

## Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS:  
STAGE 2: PRELIMINARY TARGETED FIELD EVALUATION  
LAND TO THE REAR OF HANBURY'S, BERKHAMSTED  
LOCAL ALLOCATION 4**

NGR: SP 9820 0684

*on behalf of Dacorum Borough Council*



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August 2013

ASC: 1605/DHI/LA4/2r




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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	DHI	<i>ASC project no:</i>	1605
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	155723	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	tba
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Berkhamsted		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Berkhamsted		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 9820 0684		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.1.9ha		
<i>Present use:</i>	Garden/meadow		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Housing development		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Dacorum Borough Council		
<i>Planning application ref:</i>	Pre-planning		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	2 July 2013		
<i>Client:</i>	Dacorum Borough Council Civic Centre Marlowes Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP1 1HH		
<i>Contact name:</i>	John Chapman (Dacorum)		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	David Fell	<i>Date:</i>	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2013
<i>Revisions:</i>	David Fell	<i>Date:</i>	13 <sup>th</sup> August 2013
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## CONTENTS

Summary.....	4
1. Introduction .....	4
2. Aims & Methods .....	7
3. Archaeological & Historical Background .....	8
4. Results. ....	9
5. Conclusions .....	10
6. Acknowledgements .....	11
7. Archive .....	11
8. References .....	12

### Appendices:

1. Trench Summary Tables.....	13
2. List of Photographs.....	15
3. ASC OASIS Form .....	16

### Figures:

1. General location .....	3
2. Site plan .....	6

### Plates:

*Cover: General view of the evaluation*





Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*In July 2013 a preliminary targeted field evaluation was undertaken of land to the rear of 'Hanburys', Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire (LA4). Three trial trenches were excavated in order to test a number of magnetic anomalies identified during a geophysical survey. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were observed and no features which could be related to the geophysical anomalies were present. The natural soil sequence across the site was recorded and undisturbed natural stratum was defined in each trench.*

### 1. Introduction

1.1 In July 2013 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) undertook an archaeological evaluation of land to the rear of Hanburys, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by *Dacorum Borough Council*, and was carried out according to a method statement prepared by ASC (Zeepvat 2013) following compilation of an initial desk-based assessment (Hunn 2013) and geophysical survey (Stratascan 2013), and approved by *Herts CC Historic Environment Unit* (HEU), archaeological advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), *Dacorum Borough Council*.

#### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was required under the terms of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), in order to inform proposals for the development of the site.

#### 1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

ASC is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

#### 1.4 *The Site*

##### 1.4.1 *Location & Description*

The assessment site (Local Allocation LA4) is located at the southern margin of Berkhamsted, in the administrative district of Dacorum, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It comprises an irregular parcel of land of c.1.9 ha, lying between Shootersway to the north and the A41 dual carriageway to the south. The site is bounded by the grounds of the National Film Archives to the east, Shootersway Playing Field to the west, Shootersway to the north and an arable field to the south. The boundaries comprise a mix of unmanaged hedges, wooden fences and formal hedges. An electricity sub-station abuts the western edge of the site, enclosed by a wire security fence.

##### 1.4.2 *Geology*

The site is level and lies at an elevation of c.150m AOD, on a relatively flat area of high ground comprising part of the Chiltern plateau. A short distance from the boundaries of the site the land gently dips in different directions to

descend to a number of adjoining valleys, the best developed of which is the Bulbourne, c.1.3km to the north.

Soils on the assessment site are classified as belonging to the Batcombe Series, described as a 'gleyed brown earth' comprising a 'flinty silt loam or loam, locally clay loam' (Soil Survey 1983, 582a). The soils are derived from drift geology comprising a 'yellow-brown, friable and normally flinty, passing to stiff yellow-red mottled clay' (Avery 1964, map sheet 238). The drift geology overlies Cretaceous Upper Chalk (BGS, Sheet 238).

#### 1.4.3 *Proposed Development*

The site is identified by the local planning authority as suitable for housing development comprising construction of approximately 60 new homes, associated infrastructure and services.



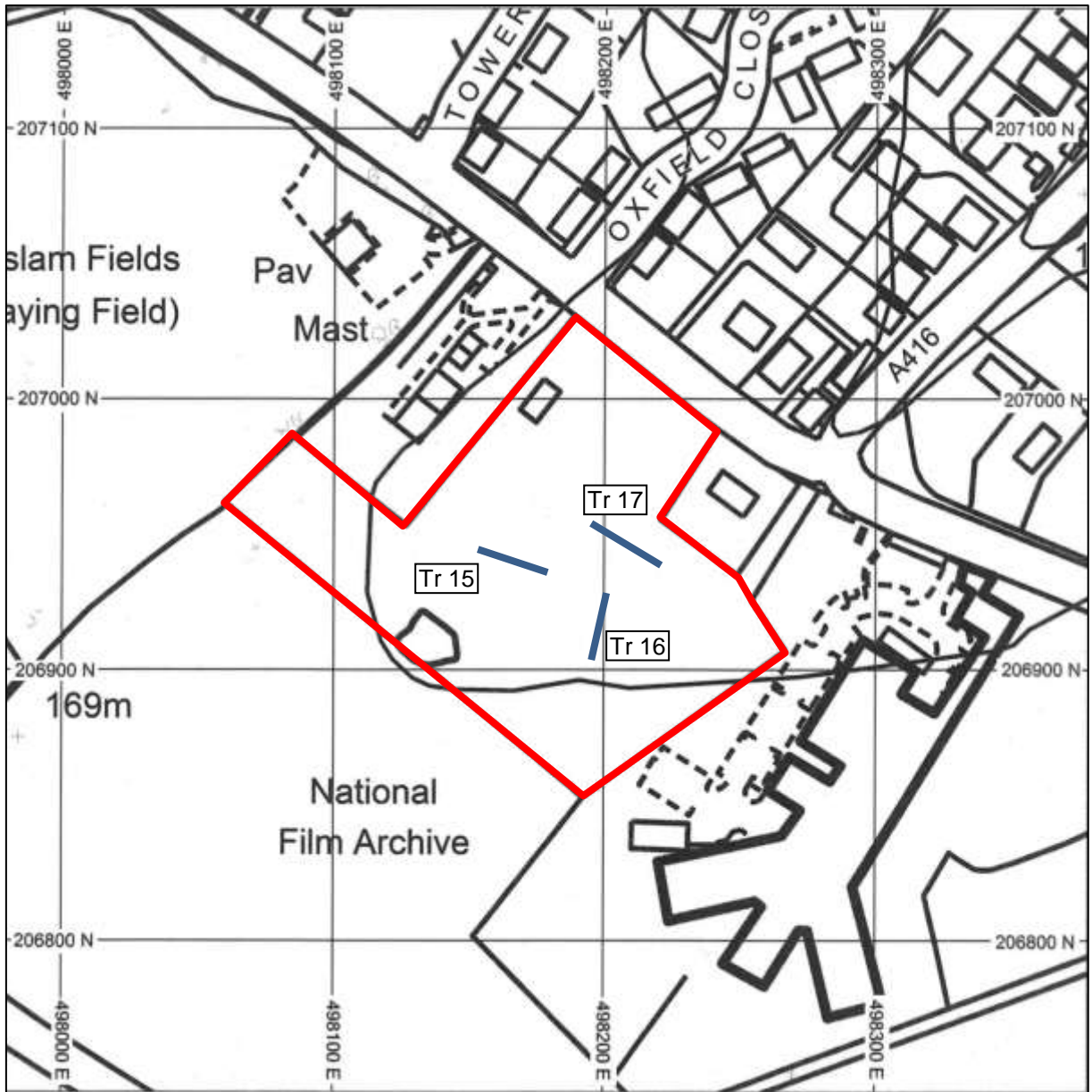


Figure 2: Site plan with trench locations (Scale 1:2500)

## **2. Aims & Methods**

### **2.1 Aims**

As described in the project design, the aims of the evaluation were:

- To test the results of the geophysical survey
- To provide a baseline assessment of the type, date, quality and extent of heritage assets present on each site.

### **2.2 Standards**

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2010) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2009), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

### **2.3 Methods**

The work was carried out according to the project design, which proposed:

- the excavation of trial trenches comprising a maximum 0.5% sample primarily to test geophysical anomalies, and also areas free from anomalies.

### **2.4 Constraints**

No constraints were encountered and the fieldwork was undertaken as specified in the written scheme of investigation.



### **3. Archaeological & Historical Background**

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and the focus of interest was considered to lie in the prehistoric periods.

This section has been compiled with information from the initial desk-based assessment (Hunn 2013). HER = Historic Environment Record number.

3.2 Archaeological remains are not currently known within the site, but a number are known within the surrounding area. The nature and extent of prehistoric activity on the higher ground above the valley of the Bulbourne is not understood in detail, but two prehistoric ring ditches. (ploughed-out burial mounds) have been identified to the south-west of the site (HER 17602).

3.3 Berkhamsted was of importance during the Roman and medieval periods but the site lies to the southwest of the areas of Roman and medieval occupation. Berkhamsted High Street follows the line of a major Roman road now known as *Akeman Street* and the medieval town probably developed around the church of St Peter and the castle, which are to the north of the site, in the river valley. The higher land above the valley remained largely unoccupied until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century when Shootersway and the surrounding area was developed for housing. Ordnance Survey maps from the 19<sup>th</sup> century depict the site as open ground and it is likely that the land has never been developed.

## **4 Results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This section provides a summary of the results of the evaluation in Local Allocation Area LA4. Trenches are labelled in sequence with other areas in the Local Assessments evaluation project and the trenches forming the subject of this report are numbered 15-17. The trenches were located in order to test anomalies detected during the geophysical survey while also providing as wide a sample as possible of the site. Full descriptions, in tabulated form, are provided in Appendix 1.

4.2 Three trenches were excavated (Fig. 2) using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless bucket operating under continuous archaeological supervision. The turf and topsoil were separated and each trench was cleaned sufficiently to determine if archaeological remains were present. Basic trench information was recorded on pro-forma sheets and a photographic record was made. The spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector.

### **4.3 Results**

The trenches were all *c.*300mm deep. The upper part of the profile comprised turf and mid greyish brown silty clay soil, which was *c.*200mm thick. No clear division between topsoil and subsoil was visible.

The underlying natural strata was reached at a depth of *c.*200mm. It exhibited little variability across the site and comprised orangy brown silty clay with small stones.

No significant archaeological features or artefacts were present in the trenches. No modern service runs were present and, within the areas of the trenches, the soils and underlying strata are undisturbed.

### **4.4 Confidence Rating**

The fieldwork was undertaken in dry and overcast weather. No significant constraints were encountered and a high confidence rating is attached to the results of the fieldwork.

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The natural soil sequence was similar across the site and comprised turf over c.200mm of greyish brown sandy clay. The underlying strata comprised lighter brown sandy clay with a higher proportion of stones.
- 5.2 The trenches were positioned in order to test a number of magnetic anomalies revealed in the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2013). No archaeological features were present in the trenches and the geophysical anomalies do not correspond with archaeological features or specific soil variations within the trenches.
- 5.3 Significant archaeological features were not observed during the fieldwork. This evaluation comprised only a sub 0.5% sample of the site and in line with the NPPF a further, more intensive phase of evaluation may be required, prior to the commencement of development.
- 5.4 The framework for the management of heritage issues in the planning system is currently set out in the Town & Country Planning Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Decisions relating to archaeological matters within the area of the site are taken by the local planning authority, acting on the advice of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCC).
- 5.5 The Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan 1991-2011 (adopted 2004) contains the following heritage related policy:
  - **Archaeology: Policy 118:** Important Archaeological Remains. This policy provides general policy guidance on archaeology and also lists the Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Significance within the borough. Policy 118 is relevant because it refers to the settings of the defined sites, as well as the sites themselves.

The Dacorum Core Strategy will be the principal document in the Council's Local Planning Framework. A public examination into the draft Core Strategy has taken place, the inspectors report has been received and the Council hopes to adopt the plan in September 2013.

The following Core Strategy policy is relevant.

- **Policy CS27:** Quality of the Historic Environment. This policy states that: 'Features of known or potential archaeological interest will be surveyed, recorded and wherever possible retained'.

## 6. Acknowledgements

The assessment was commissioned by John Chapman on behalf of Dacorum Borough Council. Thanks are due to the landowner Mr Douglas Brightman for his assistance and interest in the project. Inputs and assistance from Kate Batt, HEU Archaeological Officer, and Isobel Thompson, HEU Historic Environment Officer are gratefully acknowledged. The assistance of the staff of HALS and the English Heritage Archive is also gratefully acknowledged.

The project was managed for ASC by Bob Zeepvat BA MIfA. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Hunn BA PhD FSA MIfA and David Fell BA MA MIfA. The report was prepared by David Fell and edited by Bob Zeepvat.

## 7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the *Dacorum Heritage Trust*.

## 8. References

### *Standards & Specifications*


- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA (various dates) Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance* documents (*Desk-Based Assessments 2011, Watching Briefs 2008, Evaluations 2009, Excavations 2008, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings 2008, Finds 2009*).
- Zeepvat R J, 2013 *Dacorum Local Allocations Development Plan: Project Design for Stage 2: Targeted Field Evaluation*. Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd document no. **1605/DHI/3**


### *Secondary Sources*


- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Hunn J R, 2013 *Archaeological Assessment. Stage 1: Desk-Based Assessment*. Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd report no. **1605/DHI/LA4**
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Stratascan 2013 *Dacorum Local Allocations. Magnetometer Surveys*. Stratascan



## Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 15						
	<b>Max Dimensions (m)</b>					
	<b>Length</b>	20m	<b>Width</b>	1.6m	<b>Depth</b>	0.3m
	<b>Levels</b>					
	<b>Trench top NW</b>			c.165.00m OD		
	<b>Trench base NW</b>			c.164.70m OD		
	<b>Trench top SE</b>			c.165.00m OD		
	<b>Trench base SE</b>			c.164.70m OD		
	<b>NGR Co-ordinates</b>					
	<b>NW</b>	SP 98150 06938		<b>SE</b>	SP 98175 06930	
	<b>Orientation</b>			Northwest to southeast		
<b>Reason for Trench</b>			Testing anomaly on geophysical survey			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description and Interpretation</b>		<b>Width (max: mm)</b>	<b>Thickness (max: mm)</b>	<b>Depth (BGL: mm)</b>
151	Layer	Turf over mid greyish brown silty clay. Topsoil & subsoil		1.6m+	200	-
150	Layer	Orangy brown silty clay. Moderate small stones. Natural stratum		1.6m+	100+	200

Trench 16						
	<b>Max Dimensions (m)</b>					
	<b>Length</b>	20m	<b>Width</b>	1.6m	<b>Depth</b>	0.3m
	<b>Levels</b>					
	<b>Trench top N</b>			c.165.00m OD		
	<b>Trench base N</b>			c.164.70m OD		
	<b>Trench top N</b>			c.165.00m OD		
	<b>Trench base N</b>			c.164.70m OD		
	<b>NGR Co-ordinates</b>					
	<b>N</b>	SP 98200 06926		<b>S</b>	98194 06904	
	<b>Orientation</b>			North to south		
<b>Reason for Trench</b>			Testing anomaly on geophysical survey			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description and Interpretation</b>		<b>Width (max: mm)</b>	<b>Thickness (max: mm)</b>	<b>Depth (BGL: mm)</b>
161	Layer	Turf over mid greyish brown silty clay. Topsoil & subsoil		1.6m+	200	-
160	Layer	Orangy brown silty clay. Moderate small stones. Natural stratum		1.6m+	100+	200

<b>Trench 17</b>											
						<b>Max Dimensions (m)</b>					
						<b>Length</b>	20m	<b>Width</b>	1.6m	<b>Depth</b>	0.3m
						<b>Levels</b>					
						<b>Trench top NW</b>			c.165.00m OD		
						<b>Trench base NW</b>			c.164.70m OD		
						<b>Trench top SE</b>			c.165.00m OD		
						<b>Trench base SE</b>			c.164.70m OD		
						<b>NGR Co-ordinates</b>					
						<b>NW</b>	SP 98194 06948		<b>SE</b>	SP 98226 06934	
						<b>Orientation</b>			Northwest to southeast		
<b>Reason for Trench</b>			Testing anomaly on geophysical survey								
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description and Interpretation</b>	<b>Width (max: mm)</b>	<b>Thickness (max: mm)</b>	<b>Depth (BGL: mm)</b>						
171	Layer	Turf over mid greyish brown silty clay. Topsoil & subsoil	1.6m+	200	-						
170	Layer	Orangy brown silty clay. Moderate small stones. Natural stratum	1.6m+	100+	200						

## Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME:land to the rear of Hanburys, Berkhamsted			SITE NO/CODE: 1605/DHI/LA4
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		✓	General view of the site looking south
2	✓	✓	Trench 17 looking southeast
3		✓	General view of the site looking west
4		✓	General view of the site looking south
5		✓	General view of the site looking southwest
6	✓	✓	Trench 16 looking south
7		✓	Trench 16 looking south
8		✓	General view of the site looking southwest
9		✓	General view of the site looking southwest
10		✓	General view of the site looking north
11		✓	General view of the site looking northeast
12		✓	General view of the excavation in progress looking northwest
13	✓	✓	Trench 15 looking northwest
14		✓	Trench 15 looking northwest

## Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Dacorum Local Allocations LA4	OASIS reference:	155723
Short Description:	In July 2013 a preliminary targeted field evaluation was undertaken of land to the rear of 'Hanburys', Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire (LA4). Three trial trenches were excavated in order to test a number of magnetic anomalies identified during a geophysical survey. No significant archaeological features or artefacts were observed and no features which could be related to the geophysical anomalies were present. The natural soil sequence across the site was recorded and undisturbed natural stratum was defined in each trench.		
Project Type:	Evaluation		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	None
Current land use:	Garden/meadow	Future work: (yes/no/unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	None	Monument period:	None
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 9820 0684
Site address: (+ postcode if known)	Land to the rear of Hanbury's, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 3NE		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	1.9ha	Height OD: (metres)	
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Herts C C	Project design originator:	ASC Ltd
Project Manager:	David Fell	Director/Supervisor:	J R Hunn
Sponsor / funding body:	Dacorum Borough Council		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2013	End date:	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2013
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:		Photographs	
Paper:		Site records	
Digital:		CD with all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Archaeological Assessments: Stage 2: Preliminary Targeted Field Evaluation, land to the rear of Hanbury's, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire (Local Allocation 4)		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1605/DHI/LA4/2		
Author(s):	David Fell BA MA MIFA		
Page nos	16	Date:	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2013