Caesar’s Cottage, Camp End Road, St George’s Hill, Weybridge, Surrey

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Opus Living

by Danielle Milbank
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CCS 09/51

September 2009
Summary

Site name: Caesar’s Cottage, Camp End Road, St George’s Hill, Weybridge, Surrey

Grid reference: TQ0860 6190

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: September 25th 2009

Project manager: Jo Pine

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: CCS 09/51

Area of site: 0.48ha

Summary of results: No archaeological finds or features were encountered

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Elmbridge Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford 30.09.09
Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Caesar’s Cottage, Camp End Road, St George’s Hill, Weybridge, Surrey (TQ0860 6188) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Lee Adkins of Opus Living Ltd, Unit 4b Wintersells Road, Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 7LF. Planning permission is to be sought from Elmbridge Borough Council for the demolition of the existing house on the site and its replacement with a new house. The site lies within the multivallate hillfort on St Georges Hill which is a Scheduled Monument (23001). As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a field evaluation was proposed as detailed in *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16, 1990) and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. Scheduled Monument Consent was granted by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to carry out this evaluation. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Massey, Inspector of Ancient Monuments with English Heritage, Eastgate Court, 195-105 High Street, Guildford, GU1 3EH.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank and Paulina Pankiewicz on the 25th of September 2009 and the site code is CCS 09/51. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Elmbridge Museums in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on St George’s Hill, to the south of the River Thames and the town of Weybridge in Surrey (Fig. 1). The site occupies an irregular parcel of land with the drive and current house at the south of the site, and a garden area to the north. The site is relatively flat in the area of the current house footprint, and slopes very steeply from the rear of the house down to the north. The underlying geology is described as Plateau Gravel (BGS 1981), which was encountered in all three trenches in the form of coarse orange sand and large rounded flint gravel. The area of the site to be developed lies at a height of 75.8m above Ordnance Datum, with the garden area sloping down to 68.5m at the lowest point to the north.
**Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the north eastern part of the large multivallate hillfort on St George’s Hill. The hillfort encloses c. 5.5ha of the hilltop, with the ramparts following the contours of the hill, leaving an irregular ground plan. The 75m contour ramparts generally consist of an inner bank with an external ditch and outer, counter-scarp, bank, although the more accessible area to the west contains three banks and two ditches. An extra D-shaped rampart to the north-east encloses an area where the stream formerly ran, and the proposed development lies within this area. Most of the banks of the hillfort have survived, although many of the ditches are partially or completely infilled.

Excavations in the early 20th century (Gardiner 1911) located Iron Age pottery confirming the dating of the site, whilst subsequent work also found Early and Late Iron Age pottery and iron slag. Recent fieldwork has uncovered the sequence of construction of the ramparts (Poulton and O’Connell 1984), and a shallow linear feature was found immediately to the south-west of the hillfort (Hawkins and Douglas 1999). However, no archaeological finds or features were recovered during an evaluation about 120m to the south west of the proposed site (Anthony 2002).

**Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. The specific research aims of the project were:

a) To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site.

b) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

c) To determine if any deposits associated with the Iron Age hillfort are present.

d) To provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy if required.

It was proposed to dig three trenches, each 6m long and 1.6m wide. The trenches were positioned to target those parts of the site, outside the footprint of the current buildings, which will be most affected by the proposed development. A contingency of 4m of trench was included should this have been required to clarify findings made in the initial evaluation.
The trenches were to be excavated by JCB-type machine, under continuous archaeological supervision, and fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds, and the trenches and spoilheaps were to be scanned using a metal detector. All possible features were cleaned by hand.

Results

All three trenches were dug in the position intended, though the alignment and length were altered very slightly in some cases as a result of the presence of garden features such as steps and trees. These changes were made in consultation with and with the approval of the English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

This trench was aligned WSW-ENE and was 1.6m wide and 5.80m long. It was 0.67m deep overall, and the stratigraphy encountered comprised Tarmac and hardcore 0.12m thick, which overlay a fine grey sandy silt subsoil with frequent small and medium rounded and subrounded flint gravel inclusions, which was 0.40m thick. This in turn overlay the natural geology, which consisted of coarse orange sand and medium (and occasional large) rounded and subrounded flint gravel.

A modern electric service was observed at the eastern end of the trench, and was left on a plinth. No archaeological finds or features were encountered in this trench.

Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4 and Plate 1)

This trench was aligned south east-north west, and was 1.6m wide and 4.50m long. It was 0.82m deep overall, and the stratigraphy encountered comprised fine sandy topsoil 0.12m thick, which overlay a fine grey sandy silt subsoil with frequent small and medium rounded and subrounded flint gravel inclusions, which was 0.46m thick. This in turn overlay the natural geology, which consisted of coarse orange sand and medium (and occasional large) rounded and subrounded flint gravel. No archaeological finds or features were encountered in this trench.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3 and Plate 2)

This trench was aligned WSW-ESE, and was 1.6m wide and 5.20m long. On the north west side, it was 0.36m deep overall, with fine sandy topsoil (with frequent roots) 0.12m thick. This overlay a fine grey sandy silt subsoil
with frequent small and medium rounded and subrounded flint gravel inclusions, which was 0.18m thick. This in turn overlay the coarse orange sand and flint gravel geology. On the south east side, paving and sand 0.04m thick overlay a fine, very sandy grey silt layer with occasional small flint gravel, which was 0.46m deep. This in turn overlay fine grey sandy silt subsoil with frequent small and medium rounded and subrounded flint gravel inclusions, which overlay the natural orange sand and gravel geology. No archaeological finds or features were encountered in this trench.

Conclusion

The evaluation showed that the subsoil and natural stratigraphy area of the proposed development was relatively unaffected by modern activity, and overall the topography does not appear to have been remodelled to any great extent. The orange sand and flint gravel had not been significantly disturbed other than by tree roots, and therefore would have provided good conditions for any archaeological deposits to have survived. However, no archaeological features or deposits were identified. On the basis of this evaluation therefore, the location of the proposed replacement building has no archaeological potential.

References

Anthony, S, 2002, Brindle Crest, Camp End Road, St George’s Hill, Weybridge, Surrey, An archaeological evaluation, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 02/01, Reading
Cotton, J, Crocker, G and Graham A 2005, Aspects of archaeology and history in Surrey; towards a research framework for the county; Surrey Archaeol Soc, Guildford
Hawkins, D and Douglas, A, 1999, ‘Archaeological investigations of land at Ravenscroft Road, St George’s Hill, Weybridge’, Surrey Archaeol Collect, 86, 210-14
### APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trench</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
<th>Breadth (m)</th>
<th>Depth (m)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0–0.12m Tarmac; 0.12-0.52m grey sandy silt subsoil with gravel; 0.52m+ orange sand and gravel natural geology. [Plate 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0–0.28m Tarmac; 0.28-0.74m grey sandy silt subsoil with gravel; 0.74m+ orange sand and gravel natural geology. [Plate 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>NNW: 0–0.12m topsoil; 0.12-0.30m grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.30m+ orange sand and gravel natural geology. SSE: 0–0.04m paving; 0.04m-0.50m grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.50m-0.88m grey sandy silt subsoil with gravel; 0.88m+ orange sand and gravel natural geology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Figure 1. Location of site within Weybridge and Surrey.

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Archaeological evaluation

Figure 2. Location of site off Camp End Road.
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.
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Trench 2

SSE                NNW

Fine light brown sandy silt (topsoil)

Light grey sand with frequent roots (subsoil)

Orange sand and gravel (natural geology)

base of trench

0 1m

75.64m aOD
Plate 1. Trench 1 looking south west, scales: 1m and 2m.

Plate 2. Trench 2 looking north, scales: 1m and 2m.