All Weather Gallop, Faringdon Road Down, Lambourn, West Berkshire

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
for B W Hills (Southbank) Limited

by Steve Ford
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code FRD 04/49

May 2004
Summary

Site name: All Weather Gallop, Faringdon Road Down, Lambourn

Grid reference: SU 3298 8216 to 3344 8323

Site activity: Desk-based assessment

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: FRD 04/49

Area of site: 0.48ha

Summary of results: The proposal site lies within an archaeologically rich area. It does not cross any known archaeological sites but does traverse areas that may well once have been occupied by field systems in prehistoric or Roman times.

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Report edited/checked by: Joanna Pine ✓ 26.05.04
Steve Preston ✓ 26.05.04
Introduction

This desk-based study is an assessment of the archaeological potential of a parcel of land located adjacent to Faringdon Down Road, Lambourn, West Berkshire (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr Arthur Hedges of Arthur J Hedges Planning, 43 Bartholomew Street, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5QA on behalf of B. W. Hills (Southbank) Limited, and comprises the first stage of a process to determine the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains which may be affected by development of the new gallop.

Site description, location and geology

The development site is a long strip of land between NGR, SU 3298 8216 and 3344 8323. The underlying geology is clay with flints but with middle chalk possible on the lower areas of the proposal area (BGS 1971). It rises from the southern end from approximately 170m above Ordnance Datum to 200m.

A site visit on 17th May 2004 revealed that the proposal site currently lies in an existing (grass) gallop. Apart from a slight depression in the vicinity of the northern end of the proposal, which corresponds with one shown on the Ordnance Survey Second Edition (see below), no other earthworks were visible.

Planning background and development proposals

Planning permission is to be sought for the construction of a new all-weather gallop. The gallop will be 4m wide and will require excavation to a depth of approximately 0.35m with a central drain trench dug to 0.75m. The gallop will be 1.2km long.

Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16 1990) provides guidance relating to archaeology within the planning process. It points out that where a desk-based assessment has shown that there is a strong possibility of significant archaeological deposits in a development area it is reasonable to provide more detailed information from a field evaluation so that an appropriate strategy to mitigate the effects of development on archaeology can be devised:

Paragraph 21 states:
‘Where early discussions with local planning authorities or the developer’s own research indicate that important archaeological remains may exist, it is reasonable for the planning authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out...’

Should the presence of archaeological deposits be confirmed further guidance is provided. *Archaeology and Planning* stresses preservation *in situ* of archaeological deposits as a first consideration as in paragraphs 8 and 18.

Paragraph 8 states:

‘...Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation...’

Paragraph 18 states:

‘The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled...’

However, for archaeological deposits that are not of such significance it is appropriate for them to be ‘preserved by record’ (i.e., fully excavated and recorded by a competent archaeological contractor) prior to their destruction or damage.

Paragraph 25 states:

‘Where planning authorities decide that the physical preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains is not justified in the circumstances of the development and that development resulting in the destruction of the archaeological remains should proceed, it would be entirely reasonable for the planning authority to satisfy itself ... that the developer has made appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of remains.’

Further guidance is provided by the West Berkshire Local Plan 1991–2006

Policy EN6 states:

‘Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM’s) and the most important non-scheduled remains, together with their settings, are to be protected and managed to ensure that they are not damaged and destroyed. Where preservation is not possible appropriate arrangements need to be made for excavation and recording to take place prior to development.’

Policy ENV39 states:

‘The District Council in considering proposals for development affecting or likely to affect sites, areas or monuments of archaeological importance and areas of archaeological potential, will require appropriate evaluation prior to the determination of planning applications. In the absence of an appropriate level of information on the nature, extent and importance of archaeological deposits applications will be deferred or refused until such information, enabling the full implications of the development to be considered, is available.’

Policy ENV40 states:

‘Developments affecting sites of archaeological significance should be designed to achieve the physical preservation *in situ* of archaeological deposits. Where this is not practicable or desirable,
the District Council will require provision to be made for an appropriate level of archaeological investigation prior to damage or destruction. This will be ensured, where necessary, by planning conditions and may be subject to a ‘planning obligation’ to ensure that access, time and resources are made available for the archaeological investigation to be carried out before the development is commenced.’

Methodology

The assessment of the site was carried out by the examination of pre-existing information from a number of sources recommended by the Institute of Field Archaeologists paper ‘Standards in British Archaeology’ covering desk-based studies. These sources include historic and modern maps, the West Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record, geological maps and any relevant publications or reports.

Archaeological background

General background

The site lies within an area of considerable archaeological interest. This interest mostly derives from its proximity to the large Bronze Age round barrow cemetery of Lambourn Seven Barrows which comprises a tight cluster of mounds at its centre with several outlying mounds and levelled mounds (ring ditches). Over forty certain and possible barrows are known. The cemetery is set on the floor of a dry valley, presumably with the intention of being seen from the immediately surrounding hills and ridges, but not beyond. One earlier prehistoric occupation site overlooking the cemetery at Post Down Farm has been examined, and other occupation (a flint scatter) is recorded on the eastern margins of the complex (Gaffney and Tingle 1989).

Extensive surface survey of the areas surrounding the barrows cemetery has shown that the environs were extensively settled in later Neolithic and Bronze Age times (flint scatters) and in Roman times (Gaffney and Tingle 1989). Areas surrounding the cemetery are also notable for evidence of Roman, with some prehistoric field systems. Aerial photography with some trial trenching has recorded an extensive Roman landscape sometimes continuously covering several square kilometres of downland (Bowden et al. 1993), yet the immediate vicinity of the barrow cemetery is devoid of traces of field systems, suggesting that this area was respected and/or used for grazing.

West Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record

A search was made on the West Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for a transect 200m either side of the proposal route. The SMR contains fifteen entries for the area specified. These are summarized in
Appendix 1 and their locations plotted on Figure 1, along with one further published findspot not located in the SMR search.

Prehistoric

The majority of the entries relate to the round barrows forming the cemetery complex, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 12071) [Fig. 1: 1–8]. The barrows have been subject to a number of antiquarian and some archaeological investigations. The earlier work has been summarized (Case 1956) and a more recent excavation is published in Richards 1991. The cemetery may have been sited relative to an early Neolithic long barrow which is located at the western extreme of the cemetery beyond the detailed study area (just visible in Fig. 1). The various investigations have revealed a wide range of burial deposits with cremation and inhumation burials recorded with a range of Early Bronze Age pottery styles represented (Beaker, Collared Urn, etc). A large number of urned middle Bronze Age cremation burials are also recorded.

The ridges and dry valleys which form the dip slope of the Berkshire Downs appear to have been defined by boundary ditches in the late Bronze Age (Ford 1982). One such ditch on Eastmanton Down is located towards the north of the study area, although it is undated [10].

Fieldwalking as part of the Maddle Farm Project (Gaffney and Tingle 1989) has examined large areas of the west Berkshire Downs, and a considerable quantity of struck flint has been recovered along with smaller quantities of prehistoric pottery. This material mostly represents later Neolithic and Bronze Age occupation and land use. Two areas were fieldwalked within the detailed study area [12–14 and 16]. Both areas produced moderate quantities of struck flint, with some prehistoric pottery from one area [12]. In addition, a considerable quantity of burnt flint was recorded for one area which, possibly, may represent the presence of prehistoric monuments such as burnt mounds, but may also represent scrub or woodland clearance [14].

A number of field systems have been recorded from the air for the detailed study area and beyond [9, 11]. Where investigations have taken place, this fieldwork has indicated that these field systems are largely of Roman date, though prehistoric fields can be present, in part. The date(s) of the field systems recorded within the study are unknown.

Roman

There are no definite Roman finds or deposits within the detailed study area though the field systems visible from the air are as likely to be of Roman date as any other [9, 11].
Saxon

The antiquarian excavations of the Lambourn Seven Barrows discovered many secondary inhumation burials of Saxon date, and a penannular brooch is a notable find from these [Fig. 1: 1]. Unfortunately, the details of these findings are not clear.

Negative evidence

A watching brief at Postdown Farm [Fig. 1: 15] revealed nothing of archaeological interest (Saunders 1997).

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments on or immediately adjacent to the site. The site overlooks the valley in which the Lambourn Seven Barrows group of monuments lie but as the gallop will be set into the ground, this development will not affect the setting of the monuments nor the character of their landscape.

Cartographic sources

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted at Berkshire Record Office in order to ascertain what activity had been taking place throughout the site’s later history and whether this may have affected any possible archaeological deposits within the proposal area (see Appendix 2). Early maps were also consulted (e.g. Saxton) but show too little detail to be of any use in this study.

The earliest map showing any detail for the environs of the site was an enclosure map of Lambourn in 1804. However, the proposal site lay beyond the enclosed area and no topographic information is shown. The Tithe Map of 1846 showed detail of the site environs with the Faringdon Road, the road and track past and through Seven Barrows, woodland at the Old Warren and woodland to the east of Seven Barrows all shown. Other field boundaries present on the modern maps are shown. The proposal site lies within a large piece of unenclosed downland (Fig. 4).

The next maps by the Ordnance Survey in 1883 and in 1900 show few changes from the tithe map and are very similar to the present day maps (Figs. 5 and 6). No features of archaeological interest are shown on the site; an ‘old chalk pit’ on the Second Edition is perhaps the hollow shown on modern maps.

Listed buildings

There are no listed buildings on or near the site.
Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields

There are no registered parks, gardens or battlefields on or near the site.

Aerial Photographs

This area of West Berkshire, proximal to Lambourn Seven Barrows has been extensively photographed from the air and several authorities have produced published surveys of this information (Bradley and Richards 1978; Richards 1978; Bowden et al. 1993). More recently, English Heritage has analysed all known aerial photographs for this region and the resultant plots are shown on Figure 3. The proposal site does not traverse any of these known cropmarks.

Discussion

In considering the archaeological potential of the study area, various factors must be taken into account, including previously recorded archaeological sites, previous land-use and disturbance and future land-use including the proposed development.

The proposal site lies within an archaeologically rich area but does not cross any known archaeological sites. Several Scheduled Ancient Monuments are present nearby but are, in fact, over 200m distant from the route of the proposed gallop. A hollow at the northern end of the proposed gallop is possibly of archaeological interest but is more likely to be of relatively recent date. A number of traces of now levelled prehistoric or Roman field systems are present in the area and it is possible that the proposed gallop will traverse areas formerly occupied by field systems. The levelling of the field systems, by later ploughing or otherwise, usually destroys the stratigraphy of the field boundaries (known as lynchets) as the important stratigraphy is contained within the soil build-up forming the positive lynchet. Unless these boundaries are defined by ditches (rarely), or are preserved for other reasons, the remaining traces show only as hard and soft patches in the underlying chalk (Bowden et al. 1983).

In this case it is recommended that a watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks associated with the new gallops. This would need to be carried out by a competent archaeological contractor and would need to conform to a scheme approved by the archaeological officer of West Berkshire Council. It would involve the monitoring of groundwork activities such as topsoil/overburden removal and any trenches dug for services as necessary.
References
Saunders M, J, 1997, ‘Postdown Farm, Seven Barrows, Lambourn, an archaeological watching brief’, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report, 97/32, Reading
### APPENDIX 1: Sites and Monuments Records within a 400m wide search corridor of the development site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>SMR Ref</th>
<th>Grid Ref (SU)</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15788</td>
<td>328 828</td>
<td>Round Barrow Cemetery</td>
<td>Early/Middle Bronze Age; Saxon</td>
<td>Core of large barrow cemetery, Scheduled Ancient Monument 12071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1699</td>
<td>3301 8261</td>
<td>Round Barrow</td>
<td>Early Bronze Age</td>
<td>Richards 1986-90, Lambourn 19. Scheduled Ancient Monument 12236</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1706</td>
<td>3279 8232</td>
<td>Round Barrow?</td>
<td>Bronze Age?</td>
<td>Possible barrow. Lambourn 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>327 822</td>
<td>Round Barrow?</td>
<td>Bronze Age?</td>
<td>Possible barrow. Lambourn 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1716</td>
<td>336 835</td>
<td>Ring ditch</td>
<td>Bronze Age?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1717</td>
<td>3309 8321</td>
<td>Round Barrow</td>
<td>Bronze Age?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1721</td>
<td>333 830</td>
<td>Field system</td>
<td>Roman or prehistoric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1722-3</td>
<td>333 835</td>
<td>Linear ditch</td>
<td>Late Bronze Age?</td>
<td>Ford 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3094</td>
<td>342 830</td>
<td>Field system</td>
<td>Roman or prehistoric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7192</td>
<td>338 827</td>
<td>Sherds</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
<td>Gaffney and Tingle 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>7193</td>
<td>338 827</td>
<td>Scraper and struck flint scatter</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
<td>Gaffney and Tingle 1989</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>327 823</td>
<td>Watching brief</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Negative evidence; Saunders 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>330 826</td>
<td>Flint scatter</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
<td>Gaffney and Tingle 1989, fig 5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 2: Historic and modern maps consulted

1574    Christopher Saxton, Berkshire
1801    Lambourn Enclosure map
1846    Lambourn Tithe map (Fig. 4)
1883    Ordnance Survey First Edition XIX SE (Fig. 5)
1900    Ordnance Survey Second Edition XIX SE (Fig. 6)
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Figure 1. Location of site within Lambourn and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.
Figure 3. Plot of Aerial Photographs for the environs of the site.
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Figure 4. Lambourn Tithe Map 1846.
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Figure 5. Ordnance Survey First Edition 1883.

Site (approx)
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Figure 6. Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1900.