



Film Theatre and Television Project,  
University of Reading, Whiteknights,  
Reading, Berkshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report





**Film Theatre and Television Project,  
University Of Reading**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report**

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### QUALITY ASSURANCE

SITE CODE	<b>71102</b>	ACCESSION CODE		CLIENT CODE	
PLANNING APPLICATION REF.	<b>REF F/2009/1384</b>	NGR	<b>NGR 473405 171925</b>		

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# Film Theatre and Television Project, University Of Reading

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

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## Film Theatre and Television Project, University Of Reading

### Archaeological Evaluation Report

#### Summary

Wessex Archaeology was appointed by Heery International to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the proposed Film Theatre and Television Project, University of Reading, (NGR 473405 171925) hereafter 'the Site' (**Figure 1**). The evaluation comprised the excavation of four trenches within the proposed development area. The fieldwork was undertaken between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

It was proposed to evaluate a sample of the site in order to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological finds and features and establish the extent of existing impacts on the Site.

The Site was considered to have a moderate potential, following previous excavations on campus at nearby Whiteknights Hall to the north-east, where Early to Middle Iron Age pottery was identified.

Four trenches measuring 15m x 4m (**Trench 1**), 15m x 2m (east to west) 3.7m x 2m (north to south) (**Trench 2**), 25m x 2m (**Trench 3**) and 15m x 2m (**Trench 4**) were excavated as part of this evaluation. **Trench 2** had originally been planned to be 20m x 2m but was moved and altered in shape due to health and safety issues. Further to this three deep excavations were undertaken in **Trenches 1, 3 and 4** through the gravels to ascertain the presence or absence of Palaeolithic flints.

No archaeological features were encountered during the evaluation. One pit containing post-medieval willow pattern ceramics was identified in **Trench 4**. No finds were encountered in any of the deep excavations. All of the trenches were heavily disturbed, with deposits of made ground or in the case of **Trench 4** modern landscaping for a hedgerow. No residual archaeological artefacts were retrieved from the topsoil or subsoil.

## **Film Theatre and Television Project, University Of Reading**

### **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

#### **Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology wishes to thank Heery International for commissioning the work and to Brendan Hines of Mansell for his help and advice during the archaeological works. Thanks are also due to Mary O'Donohue (Planning Archaeologist, Berkshire Archaeology).

The evaluation was undertaken by Jonathan Smith assisted by Kari Bower. This report was written by Jonathan Smith. The graphics were prepared by Liz James. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Mark Williams.

## **Film Theatre and Television Project, University Of Reading**

### **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

##### **1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Heery International (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the site of the Film Theatre and Television Project, University of Reading, centered on National Grid Reference (NGR) 473405 171925 (hereafter the Site).

1.1.2 Planning permission was subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work being carried out on the Site in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that had been approved by the Local Authorities Archaeological Advisor (Berkshire Archaeology was acting as advisor to the relevant Authority).

1.1.3 The evaluation was carried out in respect of development proposals for the Site for which planning permission had been granted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and Wokingham Borough Council (Ref F/2009/1384).

1.1.4 The WSI (WA2009) provided a Project Design for the initial stage of archaeological works comprising the archaeological evaluation. It set out the programme of evaluation work to be carried out and the methods by which it would be achieved, including reporting.

1.1.5 This report has been prepared in accordance with relevant standards and guidance issued by the Institute for Archaeologists, with which Wessex Archaeology is a Registered Organisation.

##### **1.2 Site location, description and topography**

1.2.1 The Site is located within the campus of Reading University, south west of Whiteknights Lake towards the centre of the University campus.

1.2.2 The Site was generally flat at c.66.082-66.963m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with a very gentle slope downwards from south-east to the north-west.

##### **1.3 Geological Background**

1.3.1 The underlying geology is London Clay and Boyn Hill Gravels.

#### **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1.1 The Site is in an area of archaeological potential with archaeological sites of Iron Age and Roman date having been found in the broader vicinity.

2.1.2 Recent work in the University campus had revealed that recent landscaping had removed potential archaeological remains over large parts of the Site but in discrete areas archaeological remains were preserved such as at Whiteknights Hall to the north-east where features dating to the Early-Middle Iron Age were identified.

### 3 AIMS

#### 3.1 Archaeological Evaluation

3.1.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to:

- determine the presence or absence of a former, buried ground surface and archaeological remains beneath the Site, or parts of the Site and, where present, determine the extent, nature, date and importance of the archaeological remains
- establish the extent of existing impacts on the Site.
- provide information that may be used to determine the subsequent treatment of archaeological remains within the Site in light of the existing planning permission for its development

### 4 METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

4.1.2 The work was undertaken during 23<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

4.1.3 The evaluation comprised the excavation of four trenches in predetermined locations (see **Figure 1**). The trench positions were adjusted to avoid numerous services on the Site.

4.1.4 **Trench 1** measured 15m x 4m. A gas main, which could not be removed extended the length of the trench on the northern side. A deep excavation was made in the east end of the trench.

4.1.5 **Trench 2** was altered in shape slightly to be t-shaped, measuring 15m x 2m (east to west) 3.7m x 2m (north to south). A block of modern concrete in the east end of the trench proved too large for the machine to remove.

4.1.6 **Trench 3** measured 25m x 2m with a deep excavation in the west of the trench.

4.1.7 **Trench 4** measured 15m x 2m, also with a deep excavation in the west of the trench.

- 
- 4.1.8 The trial trenches were machine excavated using a tracked 360° excavator employing a toothless bucket, under constant archaeological supervision to the first archaeological horizon or geological deposits, whichever were encountered first.
  - 4.1.9 Deeper excavations were excavated in Trenches 1, 3 and 4 to investigate the potential of cultural material being preserved in the gravels. The arisings from these test pits were examined by an archaeologist competent in recognizing Palaeolithic material.
  - 4.1.10 Archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A comprehensive photographic record was maintained to show all aspects of the work in digital format with significant deposits recorded using black and white images.
  - 4.1.11 All trenches were surveyed using a Leica GX1230 GPS and related to the Ordnance Survey national grid and Datum.
  - 4.1.12 Following the completion of the work and with approval from Berkshire Archaeology, the trenches were backfilled with the excavated spoil or with concrete in the case of the deep excavations, under supervision from Mansell the principal contractor for the Site works.

## 5 RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section provides a descriptive summary of information derived from the evaluation trenches and contained in the archive of written, drawn and photographic records. The archive is held by Wessex Archaeology under project code **71102**.
- 5.1.2 The results of the evaluation trial trenches are summarised below. Tabulated trench summaries, giving brief soil descriptions, dimensions and finds information are provided in **Appendix 1**. A plan showing the location of the trenches is provided on **Figure 1**.

### 5.2 Soil profile

- 5.2.1 Where encountered in **Trenches 2** and **4** the topsoil was a dark greyish brown silty clay with common root disturbance and occasional flint inclusions and the subsoil was a mid brown/grey sand/silt with frequent sub angular and rounded flint inclusions. Any topsoil or subsoil originally present in **Trenches 1** and **3** had been truncated by modern disturbance.

### 5.3 Evaluation trenches

- 5.3.1 **Trench 1** was excavated through the tarmac of an existing car park (**1001**) to a depth of 0.12m below existing ground level (begl). This sealed a leveling layer (**1002**) that extended to 0.18m begl, which in turn overlay concrete (**1003**) reaching a depth of 0.45m begl. This capped a modern construction layer (**1005**) that extended to a depth of 0.77m begl. Beneath this, made ground (**1005**) descended to a depth of 1m begl where it overlay the natural,

a mid red/ brown sand/silt with 20% sub-angular and rounded gravels **(1006)**. No archaeological features were observed although a band of natural clay geology was observed in the West of the trench. A deep excavation through the clay and gravels to a depth of three metres revealed that the clay descended sharply and that the gravels overlay the clay to a depth of approximately 2.60m below existing ground level. Despite an extensive search no lithics were encountered in the extracted gravels.

- 5.3.2 **Trench 2** cut through an area of lawn and dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil with common root disturbance and occasional flint inclusions **(2001)**. This descended to a depth of 0.18m below existing ground level. Beneath this a layer of modern made ground **(2002)** descended to a depth of 0.30m below existing ground surface. The subsoil was a mid brownish grey sandy silt with frequent sub angular and rounded flint inclusions and descended to a depth of 0.70m where a mid yellowish red natural **(2003)** sub angular and rounded flint gravel was encountered. A block of modern concrete at the eastern end of the trench proved too large for the machine to remove and so was left in situ. No archaeological features were recorded within this trench and no artefacts were recovered. No deep excavated section was excavated in the trench.
- 5.3.3 In **Trench 3** a layer of tarmac **(3001)** 0.12m thick overlay a leveling deposit **(3002)** extended to 0.15m. This overlay another leveling deposit **(3003)** that descended to 0.40m below ground level. This overlay a mid brownish grey sandy silt with frequent sub angular and rounded flint inclusions subsoil **(3004)** down to a depth of 0.48m. Beneath this a disturbed natural **(3005)** of mid yellowish brown sandy gravel with frequent amounts of small to medium sized sub rounded flint gravel descended to 0.76m. It overlay natural **(3006)** a mid yellowish brown sandy gravel of sub angular and rounded flint pebbles. The deep excavation to a depth of 4 meters revealed that deposit **(3006)** descended to 1.80m where it overlay a reddish brown clay with 2% subangular and rounded flint pebbles. This overlay a band of sand at 3 meters which overlay a bluish grey clay at 3.20m. Despite an extensive search no lithics were encountered in the extracted gravels. No archaeological features were recorded within this trench and no artefacts were recovered.
- 5.3.4 In **Trench 4** a layer of dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil with common root disturbance and occasional flint inclusions **(4001)** descended to 0.27m. This overlay a mid grey sandy silt subsoil **(4002)** with sub angular and rounded flint gravels and occasional modern Ceramic Building Material fragments. This overlay natural **(4003)** a mid yellowish brown sandy gravel of sub angular and rounded flint pebbles. A modern circular pit **[4004]** with a diameter of 0.71m was filled with a light grey brown sandy silt **(4005)** which was 0.17m in thickness. It cut the natural and was overlain by the subsoil. It contained a fragment of willow pattern pottery at its base. The deep excavation reached a depth of 4m and demonstrated that deposit **(4003)** descended to a depth of 2.80m where it overlay a dark brown clay with grey streaks. Despite an extensive search no lithics were encountered in the extracted gravels. No archaeological features were recorded within this trench and no artefacts were recovered.

## 6 FINDS

- 6.1.1 No artefacts of archaeological value were recovered. The modern finds retrieved to confirm a modern date for features were discarded.

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL

- 7.1.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

## 8 DISCUSSION

- 8.1.1 The evaluation trenches have demonstrated that there is no potential for archaeology on the Site. No securely dated archaeological features or artefacts were encountered and no residual finds were encountered in the topsoil or subsoil. The only anthropogenic finds retrieved were of modern date.
- 8.1.2 Given the depth of modern disturbance it seems unlikely that archaeology survives elsewhere on the site.
- 8.1.3 No cultural material was found in deeper excavated part of the trenches.

## 9 ARCHIVE

### 9.1 Preparation and Deposition

- 9.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990)*. On completion of the project, the archive will be deposited with the County Museum Service or similar repository to be agreed with the Local Authority's Archaeological Advisor

### 9.2 Archive

- 9.2.1 The Evaluation project archive, consists of:
- One A4 file containing the paper records and drawings
  - Digital data (site photographs, survey data, word and pdf files)
- 9.2.2 The project archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury under the site code **71102**.

### 9.3 Copyright

- 9.3.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be

non-profit making, and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

#### **9.4 Security Copy**

- 9.4.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record Centre (Swindon); a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records at the Museum, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

### **10 REFERENCES**

Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2008).

**APPENDIX 1 - Table of Trench Descriptions**

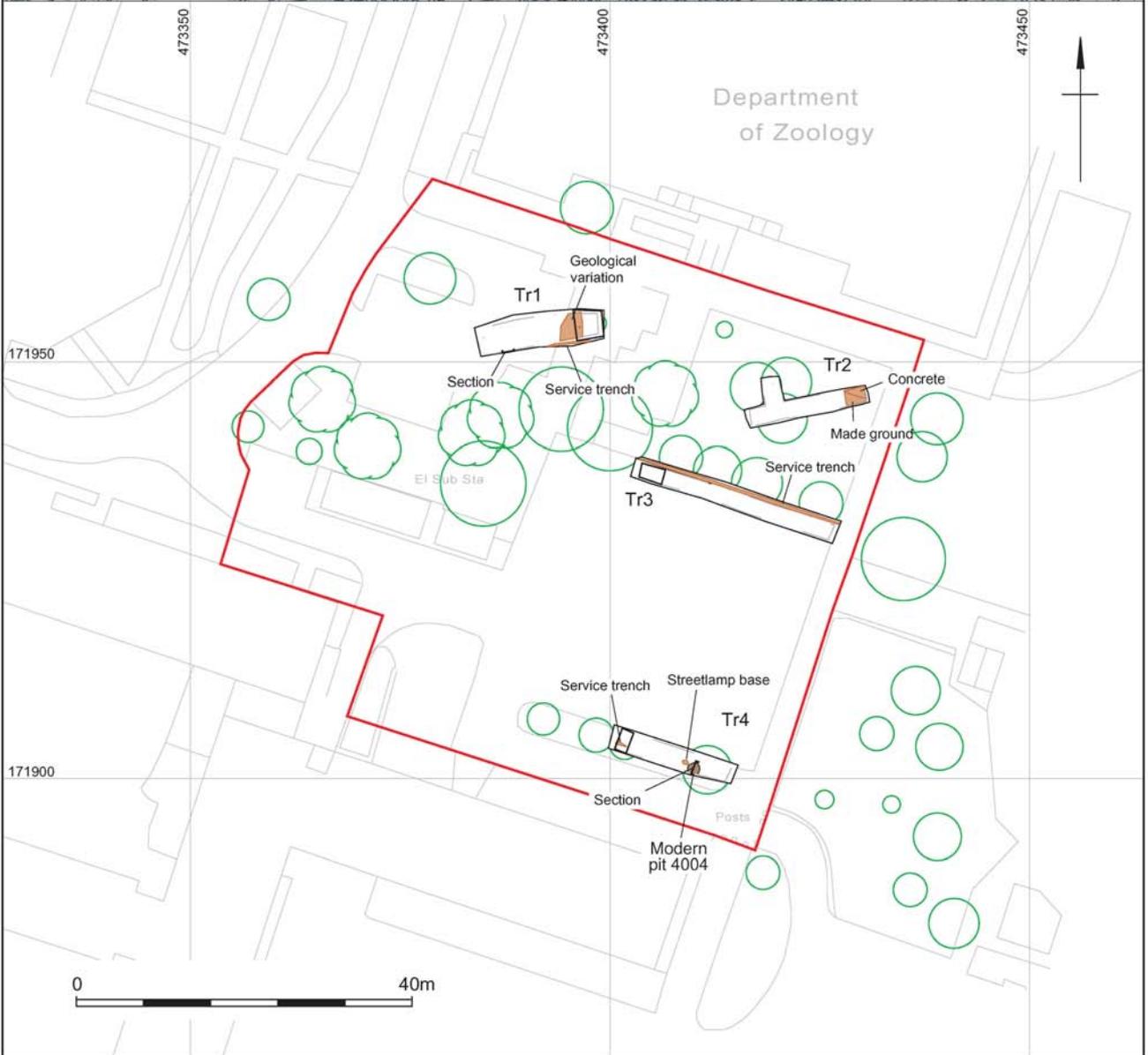
TRENCH 1	Dimensions 15m x 4m x 1m	Ground level 101.107m aOD
Context	Description	Depth
1001	Tarmac	0.00-0.12m
1002	Levelling deposit	0.12-0.18m
1003	Concrete	0.18-0.45m
1004	Construction layer	0.45m-0.77m
1005	Made ground	0.77m-1m
1006	Natural – mid reddish brown sandy silt with 20% sub angular and rounded gravels	> 1m

TRENCH 2	Dimensions 15m x 2m (east to west) 3.7 x 2m (north to south) x0.70m	Ground level 101.95m aOD
Context	Description.	Depth
2001	Topsoil – dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil with common root disturbance and occasional flint inclusions.	0-0.18m
2002	Made Ground	0.18m-0.30m
2003	Subsoil - mid brownish grey sandy silt with frequent sub angular and rounded flint inclusions.	0.30-0.70m
2004	Natural – mid yellowish red natural sub angular and rounded flint gravel	> 0.70m

TRENCH 3	Dimensions 25m x 2m x 0.76m	Ground level 100.677m aOD
Context	Description.	Depth
3001	Tarmac	0-0.12m
3002	Modern levelling deposit	0.12-0.15m
3003	Modern levelling deposit	0.15-0.40m
3004	Modern levelling deposit	0.40-0.48m
3005	Disturbed Natural - mid brown sandy gravel with frequent amounts of small to medium sized sub rounded flint gravel	0.48-0.76
3006	Natural - mid yellowish brown sandy gravel of sub angular and rounded flint pebbles	> 0.76

TRENCH 4	Dimensions 30m x 1.8m x 0.68m	Ground level 100.701m aOD
Context	Description.	Depth
4001	Topsoil – dark greyish brown silty clay with common root disturbance and occasional flint inclusions	0m-0.27m
4002	Subsoil – mid grey sandy silt with sub angular and rounded flint gravels and occasional modern CBM fragments.	0.27m -0.68m
4003	Natural - mid yellowish brown sandy gravel of sub angular and rounded flint pebbles	> 0.68
4004	Cut of pit	0.68-0.85m
4005	Fill of <b>4004</b>	0.68-0.85m





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> The Site</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Evaluation trench</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Deep excavation</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid green; border-radius: 50%; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Existing tree</li> </ul>	<p>Reproduced from the 1994 Ordnance Survey 1:50000 Landranger® map with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright, Wessex Archaeology, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6EB. Licence Number: 100028190. Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright 2009. All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100020449. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.</p>		
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Site location plan

Figure 1



Plate 1: North-east representative section of Trench 1



Plate 2: East facing section of modern pit 4004

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