



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

**11-17 WILTSHIRE ROAD, WOKINGHAM,
BERKSHIRE**

(NGR SU78152 6906)

On behalf of

Hodson Developments Ltd.

July 2009

REPORT FOR Hodson Developments Ltd.
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Summary

An evaluation of this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services on 15-16th July 2009. Eleven trenches, totalling 190 metres in length, were excavated to the natural geology. Archaeological deposits were limited to agricultural land drains, garden features and service trenches.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is at the location of the previous dwellings of No's. 11, 13, 15 and 17 Wiltshire Road and is centred on NGR SU 8152 6906. The dwellings have recently been demolished on the site. The site is approximately 0.612 ha and is reasonably flat at c. 61m AOD. The underlying geology is Bagshot Beds comprising sands and gravels and the sites lie at c. 75m OD.

1.2 Planning Background

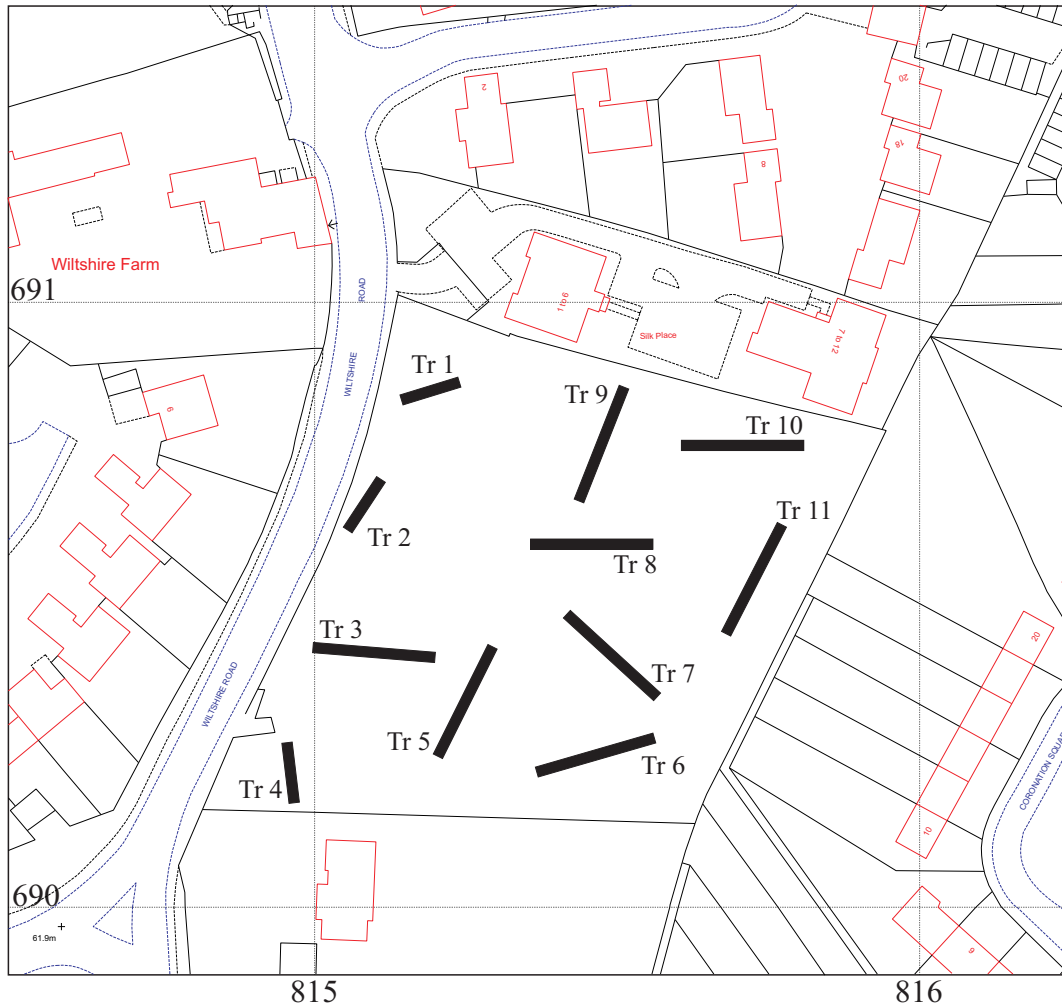
Planning application number F/2008/0126 submitted to Wokingham Borough Council proposed the erection of 40 apartments with associated parking and combined bin and cycle stores following the demolition of 11, 13, 15 and 17 Wiltshire Road. A condition (12) attached to the planning permission required that no development work shall take place until a programme of archaeological work had been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Archaeological Officer of Berkshire Archaeology prepared a Brief for a first stage of the archaeological work, namely an archaeological evaluation.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site lies close to the centre of Wokingham. The town is thought to have Saxon origins as the place-name appears to be of Saxon origin meaning 'homestead of the people of Wocc'. However, no evidence of Saxon occupation has yet to be found. Wokingham is not mentioned in Domesday as it formed part of the manor and parish of Sonning and was administered by the Bishops of Salisbury as a separate ecclesiastical and jurisdictional unit from Berkshire. The estate of Sonning remained part of Wiltshire until 1845. The Bishops of Salisbury created Wokingham as a planned town, in the late 12th or early 13th century, probably laid out around Rose Street and Peach Street with a market place at the junction with Broad Street. It was granted a market in 1219. The proposed development site is located approximately 170 m to the north of the identified medieval core of the town.

The majority of sites identified on the Sites and Monuments Record are Listed Buildings. The Terrace at Shute End, 500m to the southwest, comprises nine Listed Buildings dating from the 1400s to the 1800s. This in itself is evidence of late medieval activity in the area, supposedly indicating the expansion of the settlement at Wokingham along the Reading Road.

On the Ordnance Survey map of 1883 the site is shown as being within an agricultural field.



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Figure 1. Trench Location

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/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- 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 historic 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 emerging Solent Thames Research Framework. For example, framing our interpretation of the ending of Roman Britain, and further work on the Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon interface should be prioritized for this area, and for the medieval period - the origins/continuation of dispersed settlement and rural resources.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- To inform the need for, and scope of, further phases of work to mitigate the impact of the development

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In response to a *Brief* issued by Berkshire Archaeology a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with the Berkshire Archaeology and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and involved the excavation of a total of 190m of trenches across the site (Fig. 1).

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 of Field Archaeologists (1994) and the principles of MoRPHE (English Heritage 2006).

3.2 Methodology

The trenching sample was eleven trenches; three 10m in length and eight 20m in length (Fig. 1). All trenches were 1.6 m wide and were excavated by a 5 tonne excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand prior to limited hand excavation of any identified archaeological deposits. The trenches were laid out by GPS.

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

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 () show feature fills or deposits of material.

The natural in all trenches was a moderately compact brown-yellow grey sand with the occasional gravel pebble (1/03), (2/03), (3/03), (4/03), (5/03), (6/03), (7/03), (8/03), (9/03), (10/03) and (11/03). This displayed banding within it and is related to the Bagshot formation, indicated by geological maps to start further south.

Above this was a layer of mid brown-grey silty sand (1/02), (2/02), (3/02), (4/02), (5/02), (6/02), (7/02), (8/02), (9/02), (10/02) and (11/02) with approximately 1% gravel that was on average 0.2m thick, but was up to 0.5m thick on the western side of the site closest to the modern road. This layer contained 19th century pottery.

Overlying this was a layer of loose dark brown-grey sandy loam and rubble up to 0.35m thick in places (1/01), (2/01), (3/01), (4/01), (5/01), (6/01), (7/01), (8/01), (9/01), (10/01) and (11/01).

Although the trenches were placed away from areas of previous buildings, it would appear that these areas had been “combed” by machine during demolition.

Field drains associated with the previous agricultural land use, as noted on the first edition OS map, were recorded in Trenches 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. An animal burrow was noted in Trench 2. Modern cuts for services were seen in Trenches 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Garden features associated with the previous dwellings were evident throughout the area and included boundary hedge lines (Trenches 9 and 11), planting pits (Trenches 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11) and a garden path (Trench 11).

Photographs of the site are shown on Figure 3 where numbers indicate trench locations.

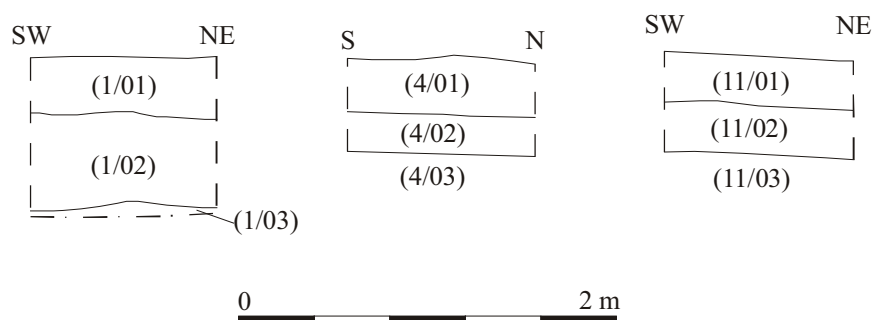


Figure 2. Representative Sections from Trenches 1, 4 and 11

4.2 Reliability of Results and Techniques

Bioturbation was noted on the surface of the natural (XX/03). While this was noted it was not thought to have impinged upon the identification of archaeological features.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery

The upper layers across the entire site contained sherds of White mass-produced earthenwares dating to the 19th and 20th century. These were also present within the majority of excavated garden features.

One residual sherd of post-medieval Redware was recovered from the modern boundary hedge line (11/07), fabric RW of the provisional type series of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit, where it is given a date of the mid-16th – 18th century (Jones 1998, 211-238).

This material was not retained

5.2 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken due to the nature of the deposits encountered.

6 DISCUSSION

All trenches showed a very uniform soil sequence of an old agricultural ploughsoil overlain by a recent garden soil. No archaeological features were present.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*.

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APPENDIX – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

ID	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
Trench 1								
01/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.30m	1.6m	10.0m		Topsoil	
01/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.50m	1.6m	10.0m		Subsoil	
01/03	Deposit	Dark, grey brown gravelly silty sand, banded with yellow grey brown gravelly silty sand.		1.6m	10.0m		Natural	
01/04	Fill	Loose black silty sand. 80% charcoal probably burnt roots.	0.30m	0.31m	0.40m		Fill of 1/5	Modern
01/05	Cut	Near oval, irregular sides and base.	0.30m	0.31m	0.40m		Cut of garden feature	Modern
Trench 2								
02/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.30m	1.6m	10.0m		Topsoil	
02/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.45m	1.6m	10.0m		Subsoil	
02/03	Deposit	Mid, grey-brown silty sand, with frequent sub-angular stones. Frequent tree throws and animal burrowing.		1.6m	10.0m		Natural	
Trench 3								
03/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.30 m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
03/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.30m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
03/03	Deposit	Loose, grey slightly gravelly silty sand banded with light grey brown silty sand and yellow orange grey podsol.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
Trench 4								
04/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.28m	1.6m	10.0m		Topsoil	
04/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand. Frequent drains. Mixed with topsoil (4/01) and natural (4/03)	0.22m	1.6m	10.0m		Subsoil	
40/03	Deposit	Light, yellow grey brown silty sand with medium and small sub-angular stones and manganese.		1.6m	10.0m		Natural	

ID	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Findings	Interpretation	Date
Trench 5								
05/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.35m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
05/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.30m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
05/03	Deposit	Light grey brown silty sand with small sub-angular stones. Banded with yellow brown silty sand, white brown sand and reddish podsol.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
Trench 6								
06/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.35m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
06/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.25m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
06/03	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand. Small sub-angular stones. Banded with grey brown sand and reddish patches of podsol.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
Trench 7								
07/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.15m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
07/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.30m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
07/03	Deposit	Light, grey brown silty sand with sub-angular stones and pebbles.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
Trench 8								
08/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.25m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
08/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.30m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
08/03	Deposit	Light, grey brown silty sand with sub-angular stones and pebbles. Occasional podsol.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
Trench 9								
09/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.25m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
09/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.35m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
09/03	Deposit	White yellow grey sand banded with grey-orange and grey-brown silty sand.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	

ID	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Findings	Interpretation	Date
Trench 10								
10/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.25m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
10/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.20m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
10/03	Deposit	Loose, light grey brown silty sand, frequent root activity. Modern garden features visible.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
Trench 11								
11/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown silty sand.	0.25m	1.6m	20.0m		Topsoil	
11/02	Deposit	Loose, mid grey brown silty sand.	0.25m	1.6m	20.0m		Subsoil	
11/03	Deposit	Loose, light grey brown silty sand banded with yellow grey sand.		1.6m	20.0m		Natural	
11/04	Cut	Linear in plan, vertical sides.		2.9m			W/E aligned planting pit.	Modern
11/05	Fill	Compact at top, loose lower down, mid grey brown silty sand.		2.9m			Fill of 11/04 same as (11/07)	Modern
11/06	Cut	Linear in plan, vertical sides.		2.1m			W/E aligned planting pit/hedge-line.	Modern
11/07	Fill	Compact at top to loose deeper, mid grey brown silty sand.		2.1m			Fill of 11/06 same as (11/05)	Modern
11/08	Cut	Rectangular in plan with sharp corners.		>0.5m	1.0m		Modern garden feature, possible planting pit	Modern
11/09	Fill	Soft, light black brown gravelly silt.		>0.5m	1.0m		Fill of 11/08	Modern
11/10	Fill	Dark black brown gravelly silt.		>0.5m	1.0m		Fill of 11/08	Modern
11/11	Cut	Square, very regular in shape		0.40m	0.40m		Cut of modern garden feature	Modern
11/12	Fill	Loose, grey brown silty sand.		0.40m	0.40m		Fill of 11/11	Modern

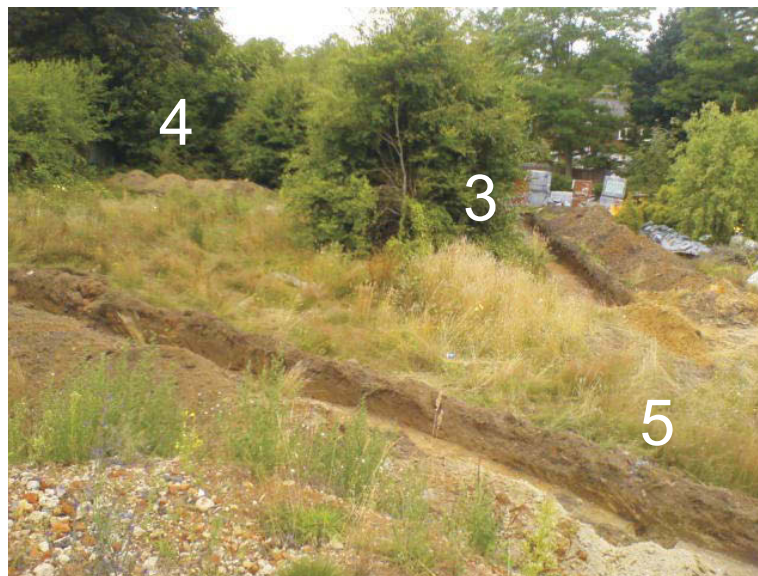
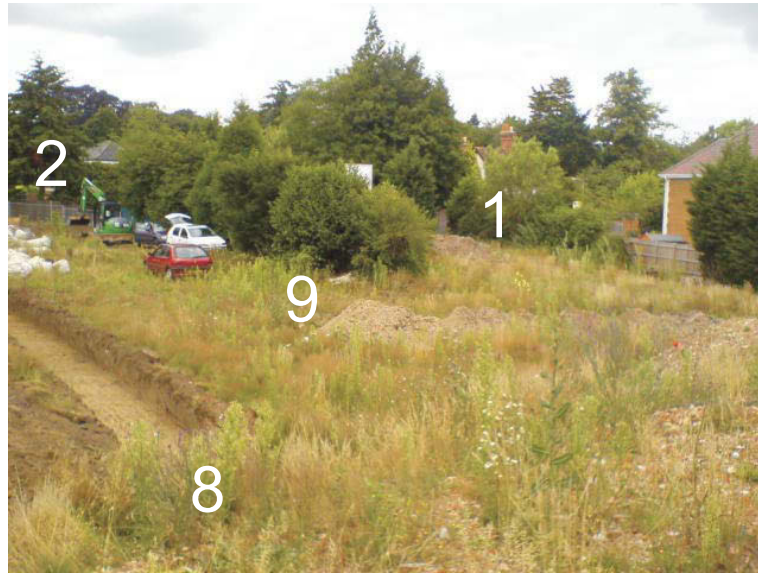


Figure 3. Photographs of site