1 Welley Road,
Wraysbury, Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

for Nicholas Halton Practice

by Jo Pine
Thames Valley Archaeological
Services

Site Code WRW98/62

April 1999
Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 1, Welley Road, Wraysbury, Berkshire (TQ 000741) (Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Nicholas Halton, Nicholas Halton Practice, The Bell House, School Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9LW.

Planning permission has been granted (application no. 96/74667) by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of two houses and associated carparking and access roads. As groundworks involve topsoil stripping, the excavation of foundation trenches and trenches for service runs, a watching brief was required as a condition on the granting of planning permission. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s Policy and Planning Guidance Note, Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16, 1990), and the Royal Borough’s policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr R Bourn of Babtie, archaeological advisors to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. An alteration to the proposals led to only one house plot being developed at the time of writing and this report only deals with the structure. The field work was undertaken by Jo Pine between the 18th and 28th of August 1998 and the site code is WRW 98/62.

Location, Topography and Geology

The site lies to the east of the River Thames and is bounded by Welley Road to the east and Ouseley Road to the south (Fig 2). It lies at a height of approximately 17 m above Ordnance Datum on undulating river terrace gravels (BGS 1981).
Archaeological Background

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. It is situated 200 m to the south of the former Waylands Nursery, where earlier excavations revealed evidence for Bronze Age, Roman and Saxon occupation (Pine 1998). Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age, late Saxon and Medieval settlement features were also previously uncovered close to St. Andrew’s Church (Astill and Lobb 1989). In addition, one of three skeletons found at Wraysbury County Combined School, to the north-east of the site, was associated with a scaramasax knife, indicating a Saxon date (SMR no. 36.05). Neolithic and Bronze Age pits were recorded at Manor farm, to the east of the site (SMR no. 43) and Bronze Age swords and part of a human skeleton were found during gravel extraction in the Halls Aggregates pit in 1979 (SMR no. 43).

Objectives and Methodology

The objectives of the watching brief were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the construction work within the development area. This involved examination of the foundation trenches excavated for the houses and observation of service runs and stripping of overburden (Fig 2).

Results

Initial observation and recording was carried out on digging of the foundation trenches of Plot 1. These were approximately 1.00 m wide, 1.20 m deep and between 0.50 and 0.60 m wide. The stratigraphy typically comprised 0.37 m of dark humic silty sandy topsoil above 0.40 m of light grey-brown silty subsoil over 0.27 m of orange-brown sand onto natural gravels. No archaeological features or deposits were observed. A large foundation trench in the central eastern part of Plot 1 was also monitored. This was 1.80 m deep and an archaeological feature (1) was observed in the western section. This was not visible in the eastern section and is either a pit or possibly the terminal of a ditch. It was 0.76 m wide, 0.48 m deep and cut from below the subsoil (Fig 3). A small amount of charcoal was present and a struck flint flake was recovered from the subsoil. The excavation of a basement area was also observed but no archaeological features were present.

Monitoring also took place during stripping of topsoil, initially in the south-west part of the site and subsequently in the remainder. The depth of topsoil removed was typically 0.30 m. The remaining foundation trenches were observed and the stratigraphy consisted of up to 0.50 m of subsoil onto 0.03 m
of sand, over 0.25 m of dark greyish brown gravel onto 0.35 m of fine yellowish orange sand. No further archaeological features or deposits were present and no finds were recovered from the spoil.

The Finds

_Flint_ by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recovered from the subsoil in Plot 1. This was an undiagnostic scraper which could only be broadly assigned to the Prehistoric period.

Conclusions

Only one archaeological feature was located on the proposal area and this was either a pit or the terminal of a ditch. It is possible that this may be of Prehistoric date, although no clearcut dating evidence was recovered to confirm this, as the struck flint may be a residual find. In view of the size of the development it is difficult to place this feature into any significant context other than to determine that it indicates archaeological activity in the general area.

References


BGS, 1981, _British Geological Survey_, 1:50 000, Sheet 269, Keyworth

Pine, J, 1998, The excavation of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age features, a late Roman enclosure and early Saxon features at Waylands Nursery, Welley Road, Wraysbury, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report 97/10, Reading

PPG 16, 1990, _Archaeology and Planning_, Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, HMSO
Figure 1. Location of site within Wraysbury and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder SU87/97 and 1174 TQ07/17 1:25000
Ordnance Survey Licence AL52324A0001
Figure 2. Location of Watching Brief areas.
Figure 3. Section 1.