

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**AT**

**GARDEN REACH, 12 CAMP ROAD,**

**GERRARDS CROSS, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**NGR SU 9970 8814**

*On behalf of*

*Mrs. S. McMahon*

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**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<i>Summary</i>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
<b>2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 STRATEGY</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 Research Design	3
3.2 Methodology	3
<b>4 RESULTS</b>	<b>4</b>
4.1 Field Results	4
4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results	4
<b>5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS</b>	<b>4</b>
5.1 Artefacts	4
5.2 Environmental Remains	4
<b>6 DISCUSSION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7 BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>6</b>
 <b>FIGURES</b>	
Figure 1      Site and Trench Location	2
Figure 2      Plans and Sections of Trenches	5

## **SUMMARY**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at 12 Camp Road, Gerrards Cross. A single trench was excavated that revealed a possible posthole or small pit. This feature was heavily truncated and remained undated.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site location (Figure 1)**

The site lies off the east part of Camp Road, Gerrards Cross at NGR SU 9970 8814. The underlying geology is Palaeogene Woolwich and Reading Beds.

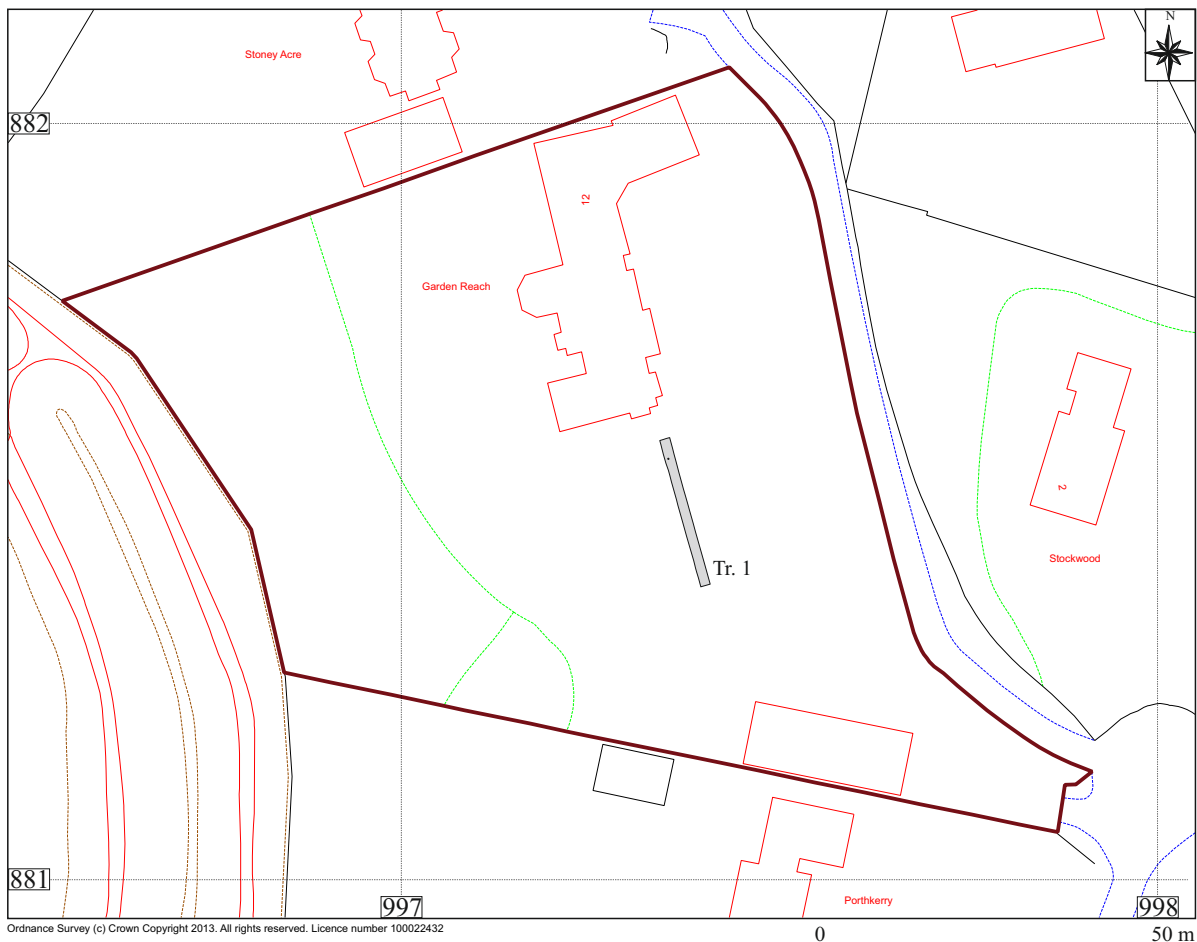
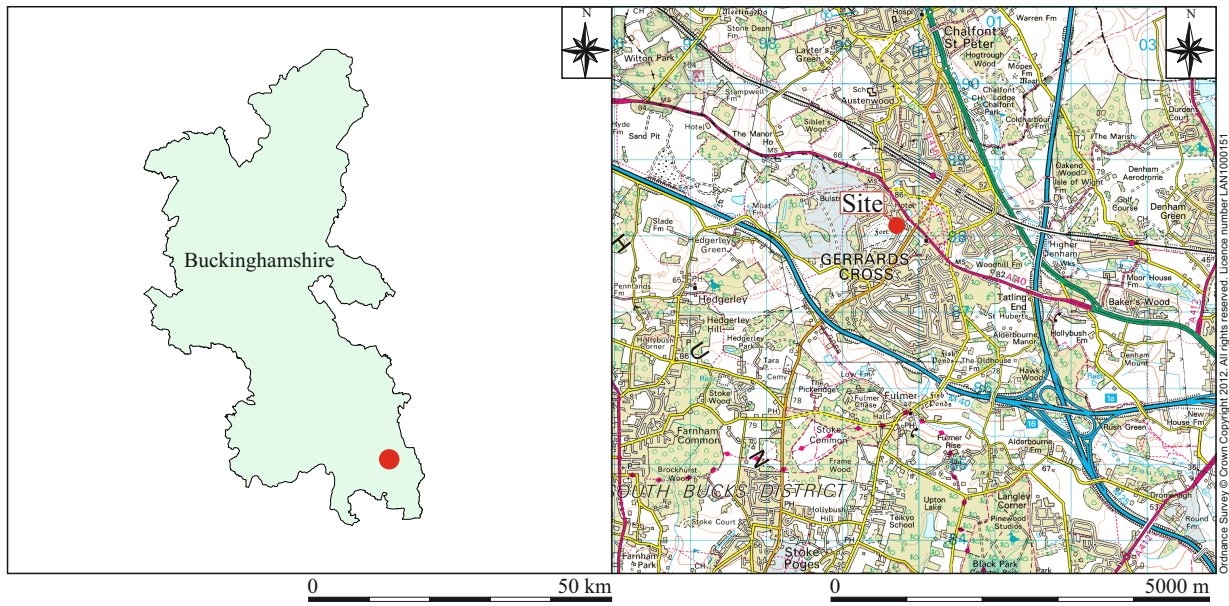
### **1.2 Planning Background**

A planning application for redevelopment of site to create two detached dwelling houses, associated hardstanding, landscaping and new vehicular access with dormer windows in existing detached garage to create additional accommodation (13/00704/FUL) has been made to South Bucks District Council. Due to the presence of potential remains of archaeological interest in the proposal area the applicant was advised to secure the implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which had been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. This was implemented as the proposed development was within an area of archaeological potential. This is in line with NPPF. Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Services prepared a Brief for a field evaluation. A *Written Scheme of Investigation*, agreed with the county planning archaeologist, proposed a method to satisfy the requirements of the Brief.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The site lies adjacent to Bulstrode Camp which is the largest monument of its kind in the County, covering over 21 acres. The defences consist of a double rampart for the greater part of the circumference. Where the inner bank is best preserved (on the eastern side) it rises to a height of 1.8-2.1m above the interior surface and is over 3.6m above the bottom of the inner ditch. The outer bank is 1.8m-2.1m above the bottom of the outer ditch. The overall breadth of the defensive work is about 30m (Fox and Clark 1925). The hillfort was investigated in 1924 when small-scale excavation produced only three small fragments of early Iron Age pottery and traces of a hearth (*ibid*). A geophysical survey in 2003 identified a series of anomalies that were speculatively interpreted as hut circles, avenues and a 'long barrow' (Gover 2003).

A watching brief was undertaken at 90 Camp Road where ground works had already been completed (TVAS 2002). The new work had truncated a bank, thought to have been part of the hillfort. At Fosse Cottage a sewerage pipe through the ditch and bank recorded two possible postholes in the interior. An evaluation by Archaeological Solutions (2005) at 44 Camp Road just outside the southern rampart of the hillfort produced a series of medieval features dating from the 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century (Archaeological Solutions 2005).






Key  Site outline  Evaluation trench  Archaeological feature

Figure 1: Site location

Three watching briefs at 59, 90, 96 and 102 Camp Road recorded no archaeological features (JMHS 2006, 2009; TVAS 2005b). A recording action was carried out on damage to the Camp ramparts at 92 Camp Road (TVAS 2005a).

At Long Patch, Camp Road (CAS 02252, NGR SU 9929 8768) a Neolithic/Bronze Age scraper/borer has been found while a Palaeolithic axe fragment or flake has come from Bulstrode Park (CAS 0838, NGR SU 9900 8850). A Neolithic or Bronze Age hammerstone has been found in the garden of Diavolezza (CAS 05318, NGR SU 9927 8812) just to the west the area. An Iron Age silver coin of Cunobelin has been found in the parish (CAS 0835). Both the 1686 Estate Map of Bulstrode Park and the Downlands 1784 map of Bulstrode do not show anything in this location except for trees on the later.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

In particular:

- To identify and characterise any Late Iron Age, Roman or medieval deposits

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* designed by JMHS and agreed with Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service, JMHS carried out the work, which comprised the excavation of one trench (Fig. 1) across the site. Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

### **3.2 Methodology**

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of a single trench 20m long and 1.6m wide across the site by a 3-tonne excavator equipped with a ditching bucket, supplemented by limited hand investigation of archaeological deposits.

## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Field Results (Figure 2)**

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material.

The lowest deposit revealed in the trench was a geological layer consisting of a mid-light orange sand and stone and flint (1/03) related to the Palaeogene Woolwich and Reading Beds deposits in the area.

Cut into this was an irregular small pit or possible posthole 1/05. This was roughly 0.16m in diameter and 0.08m deep, filled with a friable dark grey sand-silt with a very high charcoal content (1/04).

Overlying this was a layer of light grey sand-silt (1/02) with 50% stone and flint roughly 0.1m thick. The uppermost layer (1/01) was on average 0.29m thick and consisted of light grey sand-silt with 60% stone and flint, containing occasional fragments of brick and modern glass.

### **4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results**

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The archaeological evaluation took place during good weather conditions. The percentage size of the sample was considered sufficient for the development area.

## **5 FINDS**

### **5.1 Artefacts**

No artefacts were recovered during the course of the evaluation.

### **5.2 Environmental Remains**

No environmental samples were taken as the potential of the deposits was not felt to be sufficient to warrant sampling.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The undated posthole or small pit 1/05 appeared to be heavily truncated as the depth of the surviving feature was only 0.08m. The area of the evaluation was a large lawn and it is possible that landscaping had taken place to make the area level.

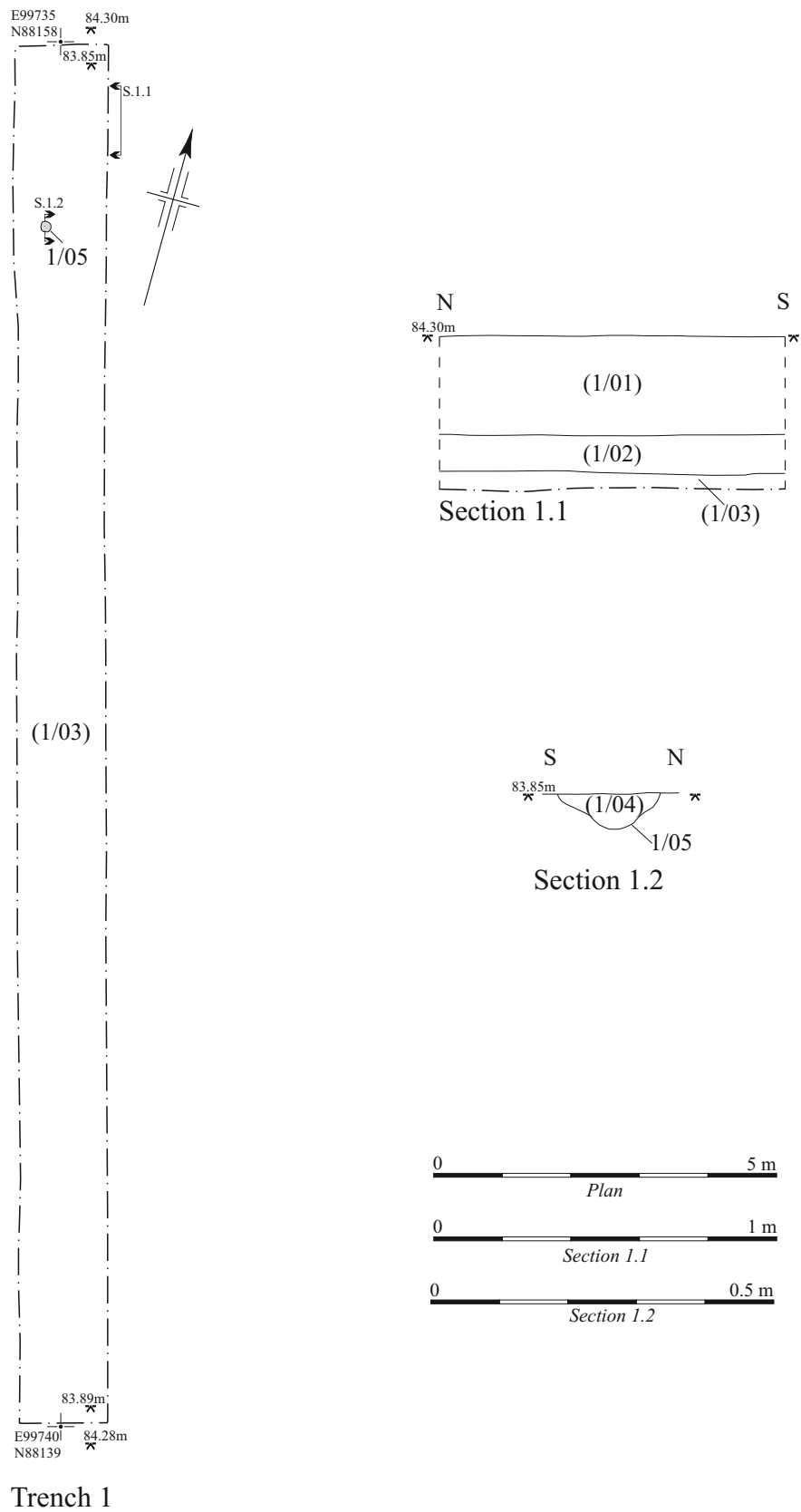


Figure 2: Trench 1 - plan and sections



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