

Land at Britford depot and paddock, Britford, Wiltshire

Centred on NGR SU159282

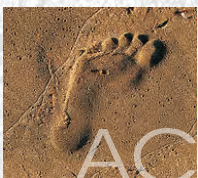
Results of archaeological evaluation

Prepared by:
Catriona Gibson

On behalf of:
Walden Homes

Document No: ACW581/2/0

Date: January 2014



archaeology

LAND AT BRITFORD DEPOT AND Paddock, BRITFORD, WILTSHIRE (NGR: SU159282) Results of Trench Evaluation

SUMMARY

An evaluation consisting of three machine-excavated trenches was undertaken by AC archaeology on land at the former WCC Britford Depot and adjacent paddock site at Britford, Wiltshire, in January 2014. The evaluation trenches were positioned under the footprint of the proposed new development. No archaeological features were identified in any of the trenches, and only modern finds were noted during scanning of the trench spoilheaps.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This report sets out the results of an archaeological trench evaluation in advance of the proposed development of land (hereafter referred to as the application area) at the former WCC Britford Depot and adjacent paddock site at Britford, Wiltshire, (NGR SU159282). The location of the application area and the evaluation trenches are shown on Fig. 1.
- 1.2** The trench evaluation was undertaken as part of a programme of archaeological works required in support of a planning application to Wiltshire County Council. The work was requested by the Assistant Wiltshire County Archaeological Officer (AWCAO) in order to identify the nature of potential heritage assets on the Site.
- 1.3** The application area comprises an area of 0.217 hectares of land on the western edge of the village of Britford (SU159282). It lies at around 43m OD with the underlying geology comprising river terrace gravels, sands and alluvium over chalk. No previous archaeological investigations have been recorded within the area.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The western boundary of the application area coincides with the western boundary of the Britford Conservation Area.. The application area also lies within an Area of Special Archaeological Significance as designated in the Salisbury District Local Plan, 2011. Britford is a village with Anglo-Saxon origins first recorded in AD670 (Wilts HER SU12NE403).
- 2.2** Earthworks, possibly Saxon or Medieval settlement remains, are recorded to the east of the site but these have since been destroyed (Wilts HER SU12NE605). A large moat associated with the Moathouse and Cob House is believed to be associated with Britford Park, shown to the east of the application area on an Ordnance Survey map of 1873 (Wilts HER SU12NE532). The paddock area was open land with trees dotted across it, the only change being the presence of a building on the western boundary at that time. A number of the buildings shown in 1873 on the depot site remain extant with some later additions.
- 2.3** Stray finds of prehistoric and medieval date have been recorded within a 250m radius of the site. These comprise a worked flint of Mesolithic date (SU12NE053), a medieval silver coin (SU12NE483) and a medieval bronze seal (SU12NE456).

3 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1** The trial trench evaluation was undertaken to determine, as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present on the Site, as dictated by current best practice.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The trench evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design, prepared by AC archaeology (Corney 2013), and approved in advance by the AWCAO.
- 4.2** The evaluation comprised three machine-dug trenches, all of them proposed as 16m in length and 1.3m in width. The trenches were laid out with a Leica Viva SmartNet Rover GPS (GS08) and heights above Ordnance Datum (m OD) were also recorded using this

device. Due to the presence of upstanding buildings, walls and an access way on the site, it was not possible to open the trenches in the locations in which they had originally been placed. This was not an issue as none of the trenches were targeted on any geophysical anomalies. Trench 1 was moved slightly to the west; Trench 2 was changed in alignment from north-east to south-west to east to west and reduced in length to 14m. Only the north part of Trench 3 could be opened as the rest was positioned over a brick wall and access track. Its length was reduced to 5m (Fig. 1).

- 4.4** Topsoil and subsoil was removed by a 2.5 tonne 360-degree tracked mechanical excavator with a 1.3m wide toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. The spoil was separated and stored alongside each trench, and subsequently backfilled upon the completion of the evaluation. Machine excavation ceased at the level at which natural undisturbed subsoil was exposed. Due to inclement weather, the trenches began to fill with water shortly after they were opened.
- 4.5** The trenches were surveyed in using a Leica Viva SmartNet Rover GPS (GS08). The three 'Negative' trenches without any archaeology were recorded using *pro forma* trench record forms. Digital colour photographs were taken of representative sections and the plans of negative trenches.
- 4.6** The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008,) and procedures laid down in MAP2 and MoRPHE (English Heritage 1991, 2006). The archive was prepared using the site code ACW581, and is currently stored at the offices of AC archaeology (Wiltshire).

5 RESULTS

- 5.1** None of the three trenches contained any archaeological features, and only modern finds were noted during the scanning of the adjacent spoilheaps. Furthermore, modern disturbance, hardstanding and make-up horizons were identified in all of the trenches, relating to the demolition of the modern buildings on the site.

Trench 1 (Plate 1)

- 5.2** Trench 1 was aligned east-west. Mixed aggregates (100) and modern made ground was noted in the upper layers (101) and natural grey-brown river gravel (102) overlying chalk was encountered at a depth of c. 0.6-0.65m below the current ground level (45.35m aOD).

Trench 2 (Plate 2)

- 5.3** Trench 2 was aligned east-west, and a series of mixed and disturbed deposits (200 and 201) were noted overlying natural grey-brown river gravel at a depth of 0.45-0.5m from the top of the trench (45.5m aOD).

Trench 3 (Plate 3)

- 5.4** Trench 3 was oriented north-south, and again only modern and disturbed deposits (300 and 301) were found overlying the chalk natural geology which was revealed at a maximum depth of 0.7m below the top of the trench (45.15m aOD).

Table 1: Summary of negative trenches

Trench No.	Contexts	Depth below ground	Description
1	100 – Made ground/hardstanding. Mixed grey-brown stone and aggregate	0-0.25m	Trench 16m long, aligned E-W, situated at S of Site. No features or finds
	101 – Made ground. Dark grey-brown silty clay with modern CBM	0.25-0.60m	
	102 – Natural geology. Grey-brown river gravels	0.60m+	
2	200 – Made ground/hardstanding. Mixed grey-brown stone and aggregate	0-0.25m	Trench 14m long, aligned E-W situated in centre of Site. No features or finds
	201 – Made ground. Dark grey-brown silty clay with modern CBM	0.25-0.45m	
	202 – Natural geology. Grey-brown river gravels	0.45m+	
3	300 – Made ground/hardstanding	0-0.25m	Trench 5m long, aligned N-S situated in NE corner of Site
	301 – Made ground. Mixed redeposited topsoil/gravels with large quantities of modern brick	0.25-0.70m	
	302 – Natural. Solid chalk natural	0.70m+	

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1** The evaluation trenches found no evidence for archaeological features in the proposed development area. The application area lies in an area of high archaeological potential, particularly relating to later prehistoric (Iron Age) and Saxon date. Of regional significance is the large enclosed Iron Age settlement of Little Woodbury, which is situated less than 1km to the south-west (Bersu 1940). Furthermore, Saxon or medieval earthworks are recorded to the east of the site, but it should be noted that these have now been completely destroyed or at least levelled.
- 6.2** The evaluation has determined that there is limited archaeological potential at least within the small exposure of the proposed development area that was evaluated. Due to the presence of buildings, other structures and an access road, it was not possible to evaluate a 3% sample of the site. It is likely that any features and finds once present have been disturbed and truncated by more recent modern activity, including the construction of a 20th century building. Modern disturbance has impacted at least a depth of 0.7m below the current ground level; however it is feasible that more substantial archaeological features survive below this.
- 6.3** The evaluation was also able to demonstrate that a gravel terrace is present in the southern part of the site and a chalk ridge exists to the north. This may be of archaeological significance.

7 REFERENCES

BGS, 1975, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 283, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth

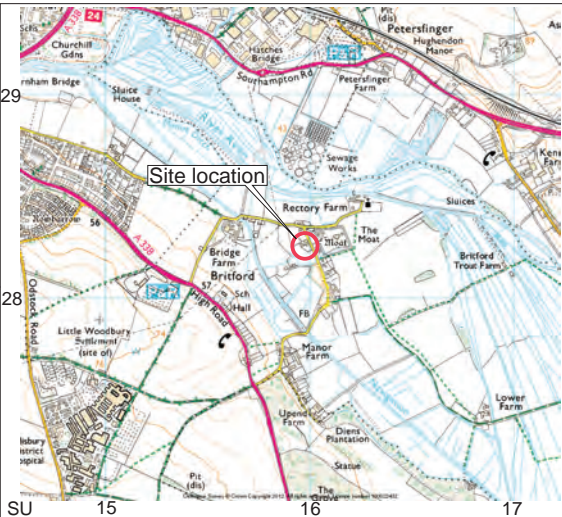
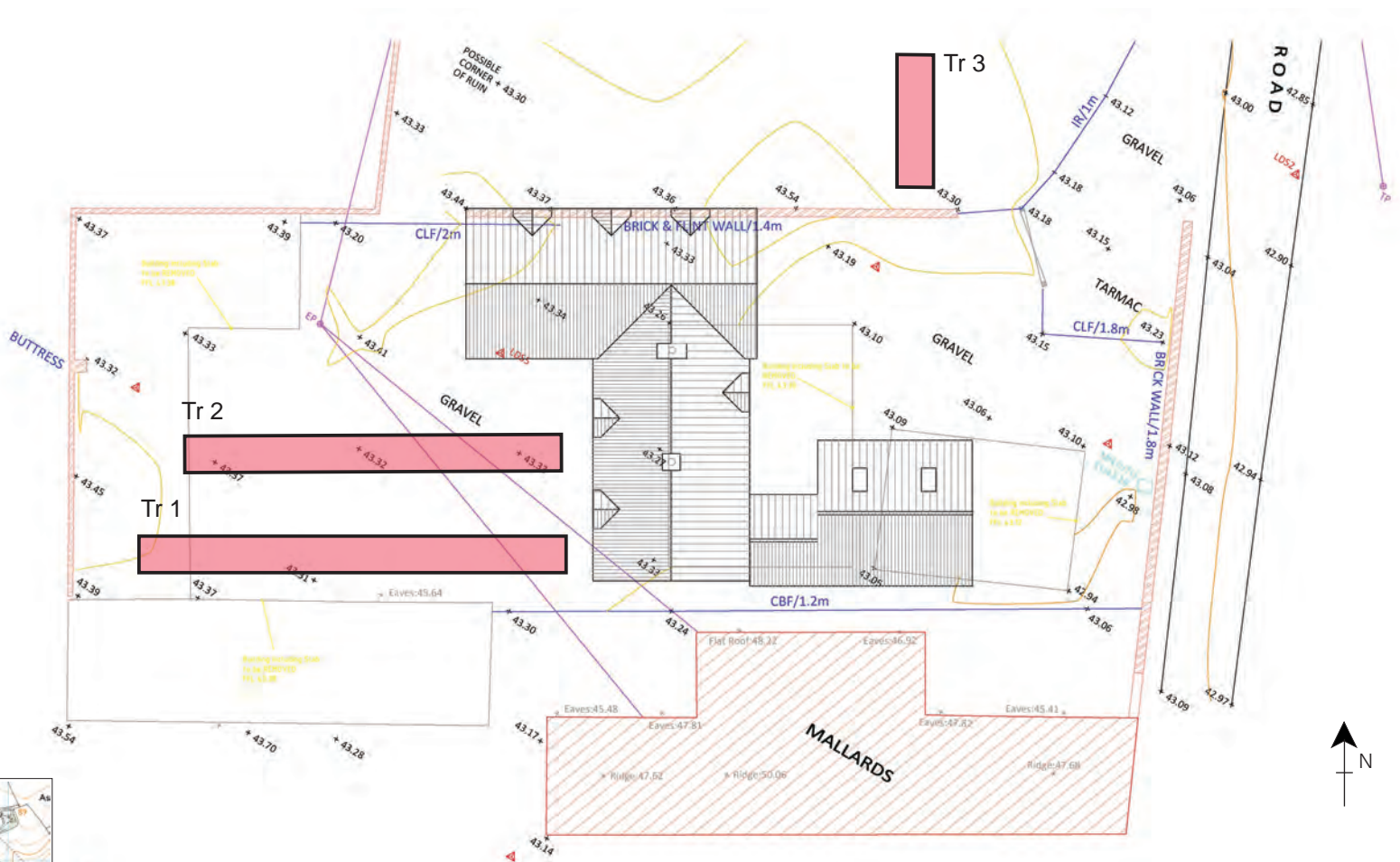
Bersu, G. 1940. Excavations at Little Woodbury. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* VI, 30-111.

Corney, M. 2013. *Land at Britford depot and paddock NGR SU 159282. Project design for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching*. Unpublished client report. ACW581/1/0.

English Heritage. 1991. *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*. London: English Heritage.

English Heritage. 2006. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment. The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*. Swindon: English Heritage.

Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Reading: IfA.



PROJECT
Land at Britford Depot and Paddock

TITLE
Fig. 1: Site and trench location





Plate 1: Trench 1, view from the north (scale 1m)



Plate 2: Trench 2, view from the north (scale 1m)

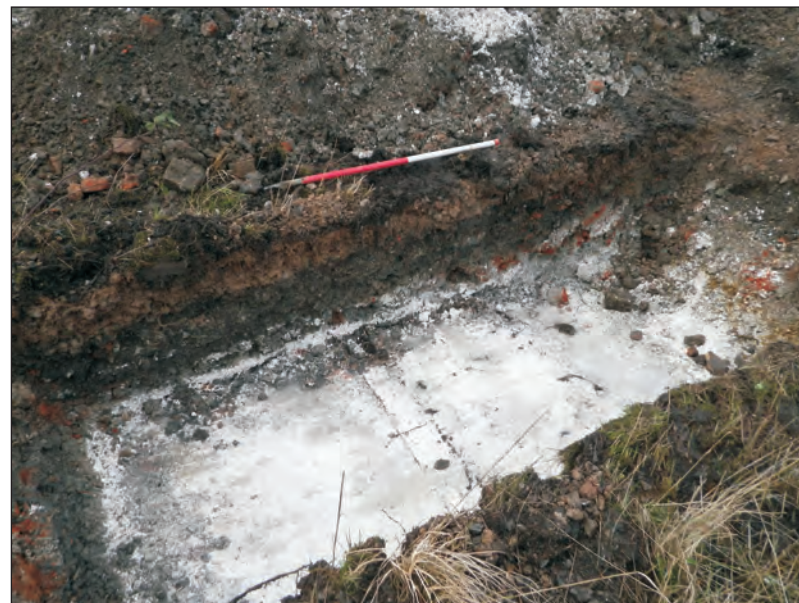


Plate 3: Trench 3, view from the north (scale 1m)

Wiltshire Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Manor Farm Stables
Chicklade
Hindon
Nr Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 5SU

Telephone: 01747 820581
Fax: 01747 820440

Devon Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Unit 4, Halthaies Workshops
Bradninch
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ

Telephone/Fax: 01392 882410

www.acarchaeology.co.uk