

## **1 Summary**

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) was commissioned by Village Homes to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 72-76 Old Church Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex, during the development of the area for a single residence.

The watching brief carried out on 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1999 and the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1999, identified part of a feature which was partly excavated during the archaeological evaluation in July 1998. No new features of archaeological interest were exposed by the groundworks.

## **2 Project Background**

### **2.1 Location and Geology**

The development site lies in overgrown back gardens containing a number of mature trees, to the rear of 72-76 Old Church Lane, centred at NGR TQ 1720 9740. Belmont Lane forms the south-east site boundary, and thick hedges divide the property from this road, and also from the adjacent property to the west. The geology consists of clay and river gravels overlain by alluvial deposits.

### **2.2 Archaeological and historical background**

The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area defined by the London Borough of Harrow Urban Development Plan. The area covers the possible extent of the early medieval village of Great Stanmore. The village seems to have extended along Old Church Lane. A medieval moated manor house lay immediately to the north of the site, its moat fed by the Edgware Brook. The early medieval Church was located to the north of the manor house. Stanmore is listed in the Domesday Book, which shows that the village was well established in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and must have Saxon origins. The village shifted northwards in the late medieval period, moving to a new location on the east - west aligned road to Uxbridge. The old church and village fell into disuse and a new church was built to the north. When the present suburban houses were built, some record was made of the moated manor house site, but no systematic excavation took place. The full extent of the early medieval village, or of its Saxon predecessor is unknown.

### **2.3 Background to the watching brief**

An archaeological evaluation of the proposed residential development site was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in July 1998 (72-76 Old church Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex, Archaeological Evaluation Report, August 1998). Although the

relatively small evaluation trench revealed a single feature probably of medieval date, unstratified artefacts of prehistoric, Roman, and Saxon dates were also recovered. Further to this, OAU were commissioned by Village Homes to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the digging of the foundations for the development.

## 2.4 Watching brief methodology

The watching brief was undertaken on the 30th of June and 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1999, and a continuous presence was maintained on site during the excavation of the foundations; during this time the upcast from the trenches was also examined. All excavation was by a JCB fitted with a 0.6m toothed bucket. The deposits exposed were cleaned, inspected, and recorded in section and by photography, and a plan was made to record their location. Written records were also made on proforma sheets. Soil description utilises standard charts for the approximation of percentage of inclusion types in soil deposits.

\* Site Narrative.

## 3 Quantification of the archive

### 3.1 Stratigraphic

Record type	Quantification
Context records	9
Plans A4	1
Sections A4	2
B + W Films	0
Colour Films	1

The excavated foundation trenches revealed in section more of the extent of a large shallow feature discovered in the evaluation trench, possibly a tree bole. Black and white photographs were not taken due to a malfunctioning camera.

### 3.2 Artefactual

Small amounts of glass, iron, and CBM fragments were retrieved from the garden soil, but were all relatively modern and hence were not retained; a single fragment of animal bone, and a single bone button no earlier than post medieval in date was also recovered from this context. A small amount of iron slag was retrieved from the top fill of the large shallow feature. Despite examining the upcast from the trenches, the amount of finds retrieved was minimal.

### **3.3 Environmental**

Due to the absence of any significant archaeology, no environmental soil samples were taken.

## **4 Statement of potential**

### **4.1 Stratigraphic**

Only one archaeological feature was observed, the same one partially excavated in the evaluation trench. This was a shallow, irregular feature, dated as probably medieval by the finds found during the evaluation. The stratigraphic potential of the watching brief is therefore minimal.

### **4.2 Artefactual**

Unfortunately, unlike the evaluation, no finds of Bronze-age, Roman, or Saxon date were recovered from the watching brief. The only finds of archaeological interest were the small amount of slag, from the feature of probable medieval date. Quantities of this material were also previously recovered from the same feature during the evaluation. Therefore, no significant new artefactual evidence was retrieved.

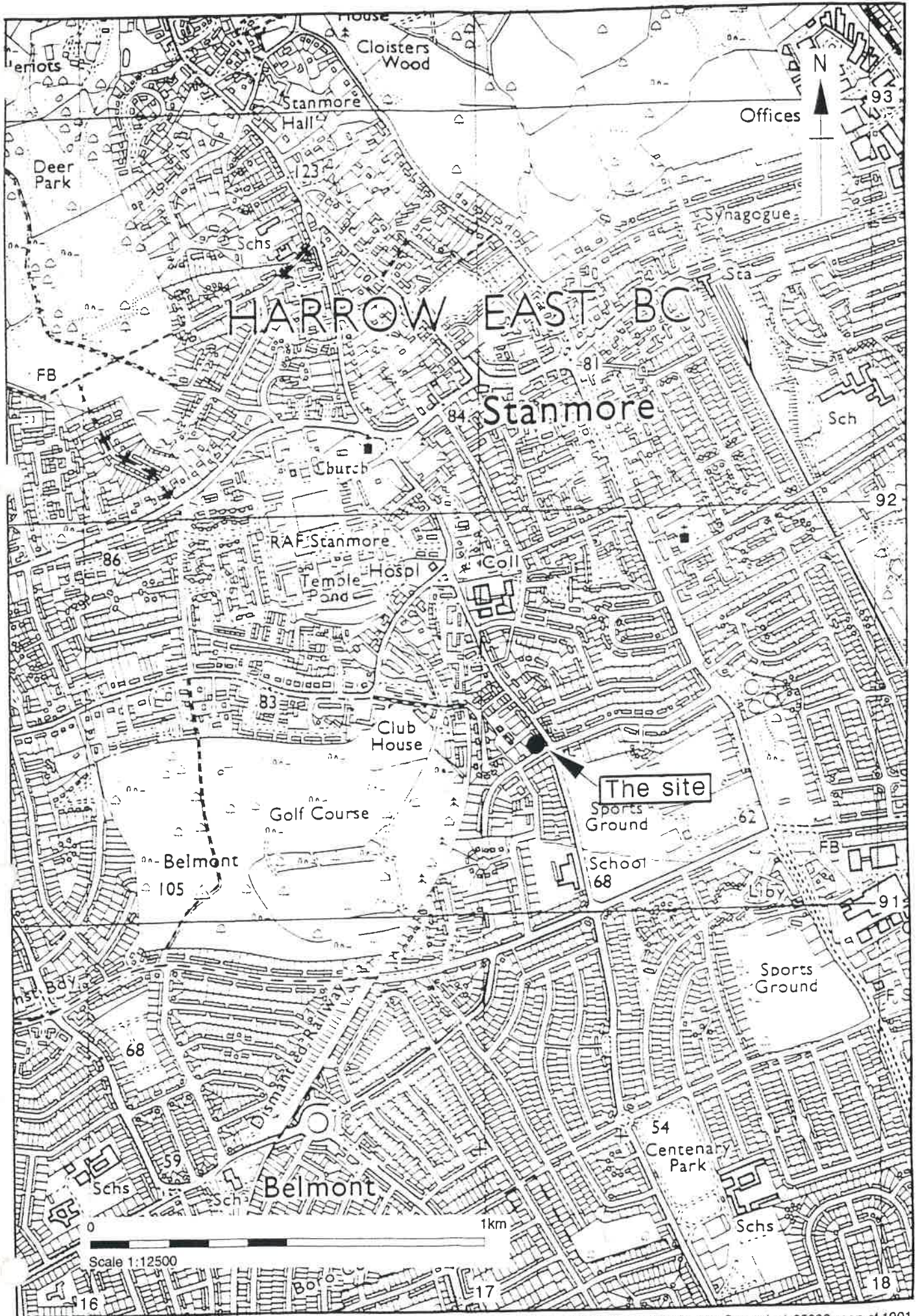


Figure 1: Site location plan

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