

Archaeological Watching Brief
at
THE BARN,
GROVE ROAD, COOMBE DINGLE,
BRISTOL.
for
Mr & Mrs Oaten



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Archaeological Watching Brief
at
**THE BARN,
GROVE ROAD, COOMBE DINGLE,
BRISTOL.**

Centred on
N.G.R. ST 55574 77326

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Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	Km	Kilometre
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	m	Metre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	NGR	National Grid Reference
BC	Before Christ	NMR	National Monuments Record
c.	Circa	OS	Ordnance Survey
HER	Historic Environment Record		

NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

May, 2011.

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks associated with the construction of a side extension and a replacement double garage at The Barn, Grove Road, Coombe Dingle, Bristol.

The groundworks revealed a simple sequence of driveway surfacing, topsoil, sealing subsoil and subsequently, archaeological sterile clays of geological origin.

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the intrusive groundworks.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) were commissioned by Mr and Mrs Oaten to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundwork's associated with the construction of a side extension and a replacement double garage at The Barn, Grove Road, Coombe Dingle, Bristol.
- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned to comply with the condition of planning consent (Planning application 06/02857/H) and in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS 2011).
- 1.3 The fieldwork was undertaken between April 7th and April 26th 2011 initially under the supervision of Timothy Longman and later R K Ducker, who also compiled this report.
- 1.4 The project archive will be deposited with Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery under the Accession Number BRSMG 2011/12 and a copy of the report will be made available to the National Monuments Record maintained by English Heritage. The project has been entered in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24992 and in the OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations as: bristola1-97547.

2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site is located on the north/west side of the lower part of Grove Road, between Nos. 1A and 3, NGR ST 55574 77326. It runs alongside much of the boundary with the garden of No. 3. In combined area, only about 45m² is involved. The site sits immediately above the 23m aOD contour, inclining towards the south.
- 2.2 According to the 1:50,000 geological map, the underlying hard geology is Dolomitic Conglomerate of the Triassic period.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There has been no previous archaeological work on the site and the following historic background has been taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2011). A small hoard of Early Bronze Age metalwork was found about 150m to the east in 1899. In 1972 a Romano-British stone coffin was discovered at Pitchcombe Gardens, 200m to the north-east of The Barn. The major portion of Grove Road is thought by some to represent part of the route of the Roman road from Sea Mills to Gloucester, although the lowest stretch, of which The Barn sits on one corner, appears to be much later in origin.
- 3.2 Historically the site lay in the parish of Henbury, near the edge of the deeper part of the valley of the River Trym. The river itself formed the boundary with Westbury parish. This part of the parish retained vestiges of the old open field system until relatively recently, showing as small groups of what once had been individual strips. These were shown on Isaac Taylor's map and survey of Edward Southwell's estate in 1771-2. Parcel 87 included the present property and was one of three belonging to one Burford. Although described as 'A house & orchard', there were two buildings, one on the site of the present house and another further to the west.
- 3.3 No structures were shown in this area on the 1840s tithe map, but a building appeared again on the first edition of the OS 1:2500 plan. It should be noted that the tithe map did not necessarily record isolated agricultural buildings and so the two structures could have been one and the same.
- 3.4 The 1903 OS also shows two small buildings on the study area, apparently within an orchard associated with Appletree Cottage to the south, this is repeated on the 1915 OS but by the 1936 OS the orchard has been reduced in size and the two small buildings, though still extant are apparently in a separate plot now possibly associated with a different building to the west (and later known as "Byways"). Both the 1953 and 1963 OS maps are similar but also show that the more northerly of the two buildings has been partly subdivided, apparently to form pig pens. More recently, the building has had a residential use and is known as 'The Barn'.

4. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork complied with the methodology contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2011). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008). The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits revealed during the course of intrusive groundworks.
- 4.2 The watching brief involved the monitoring of the mechanical excavation of reduced level platforms for both the garage and the extension as well as standard strip foundations for these.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 All groundworks were carried out using a 360° tracked mini-mechanical excavator using a toothed bucket.

Garage Foundations and Reduced Level Excavation (Figure 2, Plates 1 & 2)

- 5.2 Standard strip foundations were excavated for the new garage and the area enclosed by these footings was subsequently reduced in level. The trenches reached a maximum of 1.15m deep whilst the interior of the garage was excavated to 700mm deep. A simple sequence of deposits was revealed during these works. The uppermost deposit, exposed in the west facing section, comprised a thin layer of gravel drive surface (106). Over the remainder of the footings, topsoil (100) sealed subsoil (101) that in turn sealed archaeologically sterile clay deposits (102) of geological origin.

Extension Reduced Level Excavation and Foundations (Figure 2, Plates 3 & 4)

- 5.3 Initially the area of the extension was reduced in level by up to 900mm after which foundations were excavated to a maximum of 1.5m below this. At the completion of the reduced level excavation, at least 50% of the platform could be seen to have reached the upper surface of the underlying clay, reducing the need for further monitoring. A sequence of deposits identical to those above was recorded, i.e. drive surface (106) topsoil (103) subsoil (104) and clay (105).
- 5.4 No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed and no artefacts predating the modern period were recovered during intrusive groundworks at the site.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Excavations of the garage foundations & reduced level platform and the reduced level excavation and foundations for the extension exposed a simple sequence of deposits. The uppermost deposit comprised topsoil (100 & 103), over subsoil (101 & 104) and finally deposits of archaeologically sterile clay of geological origin (102 & 105). Deposits of modern gravel were also identified that comprised a modern driveway surface.
- 6.2 The watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of the intrusive groundworks. The lack of archaeological deposits may indicate that any structural remains related to the Bronze Age hoard, or the Romano-British coffin and suggested Roman Road did not extend into the application area or that they may have been truncated by previous development of the area.

7. PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 The fieldwork was undertaken initially by Timothy Longman and later by R K Ducker who also produced this report. The illustrations were prepared and the report compiled by Ann Linge. The archive was compiled and prepared for deposition by the author and the project was managed by John Bryant.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES CONSULTED

Published Works

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Maps

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Unpublished Material

BaRAS 2010. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief at The Barn, Grove Road, Coombe Dingle, Bristol.*

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BaRAS would like to thank Mr & Mrs Oaten and Dot-Com Builders (Building and Maintenance) Ltd for their assistance and co-operation.

APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

NATIONAL POLICIES

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work that would affect a SAM.

GOVERNMENT POLICY GUIDANCE

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990) have been replaced (23 March 2010) by Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) which sets out the Government's national policies on conservation of the historic environment. Those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets.

Of particular relevance within the Planning Policy Statement are:

Policy HE6: Information Requirements for Applications for Consent Affecting Heritage Assets

HE6.1 Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets themselves should have been assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary given the application's impact. Where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.

Policy HE9: Additional Policy Principles Guiding the Consideration of Applications for Consent Relating to Designated Heritage Assets

HE9.1 There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I or II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Policy HE12: Policy Principles Guiding the Recording of Information Related to Heritage Assets

HE12.3 Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance. Developers should publish this evidence and deposit copies of the reports with the relevant historic environment record. Local planning authorities should require any archive generated to be deposited with a local museum or other public depository willing to receive it. Local planning authorities should impose planning conditions or obligations to ensure such work is carried out in a timely manner and that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.

DISTRICT POLICY

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

APPENDIX 2: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Description
100	Dark brown, friable, sandy silt, averages 200mm thick - topsoil
101	Reddish-brown, firm clay with very occasional small sandstone fragment inclusions – subsoil.
102	Stiff, brownish red clay at base of excavation, excavated to a maximum of 450mm deep. Natural, archaeologically sterile clay.
103	Same as (100) friable, mid – dark brown fine, sandy silt. Heavily root disturbed in places. Recorded in sections of house extension to 400mm thick.
104	Same as (101) firm, reddish-brown, sandy clay with very occasional small sandstone inclusions. Recorded in sections and partly remaining in-situ in the base of the house extension. Up to 300mm thick.
105	Same as (102) stiff, reddish-brown clay exposed at base of approximately 50% of the area of the extension and in the foundation trench monitored. Excavation reached a maximum depth of 1.3m deep. Archaeologically sterile clay.
106	Gravel and hardcore bedding exposed in section of reduced level excavation of garage and extension (east side) averages 150mm thick.



Fig.1 Site location plan, scale 1:1250

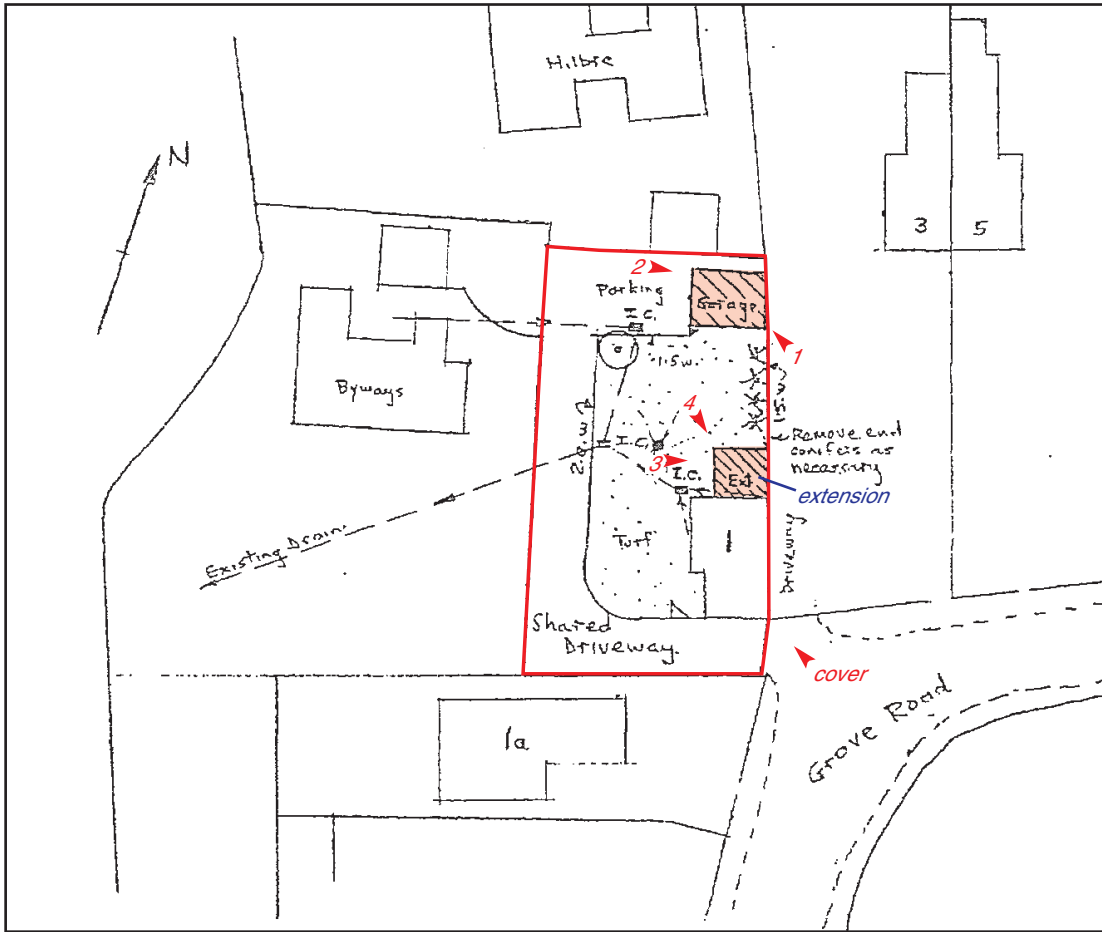


Fig.2 Plan showing study area in detail, not to scale



Plate 1 General view of the foundation excavation for the new garage, looking north-west



Plate 2 Detail of the west-facing section of the reduced level dig for the garage, looking east, 0.5m scale



Plate 3 South-facing section of the extension reduced level excavation and foundation excavation, looking north-east, 0.5m scale



Plate 4 Foundation excavation and the west-facing section of the extension, looking east, 0.5m scale