



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

LAND ADJACENT TO 7 BEAUMONT CLOSE,

MAIDENHEAD, BERKSHIRE SL6 3XN

NGR SU 86165 79141

On behalf of

Product Property Ltd

FEBRUARY 2016

REPORT FOR Product Property Ltd
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at land adjacent to 7 Beaumont Close in Maidenhead, Berkshire. The fieldwork consisted of monitoring of the excavation of foundation trenches for two semi-detached dwellings. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were encountered, except for a 20th century sewage pipe.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located on the north side of Beaumont Close, Maidenhead (NGR SU 86165 79141) and lies at an approximate height of 30 m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The site is currently undeveloped and the underlying geology is Upper Chalk (BGS 1981 sheet 269, Solid and Drift).

1.2 Planning Background

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead granted planning permission (15/03771/FULL) for the erection of two dwellings on the site. Due to the potential of the site to contain buried archaeological remains a condition for a watching brief was attached as advised by Berkshire Archaeology, advisors to the LPA.

John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) was commissioned to undertake this work, and a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2016) was prepared to satisfy the requirements of such archaeological work. The *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) proposed the methodology by which the archaeological watching brief was to be carried out.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located within an area of known archaeological potential, particularly in relation to prehistoric remains. The site is located within 300 m of a Bronze Age site identified at Cox Green School. Such sites are likely to be dispersed. Given the previously relatively undeveloped nature of this site, it was thought likely that any archaeological deposits would be well preserved (JMHS 2016).

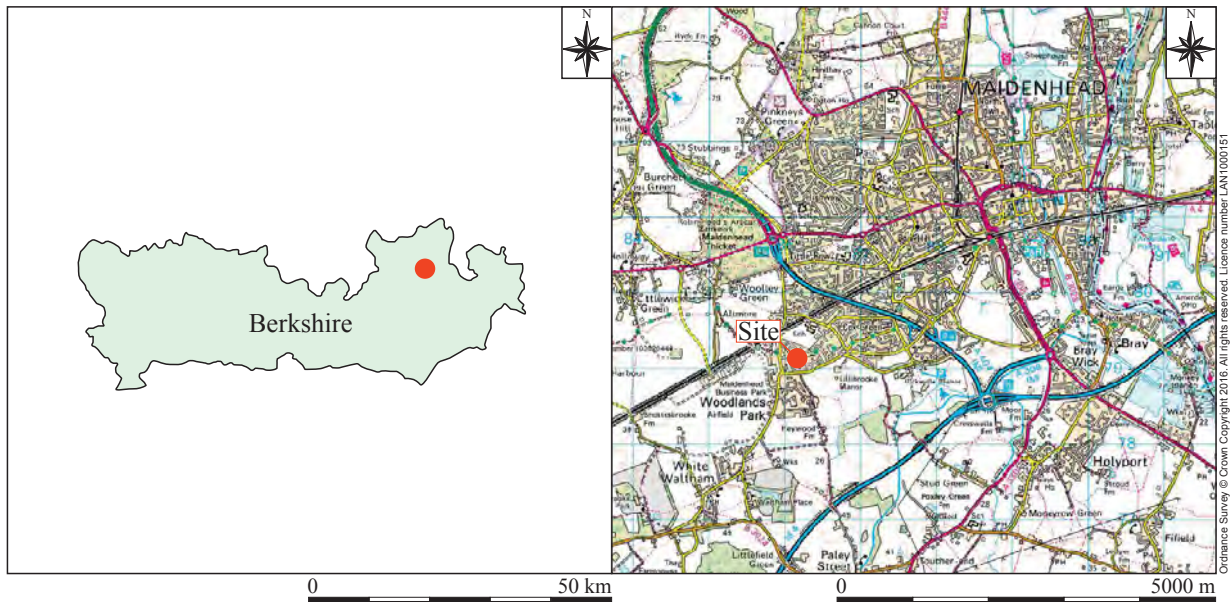
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the WSI (JMHS 2016) were:

- To record any archaeological remains that will be impacted on by the groundworks.

In particular:

- To record any prehistoric or later remains.



Key Site boundary Monitored area Not monitored area
 Foot of natural chalk ridge Sewer pipe

Figure 1: Site location

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

JMHS carried out an archaeological watching brief in accordance with the WSI (JMHS 2016). Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the WSI (Sections 3.1 – 3.7).

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) and the principles of MoRPHE (Historic England 2015).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present on site during excavation of the majority of the foundation trenches for two semi-detached dwellings. A 2t excavator fitted with a toothless 0.70 m wide bucket was used to excavate the foundation trench.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was also produced.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results (Figure 2)

All features and deposits were assigned with individual context numbers, except of modern features. Context numbers with no brackets indicate feature cuts, numbers in round brackets () show feature fills or deposits of material and numbers in bold indicate any form of masonry.

Prior the excavation of foundation trenches the site was cleaned up and approximately 0.10m of topsoil was reduced.

56.50 m of foundation trenches were monitored. They were 0.70 m wide and varied in depth from 1 m to 1.57 m from the present ground surface (Fig. 1).

Four successive layers and a sewerage pipe were presented within the monitored foundation trenches. The lowest deposit encountered within the foundation trenches was 0.06 to 0.66 m thick (as excavated) natural chalk with a high percentage of flints (103), interpreted as bedrock geology (Pl. 1 & 2). It formed a natural ridge in the central area of the site (Fig. 1). Deposit (103) was overlaid by 0.20 to >1.37 m thick deposit of mid reddish brown sandy silt with a moderate amount of flints (102), interpreted as superficial natural deposit (Pl. 1, 2 & 3). Deposit (102) was cut by 20th century sewerage construction cut located in the east portion of the monitored area (Fig. 1), and overlaid by 0.08 m thick deposit of light pinkish grey sandy gravel (106) encountered as the southeast corner of monitored area (Pl. 3). The uppermost deposit within the monitored area was layer of 0.18 m thick dark grey loam (101), which

represented a topsoil (Pl. 1, 2 & 3). The topsoil contained 20th century rubbish and fragments of bricks.



Plate 1: Representative section of SSE foundation trench, looking NNW



Plate 2: Representative section of NNW foundation trench, looking NNW



Plate 3: Representative section of ESE foundation trench, looking ENE

4.2 Reliability of Results

The reliability of results is considered to be very good. The archaeological watching brief took place in average weather conditions with good light and visibility. Excellent co-operation from the ground workers and landowner ensured sufficient time to investigate and record the archaeological deposits to the appropriate standards.

5 FINDS

No artefactual evidence was recovered, apart from 20th century rubbish and fragments of bricks observed within the topsoil (101), which were not retained.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological watching brief was successful and meets the aims of the investigations, which were laid out in the WSI.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds relating to prehistoric or later activity in the area were encountered during the course of the groundworks, except of 20th century sewerage pipe and deposit (106), presumably related with construction of neighbouring garages.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site record

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to a suitable repository when one is available.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014). *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading: CIfA.

Historic England (2015). *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. London: HE.

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