



The Old Telephone Exchange, Stapenhill

Archaeological Watching Brief

ARCUS report 1170.1(1)

March 2009

Client: Andrew Homes Ltd

Archaeological Watching Brief



Site Name: The Old Telephone Exchange, Stapenhill

Grid Reference: SK 25415 21009

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 1170.1(1)

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Client: Andrew Homes Ltd

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Location of archive: Staffordshire County Council

Planning reference: PA/13502/00904

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Checked by:	Passed for submission to client:
Date:	Date:
Chris Harrison <i>Archaeological Supervisor</i>	Anna Badcock <i>Assistant Director</i>

OASIS SUMMARY FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
OASIS identifier	Arcus2-56300	
Project title	The Old Telephone Exchange, Stapenhill	
Short description of the project	<p>ARCUS was commissioned by Andrew Homes Ltd to carry out a watching brief during overburden removal, access road stripping of and excavations of foundation trenches on land at the site of the Old Telephone Exchange, Fyfield Road, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, East Staffordshire.</p> <p>Nothing of archaeological significance was noted during the works, the site having been truncated by terracing when former telephone exchange buildings were constructed.</p>	
Project dates	04-04-2008 – 18-04-2008	
Previous/future work	none	
Monument type and period	none	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	Surfaces relating to former Telephone Exchange	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County/Parish		
Site address	The Old Telephone Exchange, Fyfield Road, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, East Staffordshire	
Site co-ordinates	SK 25145 21009	
Site area	10 m ²	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	ARCUS	
Project brief originator	Staffordshire County Council	
Project design originator	ARCUS	
Project manager	Anna Badcock	
Sponsor or funding body	Andrew Homes Ltd	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
Archive Type	Location/Accession no.	Content (e.g. pottery, metalwork, etc)
Physical	none	none
Paper	Staffordshire County Council	report
Digital	Staffordshire County Council	report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Watching Brief on Groundworks at The Old Telephone Exchange, Stapenhill	
Report no	1170.1(1)	
Author	Chris Harrison	
Date	March 2009	

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLATES

Illustrations

- 1 Site location map.
- 2 Location of house footings within site.

Plates

- 1 View of foundation trench showing tarmac and red brick surfaces.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

In April 2008, ARCUS were commissioned by Andrew Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of overburden and foundation trenches for new domestic buildings and an access road at the site of the Old Telephone Exchange, Fyfield Road, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, East Staffordshire (centred on SK 25415 21009). The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent for redevelopment at the site.

Excavation of the foundation trenches revealed no significant archaeological remains. The construction of the Old Telephone Exchange had required ground to be made up which had destroyed any earlier features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of Report

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of overburden and foundation trenches for three new domestic buildings and access road at the site of the Old Telephone Exchange, Fyfield Road, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, East Staffordshire. This was required by Staffordshire County Council as a condition of planning consent on an application for redevelopment at the site (PA/13502/00904). The watching brief was undertaken in line with the government's planning guidelines set down in PPG16 (1990), and a project design prepared by Staffordshire County Council (2007). ARCUS were commissioned by Andrew Homes Ltd to undertake the watching brief.

1.2 Site Location

The site the north side of Fyfield Road, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, East Staffordshire (NGR SK 25415 21009) and was formerly occupied by The Old Telephone Exchange which was demolished in January 2008 (**Illustration 1**).

1.3 Archaeological Background

No archaeological work has occurred within this site prior to this scheme of works. An account of the site's history was compiled in 2007 by Staffordshire County Council and is summarised below.

Whilst no documented features lie within the development area, several significant sites of archaeological interest are known to exist within the immediate environs. 230 metres to the north east, a Romano-British farmstead (PRN 00908) was discovered and excavated. The area now houses a quarry which has destroyed all remains of the farmstead.

The development area lies 130 meters to the north of the site of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery (PRN 00907) which was excavated in the late nineteenth century. The excavations uncovered 34 burials and 2 cremations with affiliated grave goods.

400 meters to the south east are the sites of Burton upon Trent castle (PRN 01223) and a 12th century hospital (PRN 00916) associated with Burton Abbey.

Within the immediate vicinity of the development area, in operation during the nineteenth century, were brickworks (PRN 05201) and sawmill (PRN 05194)

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and Objectives

The general aim of the watching brief was to mitigate the impact of the development on the archaeological resource, through preservation by record of any archaeology encountered during the groundworks.

The specific aims were:

- to identify, record and, where possible, characterise any archaeological remains encountered during the groundworks;
- to provide an adequate record of any significant remains, such as cremations, discovered during the scheme of works
- to provide information that will enable the remains to be placed within their

local and regional context and for an assessment of the significance of archaeology within the proposal area to be made.

2.2 Evaluation Methodology

All site work was carried out in accordance with the methodology outlined in the project design (Staffordshire County Council, 2007). This was based on IfA guidelines (2008), health and safety regulations (SCAUM 2007) and current industry best practice.

Archaeological recording comprised of the assignment of numbers (contexts) to individual archaeological events, allowing for the stratigraphy of the groundworks to be chronologically identified. Colour, black and white and digital photographs were taken of features to provide visual examples of the archaeology. Plans of the archaeological record were made by the onsite staff and detail the areas excavated.

2.3 Fieldwork Programme

The project was managed by Anna Badcock. Fieldwork was undertaken in February and March 2008, by Katherine Baker.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Removal of Overburden and Foundation Trench Excavations

Groundworks were carried out in advance of the construction of foundations for new domestic buildings. Excavation of a concrete slab that covered the entire site occurred prior to an archaeological presence and was mixed with demolition material and spread across site. The top layer of archaeology was, therefore, the made ground post demolition of the Old Telephone Exchange (**Plate 1**). Below the made ground layer existed a tarmac surface relating to a car park or yard associated with the Old telephone Exchange. This covered a brick surface which related to an earlier yard surface. Below the brick flooring, a redeposited natural levelling layer existed relating to a making up of ground prior to the construction of the Old Telephone Exchange. Further excavations revealed a reddish clay substrate below the made ground and at a depth of between 0.10m and 0.48m below the present ground surface. Where foundation trenches were excavated (to a depth of 1.60m) the same stratigraphy was observed.

3.2 Access Road

Groundworks were carried out in advance of the construction of an access road into the housing development. Only part of the final length of the access road was stripped to the west of the show home, consisting of the length of road from the entrance into the development off Fyfield Road up to the point where the western boundary widened to the north of the adjacent electricity substation. Up to 0.30m of mixed, loose ground was excavated down from the level of the adjacent pavement. The ground consisted of mainly redeposited mid pink brown natural that was mixed with areas of modern hardcore and sand. An old tarmac surface was present along the northern part of the western edge, within which was a modern brick manhole.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary and Discussion

The area of the development displayed archaeology solely relating to the construction, lifetime, and demolition of the Old Telephone Exchange. Above natural there existed a made ground deposit that was made from a mixture of natural and rubble. The natural clay within the made ground deposit was the same type as was present in the locality, suggesting that material was collected locally for deposition (possibly dug from the site itself). No buried topsoil or developed subsoil was observed, suggesting that these were removed prior to the construction of the Old Telephone Exchange. It is likely that the collection preparation and deposition of made ground over the entire site has resulted in the complete destruction of any features relating to the period before the construction of the Old Telephone Exchange.

Access could not be gained to the base of the excavated area due to health and safety concerns, but no archaeological remains were visible in the removed spoil. The overall reliability of the watching brief is considered to be excellent.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Work

Based on the results of the watching brief, no further work is recommended.

5 ARCHIVE

The project archive will be deposited with the Potteries Museum. The archive will be prepared by ARCUS staff in accordance with the requirements specified in Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2006) and with UKIC guidelines (1990). In addition, copies of this report will be deposited with Staffordshire County Council HER, circulated to the client, and retained in the offices of ARCUS.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage. 2006. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. English Heritage: Swindon.

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UKIC. 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage*. United Kingdom Institute of Conservation. London.

7 ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLATES



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Project:
Fyfield Road, Stapenhill

Title:
Site Location Map

Scale:
1:5000

NGR:
SK 254 210

Project No.
1170.1(1)

Date:
May 2009

Drawn:
Jo Mincher

Illustration No.
1

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Project: Fyfield Road, Stapenhill		Scale NTS	Date May 2009
Title Site Plan		NGR SK 254 210	Drawn J Debska
		Project No. 1170.1(1)	Illustration No. 2



Plate 1: View of north facing section of foundation trench showing tarmac and red brick surface. Top layer is modern demolition material, deposited after the concrete raft was removed.

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