

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

ON

LAND TO THE REAR OF

54 ROSE STREET, WOKINGHAM

BERKSHIRE.

SU 8133 6876

On behalf of

Chantry Development Finance Ltd

FEBRUARY 2011

REPORT FOR Chantry Development Finance Ltd
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SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation on land to the rear of 54 Rose Street, Wokingham. The trench and all three test pits revealed a similar sequence of deposits. No features earlier than the very late 18th century were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site location (Figure 1)

The site is located on the north side of Rose Street, Wokingham, approximately 140 m west of All Saints Church and is centred on NGR SU 8133 6876. The site is approximately 380 m² and is currently utilised as parking space for properties off the Rose Street frontage. The site is situated at approximately 70 m AOD.

1.2 Planning Background

A planning application has been submitted to Wokingham Borough Council that proposes construction of three terraced dwellings to the rear of No.54 Rose Street (F/2008/0672). 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 PPS 5. Berkshire Archaeology prepared a Brief for the first phase of the work, namely 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 is identified as being of archaeological potential, due to a number of sites noted on the Berkshire Historic Environment Record for this area.

Despite the place name for Wokingham indicating evidence for Saxon origins, no archaeological remains have yet been identified from this period. The area formed part of an estate based on Sonning and is not mentioned in Domesday (1086). The town appears to have been created in the late 12th century from documentary and archival evidence as detailed in the granting of a market charter in 1219. It was probably during the period between 1219 and 1258 that the town was laid out (Astill 1978).

It is likely that the early settlement of Wokingham, like the development of many similar small towns, was originally based around the church, although at present this is presumptive. The parish church of All Saints (Grade II* Listed Building), located some 140 m to the east of the site, was originally of Norman date. However, the building now contains a little Norman work and is mainly 14th century with a 15th century tower and clerestory. This proves that the church was in use at the same time as the present structure at 52-54 Rose Street, only 140m to the east.

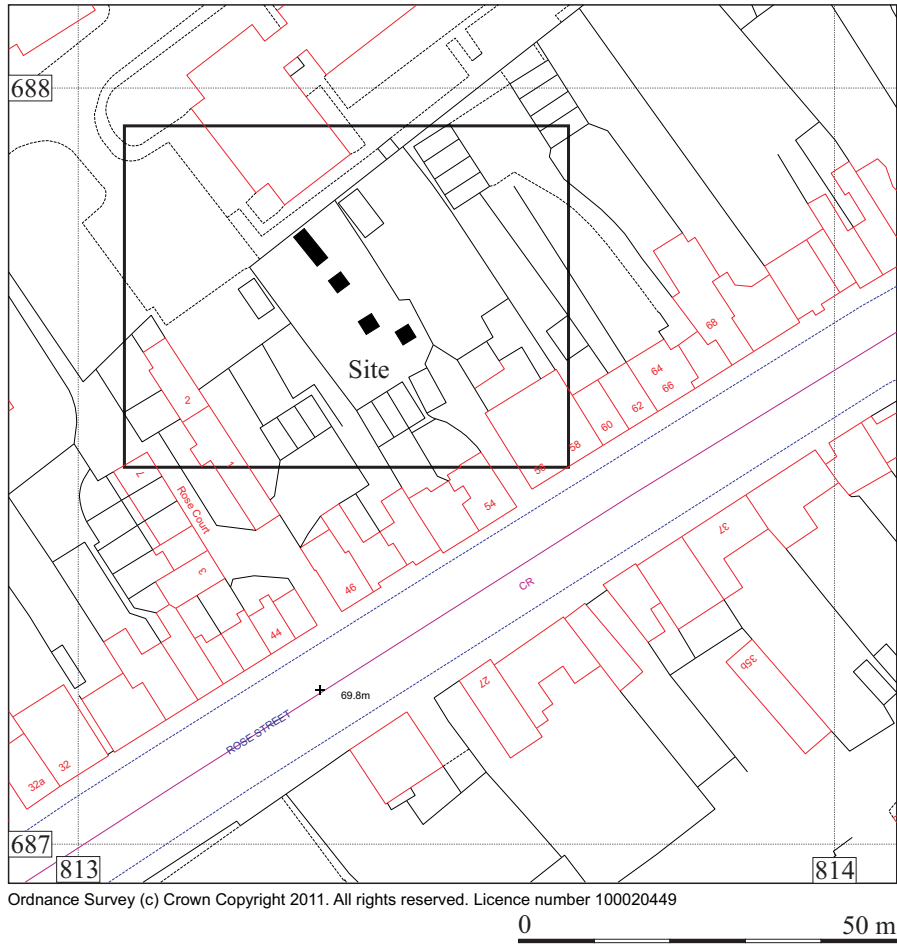


Figure 1. Site location

Thames Valley Archaeological Services (2009a) undertook a small scale evaluation at 82-84 Rose Street and located a large ditch to the rear of the plot that although undated, suggested a pre-new town date (Saxon/Medieval) together with a series of as yet undated features. Also in 2009 Thames Valley Archaeological Services undertook a watching brief at 1 Rose Court but no finds or deposits earlier than the 19th century were identified (TVAS 2009b). A watching brief carried out by Wessex Archaeology in 1996 during the development of the Waitrose Supermarket Site between Rose Street and Rectory Road, recorded a concentration of post-medieval pits, a brick-lined well, a late medieval pit and an undated ditch.

According to the map published by Astill (1978), the burgage plots along Rose Street date to the medieval period. The planned medieval town consists of a small grid of long linear plots either side of Rose and Peach Streets and one lateral street, Cross Street. From this evidence and later mapping evidence we can expect to find a burgage plot boundary between 52-54 Rose Street and 56 Rose Street and extrapolate that the medieval town boundary could be located within the area of the proposed development. Rocque's map shows a possible barn in the location of the proposed new build that may or may not be connected with the adjacent glebe lands. Remains of the structures illustrated in the tithe map and the first edition OS map may be evident.

While the majority of the evidence points to the potential survival of medieval and post-medieval remains we do have indications of earlier activity in the form of an early lithic findspot and a Roman cinerary urn. While the evidence for this early activity is tentative at the moment, we have many examples where prehistoric activity survives below medieval and post-medieval structures and associated features. However, some previous impact is expected from the grubbing up of demolished garages and the scraping and levelling of the site for the car park.

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.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* designed by JMHS and agreed with Berkshire Archaeology, JMHS carried out the work, which comprised the excavation of one trench and three test pits 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 (1994).

3.2 Methodology

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of one trench and three test pits across the site by a 3-tonne excavator equipped with a ditching bucket, supplemented by limited hand investigation of archaeological deposits. The trench was 5m long by 1.8m wide, the test pits each 2m by 2m (Fig. 1).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results

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.

A similar sequence of deposits was encountered across the site. The lowest deposit revealed was a geological layer consisting of a mottled yellow-grey sandy clay (1/04, 2/04, 3/04 and 4/04).

Above this was a layer of green-grey sandy clay with rare charcoal flecks, but otherwise relatively sterile (1/03, 2/03, 3/03 and 4/03). It increased in thickness from the south (c.0.1m) to the north (c.0.2m) across the site.

Overlying this was a layer of dark grey-black sandy clay loam (1/02, 2/02, 3/02 and 4/02). This layer was on average 0.6m thick. It had been heavily disturbed with high concentrations of brick rubble and modern metal objects. While some of this material is likely to have originated from the garages that once stood on the site the bricks were a range of post-medieval dates, some *frogged* others not.. It would seem likely that this layer had been subject to pitting although no cuts could be discerned.

The upper layer was 0.2m thick consisting of hardcore makeup and a compacted modern gravel surface (1/01, 2/01, 3/01 and 4/01).

Trench 1 (Figure 2)

Cut into layer (1/03) were three postholes 1/05, 1/07 and 1/09 and a small pit 1/11.

Context	Description	Dimensions	Fill
1/05	Circular cut	0.25m diameter	Mid grey sandy clay (1/06) 0.23m thick
1/07	Oval cut	0.4m x 0.2m	Mid grey sandy clay (1/08) 0.11m thick
1/09	Circular cut	0.2m diameter	Mid grey sandy clay (1/10) 0.1m thick
1/11	Rectangular pit	0.4m+ x 0.4m	Mid grey sandy clay (1/12) 0.15m thick

All were sealed by layer (1/02)

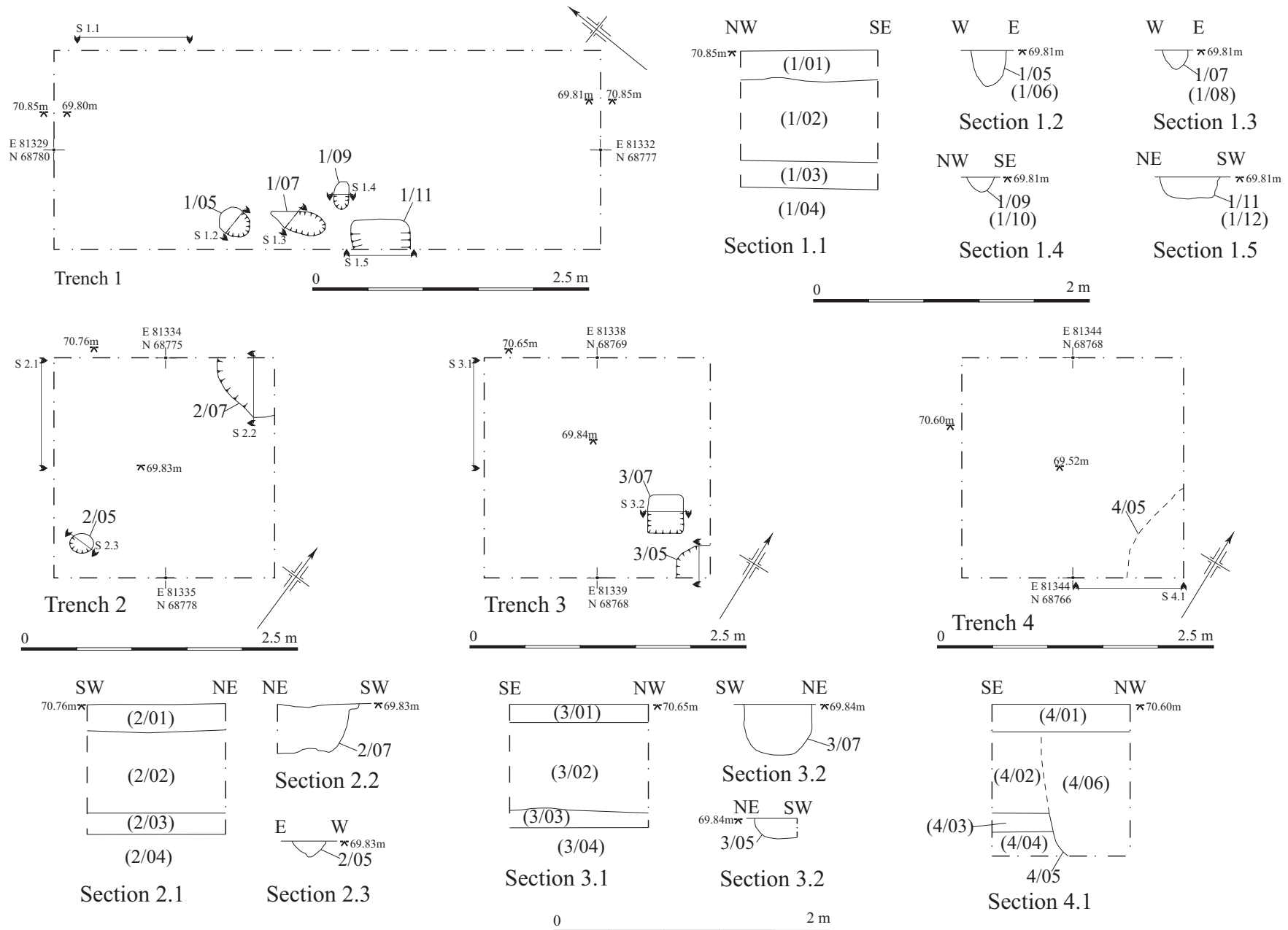


Figure 2. Plans and sections

Test Pit 2 (Figure 2)

Cut into layer (2/03) and sealed by layer (2/02) were a posthole 2/05 and a pit 2/07.

Context	Description	Dimensions	Fill
2/05	Circular cut	0.22m diameter	Mid grey sandy clay (2/06) 0.11m thick
2/07	Circular cut	0.5m+ diameter	Mid grey sandy clay (2/08) 0.37m thick

Test Pit 3 (Figure 2)

Cut into layer (3/03) and sealed by layer (3/02) were two pits 3/05 and 3/07.

Context	Description	Dimensions	Fill
3/05	Circular cut	0.3m+ diameter	Mid grey sandy clay (3/06) 0.16m thick
3/07	Circular cut	0.5m+ diameter	Mid grey sandy clay (3/08) 0.34m thick

Test Pit 4 (Figure 2)

Cut into layer (4/02) was a large pit 4/05. The cut for this pit could only partially be traced within layer (4/02), indicating the upper portion had been disturbed by later activity although no cut for this was perceptible.

Context	Description	Dimensions	Fill
4/05	Irregular cut ?	2m+ diameter	Dark grey sandy clay (4/06) 1.1m thick

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 Pottery

Sherds of blue transfer print flat pearlware were recorded in contexts (1/06), (2/08), (3/08) and (4/06); this was a popular glaze type from 1780 – c.1870's. A single sherd of a Willow pattern saucer was recovered from (1/12) this has a *terminus post quem* of 1790. Sherds of Creamware, dated late 18th – early 19th century, were recovered from contexts (3/08) and (4/06). Red sandy earthenware, with a brown glaze, was noted from context (3/08). Such 'country pottery' was first made in the 16th century, and in many areas continued in use until the 19th century.

An intact stoneware bottle was recovered from context 4/06 that was printed "Wellington Brewery, Headington & Son, Wokingham". Documents held by the London Metropolitan Archives (ACC/2305/61) show that Headington and Son, Wellington Brewery, Denmark Street, Wokingham, was taken over by Ashby's Staines Brewery Limited in 1920. Therefore the bottle dates before this take over.

5.2 Glass

Context 4/06 contained several glass bottles including the following:

Bottle in transparent pale green glass “J.H. Knowles Reading”

Bottle (marble type) in transparent pale green glass “Wellington Brewery Wokingham”

Bottle (marble type) in transparent pale green glass “R Castle Wokingham”

Bottle in clear glass bearing the lettering “RW & S Ld. WHITE” on the front and “¼ D. Deposit charge on this Bottle. Riley’s patent” on the reverse. This bottle dates to 1892 or later after Riley’s patent stopper was introduced.

5.3 Environmental Remains

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

6 DISCUSSION

Although situated within the historic core of the town the site would appear to have been kept as an open space. The subsoil layer sealing the natural was noticeable sterile of finds, but would represent a high potential for survival of archaeological remains in the vicinity.

Cut into this layer were features dating from the late 18th century (c. 1790) onwards that may well be related to garden activity. The thick loam deposit buried below the modern surface is likely to represent a horticultural soil. This would appear to have been used as such until the later part of the 19th century.

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Appendix: Archaeological Context Inventory

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Findings	Interpretation
Trench 1							
1/01	Layer	Gravel and stone	0.2	Tr.	Tr.		Modern surface
1/02	Layer	Dark grey-black sandy loam	0.6	Tr.	Tr.	CBM	Horticultural soil
1/03	Layer	Green-grey sandy clay	0.2	Tr.	Tr.		Subsoil
1/04	Natural	Mottled yellow-grey sandy clay	-	Tr.	Tr.		Natural
1/05	Cut	Circular	0.23	0.25	0.25		Posthole
1/06	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.23	0.25	0.25	Pot	
1/07	Cut	Oval	0.11	0.4	0.2		Posthole
1/08	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.11	0.4	0.2		
1/09	Cut	Circular	0.1	0.2	0.2		Posthole
1/10	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.1	0.2	0.2		
1/11	Cut	Rectangular	0.15	0.4	0.4		Pit
1/12	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.15	0.4	0.4	Pot	
Trench 2							
2/01	Layer	Gravel and stone	0.2	Tr.	Tr.		Modern surface
2/02	Layer	Dark grey-black sandy loam	0.6	Tr.	Tr.	CBM	Horticultural soil
2/03	Layer	Green-grey sandy clay	0.1	Tr.	Tr.		Subsoil
2/04	Natural	Mottled yellow-grey sandy clay	-	Tr.	Tr.		Natural
2/05	Cut	Circular	0.11	0.22	0.22		Posthole
2/06	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.11	0.22	0.22		
2/07	Cut	Circular	0.37	0.5+	0.5+		Pit
2/08	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.37	0.5+	0.5+	Pot	
Trench 3							
3/01	Layer	Gravel and stone	0.2	Tr.	Tr.		Modern surface
3/02	Layer	Dark grey-black sandy loam	0.6	Tr.	Tr.	CBM	Horticultural soil
3/03	Layer	Green-grey sandy clay	0.1	Tr.	Tr.		Subsoil
3/04	Natural	Mottled yellow-grey sandy clay	-	Tr.	Tr.		Natural
3/05	Cut	Circular	0.16	0.3	0.3+		Pit
3/06	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.16	0.3	0.3+		
3/07	Cut	Circular	0.34	0.5	0.5		Pit
3/08	Fill	Mid grey sandy clay	0.34	0.5	0.5	Pot	
Trench 4							
4/01	Layer	Gravel and stone	0.2	Tr.	Tr.		Modern surface

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	 Finds	 Interpretation
4/02	Layer	Dark grey-black sandy loam	0.6	Tr.	Tr.	CBM	Horticultural soil
4/03	Layer	Green-grey sandy clay	0.1	Tr.	Tr.		Subsoil
4/04	Natural	Mottled yellow-grey sandy clay	-	Tr.	Tr.		Natural
4/05	Cut	Irregular?	1.1	2+	02+		Pit
4/06	Fill	dark grey sandy clay	1.1	2+	02+	Pot	