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# Charters Road Sunningdale Berkshire



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report



**Oxford Archaeology**

January 2003

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CPM Environmental Planning and Design

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**Charters Road, Sunningdale, Berkshire***ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*

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Cover Plate: General view of site during clearance.

## SUMMARY

*In November and December 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Charters Road, Sunningdale, Berkshire, (NGR SU 9485 6675). The work was commissioned by CPM Environmental Planning and Design in advance of the construction of a new two-storey building on the site. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or deposits and that the site historically has been covered with a layer of organic peat.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In November and December 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Charters Road, Sunningdale, Berkshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by CPM Environmental Planning and Design in respect of a planning application for the construction of a new two-storey building (Planning Application No. 01/80750), upon demolition of two bungalows on the site.
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by Babtie on behalf of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (Babtie 2002).
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by CPM Environmental Planning and Design, and OA operated in accordance with this method statement (CPM 2002).

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on Tertiary and Cretaceous sand, loam and clay at 48 m OD (CPM 2002). The site is situated on the south side of Charters Road and was essentially level at the time of the site work.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI (CPM, 2002) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 There have been few finds dating to the early prehistoric period in the area, which is probably due to lack of natural flint sources in the area. In contrast, there is considerable evidence of Bronze Age activity in the Sunningdale area in the form of round barrows. One round barrow was excavated, near Sunningdale station in 1901 together with twenty urns, 3 of them under a barrow (and fragments of burnt bone) discovered during the construction of the golf course. Four round barrows near Ascott station were removed in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1.3.3 The site lies less than 300 m to the south-east of the line of the Devil's Highway, a Roman road which runs between Silchester and London. No trace of a Roman settlement has been found in Sunningdale itself, although there are Roman encampments in the surrounding area.

- 1.3.4 The name "Sunningdale" is first seen in the Anglo Saxon Charter meaning "area of the family of Sunna". In the 11<sup>th</sup> century Sunningdale was part of the Estate of Edward the Confessor. In the Domesday Book it is listed as part of the Manor of Cockham known as "Cochela" in the Berkshire hundred of Beynhurst. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century Broomhall Nunnery had been built on the south side of what is now Sunningdale College; the nunnery was closed in 1511.

## 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 development.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Following the demolition of the two bungalows (named *Troy* and *Glenbrook*) on the site was levelled. On-site ground conditions were poor owing to heavy rainfall, which led the site contractors to construct a layer of crushed stone over the site prior to any ground works or piling operations for the new buildings taking place.
- 2.2.2 A small brook extending through the site was channelled through a new culvert. This new service was the deepest excavated service on the site; the remainder of the new services were set within the piling mat or above it and were then connected to existing services (Fig. 2).
- 2.2.3 All archaeological observations were planned at a scale of 1:100 and where features/deposits were 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

#### *New Culvert (Fig. 2 and 3)*

- 3.1.1 The stratigraphy of the site was exposed during excavations for the culvert needed to channel the existing brook across the site. Deposits are identified by unique record number and shown on section (Fig. 3 and Appendix 1).
- 3.1.2 The natural comprised a light grey silty clay loam with patches of sand and coarse flinty gravel (1). This was overlain by a 0.3 m thick layer of peat with lenses of light grey sand (2) to the base of the deposit. Sealing this was a 0.4 m thick layer of very dark grey brown silty sand loam topsoil (3) with the recent building demolition material and crushed stone laid on the surface (Fig. 3).

3.1.3 The new buildings were of piled construction and a single monitoring visit was made during this operation. No archaeological features or finds were the observed.

## 3.2 Finds

3.2.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

## 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief. Geographically the site is situated in the bottom of a long valley that is known as the "Old Windsor Bog" (OS explorer map 160) and the limited observations from this watching brief suggest that historically this site has been within the peat bog until the bungalow buildings were erected in the 20th century.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>
1	Layer				Natural	None
2	Layer	0.3 m			Peat layer	None
3	Layer	0.4 m			Topsoil/Demolition	None

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Babtie, 2002, *Troy and Glenbrook, Charters Road, Ascot* Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief

CPM, 2002, *Charters Road, Sunningdale* Written Scheme for Archaeological Watching Brief

D Wilkinson, 1992, *OAU Fieldwork Manual*.

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Charters Road, Sunningdale, Berkshire

**Site code:** SUNCR 02

**Grid reference:** NGR SU 9485 6675

**Type of watching brief:** Groundworks for the construction of two new buildings.

**Date and duration of project:** Four site meetings from 25/11/2002 to 10/12/02.

**Area of site:** 12,000 sq. m

**Summary of results:** No archaeological features or deposits. The site overlies a peat bog marked on OS maps.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course, under the following accession number: REDMG 2002.205







Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location

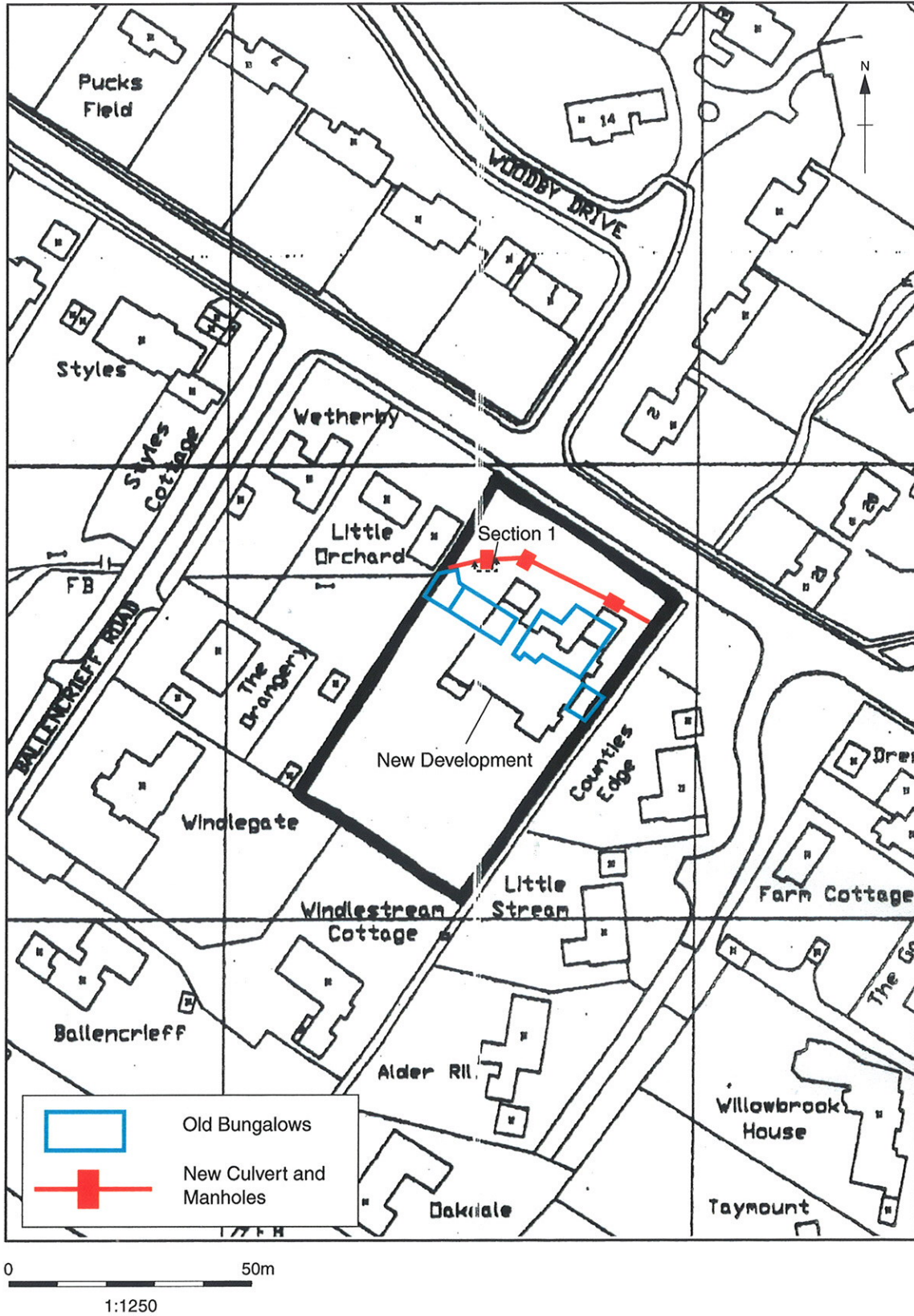


Figure 2: Plan of Site and Location of Section

### Section 1

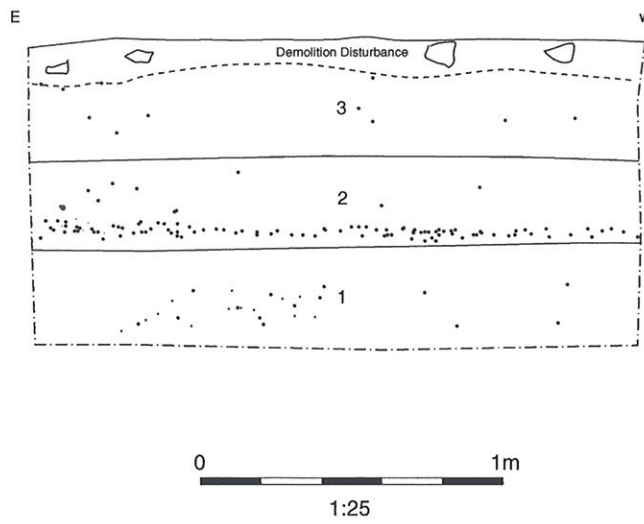


Figure 3: Section 1



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