Childs Way, H6 and V1 Roadworks
Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For English Partnerships

by Sian Anthony
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CWMK02/56

February 2003
Summary

**Site name:** Childs Way, H6 and V1 Roadworks, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire

**Grid reference:** SP 822 346

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 3rd December 2002 to 25th February 2003

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Sian Anthony

**Site code:** CWMK 02/56

**Area of site:** -

**Summary of results:** Two Post-medieval field boundaries were investigated.

**Monuments identified:** None

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is currently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service due course.

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Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the Childs Way (H6) and V1 roadworks, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire (SP822346) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Ruth McCarthy, Planning Manager Implementation, English Partnerships, 414-428 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 2EA.

Work to construct new roads and a roundabout for infrastructure was to take place subject to the implementation of a programme of archaeological works to take place during the groundworks. The site is owned by the Commission for the New Towns, who have planning authority under Section 7(1) of the New Towns Act (1981) and the Town and Country Planning (New Towns) Special Development (Amended) Order (1985), under which any development or permissions should have regard to the provisions of the Department of the Environment’s Planning Policy Guidance, Archaeology and Planning (PPG16 1990). The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Brian Giggins, Archaeological Officer for Milton Keynes Council.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Sian Anthony, Andy Taylor and Stephen Hammond between the 3rd December 2002 and 25th February 2003, and the site code is CWMK02/56. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum Service in due course with accession code AYBCM:2002.86.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the south-west margins of Milton Keynes (Fig. 1) where the H6 and V1 roads meet. The site lies on gently sloping ground at c. 95m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 1992) the underlying geology is glacial till above Oxford Clay, which was confirmed on site.

Archaeological background
The site is to the west of the deserted medieval village of Tattenhoe and an associated moated site of unknown function, and to the north-east of Snelshall Priory. To the south, on the eastern side of the road, minor medieval activity has been revealed (Taylor 2001). A Late Iron Age settlement has also been uncovered in a parcel of land between the south-eastern side of H6 and the north-eastern side of V1 (Anthony 2002 and in press) in an area known as Westcroft. A magnetic susceptibility survey undertaken in 1997 (AI 1999) highlighted areas of potential that would be disturbed by the proposed roadworks (Sites E and G; Fig 2). Further to this, infra-red photography also revealed a potential linear feature within Site G (AI 1999).

**Objectives and methodology**

As the site of the new roadworks contains two areas previously highlighted as having archaeological potential it was decided that in conjunction with the watching brief, the areas of the construction work that would cut through these areas would be stripped under close archaeological supervision. This would be done using a 360° type tracked excavator fitted with a ditching bucket. The purpose of the watching brief was to observe, excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks whilst the archaeologically supervised strip in addition would allow for a more controlled and detailed search of areas with the greater potential. All spoilheaps encountered would also be monitored for finds. Sufficient time would be allowed to carry this out during the groundworkers’ schedules but without causing undue delay. The watching brief areas were stripped using bulldozers that tracked over the ground as soon as uncovered.

**Results**

The affected areas of Site E and Site G affected by the roadworks were stripped under archaeological supervision. Within the area stripped in Site E, the linear bands noted as joining each other on an aerial photograph were revealed. These were investigated and were shown to contain mid grey/brown silty clay with frequent large gravel inclusions. Finds of modern brick and glass on the surface from both linear features suggest a late-post medieval date and both are likely to represent old field boundary ditches. Examination of geophysical maps indicated possible continuation of the two linear boundaries on either side of the affected area.

The supervised strip in Area G was noted to contain a great deal of modern disturbance, with large areas containing brick rubble straight onto natural yellow/brown clay. Typically however the stratigraphy revealed during the watching brief consisted of mid grey/brown silty clay topsoil over natural brown/yellow clay. Some areas were not stripped deep enough to reveal the natural, and other areas were affected by the large amounts of
rainfall during groundworks that prevented good visibility of the natural levels or any potential archaeological features. The type of machines used during groundworks also hindered visibility by immediately tracking over stripped natural.

**Finds**

Six pieces of burnt flint were noted, two from the topsoil of the supervised strip in Area F and four from a spoilheap just the north-west of Area E. These were not retained. Modern finds of brick and glass also were not retained. No other finds of archaeological interest were observed.

**Conclusion**

No archaeological features were discovered during the watching brief and stripping exercise. Although six pieces of burnt flint were recovered no other finds were revealed. The burnt flints themselves could merely be the result of fairly recent agricultural activity involving stubble burning. The only features encountered were two post-medieval field boundaries previously noted as possible linear features on an aerial photograph. It is highly unlikely therefore that any archaeological activity has taken place with the confines of the road development. However the bulldozing method adopted to strip areas beyond those under direct archaeological supervision made recognition of any potential features very difficult, especially with the need for the machine to constantly re-track over the same areas.

**References**


Anthony, S, 2002, ‘Westcroft, Phase IV, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, an archaeological watching brief’, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 02/12


Taylor, K, 2001, ‘Tattenhoe Phase 2B Site 33, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, an archaeological evaluation’, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 01/24
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Figure 1: Location of site within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

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Figure 2. Location of watching brief and areas stripped under archaeological supervision.

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