



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

48 TEMPLE STREET, BRILL,

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

(NGR 465603 214125)

On behalf of

The Mortimer Property Group Ltd

June 2007

REPORT FOR	The Mortimer Property Group 48 Temple Street Brill Aylesbury HP18 9SX
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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>SUMMARY</i>	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	
1.2 Planning Background	
1.3 Archaeological Background	
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	2
3 STRATEGY	2
3.1 Research Design	
3.2 Methodology	
4 RESULTS	4
5 FINDS	4
6 DISCUSSION	5
7 ARCHIVE	5
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	5
APPENDIX – AREA A	7
Figure 1 Site Location	3

Summary

A watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during the ground work for an extension to an existing house in the area previously occupied by the garden. The investigation revealed a single modern pit.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located in Temple Street, Brill (NGR 465603 214125). The site is situated on Calcareous Grit of the Corallian Beds and lies at approximately 190m OD. The existing use is a house and garden.

1.2 Planning Background

Aylesbury Vale District Council had granted planning permission for the erection of a two storey extension to 48 Temple Street (06/01428). A condition was attached to the planning permission requiring the implementation of a watching brief during groundworks. This was in line with PPG 16 and Local Plan policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Brill is of considerable archaeological interest with evidence for Iron Age occupation adjacent to the church associated with an earthwork (CAS0106), which may be the remains of a hillfort rampart (Farley 1989). In the late Saxon period, Brill was a royal manor and the centre of an estate, which may have had its origins in a pre-Saxon 'multiple estate' (Baines 1995). Brill was the most important settlement within the medieval forest of Bernwood, which was legally established following the Norman Conquest based upon the pre-existing woodland and a hunting lodge built by Edward the Confessor. Brill was the administrative centre for the forest and hundred with a royal house, fishponds, mills, church, prison-house, market and fair, claypits and kilns. In the 13th and early 14th centuries Brill was described as a borough but thereafter it went into decline and lost its status as a town. Brill was the centre of an important regional pottery and tile industry, which is believed to have originated in the 12th century and continued to be active into the post-medieval period when it also produced bricks (Harvey 1997). During the Civil War Brill was briefly garrisoned by Parliament during the winter of 1644.

Little early prehistoric remains have been found in Brill with a possible Mesolithic blade found 200m to the SE (CAS2053). Similarly limited Roman finds are known from Brill and include a coin 350m W (CAS5216) of the proposal site and a 1st century coin from the parish (CAS0582).

A timber royal hunting lodge (CAS2310) was constructed in the 11th century somewhere within Brill. The building prospered and grew with royal favour and the later parish church (CAS2192) may have functioned as a royal chapel to the palace. Royal presence had economic implications as under its patronage, the pottery industry may have been established by the end of the 12th century (Mellor 1994, 111). Evidence for the industry is found throughout Brill and often medieval pottery is

found in conjunction with later brick, tile and pottery kilns (e.g. CAS5712), indicating longevity and continuity of use.

Extensive remains of the medieval and post-medieval pottery, tile and brick industry are known in relatively close proximity to the proposed development site. Medieval pottery kilns have been found in the vicinity of the site (CAS5058, CAS4394, CAS0576, possible CAS5681, CAS5293 and CAS2195).

Post-medieval brick and tileworks are known 0.7km N of the proposed development site (CAS4653 and CAS4192). Pottery kilns of the post-medieval period occur to the NNW (CAS5293), NW (CAS2129, CAS2153) and SE (CAS2499). An evaluation at the east end of Windmill Street, to the rear of the Sun Inn, produced traces of post-medieval pottery production, including dumps of clay, pottery wasters and kiln furniture (Murray 2001).

A mound considered a medieval castle motte lies 200m to SW (CAS 0528). This mound is recorded on the Bateson map of 1590.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular:

- to record any remains associated with the medieval settlement.
- to record any remains of pottery, tile or brick production

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service. 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 and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

The excavation of the foundation trenches was monitored. This work was conducted using a mini-excavator employing a toothed 0.7m bucket to dig both the footing and service trenches.



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0 50 m

4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

All features were assigned individual context numbers. This number covered both the feature cut and the fill for pits, unless the feature was sample excavated by hand. Context numbers in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material. A general description of the feature fills is given.

The lowest deposit recorded was a firm orange brown clay sand with grit and small stones (03), this was part of the natural calcareous grits in the area. Above this was a grey-brown silty clay with frequent small stones (02). This deposit varied between 0.4 and 0.5m thick. The topsoil capping this was a dark brown-grey humic sandy loam with the odd small stone (01) that was 0.3m thick.

Cut into (02) were several service trenches for water and drainage. Also cut into (02) was a modern pit containing large quantities of electrical ceramic insulators marked G.P.O.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery (By Paul Blinkhorn)

The pottery assemblage comprised 9 sherds with a total weight of 261g. It was all medieval or later, and is typical of contemporary assemblages in the area. None of the pottery showed any evidence of being kiln waste, despite numerous medieval and post-medieval pottery kilns being known in the village (eg. Yeoman 1988).

The assemblage was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994), as follows:

MC9: *Brill/Boarstall Ware*. 1200-?1600. 1 sherd, 60g..

PM8: *Red Earthenware*. 17th century. 4 sherds, 80g.

PM21: *Tin-Glazed Earthenware*, 17th – 18th century. 1 sherd, 2g.

PM22: *Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware*. 1720-1780. 1 sherd, 4g.

PM29: *Rhenish Stonewares*, AD1450+. 2 sherds, 15g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. All of the material was unstratified, although the range of fabric types shows that there was 13th century activity at the site, and then throughout the post-medieval period

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

	MC9		PM29		PM8		PM21		PM22		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
1	1	60	1	7	1	19	1	2	1	4	U/S
2			1	8	3	161					U/S
Total	1	60	2	15	4	180	1	2	1	4	

6 DISCUSSION

The only feature recorded at 48 Temple Street was a modern pit associated with the replacement of telecommunications in the area. The garden to the rear was used as an allotment or kitchen garden for over 50 years. This accounts for the depth of topsoil.

This activity would not have been sufficient to remove evidence for medieval kilns or rubbish/waster pits in the vicinity, it must be concluded that ceramic production in the medieval period did not occur on this plot.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site records

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the County Museums' Store.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX A – Area A

During the course of the watching brief at 48 Temple Street, the on-site archaeologist's attention was drawn to an open trench cut parallel to the football field to the east of the site (NGR 465664 214114). This is marked as "Area A" in figure 1.

This cut was approximately 0.4m wide and at least 0.5m deep. Arisings were visible to the side and in places it had been back-filled with brick and concrete rubble. The trench had obviously been open for some time as the sections were heavily weathered.

A quick investigation of the south facing section of the trench was carried out. It appeared that at least two deposits were impacted upon, although the narrow nature of the trench made it difficult to see. The upper layer was a pale orange brown sandy clay up to 0.2m thick that contained rare small stone. Below this was a layer of darker orange-brown sandy clay with considerable more small stones. Both layers contained quantities of pottery.

The pottery was analysed by Paul Blinkhorn who concluded that it was:

MC9: *Brill/Boarstall Ware*. 1200-?1600. (Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994),

	MC9		PM29		PM8		PM21		PM22		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
Area A	7	25									13thC

It is interesting to note that it was all of the same type of ware. Although no sherds were from wasters medieval activity is obviously present in this area.