimeter and a cemetery, to the south, separated by a stone boundary wall and a number of mature trees; there are also mature trees along the eastern boundary. To the west and north the site is flanked by Drovers Way and the Wickwar Road is to the east side.

4.8 The bunds were reduced to facilitate the erection of a tree protection zone and the loose material was spread across the site. No archaeology was observed or recorded during this procedure.

Reduced level excavation

4.9 The reduced level excavation was only partial and as a consequence the natural ground or any potential historic surface was not fully revealed; as a consequence the excavation of the foundation trenches was observed.

Foundation trenches

4.10 During the monitoring of excavation for the foundation trenches it was evident that, in a number of places the bedrock was close to the existing ground level and sealed by a layer of clay; the dip angle of the bedrock causing some instability of the trench sides. The general soil sequence as exposed at the eastern extent of area of observation can be seen in Plate 7 and a description of the sequence is given below in Table 2.

Depth (mbgl)	Thickness (m)	Description
0.00	0.45	MADE GROUND: general overburden material comprising mixed building waste with soil/subsoil and organic material including tree roots and rootlets
0.45	0.15	MADE GROUND: loose grey fine gravel (pipe bedding)
0.60	Not determined	Very stiff pale grey-green SILT occasionally streaked/mottled pale orange-brown silt/clay with fine flecks of decayed vegetation (rootlets); NATURAL

Table 2: Soil sequence exposed in west-facing section of the foundation trenches at eastern extent of the area of investigation to the south of Drovers Way

4.11 Excavation of the foundation trenches for the garages and annex, located in the south-east corner of the area of investigation, was observed (Plate 8). A thin layer of overburden material was present, over natural clay, which in turn overlay bedrock. There were areas where the bedrock was broken out to achieve the required cover of concrete. No pre-modern archaeological deposits were observed during this phase of the groundworks.

4.12 The excavation for the garage foundations on the west side was observed; it revealed a considerable layer of overburden material, comprising granular sub-base and pipe gravel to up to 2.0m thick. This caused instability and collapse of the trench sides (Plate 9); a reduced level dig to remove the overburden material ensued. The garage foundations were c.3.0m deep and it is likely the foundation depth is a direct consequence of the overlying made ground. The reduced level dig revealed natural ground and no pre-modern archaeological deposits were observed during this phase of the groundworks (Plate 10).

5. COMMENT

5.1 The archaeological monitoring of the groundworks required at Barnhill Road was carried out in accordance with the Project Design.

5.2 The foundation and service trenches were cut into the overburden material which was either of modern origin or into natural substrates.

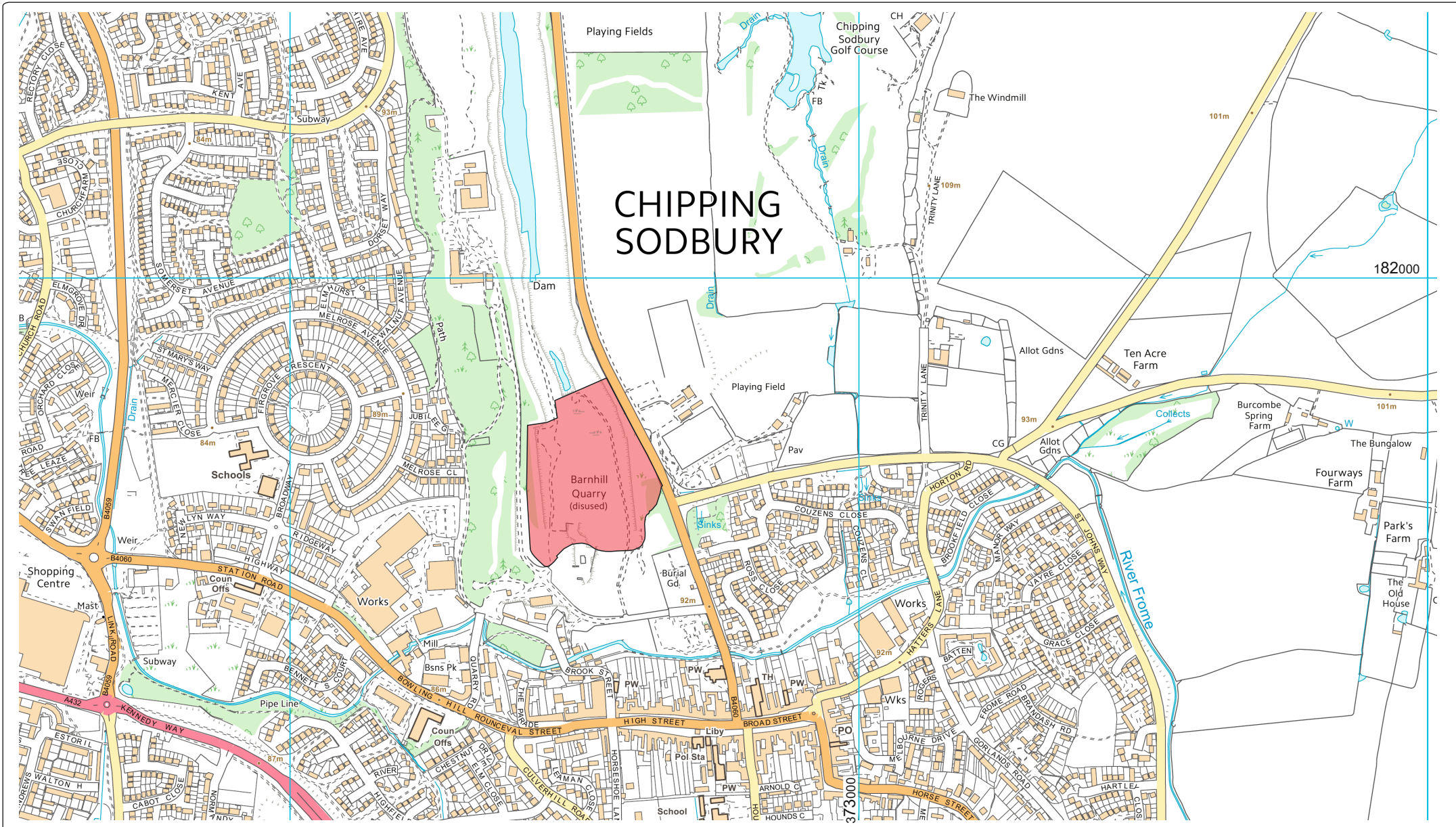
5.3 There were no significant archaeological deposits observed or recorded during the monitoring period.

6. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 1:50 000 maps. Accessed October 2014 online at:
www.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html

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PROJECT

Land at Barnhill Quarry, Chipping Sodbury

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location





Plate 1: The disused Barnhill Quarry during backfilling operations prior to the development



Plate 2: Area north of Drovers Way prior to excavation



Plate 3: Short section of wall exposed during reduced level. Scale 1 metre



Plate 4: Partial reduced level dig showing the mixed overburden fills



Plate 5: North-facing section at northern extent of area north of Drovers Way showing exposed soil sequence during excavation of foundation trenches. Scale 2m/1m



Plate 6: Area south of Drovers Way prior to excavation



Plate 7: The general soil sequence as exposed in the foundation trenches at the eastern extent of the area of investigation south of Drovers Way



Plate 8: The general stratigraphic sequence exposed in garage/annex foundations



Plate 9: Depth of overburden material and instability of trench sides



Plate 10: The exposed ground after reduced level dig

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