

**Additional Work,
Bullcroft Park,
Wallingford, Oxfordshire**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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1 SCOPE OF WORK

- 1.1.1 Subsequent to the evaluation conducted by OA (OA, 2008) additional work was requested by Chris Welch of English Heritage. This was in the form of an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the excavation of cable and fencing trenches and also during the excavation of the pits for the new lamp standards.
- 1.1.2 These works comprised the excavation of a total of 90 m length of 0.9 m wide by 0.45 m deep trenching along the southern, eastern and northern sides of the northernmost tennis courts, the excavation of 30 m length of 0.9 m wide by 0.25 m deep trenching along the western side of the courts and the excavation of six 1 m square by 0.7 m deep pits located at the four corners of the court and centrally in the southern and northern edges of the court.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA, 2008a).

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken as a series of site visits during those works likely to impinge or disturb any potential archaeological deposits.
- 2.1.2 A 9 tonne mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket was used for these works. All the material excavated was retained on site.
- 2.1.3 A plan showing the extent of the excavations and the locations of any features and sections was maintained at a scale of 1:100 and any recorded sections were drawn at a scale 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

The Western Trench

- 3.1.1 This was composed of approximately 30 m length of trenching with a 1 m square by 0.7 m deep pit located at either end. The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.25 m exposing a 0.15 m depth layer of modern topsoil and turf overlying a layer of made ground composed of grey-brown silt loam. The stratigraphy recorded in the south-western and north-western pits was broadly similar to that observed within test pits 3 and 4 respectively during the evaluation, although no further features were observed.

The Southern Trench

- 3.1.2 This was excavated to a depth of 0.45 m across the tarmac of the tennis courts, with a 1 m square and 0.7 m deep pit for a lighting standard located centrally. Within the pit the underlying natural, a red-brown alluvium, was encountered at a depth of 0.7 m below the level of the tennis court. This was overlaid by a 0.25 m deep layer of dark brown clay silt, a probable layer of worked soil similar to context 3007. Overlying this was a 0.25 m deep layer of mixed clay silt and mortar, a probable landscaping layer supporting the gravel base and tarmac surface of the tennis court. Within the trench the base of the cut was wholly within the landscaping layer with no archaeology exposed.

The Eastern Trench

- 3.1.3 This was similar to the western trench being composed of approximately 30 m length of trenching with a 1 m square by 0.7 m deep pit located at either end. The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.4 m, exposing a 0.15 m depth layer of modern topsoil and turf overlying made ground composed of grey-brown silt loam. The excavation of the pits displayed similar stratigraphy with the made ground shown to directly overlie the underlying alluvium. This is similar to that observed within test pits 5 and 6 during the evaluation.

The Northern Trench

- 3.1.4 This measured approximately 30 m long and was dug to an average depth of 0.45 m, with a 1 m square by 0.9 m deep pit located centrally. The trenching was contained within a layer of made ground similar to that observed within the eastern trench and lamp standard pits. Within the pit the underlying terrace gravel was encountered at a depth of 0.8 m below the level of the playing field. This was overlain by a 0.22 m deep layer of worked soil. This was sealed by a continuation of the made ground observed in the eastern trench.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No dating evidence was recovered during this phase of works.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The stratigraphy observed during the watching brief was consistent with that observed during the evaluation and showed that the area had been subject to extensive landscaping in the form of deposits of made ground. These are probably post-medieval in nature and relate to the construction of the present day Bullcroft Park.
- 4.1.2 No further evidence for any features or structures was observed during the course of the watching brief.

5 REFERENCES

IFA, 2001 *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs*

OA, 2008 *Bullcroft Park, Wallingford, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report*

OA, 2008a *Bullcroft Park, Wallingford, Oxfordshire: Written scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

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