Rear of 17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

for Paradigm Housing Association

by Steve Ford
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SLD08/55

June 2008
Summary

Site name: Rear of 17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9418 7635

Site activity: Desk-based assessment

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site code: SLD08/55

Area of site: c. 0.155ha

Summary of results: The site lies close to or within the historic centre of the hamlet of Dedworth which has late Saxon and medieval origins. It is anticipated that further information will be required from the results of trial trenching in order to devise a scheme to mitigate the impact of the proposals on any archaeological features that might be present.

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Report 08/55

Introduction

This desk-based study is an assessment of the archaeological potential of a plot of land covering approximately
0.155ha at the rear of 17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire (SU 9418 7635) (Fig. 1). It 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 redevelopment of the area. The project was commissioned by
Mr Len Currell of Carless and Adams Partnership, 6 Progress Business Centre, Whittle Parkway, Bath Road,
Slough Berkshire, SL1 6DQ on behalf of Paradigm Housing Group, 24 London Road, West, Amersham,
Buckinghamshire, HP7 0EZ.

A planning consent (07/01910) has been gained from The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to
redevelop the site for housing and associated parking areas. The consent is subject to a condition (7) relating to
archaeology which requires a desk-based assessment as part of a phased programme of archaeological work so
as to assess the impact of the development with regard to its archaeological implications and to ensure
preservation by record of any surviving remains.

Site description, location and geology

The site is a rectangular parcel of land of around 0.155ha on the west side Smiths Lane to the rear of numbers
17-27. The site is to be accessed via a road leading off Smiths Lane (Fig. 8). The site is bounded to the east by
the rear gardens of numbers 17-27 and similarly to the south by the rear gardens of 246-252 Dedworth Road. To
the north lies the gardens of Dedworth Green Baptist Church and to the west the grounds of Dedworth School. A
site visit on 4th June 2008 showed that the site is occupied by an access road (with garages for the adjoining
properties leading off this), leading into a slightly overgrown grassy paddock, with mature trees along the west
side, which show signs of some recent (minor) earth disturbance and with a small mound toward the north end.
The site lies on London Clay (BGS 1981) at 26m above Ordnance Datum.
Planning background and development proposals

Planning permission has been gained for the erection of a pair of 3 bedroom semi-detached houses and 6, 2 bedroom flats with associated bin stores/cycle stores, garden sheds and parking.

*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.’

The Berkshire Structure Plan (2001–2015 adopted 2006) also outlines policy regarding the archaeological potential of development sites.

Policy EN4:
‘1. Historic features and areas of historic importance and their settings will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced. The Councils will only allow development if it has no adverse impact on features or areas of historic importance.

‘2. Proposals will be expected to have regard to the wider historic environment and will only be permitted where they would conserve or enhance the character or setting of Berkshire’s historic landscape and built environment’

Para 5.15 explains that:

‘… the features of historic importance covered by this policy include ancient monuments, historic buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological remains, battlefields and the historic landscape including field patterns, hedgerows and green lanes. It is not only the features of historic heritage themselves, but the wider historic environment, which is of significance.’

Further paragraphs make it clear that this policy will be enforced along the lines of PPG 15 and PPG16.

Para 5.17:

‘In accordance with PPG16, where development is proposed in areas of archaeological potential, developers may be required to commission an independent assessment of the site (in consultation with the local planning authority) prior to the application being determined. This will assist the Unitary Authorities in deciding whether development is appropriate. Where development is permitted, the Unitary Authorities will need to be satisfied that appropriate arrangements have been made for assessment, excavating and recording on the site. Where possible archaeological remains should be preserved in situ and should be protected from unnecessary disturbance by new development through sympathetic design…’

This is reiterated in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (RBWMLP 2003), Policy ARCH1:

‘There will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of scheduled and nationally important monuments and their settings. Planning permission will not be granted for any development likely to affect the preservation of such monuments and their settings.’

Policy ARCH2:

‘Planning permission will not be granted for proposals adversely affecting sites in Berkshire’s sites and monuments record where archaeological features merit in-situ preservation unless it can be demonstrated that:

1) The proposals will not harm the archaeological importance of the site and its setting;
2) Appropriate and acceptable provision is made for the protection and management of the archaeological remains in-situ prior to and/or during development.

Policy ARCH3:

‘Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which appear likely to adversely affect archaeological sites and monuments of unknown importance and areas of high potential unless adequate evaluation enabling the full implications of the development on matters of archaeological interest is carried out by the developer prior to the determination of the application.’

Policy ARCH4:

‘Where evaluation of a site demonstrates the presence of archaeological remains which do not merit permanent in-situ preservation, planning permission will not be granted for any development unless provision is made for an appropriate level of archaeological investigation, recording and off site preservation/publication/display of such remains prior to damage or destruction or to the commencement of development.’
Methodology

This 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 Berkshire Historic Environment Record, geological maps and any relevant publications or reports. A site visit was also conducted on 4th June 2008 in order to determine the current land use, topography and disturbance of the site.

Archaeological background

The Middle Thames Valley is known to have a high density of prehistoric activity (Gates 1975), and work in the wider area such as at Eton Rowing Lake and the Maidenhead Flood Alleviation Scheme (Foreman et al. 2002), has demonstrated that the floodplain river gravels in particular have a high concentration of sites of all periods from Mesolithic to Saxon. To the north-east of the site at Eton Wick, a complex of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments has been identified (Ford 1993). The heavy clays, such as in the vicinity of this site, have, however, produced much less evidence, although they are not quite so archaeologically barren as once thought (Ford 1987; Preston 2003). Roman activity in the area, by contrast, appears limited to stray finds (Lowe 2003; Balance 1983; Pine 2002).

The town of Windsor (New Windsor) to the east developed, at the expense of the original settlement at Old Windsor, only after William I built the castle. An earlier settlement (Underore) is believed to have been located north of the castle hill, although evidence for this is slight, and it was not until the rebuilding of the castle by Henry I in the 12th century that the town proper developed (Preston 2005, 7).

The general area of the site, well to the west of medieval Windsor, may have been within the bounds of the royal dominion of Windsor Forest; by 1225 only Windsor Forest remained subject to Forest Law within Berkshire (Ford 1987, 102). John Rocque’s map of Berkshire in 1761 shows the boundary of the Forest as lying along Dedworth Road, and if this boundary is of some antiquity, then the site, which is to the north, lay outside the park (Fig. 3). While it is tempting to extrapolate the extent of forested land backwards from the Norman period, the temptation should be resisted unless further evidence is available; the early Norman kings jealously guarded and voraciously extended their forests, where they were not subject to baronial influence and the normal rule of law (Loyn 1991, 378–81). Nor should the idea of the Forest in its legal sense be taken necessarily to imply continuous woodlands (Hoskins 1977, 66–9).
Berkshire Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record

A search was made of the Berkshire Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) on 22nd May 2008 for a radius of 1km surrounding the site. The results of this search indicate that there are 17 records within the search radius, which includes four listed buildings. The location of these are illustrated in Figure 1 and the entries are summarized in Appendix 1.

Prehistoric
Three records relate to the prehistoric period, all of which are stray finds. Two entries relate to material dredged from the river Thames. These comprise a Late Bronze Age bronze spearhead [Fig. 1: 6] and four Neolithic or Early Bronze Age flint axes (two polished, one flaked and one unknown) [7]. The other entry is for the finding of a lower Palaeolithic handaxe and a Neolithic or Early Bronze Age polished flint axe [8]. None of these records are close to the site, nor do they necessarily indicate prehistoric settlement nearby.

Roman
There is a single entry for the Roman period for a second century coin of Antoninus Pius from well to the south of the site [5]. Again, a single coin by itself is not indicative of Roman settlement in the area.

Medieval
Six entries relate to the medieval period. The main entry is to the documentary references to Dedworth having late Saxon and medieval origins [1]. The location for this entry as shown on Figure 1 is a generic one, centred just to the south of the proposal site but this specific locality has not been confirmed archaeologically. The documentary sources (below) show that the manor was subdivided in the 13th century suggesting the presence of at least two foci of occupation from that time. A certain focus of medieval activity was located at the moated site to the south [2] which has now been consumed by suburban development. A second focus may be present not far to the north-west [3] where an elaborate tiled hearth and medieval pottery have been recorded, implying the presence of high status building, such as a manor house. In post-medieval times the focus of the hamlet may have been further to the west (Fig. 3) but with various properties depicted along the principal roads in the area closer to the site. One entry refers to the possible site of a wharf or landing stage to the north which was a location used for pilgrims to St Leonards Chapel (to the south of the study area) to disembark from Thames ferries [10]. Well to the east of the site, medieval occupation has been revealed by archaeological evaluation with ditches and pits recorded [11]. The study area also includes Windsor Great Park (deer park) [4]. The surviving parkland is now only present well to the south-east (and is a grade I registered park) but formerly came much
further north, just to the south of the site (according to John Rocque’s map of 1761, Fig. 3) and may well have extended far enough to have included the site in earlier medieval times.

Post-Medieval
The four post-medieval entries relate to listed buildings of 17th-20th century dates and include a convent [14], granary [15], house [17] and a pair of suburban villas [16]. None of these is close to the site.

Undated and negative
One entry [9] relates to the finding of animal and human bone and a fragment of leather shoe from a caravan park, well to the north-west of the proposal site. The collection was considered to be a by-product of dredging of the nearby river Thames. The SMR ascribes the finds a tentative Saxon date but no evidence is provided to confirm this date for any or all of these finds. The SMR includes records for two watching briefs, both of which revealed nothing of archaeological interest [12, 13].

Scheduled Ancient Monuments
There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the immediate vicinity of the site or the study area.

Documentary and Cartographic Sources
The hamlet of Dedworth lies within the parish of Clewer within Ripplesmere Hundred. Dedworth is mentioned as a separate manor in Domesday Book where it belonged to Albert of Lotharingia and had been held by Hugh the Chamberlain at the time of the conquest. It was assessed at one hide, with land for 3 ploughs, 20 acres of meadow and woodland for 5 pigs (Williams and Martin 2002, 157). Five villagers are counted and it was valued at 30 shillings. During the 13th century the manor was subdivided into Dedworth Mausell and Dedworth Loring (VCH 1923, 74). The place name of Dedworth is not commented on specifically in Mills (1998) but is likely to comprise a personal name ‘Deda’ or ‘Dydda’ and ‘worth’, which is an Old English name for an enclosure or enclosed settlement (Mills 1998, 392). The form of the name was Dideorde in the 11th century (VCH 1923, 74).

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted at the Berkshire Record Office and Windsor Library 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 (Appendix 2).
The earliest available map of the area is Christopher Saxton’s large scale map of Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, 1574 (not illustrated). This shows no detail at the level of the site, but does indicate the importance of Windsor. The settlement of Clewer (Clure) to the east is depicted but not Dedworth. Norden’s large map of Windsor Forest, 1607 shows more detail with several surrounding settlements for the site shown (Clewer, Oakley Green) but Dedworth is not mentioned. The site might lie near a named place (Bullocks Green) (Fig. 2). John Rocque’s map of Berkshire in 1761 (Fig. 3) shows the environs of the site in moderate detail. The settlement is called Dedworth Green. Dedworth Road and Smiths Lane can be identified. The site appears to be coincident with a farm or smallholding with a rectangular area of land defined between Dedworth Road and Smiths Lane. Two structures are depicted. It is most likely that this depiction is a stylized representation and the map cannot be scaled. It does though probably reflect the presence of an occupation site at this time perhaps located just to the south of proposal site.

An anonymous map of Windsor Forest of c. 1800 shows less detail (not illustrated). The enclosure map for 1819 (Fig. 4) again shows the road pattern which allows the site to be generally located (to the west of Shoehorses(?!) Lane and Dedworth Road but nothing is indicated as occupying the site.

The tithe map of 1841 shows detail for the environs of the site (Fig. 5). The site boundary appears to straddle one of the boundaries shown on this map but is otherwise undefined. It possibly includes the site of a house and garden. An access road from Smiths Lane in existence at this time might also be that present on later maps and is the same as that to be utilized by the current proposal.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey (1876) shows the environs of the site in detail (Fig. 6). This map is very similar to the Tithe map with few, if any, changes to the layout. The eastern margins of the site are depicted as orchard or woodland.

The Third Edition (1912) shows a few changes near to the site with the addition of a new field boundary that traverses the southern portion of the site in a north east-south west direction (not illustrated).

The 1932 Edition shows a few more changes near to the site. The house on or close to the site depicted on the Tithe and 1876 Ordnance Survey map has now been demolished (Fig. 7).

By the time of the Ordnance Survey edition of 1959 much the environs of the site to the east has been developed for housing (not illustrated). To the west of Smiths Lane the nearby school has been built but no suburban housing.
By the time of the Ordnance Survey edition of 1968 housing to the west of Smiths Lane has now been constructed and by 1976 the site boundary has been created with the construction of blocks of garages but which have subsequently been demolished with only hard standing remaining (not illustrated).

**Listed buildings**

Four listed buildings are recorded within the study area, all grade II. No listed buildings lie on or close to the site, nor will be affected by development on it.

**Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields**

No registered gardens or battlefields lie within the study area. Windsor Great Park is registered as a grade I park and a small part of it lies just within the margins of the wider study area but well south of the site. Its presence has no implications for the proposal site.

**Aerial Photographs**

The site lies in an area that has been developed since before the advent of aerial photography for archaeological purposes. No aerial photographic collections have therefore been consulted.

**Discussion**

There are two issues that need consideration in recommending a suitable course of action for any development on this site: the likelihood of the original presence of archaeological deposits on the proposal site and whether they have survived later disturbance; and the impact of the permitted new development on relevant archaeological levels.

The site lies close to, or even within the historic (late Saxon/medieval) core of the hamlet of Dedworth. The location of the settlement is poorly understood, with two medieval foci possibly already recorded, and with early (post-medieval) cartographic sources suggesting additional settlement locations. A post-medieval smallholding(?) is present on or close to the site which may be the same as structures indicated on early 19th century maps.

It is anticipated that further archaeological information will be required by the local planning authority as a part of the planning condition and that this requirement is likely to comprise an archaeological evaluation (trial trenching). This would provide information on the presence or absence of archaeological deposits on the site and
if necessary, use this information to draw up a scheme to mitigate the effects of development. A written scheme of investigation for such an evaluation would need to be drawn up and agreed with Berkshire Archaeology, archaeological advisers to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and carried out by a competent archaeological contractor such as an organization registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

References

Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Counc Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap 1, Reading
Gates, T, 1975, *The Middle Thames Valley. An archaeological survey of the river gravels*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm, Publ 1
RBWMLP, 2003, *Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan, revised*, Maidenhead
**APPENDIX 1: Sites and Monuments Record entries within a 1000m search radius 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>9410 7625</td>
<td>hamlet</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Dedworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>117.02</td>
<td>94080 76120</td>
<td>moat</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Peter de Lorings manor?. Now built over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>117.03</td>
<td>93998 76546</td>
<td>Manor house?</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Large tile hearth found. Excavated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4156</td>
<td>965 721</td>
<td>Deer park</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Windsor Great Park. Registered Grade I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>94140 75840</td>
<td>Findspot</td>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>Coin of Antoninus Pius (2nd Century)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>93740 77160</td>
<td>Findspot</td>
<td>Late Bronze Age</td>
<td>Bronze spearhead. Dredged from river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>93646 77314</td>
<td>Findspot</td>
<td>Neolithic or Early Bronze Age</td>
<td>2 flint axes, Polished flint axe, Flint or stone axe, all dredged from river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2988</td>
<td>9500 76420</td>
<td>Findspot</td>
<td>Lower Palaeolithic Neolithic or Early Bronze Age</td>
<td>Hand axe, Polished flint axe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4177</td>
<td>9320 7720</td>
<td>Findspot</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>Human and animal bone, Leather shoe. Dredged from river and dumped ashore?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>RW15740</td>
<td>93760 77078</td>
<td>Wharf?</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Possible site of landing stage for pilgrims to St Leonards Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>RM15778</td>
<td>95139 76130</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Occupation: Ditches and pits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ERM806</td>
<td>93821 75390</td>
<td>Watching brief</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>ERW39</td>
<td>93918 76290</td>
<td>Watching brief</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>DRM879</td>
<td>95145 76233</td>
<td>Listed Building</td>
<td>Post-Medieval</td>
<td>19th century convent of John the Baptist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>DRM224</td>
<td>93186 76394</td>
<td>Listed Building</td>
<td>Post-Medieval</td>
<td>17th century granary adjacent to The White House, Dedworth Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>DRM463</td>
<td>94820 75827</td>
<td>Listed Building</td>
<td>Post-Medieval</td>
<td>160-2 Clewer Hill Rd. 19th century villas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>DRM682</td>
<td>95159 75457</td>
<td>Listed Building</td>
<td>Post-Medieval</td>
<td>Parkwell Cottage, Winfield Rd. 18th century</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All Listed buildings Grade II
APPENDIX 2: Historic and modern maps consulted

1574  Christopher Saxton’s Map of Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire
1607  Norden’s map of Windsor Forest (Fig. 2)
1761  Rocque’s plan of the County of Berkshire (Fig. 3)
1800  anonymous map of Windsor Forest
1819  Windsor Inclosure map (Fig. 4)
1841  Clewer tithe map (Fig. 5)
1876  Ordnance Survey First Edition 25 inch sheet xxxi.12 (Fig. 6)
1932  Ordnance Survey Edition 25 inch sheet xxxi.12 (Fig. 7)
1959  Ordnance Survey 1 inch sheet 159
1968  Ordnance Survey 1 inch sheet 159
1976  Ordnance Survey 1:25000 sheet 87/97
1998(?) Land Registry plan of site
17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire, 2008
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Figure 1. Location of site within Dedworth and Berkshire showing Sites and Monuments Record entries.

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17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire, 2008
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Figure 3. Rocques’ map of Berkshire 1761
17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire, 2008
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Figure 4. Windsor Inclosure map 1819
Figure 5. Clewer Tithe map 1841
17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire, 2008
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Figure 6. Ordnance Survey First Edition 1876
17-27 Smiths Lane, Dedworth, Windsor, Berkshire, 2008
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Figure 7. Ordnance Survey 1932
SITE

Figure 8. Current layout.