



Barrack Block Drainage Hampton Court Palace

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



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Issue	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Signature
1	Paul Leader Assistant Supervisor	Ben Ford Senior Project Manager	(name) (position)	

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Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263800

e: oasouth@thehumanjourney.net

f: +44 (0) 1865 793496

w: oasouth.thehumanjourney.net

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Written by Paul Leader.

Illustrated by Hannah Kennedy

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Summary

On the 2nd April 2012, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at Hampton Court Palace. A single trench measuring 0.4 m wide, 10.0 m long and 0.4 m deep was excavated immediately to the south and parallel to the frontage to the Barrack Block on its south-west corner. A previous visit in January 2012 had overseen the removal of a two paving stones and the excavation of two inspection trenches measuring 1.0 m square and 0.6 m deep each. The work was commissioned by Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) in advance of the installation of new drainage from the existing down pipe on the south-west corner of the Barrack Block. The Watching Brief only revealed modern topsoil and modern make up for the paving..

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) were commissioned by Toby Cosgrove, Historic Royal Palaces to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief during the excavation of a drainage trench at Hampton Court Palace, SE of Hampton, Surrey. The Site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 515485 168587 (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 A previous visit had been made to the site in January 2012 when two paving stones to the south-west of the Barrack block were lifted to facilitate the excavation of two small inspection trenches (Fig 2).
- 1.1.3 The works which took place on 2nd April 2012, consisted of the excavation of single trench measuring 0.4 m wide, 10.0 m long and 0.4 m deep immediately to the south and parallel to the frontage to the Barrack Block on its south-west corner (Fig. 2).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The Site is situated on the First Terrace Drift Geology in the flood plain of the River Thames, which overlies London Clay.
- 1.2.2 The Site is relatively level and lies at a height of c 9.49 m above OD.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 Hampton Court Palace is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Surrey No. 83) of outstanding national importance. The wider historical background to the Palace has been well documented and is not repeated here.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the groundworks.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.



2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The initial visit in January 2012 involved the lifting of two paving stones against the western end wall at the south-west corner of the Barrack Block. A trench was then excavated beneath both to a depth of 0.6m (Fig. 2).
- 2.2.2 The works on 2nd April 2012 involved a hand excavated trench through the existing flower bed, immediately to the south of the Barrack Block, beginning at the south-west corner, and running south-eastwards, parallel to the front of the Barrack Block. Following excavation archaeological inspection and recording of the works took place (Fig 2).
- 2.2.3 The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:200. A general photographic record of the work was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The only deposits encountered were the modern, well turned, topsoil of the existing flower bed and the modern make up beneath the paving, laid following the redevelopment of the Clore Learning Centre during 2006.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were encountered.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 Due to the low impact of the works limited archaeological conclusions can be drawn. The topsoil was well turned and prior to excavation was planted with a small hedge, demonstrating that the area had been worked in recent times by the gardening staff. The make up beneath the flagstones indicated the area was heavily disturbed during the previous construction work, this was overseen by a previous watching brief.



APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OAU, 1992. *Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson).



APPENDIX B. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Barrack Block Drainage Hampton Court Palace
Site code:	HCP91
Grid reference:	Centred at NGR: TQ 515485 168587
Type of watching brief:	Drainage trench
Date and duration of project:	2 nd April 2012
Area of site:	Trench measured 0.4 m x 10 m x 0.4 m, A previous visit saw the excavation of 2 investigation trenches 1m square and 0.6m deep
Summary of results:	Only the modern topsoil of the flower bed and pathway make-up was encountered
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Historic Royal Palaces at Hampton Court Palace, Surrey, KT8 9AU in due course.



Figure 1: Site location



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850 500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850 599
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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