

## Land off Popham Lane North Waltham, Hampshire

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**LAND OFF POPHAM LANE, NORTH WALTHAM,  
HAMPSHIRE, RG25 2BB**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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## QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	72280	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	BDB/67935	NGR	456775 145430		

VERSION	STATUS*	PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	APPROVER'S SIGNATURE	DATE	FILE
1	I	CJE	NDT			DOCUMENT1

\* I= Internal Draft E= External Draft F= Final

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### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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*Front Cover: Machine stripping of east end of Site (view from the north-east)*

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## **LAND OFF POPHAM LANE, NORTH WALTHAM, HAMPSHIRE, RG25 2BB**

### **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

#### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by Redwing Construction Ltd on behalf of Sebastian's Action Trust, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during construction works on land off Popham Lane, near North Waltham, Hampshire. The site comprises an irregular rectangular 0.8ha area of land centred upon NGR 456775 145430, and lies immediately north of the junction of the A30 and A33, approximately 10km south-west of Basingstoke.

The watching brief observations were made between 12<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010, during groundworks associated with the construction of a children's respite care centre.

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recorded during the watching brief. The lack of finds of any period (except for modern services) suggests the site has mainly been used for pasture, although ploughing on the site is possibly indicated in an earlier geophysical survey.

The lack of any features or residual material within the plough soil strongly indicates that the Site is distant from any settlement activity.

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**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**Acknowledgements**

This programme of watching brief work was commissioned by Redwing Construction on behalf of Sebastian's Action Trust, and Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Mark Overy of Redwing in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to acknowledge the assistance and comments of Hannah Fluck (Hampshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor) and Debbie Charlton for making her research on the area available..

The fieldwork was carried out by Chris Ellis and John Martin. This report was compiled by Chris Ellis. The figures were prepared by Kenneth Lymer and the project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Nick Truckle.



## LAND OFF POPHAM LANE, NORTH WALTHAM, HAMPSHIRE, RG25 2BB

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by Redwing Construction on behalf of Sebastian's Action Trust (the Client), to carry out an archaeological watching brief during construction works on land off Popham Lane, near North Waltham, Hampshire (**Figure 1**), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'. The Site comprises an irregular rectangular 0.8ha area of land and is approximately centred upon NGR 456775 145430, immediately north of the junction of the A30 and A33, approximately 10km south-west of Basingstoke.

1.1.2 The work was required in order to satisfy a condition placed on planning consent BDB/67935 granted by Basingstoke and Dean Council for the construction of a respite care centre comprising the erection of two four bedroom, and 1 single bedroom dwellings with associated respite care facilities. The condition was placed on the planning consent following advice from the Hampshire County Council (HCC) Historic Environment Advisor that there was potential for significant archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British period to be present on the Site.

1.1.3 In order to define the extent of any archaeological deposits an initial stage of archaeological investigation consisting of a geophysical survey was undertaken on the Site by Wessex Archaeology in August 2009 (Wessex Archaeology 2009a). The results of the survey suggested that there were a number of anomalies of possible archaeological potential within the Site area and therefore the HCC advisor specified that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during construction works.

1.1.4 This report summarises the results of the watching brief fieldwork. The watching brief followed on from the approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2009b) submitted to the Client and to the Hampshire County Council Archaeological Officer, prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.

##### 1.2 The Site, location and geology

1.2.1 The Site falls within an overall area of 0.8ha (**Figure 1**). The landscape setting of the Site is characterised by small to medium sized arable and pasture fields enclosed by hedgerows, with Popham Lane forming the eastern boundary of the Site and the A30 forming the southern boundary.



- 1.2.2 The topography of the Site consists of gently sloping land at c. 125m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), rising north, south and west to a maximum elevation of 170m aOD. The Site is currently under pasture. The underlying geology is mapped as Upper Chalk (BGS Sheet 284), which locally is overlaid with Clay-with-Flint deposits.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1.1 The Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (HAHBR) records several sites and find spots within a 750m radius of the Site, the majority of which date to the Romano-British period.
- 2.1.2 The Site is located just to the west of the present day A33 which runs along the line of the Roman road from Winchester to Silchester. During the construction of the M3 (which here runs parallel to the A33) in 1969, a settlement site dating from the Romano-British period was excavated approximately 500m to the north east of the Site. The excavations revealed refuse pits, ditches, huts and a well together with artefacts such as animal bone, pottery, quern fragments and a hoard of 106 coins, mostly late 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century in date.
- 2.1.3 Close to the east of the Site is the documented site of a Roman Villa, the location of which was confirmed in 2002 by a programme of fieldwalking, geophysics and aerial photographic interpretation conducted by the North Waltham, Steventon, Ashe and Deane History Society.
- 2.1.4 The HAHBR also records that the foundations of a Roman building were discovered near the Wheatsheaf Inn to the south-east of the Site. Finds included roof tiles, *tesserae*, pottery and coins.

## **2.2 Geophysical Survey**

- 2.2.1 A detailed gradiometer survey undertaken by Wessex Archaeology of the approx 0.8ha area of the Site was successful in detecting a number of anomalies of possible archaeological potential within the study area, along with numerous other anomalies less likely to be anthropogenic in nature. (**Figure 1**)
- 2.2.2 Several amorphous anomalies of possible archaeological significance lie at the southernmost extent of the survey area; it should be noted that these lie outside the proposed development boundary. Other discrete anomalies appear infrequently elsewhere and are of more limited archaeological potential.
- 2.2.3 An amorphous curvilinear anomaly runs west-east across the centre of the survey area and is probably pedological in origin. A region of increased magnetic response nearby is also likely to be geological or pedological in origin.

- 2.2.4 Two extended regions of magnetic disturbance appear towards the north and south of the survey area. The southernmost is most likely to be modern in origin, as it is coincident with an extant utility pole. The individual responses comprising these regions are sufficiently great in magnitude to mask any weaker archaeological anomalies that may be present in the immediate vicinity, however.
- 2.2.5 Elsewhere, linear and curvilinear trends are likely to be associated with former land use. A number may indicate the remnants of ridge and furrow, and others appear to relate to the use of the Site as a paddock or stock enclosure.

### 3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 A project design for the watching brief fieldwork was compiled and approved (Wessex Archaeology 2009b), providing full details of the research aims and methods. The aim of the watching brief was to provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the proposed footprint of the new building.

### 4 METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Watching Brief

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008). A watching brief was maintained on all foundation excavations within the footprint of the proposed development.
- 4.1.2 The watching brief visits were carried out between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010. The archive, ascribed a unique project code (**72280**), was taken to the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury to be indexed and archived.

### 5 RESULTS

#### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section includes all information on the natural deposits encountered. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recorded during the watching brief.

#### 5.2 Natural deposits and soil sequence

- 5.2.1 The *topsoil* (**100**) was characterised by a 0.22m thick deposit of light yellowish-brown fine silt, compacted, dry and friable with common sub-angular/angular flint inclusions (<0.1m). This overlaid a 0.39m thick *subsoil* deposit (**101**) consisting of a strong, pale yellowish-brown slightly clayey silt with moderate flint inclusions (<0.15m, mostly <40mm).
- 5.2.2 The *subsoil* overlaid an 'upper' *Clay-with-Flint* deposit (**102**) which was a 0.48m(+) thick deposit characterised by a strong, dark orange/brown, stiff, silty clay with abundant angular and sub-angular flint inclusions (<0.15m) which were thermally fractured.

5.2.3 The 'lower' *Clay-with-Flint* deposit (**103**) was a very dark orange/brown silty clay with a very good interface with **102** above, and dipped gently down to the east. The deposit had a 'gritty' texture because of the abundant thermally fractured flint inclusions it contained (<0.15m, mostly <40mm).

5.2.4 The only feature recorded was a north-south aligned, modern (4" diameter) ceramic pipe trench which was recorded in the southern corner of the proposed car park area to the immediate east of the proposed care home structure.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1.1 No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recorded during the watching brief. The lack of finds of any period (except for modern services) suggests the Site has mainly been used as pasture, although ploughing has possibly occurred in the past (Wessex Archaeology 2009a). It seems that although there is documented Romano British settlement activity in the vicinity of the Site, no such activity is present within, or close to the development area.

## 7 ARCHIVE

7.1.1 The project archive was prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (UKIC 1990). The archive, including plans, photographs and written records, are currently held at the Wessex Archaeology offices under the project code 72280, the contents of which are listed in **Appendix 1**. It is intended that the archive should ultimately be deposited with Hampshire County Council Museums Service.

## 8 COPYRIGHT

8.1.1 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

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## 9 REFERENCES

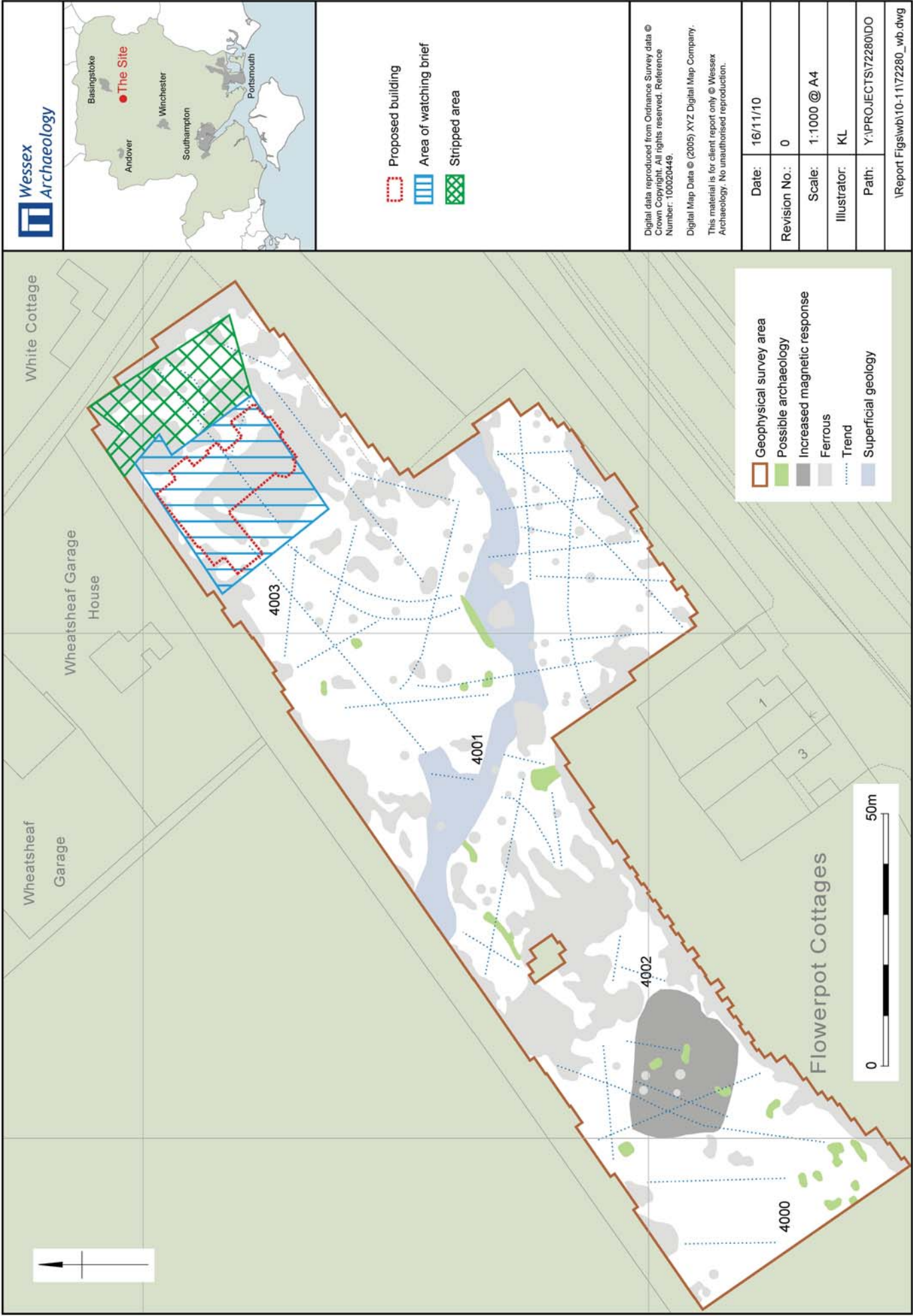
### 9.1 Bibliography

Wessex Archaeology, 2009a, *Land off Popham Lane, North Waltham, Hampshire: Detailed Gradiometer Survey Report*. Unpublished client report Ref: **T13012.01** (August 2009).

Wessex Archaeology, 2009b, *Land off Popham Lane, North Waltham, Hampshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Unpublished client report Ref: **72280.01** (September 2009).

**10 APPENDIX 1 – ARCHIVE INDEX**

<b>File No.</b>	<b>NAR Cat.</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>No. Sheets</b>
1	-	Index to Archive	A4	1
<b>1</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Client Report</b>	<b>A4</b>	<b>10</b>
1	-	Written Scheme of Investigation	A4	17
1	B	Day Book (photocopy)	A4	4
1	B	Test Pit/Trial Trench Records	A4	1
1	D	Photographic Register	A4	1
1	F	Geophysical Survey Report	A4	18
2	-	Digital photographs	-	25
<b>FINDS</b>	<b>None</b>			



Site location and geophysical survey areas

Figure 1






Plate 1: North-east facing section of soil profile (east end of Site)



Plate 2: Machined extent of building area (viewed from the south-west)

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