

Land Adjacent to Clarendon House Hambledon Road Denmead Hampshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology

19th June 2003

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OA Job N^o: JN 4520

Planning Ref N^o: 0200858FUL

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**Land Adjacent to Clarendon House
Hambledon Road, Denmead
Hampshire**

NGR SU 654 121

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Location and scope of work	1
1.2 Geology and topography	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background	1
2 Project Aims and Methodology.....	1
2.1 Aims	1
2.2 Methodology.....	2
3 Results	2
3.1 Description of deposits	2
3.2 Finds	3
3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains	3
4 Discussion And Conclusions	3
Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory	4
Appendix 2 Bibliography and References	4
Appendix 3 Summary of Site Details.....	4

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1 Site Location
Fig. 2 Site plan and sections

SUMMARY

In May 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Land Adjacent to Clarendon House, Hambledon Road, Denmead, Hampshire (NGR: SU 654 121). The work was commissioned by Banner Homes (Wessex) Ltd in advance of the construction of two semi-detached and five terraced dwellings (Planning Ref. 0200858FUL). The watching brief revealed that the site did not contain any significant features/deposits associated with human activity and it is likely that the site had always been in use as agricultural land.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In May 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at land adjacent to Clarendon House, Hambledon Road, Denmead, Hampshire (NGR: SU 654 121). The work was commissioned by Banner Homes (Wessex) Ltd in respect of a planning application for the construction of two semi-detached and five terraced dwellings at the above address (Planning Application No. 0200858FUL).
- 1.1.2 A programme of archaeological works was set by Winchester's Sites and Monuments Officer, Tracy Matthews.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2003).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located on open grassland between properties adjacent to Hambledon Road to the south and private gardens to the north at NGR SU 654 121.
- 1.2.2 The site encompasses an area approximately 875 m² and lies at c. 50 m OD. The natural geology is London Clay, which is overlain by Bagshot Sands and Bracklesham Beds of sand and clay. Drift deposits of Plateau Gravel are also found in patches throughout this area (BGS 1974).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 Denmead is not registered as a historic rural settlement though within the current village area lies a group of 17th and 18th century properties, one of which has 15th century origins. These include the White Hart Inn that is located south of the development site.
- 1.3.2 A scatter of prehistoric finds has been found in the region though no evidence of settlement has thus far been found.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To monitor all ground-works that may have affected or revealed archaeological deposits. This included monitoring surface stripping, foundations and service trenches.
- 2.1.2 To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the development site.
- 2.1.3 To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- 2.1.4 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 2.1.5 To make available the results of the investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The development area under investigation is shown on Figure 2. The area was stripped of topsoil across the whole development. Upon completion of the topsoil strip further smaller areas were then stripped of the subsoil in advance of piling the dwelling platforms and the construction of the associated roads also shown on figure 2.
- 2.2.2 The removal of the topsoil and subsequent localised removal of the subsoil (Fig. 2) was undertaken by a mechanical 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under strict archaeological supervision. All mechanical excavation was carried out to the level of the latest archaeologically significant horizon or the natural geology, whichever was encountered first.
- 2.2.3 All features and deposits were allocated unique context numbers, and all recording was carried out in accordance with established OA practice. Bulk finds were collected and recorded by context. All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:100 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. 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 No deposits or features of archaeological significance were identified during the archaeological monitoring.
- 3.1.2 The natural clay (102) was encountered up to 0.8 m below ground surface and was comprised of a yellow-brown silty clay with medium to large flint nodules.
- 3.1.3 The natural clay was overlain by a relict plough soil horizon up to 0.6 m thick (101). This deposit was composed of an orange/yellow- brown silty clay with small flint nodules. A number of clay pipe fragments and sherds of 19th century pottery were recovered.

- 3.1.4 The sequence was topped by a layer of dark yellowish brown silty clay (100) up to 0.2 m thick. This soil was the modern, active topsoil and produced a number of modern finds including glass, CBM and ceramics.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered from any significant archaeological deposits. The majority of the finds were recovered from the relict plough soil (101). The finds included small fragments of clay pipe and a few sherds of glazed earthenware of 19th century date. The finds represent general debris possibly associated with agricultural manuring.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits of palaeo-environmental significance were observed on the site. No samples were recovered for analysis.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The lack of archaeological features or deposits across the development area strongly suggests that the immediate site and its environs have never been the focus for direct human activity. Arable agriculture on the heavy London Clays has traditionally been a relatively late occurrence; very few sites of later prehistoric date have been identified previously. The lack of features would suggest that the development area had never been incorporated into a settlement at any period and the absence of field ditches indicates an absence of field systems, therefore, it would appear that this land has only ever been utilised as agricultural grazing land or woodland.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context Number	Width	Thickness	Type
100	N/A	0.2 m	Topsoil
101	N/A	0.6 m	Subsoil
102	N/A	N/A	Natural

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

BGS 1974 *British Geological Survey England and Wales: Solid and Drift edition Sheet 316*

IFA 1999 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

OA 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (1st edition, ed. D Wilkinson)

OA 2003 *Land Adjacent to Clarendon House, Hambledon Road, Denmead, Hampshire. Written Scheme of Investigation*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land Adjacent to Clarendon House, Hambledon Road, Denmead, Hampshire

Site code: WINCM:AY149

Grid reference: SU 654 121

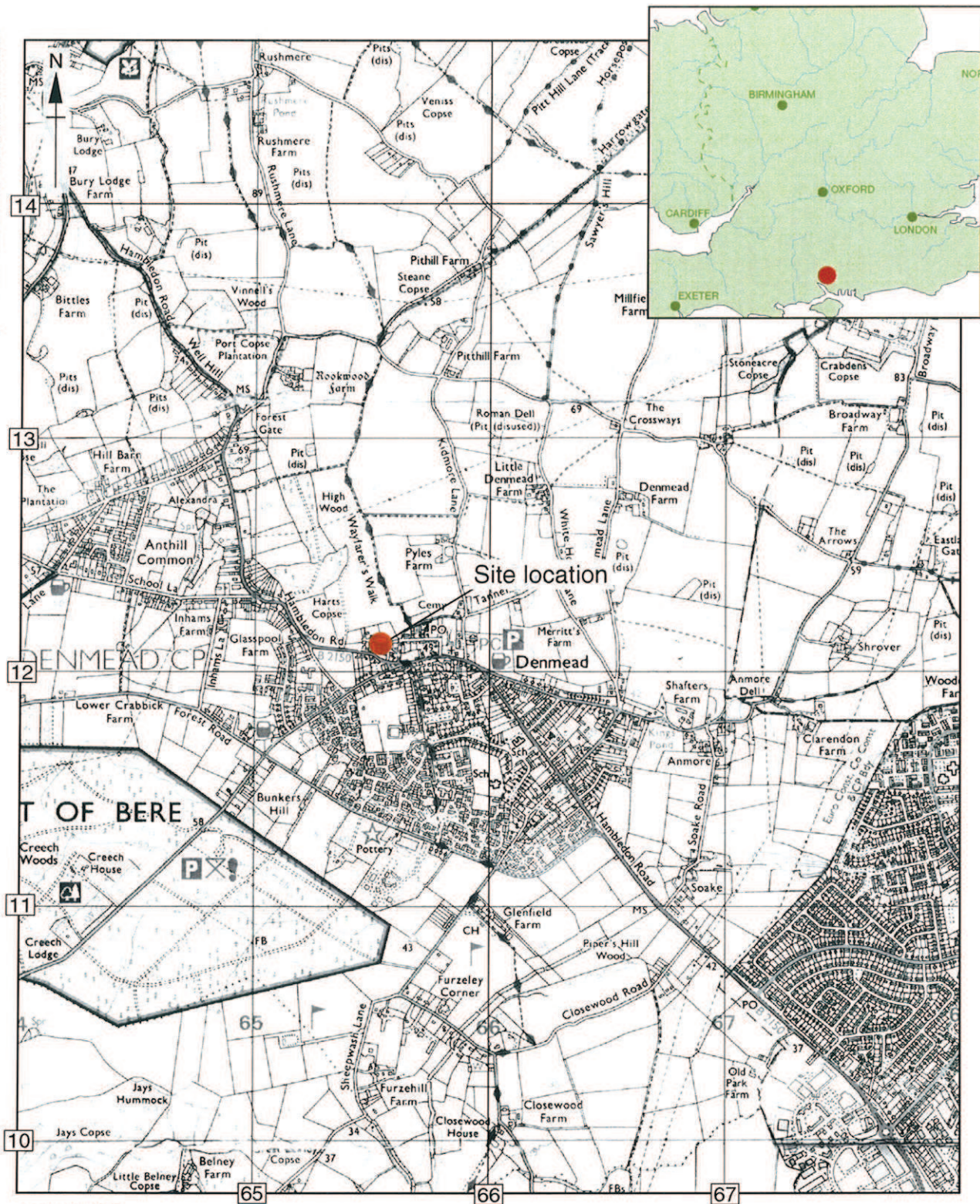
Type of watching brief: Topsoil strip down to subsoil in advance of development

Date and duration of project: 19th - 22nd May 2003

Area of site: 875 m²

Summary of results: An undisturbed sequence of natural clay capped by a relict ploughsoil and then a modern topsoil was revealed. No archaeological features were discovered.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Winchester County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: WINCM:AY149



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site Location

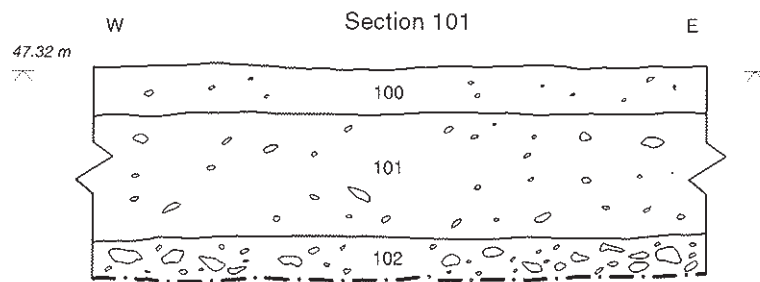
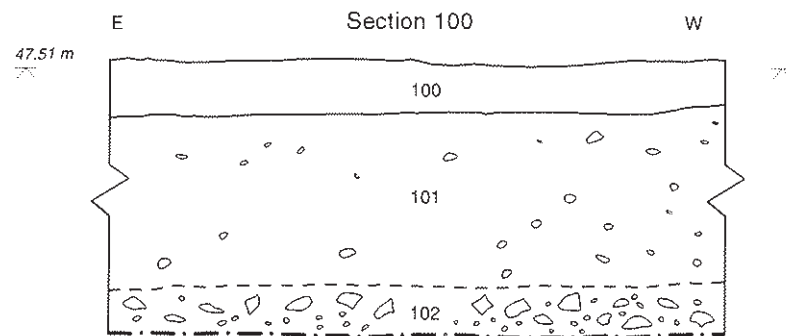
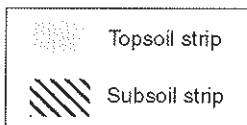
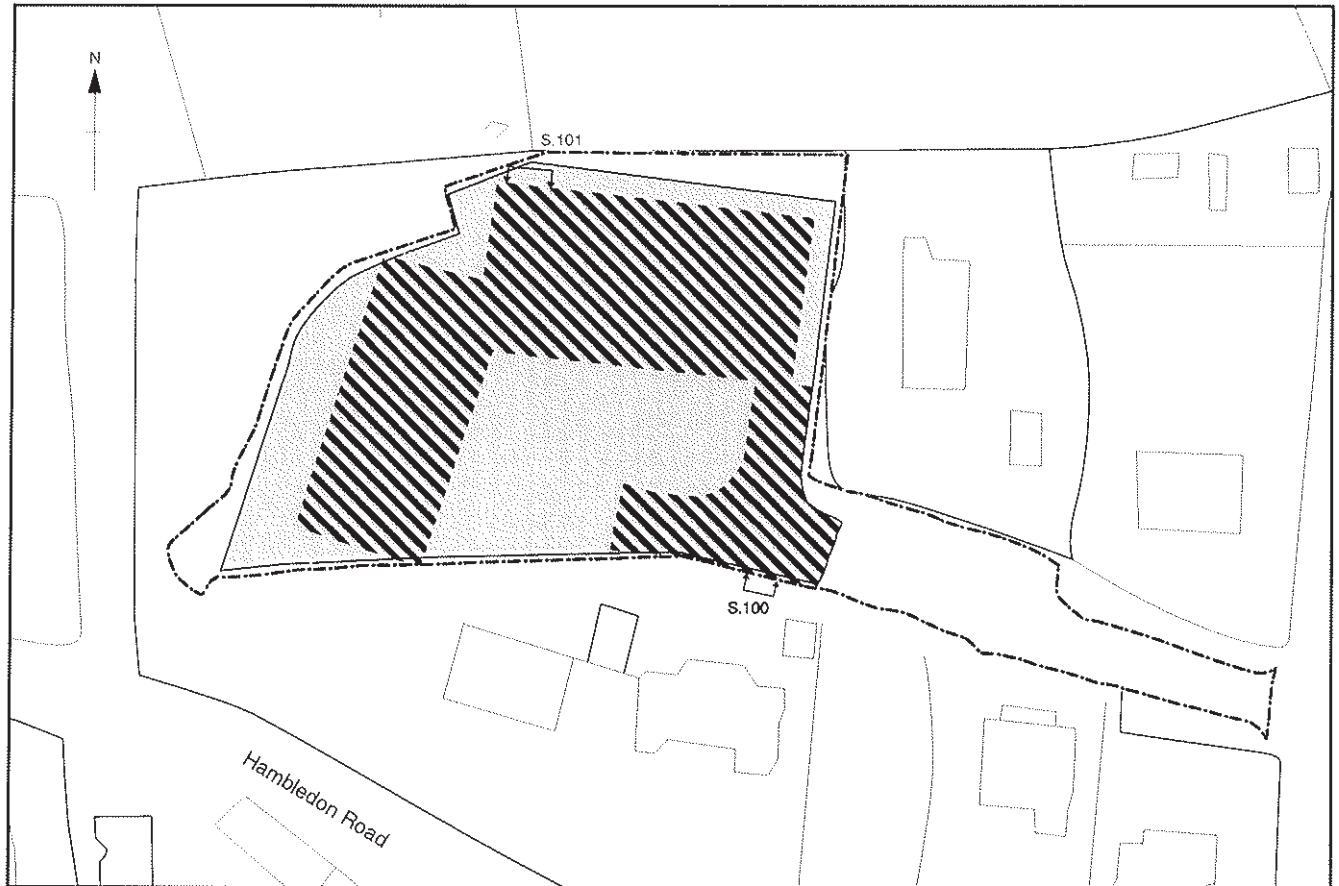


Figure 2: Site plan and sections (plan based on Banner Homes Drawing number 359/110)



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