



Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey

Archaeological Evaluation Report

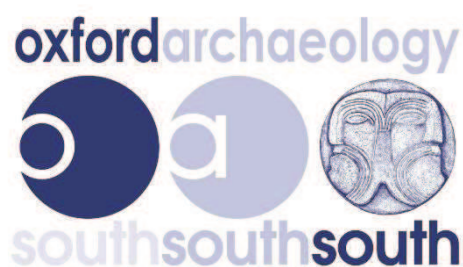
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Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Written by Robert McIntosh

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Summary

In September 2017 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Grove Developments Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey, prior to the demolition, redevelopment and extension of the hotel.

The evaluation comprised four trenches excavated within the extension footprint centred on SU 9807 7160. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered. The trenches did reveal, however, traces of 20th-century landscaping and disturbance relating to the construction history of the hotel.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Grove Developments Ltd for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Nick Truckle who advised on and approved the work on behalf of Surrey County Council for his advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Steve Lawrence. The fieldwork was directed by Robert McIntosh, who was supported by Simon Batsman. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Aiden Farnan. Thanks are also extended to the team of OA staff that prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Commission and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Grove Developments Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of an extension and redevelopment of Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of the planning permission (planning ref. RU. 16/0824). No brief was set for the work by the local planning authority, although discussions with Nick Truckle, Archaeological Officer at Surrey County Council, established the scope of work required to adequately evaluate the site. This comprised an approximate 5% evaluation sample of the redevelopment new build footprint of which the most accessible and least disturbed area was to the west of the existing hotel. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was produced by OA and approved by Nick Truckle prior to the start of the fieldwork (OA 2017). This document outlined how OA would implement the agreed scope and specification.
- 1.1.3 The fieldwork was completed between 5th-6th September 2017.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 Savill Court Hotel is situated in mature parkland east of Wick Lane and between Great Windsor Park to the west and Englefield Green to the East. The impact footprint of the redevelopment measures approximately 5,700m² and is centred on NGR SU 9807 7160 (Fig. 1). The immediate surroundings of the hotel comprise manicured lawn, mature trees and shrubs, and paved access roads, parking and paths. The ground surface is between 71.5-72.5m aOD.
- 1.2.2 The geology of the area is mapped as sand and gravel river terrace deposits overlying a solid geology comprising sand of the Bagshot Beds formation (BGS nd).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in a desk-based assessment and heritage impact assessment (Morriss 2016). This has not been reproduced here and the assessment should be referred to for information regarding the 19th- and 20th-century development of the building, gardens and parkland. In summary, the current building was constructed in the early 20th century and has undergone significant structural alteration in more recent decades.
- 1.3.2 The following with regard to the known archaeological potential of the site is a verbatim reproduction from the assessment (Morriss 2016):

Very little is known about the archaeology of the area and there are very few entries relating to archaeological features or finds in or adjacent to the hotel site in the Surrey HER. A single Neolithic flint was found at Lime Lodge in Englefield Green (SMR 19021). The site is not within one of the LPA's 'Areas of High Archaeological Potential.

The available evidence suggests that the area around the present building has been open space – either fields or gardens – since at least the 18th century and, probably, since the medieval period and before. The area has also been subject to considerable disturbance and landscaping, especially since the end of the 19th century.

The only known feature of note within the proposed excavations will be the line of Ham Lane – and that is likely to have been erased when the house was extended after 1912. Overall the archaeological potential is considered to be low.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains.
- ii. To determine the character of any remains present, without compromising any deposits that may merit detailed investigation or preservation.
- iii. To determine the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise.
- iv. To characterise any underlying archaeological strata down to undisturbed geology without significantly impacting upon significant younger (overlying) deposits where possible
- v. To determine the geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered.
- vi. To recover suitable materials for scientific dating where appropriate.
- vii. To establish what archaeological remains/deposits may be affected by any proposed development.
- viii. To make available the results of the investigation to inform subsequent mitigation strategies.
- ix. To produce a factual report, full archive and HER data submission.
- x. To disseminate the results of the investigation at a level appropriate to their importance.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 A summary of OA's general approach to excavation and recording can be found in appendix A of the WSI. Standard methodologies for geomatics and survey, environmental evidence, artefactual evidence and burials can also be found in that document (appendices B, C, D and E respectively).

2.2.2 The evaluation was intended to comprise an approximate 5% sample by area of the site. This equated to the excavation of 115m of linear trench based on a trench width of 1.8m. Owing to a number of access constraints, it was agreed to concentrate the evaluation on the accessible land that has previously been least impacted to the west of the current hotel, with a further trench to be excavated in the northern area where possible. In the event, four trenches were excavated to the west of the hotel (Fig. 2, Trenches 2-5). The trench to the north of the hotel (Trench 1) was not excavated following agreement with Nick Truckle.

2.2.3 Site specific methodologies were as follows:

- xi. Each trench location was laid out with GPS prior to machine excavation.
- xii. Trench locations were then assessed and where necessary modified in relation to service locations and other restrictions.
- xiii. Topsoil and subsoil were stored separately one on either side of the trenches.
- xiv. A summary of the results and accompanying images of the trenches were forwarded to Nick Truckle prior to backfilling.
- xv. Backfilling of the trenches was undertaken in reverse order of excavation with the deposits lightly tracked in by the machine.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below. Details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.1.2 Context numbers reflect the trench numbers unless otherwise stated, e.g. pit 102 is a feature within Trench 1, while ditch 304 is a feature within Trench 3.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

- 3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology of yellowish sands with grey gravel patches was overlain by a dark greyish brown subsoil containing occasional modern construction debris. The existing topsoil and turf completed the sequence.
- 3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were good, and the trenches were free-draining and remained dry throughout. No archaeological features were present. Modern service trenches were clearly distinguishable and easy to identify.

3.3 Trench 2 (Plate 1)

- 3.3.1 Trench 2 contained no archaeological features. Two layers of modern made-ground containing construction debris and plastic items were present at either end of the trench below the topsoil. These appear to have derived from the last phase of construction and extension at the hotel.

3.4 Trench 3 (Plate 2)

- 3.4.1 A number of potential features were investigated within Trench 3. None of these proved to be archaeological. Feature 303 was a modern treehole and both 305 and 306 (Plates 5 and 6) were variations in the surface of the geological deposits.

3.5 Trenches 4 and 5 (Plates 3 and 4)

- 3.5.1 No archaeological features were present in Trenches 4 and 5.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 Conditions were good throughout the evaluation and the distinction between the natural geology and other deposits was clear and well defined. There were no factors present during the evaluation that would have impaired the visibility and reliability of the site investigation.

4.2 Interpretation

- 4.2.1 The presence of modern debris scattered throughout the subsoil, and two levelling deposits found in Trench 2 indicate that the area has been subject to a degree of modern landscaping and disturbance. The absence of any undisturbed soil horizons over the natural geology also indicates that this level may also have been truncated, further reducing the potential for the survival of any archaeological deposits at this site.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench lacking archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying two levelling deposits over natural geology of sand with gravel patches. The trench also contained one services trench beneath the levelling deposits.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer	-	0.1	Topsoil. Dark brownish grey silty sand with some gravel inclusions.	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil. Medium brownish grey silty sand. Occasional modern refuse.	-	-
202	Layer	-	0.6	Made ground. Pale to medium pinkish yellow gravelly sand with modern CBM inclusions and refuse	-	Late 20 th Century
203	Layer	-	0.55	Made ground. Dark brownish grey silty sand.	-	-
204	Layer	-	-	Natural Geology. Greyish yellow sand with orangey mottling in places, contained gravelly patches.	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench lacking archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand with gravel patches. One treehole was present and excavated. Two areas of differing natural geology were investigated and confirmed as natural geology.					Length (m)	28
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.6
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown silty sand.	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.15	Subsoil. Dark greyish brown, gravelly silty sand. Occasional modern refuse.	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural. Light yellowish brown silty sand with gravel patches.	-	-
303	Cut	2.6	0.3	Treehole. Sub-circular.	-	-
304	Fill	2.6	0.3	Fill of 303. Light grey silty sand.	-	-
305	Deposit	-	-	Variation in natural sands. Brownish yellow, sand.	-	-

306	Deposit	1.6	0.3	Gravel patch in natural. Medium grey gravel.	-	-
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Trench 4

General description					Orientation	N-S
Trench lacking archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a thin layer of weathered natural, over natural geology of light yellowish brown silty sand, with grey gravel patches. Contained drainage pipe at NE end.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.7
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	Layer	-	0.21	Topsoil. Medium greyish brown silty sand.	-	-
401	Layer	-	0.33	Subsoil. Medium greyish brown, gravelly silty sand, with occasional modern refuse.	-	-
402	Layer	-	0.2	Weathered natural. Mixed natural, light yellowish brown silty sand, and subsoil, medium greyish brown gravelly silty sand.	-	-
403	Layer	-	-	Natural. Light yellowish brown silty sand with grey gravelly patches.	-	-

Trench 5

General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench lacking archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of sand with gravelly patches. Contained same drainage pipe as trench 4, running through its centre.					Length (m)	8
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.72
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
500	Layer	-	0.24	Topsoil. Dark greyish brown sandy silt.	-	-
501	Layer	-	0.48	Subsoil. Dark greyish brown, gravelly sandy silt with occasional modern refuse.	-	-
502	Layer	-	-	Natural. Light yellowish brown silty sand, with grey gravel patches.	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

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OA, 2017 Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey. Written Scheme of Investigation. Archaeological Evaluation. Unpublished document, Oxford Archaeology. June 2017

APPENDIX C**SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

Site name:	Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey
Site code:	BISC17
Grid Reference	SU 9807 7160
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	5th and 6th September 2017
Area of Site	5,700m ²

Location of archive: There is currently no receiving museum for this collection area. The archive will be stored at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES. The status of this archive and receiving area will be reviewed in 2 years.

Summary of Results: In September 2017 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Grove Developments Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Savill Court Hotel, Bishopsgate, Surrey, prior to the demolition, redevelopment and extension of the hotel.

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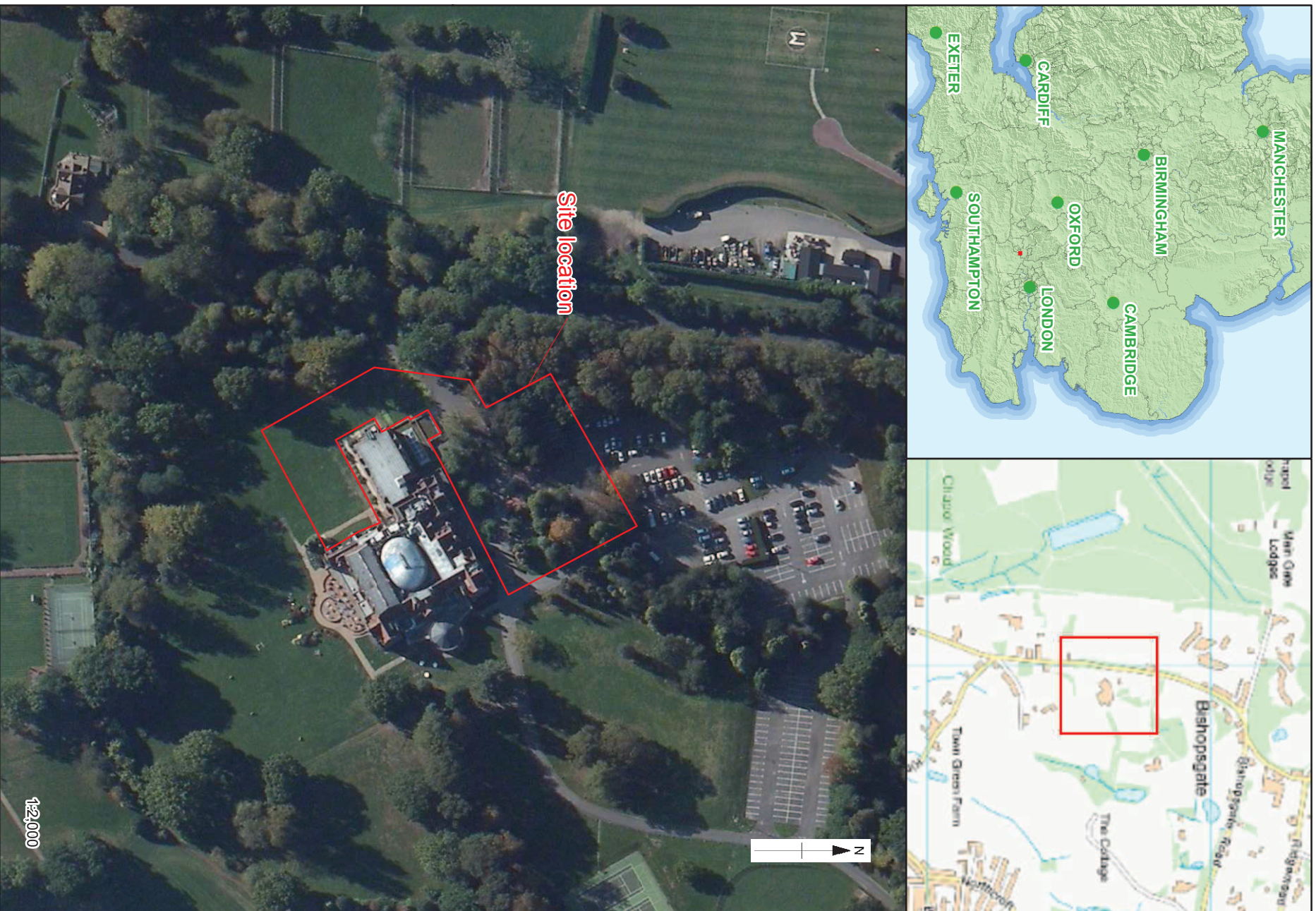






Plate 1: Trench 2, looking NE



Plate 2: Trench 3, looking NW



Plate 3: Trench 4, looking NE



Plate 4: Trench 5, looking NW



Plate 5: Deposit 303, looking SW



Plate 6: Deposit 306, looking NE



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