

**BK GRAIN HANDLING ENGINEERS
LITTLECOTE ROAD, FROXFIELD,
MARLBOROUGH, WILTSHIRE**

NGR: SU 2995 6837

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

**April 2008
Report No.589**

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

On the 1st and 2nd of April 2008 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief at BK Grain Handling Engineers, Littlecote Road, Froxfield, Marlborough, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 2995 6837). The work was undertaken on behalf of BK Grain Handling Engineers, in response to a condition of planning permission.

The proposed development comprised the construction of additional offices, workshop and storage (Planning Application Number: K/57766/F). The archaeological work was targeted on the whole development area.

The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features, deposits or artefacts.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site, in this case, chalk.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

OS

Ordnance Survey

Post-medieval

The period from *circa* AD 1500 onwards

Roman

The period from AD 43 to AD 410

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 1st and 2nd of April 2008 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief at BK Grain Handling Engineers, Littlecote Road, Froxfield, Marlborough, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 2995 6837). The work was undertaken on behalf of BK Grain Handling Engineers, in response to a condition of planning permission.
- 1.2 The proposed development comprised the construction of additional offices, workshop and storage (Planning Application Number: K/57766/F). The archaeological work was targeted on the whole development area.
- 1.3 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2008), based on a brief issued by the County Archaeologist working as archaeological advisor on behalf of Wiltshire County Council and approved by the same. The WSI was prepared in accordance with the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001) and Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 1.4 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief and conforms to the specification set out in Appendices 4 and 5 of *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The study area is located on the northern edge of Froxfield, a village to the west of Hungerford, on the Littlecote Road (Figures 1 and 2). The area of proposed development lies in a field on the northern edge of the existing building and is bounded to its west by Littlecote Road, and to its north and east by fields. The existing building stands on a flat area of ground south of the site, terraced into the hill. The study area lies at the bottom of a hill, which rises to its west and lies at approximately 118mOD.

3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Planning permission has been granted for the construction of additional offices, workshop and store at BK Grain Handling Engineers, Littlecote Road, Froxfield (planning application number K/57766/F).
- 3.2 Archaeological finds and features have been found in the vicinity of the proposed development. To the west of the development area an undated burial was discovered and excavated. No grave goods were found in association with the burial, although the north-south alignment of the grave suggests it may have been of pagan Saxon or Romano-British origin. To the east, a large

ring-ditch has been noted on aerial photographs in addition to several finds, including flint tools and Romano-British coins.

- 3.3 The study area therefore contained the potential for archaeological finds predominantly dating to the Prehistoric, Roman or Saxon periods. This in no way prejudiced the works against the recovery of finds or features relating to other periods.

4 AIMS

- 4.1 The aims of the watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains.

- 4.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives.

i) to define, identify and record any archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible.

ii) to attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site.

iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The layout of the groundworks, consisting of one building block, is shown on Figure 2. The whole development area was topsoil stripped and reduced to either foundation level or natural (chalk) under the direction of a suitably experienced archaeologist. This was done with the use of a mechanical excavator fitted with a wide toothless bucket, working under the constant supervision of an archaeologist. When features or deposits of potential archaeological significance were noted, they were closely examined and defined, and excavated by hand where appropriate. All spoil tips were scanned by eye for unstratified finds.

6 RESULTS

- 6.1 Natural ground was exposed within the whole development area and consisted of chalk, encountered at an average depth of 0.85m below the existing ground level. Within the chalk were frequent linear striations of yellowish brown clay silt which were geological, probably of glacial origin. These were northeast-southwest aligned, with variable width of 0.15m-0.45m and spaced between

0.15m-0.70m apart. The natural ground was overlain by subsoil (102), an orange brown silt clay with frequent chalk lumps and flint inclusions, up to 0.50m thick. The subsoil was overlain by topsoil (101), a mid brown clay silt with frequent chalk flecks, 0.26m thick.

- 6.2 On the west side of the study area, extending beyond the limit of excavation, was a north-south aligned linear deposit of dark brown silt clay with frequent large flint nodules, at least 10m in length and at least 2.80m in width. A section was hand-excavated through the deposit and it was found to be geological in origin.
- 6.3 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the study area. There was no modern disturbance present across the site in any form.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features. In general, visibility and recording conditions were good.
- 7.2 The watching brief has indicated no potential for significant archaeological remains within the development area and a low potential within the immediate vicinity of the study area. This does not, however, preclude the possibility of archaeological finds, features or deposits within the surrounding area.

8 NATURE OF THE RECORD

- 8.1 The stratigraphic archive for the site consists of the following elements:
- Watching brief record sheets
 - Plans
 - Photographs
- 8.2 The on-site methodologies used to recover any evidence were set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Foundations (2008). In summary the following excavation methods were utilised; observation of all groundworks associated with the construction of the new building. All site recording was undertaken in accordance with the WSI. The records are available in the archive.
- 8.3 Following the completion of the Watching Brief an ordered, indexed, and internally consistent site archive has been compiled in accordance with Appendix 3 of The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991). This archive is currently held at Foundations Archaeology and will be deposited with Wiltshire Heritage Museum (Devizes) within six months.
- 8.4 A summary of the contents of this report is available from Project OASIS at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>

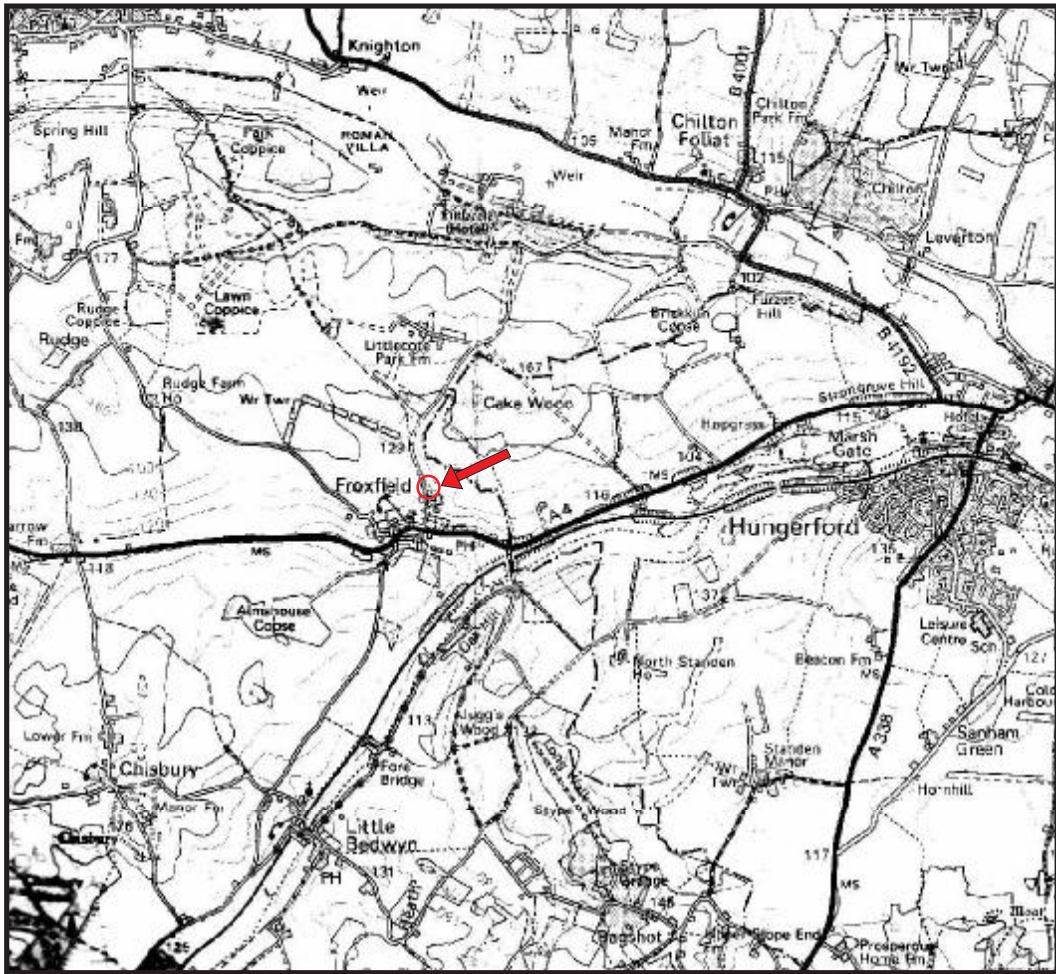
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10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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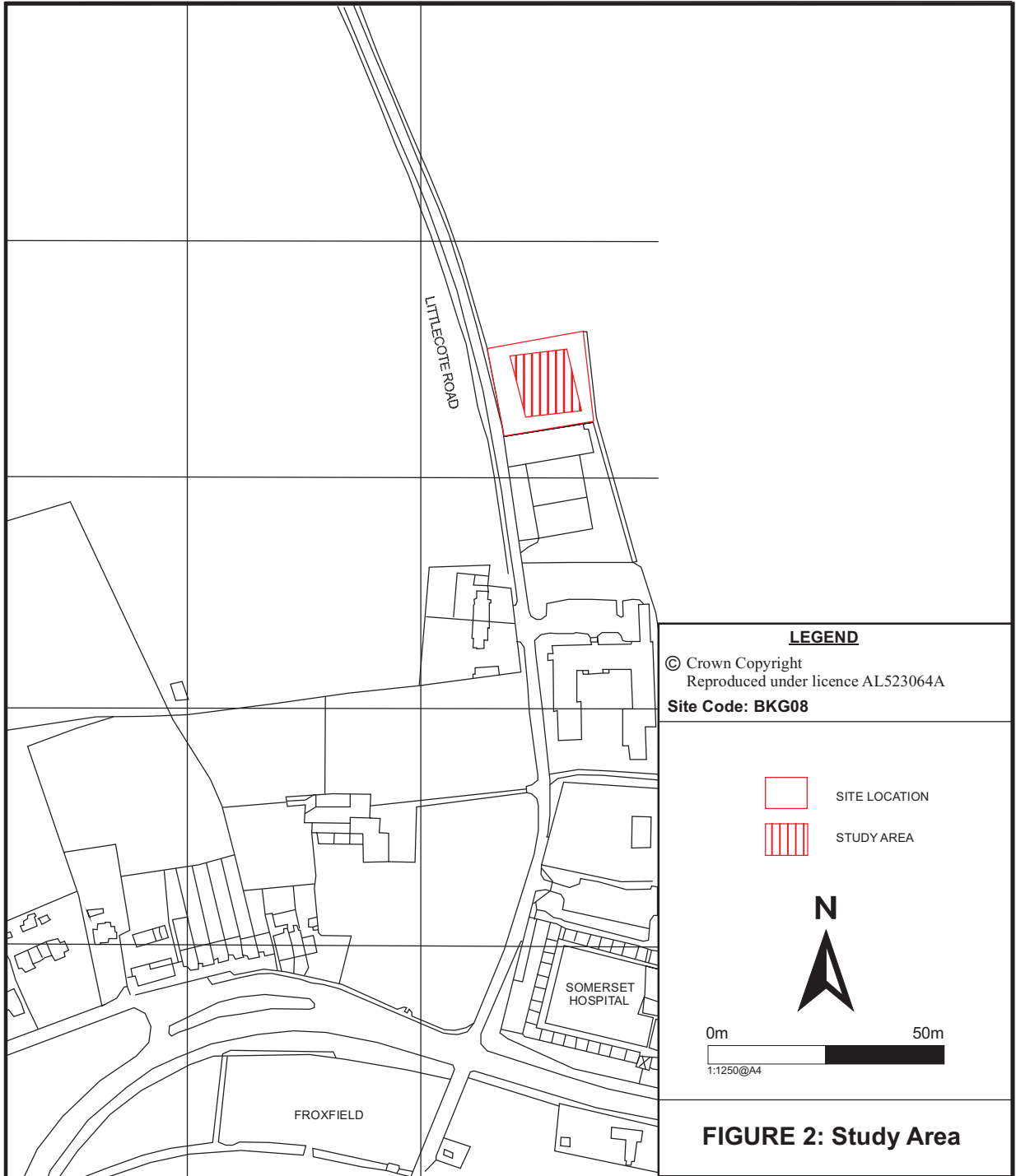
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Site Code: BKG08

N

0m 2000m

1:50000@A4


FIGURE 1: Site Location



LEGEND

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-  SITE LOCATION
-  STUDY AREA



0m 50m
1:1250@A4

FIGURE 2: Study Area