

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

33 NORTHUMBRIA ROAD, MAIDENHEAD,

BERKSHIRE

NGR SU 8705 7971

On behalf of

T.S Ridley Building Contractors LLP

APRIL 2014

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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological evaluation at 33 Northumbria Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire. One machine-dug 9m long trench was excavated at the northeast corner of development site. Three successive deposits were recorded within the evaluation trench. Occasional finds, represented by one fragment of Roman pottery, one fragment of Roman brick or tile and two fragments of post-medieval roof tile were recovered from subsoil (1/02). No features of archaeological significance were present within evaluation trench.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site of the proposed development is located on the southern side of Northumbria Road, Maidenhead (NGR SU 8705 7971). The site lies at approximately 35m above OD. The underlying geology is Upper Chalk and is currently in residential use.

1.2 Planning Background

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead granted permission for the subdivision of plot to provide one three bed detached dwelling: with 2-storey extension and conversion of existing dwelling to two flats at 33 Northumbria Road, Maidenhead (13/02535).

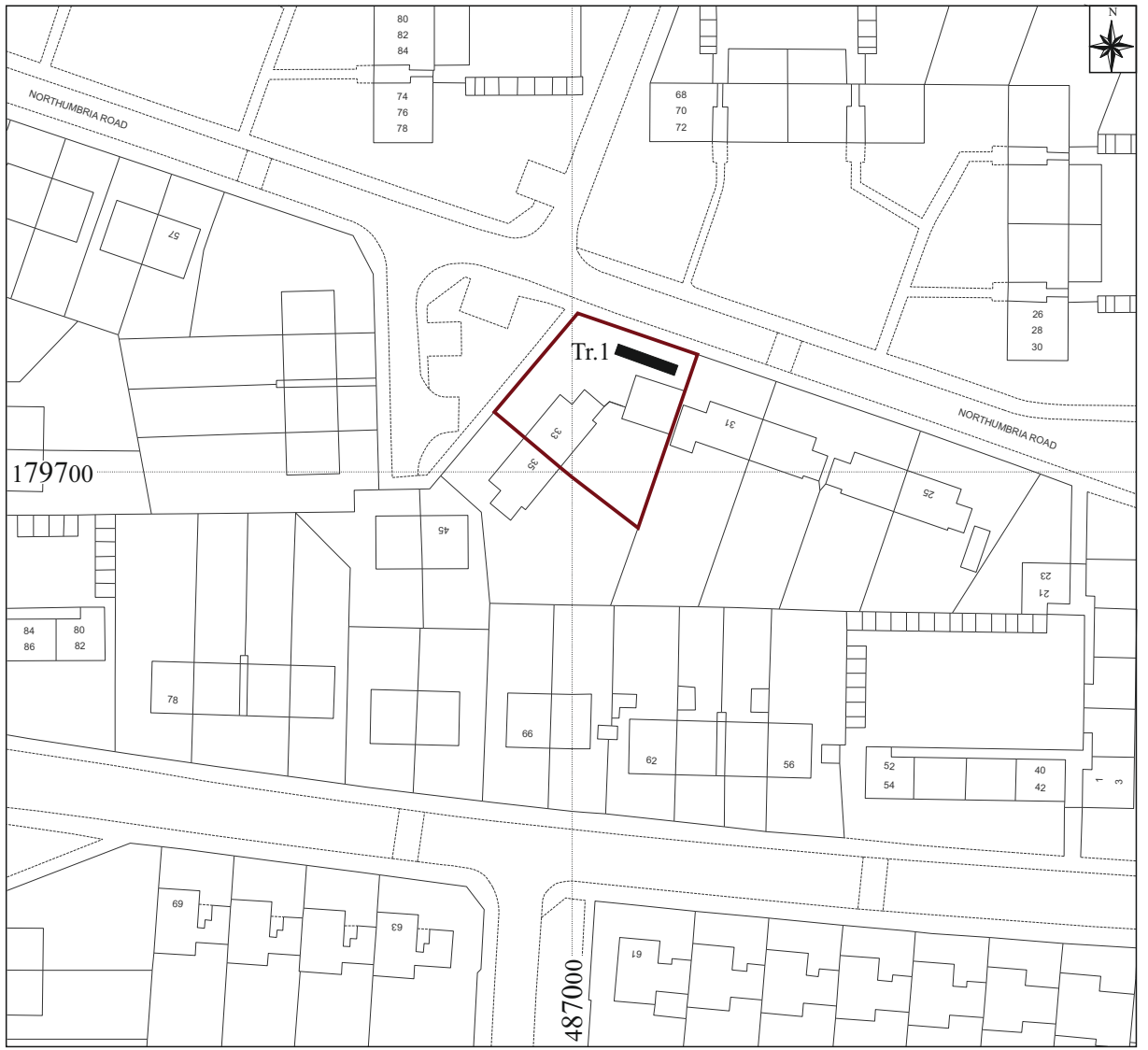
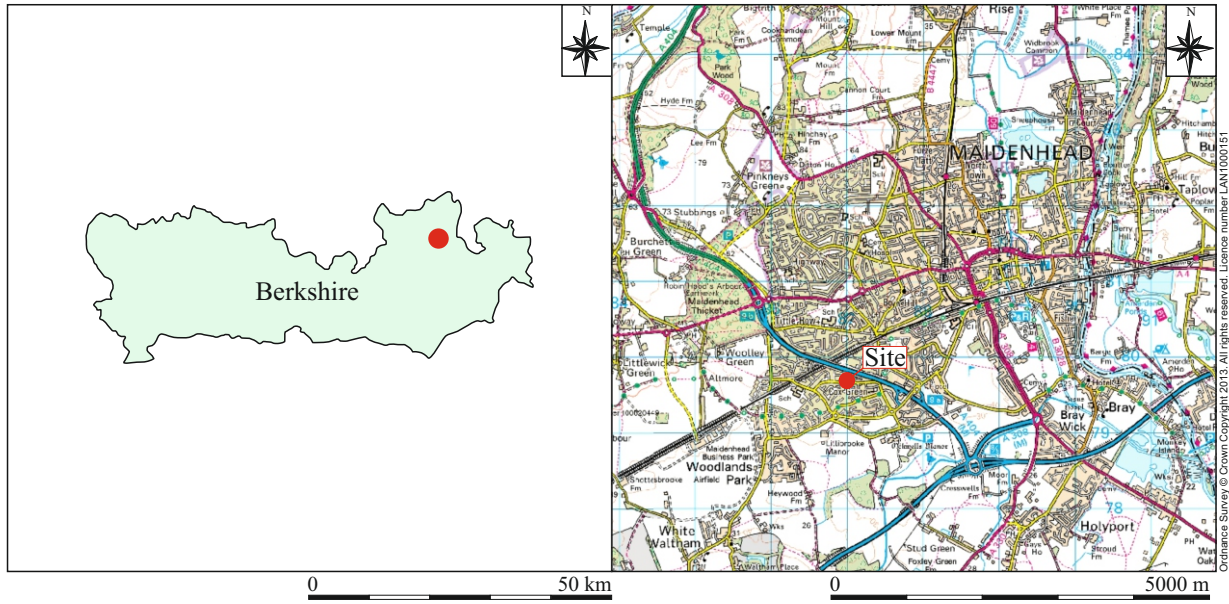
Due to the archaeological potential of development area, Berkshire Archaeology (BA) required that preliminary archaeological evaluation should be undertaken in the area.

John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) was commissioned to undertake this work, and a Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS 2014) was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the General Standards for Historic Environment Projects (BA 2014) The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) proposed the methodology by which the archaeological evaluation was to be carried out.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The following section is based on information presented in the WSI (JMHS 2014).

The development site lies some 250m southeast of the site of a Roman villa. Cox Green Roman villa was excavated in the 1950s and was found to comprise a complex farmstead, with ancillary buildings and structures. The villa complex would have been the centre of a widespread agricultural landscape, with other outbuildings, agricultural features such as corn driers, enclosures, field systems and track ways. There is therefore the potential for this site to contain evidence for Roman features and deposits associated with the Roman villa and landscape.



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Key Site boundary Evaluation trenches

Figure 1: Site location

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site and the depth of soil deposits that overlie these remains.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the Roman landscape.
- To determine the implications of the remains with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity.
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits. The forms in which such evidence may be present will be determined in accordance with the guidelines set out in English Heritage's *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation and Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record*.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.
- To address some of the key issues highlighted in the Solent Thames Research Framework. This will depend on the type and date of remains encountered.
- To inform the need for, and scope of, further phases of work to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In accordance with the General Standards for Historic Environment Projects issued by BA (2014) and the WSI by JMHS (2014), JMHS carried out the work, which comprised a scheme for the mechanical excavation of one trial trench across the site. Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the WSI.

3.2 Methodology

A five tonne excavator fitted with a toothless 1.5m wide ditching bucket was used to excavate one 9m long trial trench. Due to the limited space on site, the trench was slightly relocated (coordinates: west end 487006, 179717; east end 487014, 179714) from the proposed location and placed in area enclosed by the garage, driveway and hedge line.

Archaeological deposits revealed within trench were then cleaned by hand and recorded at an appropriate level. All deposits had written, drawn and photographic records made of them, and were assigned by individual context numbers.

All artefacts were collected, analysed and retained. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008) and the principles of MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results

All features were assigned individual context numbers. Context number with no brackets indicate feature cut, number in () show feature fill or deposit of material and number in bold indicate any form of masonry.

4.2 Trench 1 (Figure 1; Plate 1)

Trench 1 was 9m long and 1.5m wide, and orientated west-northwest to east-southeast.



Plate 1: Trench 1 – view east-southeast

The lowest deposit was natural mid reddish brown sandy clay (1/03) with occasional flints. Overlying the natural was 0.38m thick, mid brown sandy loam (1/02) subsoil. From this deposit were recovered two fragments of roof tile, one fragment of brick and one pottery sherd (See. 5.1). The uppermost deposit was 0.36m thick loose dark brown sandy loam (1/01), topsoil.

No archaeological features were present within evaluation trench.

4.3 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The archaeological evaluation took place in generally clement conditions with average light and visibility.

5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

5.1 Finds

All finds were recovered from deposit (1/02). The small assemblage of ceramic building material was represented by two fragments of roof tiles (74g) and one fragment of brick or tile (55g). One of the roof tiles was late medieval or early post-medieval in date and the second one was date to the late 19th century. The fragment of brick or tile was of Roman provenance and was very abraded. A small abraded Romano British pottery sherd in an oxidised fabric (10g) and a fragment of animal bone (14g) were recovered from the same deposit.

5.2 Palaeo-environmental Remains

No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental analysis were identified, and no samples were taken.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation at 33 Northumbria Road, Maidenhead was successful in proving that no archaeological remains of significance were revealed in the evaluation trench.

Occasional finds recovered from the subsoil (1/02) indicates human activities in area from the Roman period to present days.

Although, the archaeological evaluation was negative, the possibility of the presence of archaeological features within development area is not excluded.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Appendix 1: Trench Context Inventory

<i>ID</i>	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
Trench 1								
1/01	Deposit	Loose dark brown sandy loam	0.34m	1.50m	9m	-	Topsoil	Modern
1/02	Deposit	Firm mid brown sandy loam	0.35m	1.50m	9m	Pottery, CBM, Bone	Subsoil	Late post- med.
1/03	Deposit	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay with occasional flints	-	1.50m	9m	-	Natural	-