

## Westgate School

### Appendix H: Heritage Statement (Archaeology)

#### Archaeological background

The site is located on a south east facing chalk slope, looking across a dry valley towards the sharp hill on which the Iron Age site of Oram's Arbour stands. There are no archaeological sites currently recorded within the site, and few recorded within the immediate vicinity.

However the site is in the area of Fulflood which was developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the absence of structured archaeological monitoring it is likely that the absence of archaeological records may represent the extensive unmonitored development more than be an indication of the archaeological potential of the area.

The site is chalk downland within the vicinity of Winchester, which has been a primary focus of settlement since the Iron Age, although Bronze Age and Neolithic occupation is also recorded. It is likely that archaeological evidence will have existed in the area of Fulflood, such as small Iron Age/Roman farmsteads, earlier unenclosed settlement, field systems and perhaps burial sites. The Fulflood area in general has a high archaeological potential for as yet unrecorded archaeological sites.

#### Impact of Past Development

In view of this a brief review was undertaken, by map regression and on site, as to the impact of existing development on the archaeological potential of the development site. (The degree to which the archaeological potential has been compromised or destroyed by the development of the houses and school). In particular the area around Rotherly where the new development is proposed.

It is clear that the area has been subject to terracing in order to accommodate development. Whilst the fall of Cheriton Road shows the original slope, the landscape within the school site has been stepped to create level areas on which to develop. From Links Road to Green Lane the land is stepped down, so that the site of Rotherly is on a less steep slope than the natural land form. The girl school site to the south is in two steps.

#### Rotherly

The ground preparation for Rotherly is not uniform and can approximately be divided into three zones.

In the north-west corner the ground appears to be undisturbed. The site of the cottage and the stables is at the original ground level, as is a small part of the garden of Rotherly. The stepped shape on the OS map marks the terraced garden edge and represents the point at which the slope has been dug into. To the west it appears to be undisturbed, to the east it has been terraced in. The Rotherly building sits to the front of a lip that steps down eastwards, and is presumably on a 'fill' created from the material cut to the west. (ie Rotherley and its garden sites on a cut and fill terrace)

In front of Rotherly, the garden setting to the front of the house, the land slopes gently from north to south. But it is clear by comparison to Cheriton Road, the fall within Rotherly's front garden has been made more gentle by reducing the height to the north. There is a drop of a metre or more from Links Road. It would appear that the area to the front of Rotherly has been graded and lost more in height to the north and less to the south. However on the south edge of this block is the car park and the test pit results show 80 centimetres of car park surface make up. In addition the car park is lower than the surrounding area, suggesting significant damage during car park construction.

It would appear that the archaeological potential of the site is significantly compromised by the degree of terracing and development existing on site.

### **Impact of Proposed Development.**

To the north west where the cottage, cottage garden and stable site are it is proposed to construct a car park. This area has not been terraced, but has been compromised to some degree by the cottage and the stable building. The construction of the car park should offer good opportunity during preliminary stripping to carry out an archaeological watching brief.

It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief is maintained during the relevant stages of car park preparation in order to recognise and record any archaeological remains encountered.

In the south east of Westgate School a car park will be built in an area that is currently green space. It is clear that this area has been cut and filled in two steps from the north. This will have significantly compromised the survival of any archaeological remains. It is possible that some remains might have survived where the fill has built up the ground. The construction of the car park should offer good opportunity during preliminary stripping to carry out an archaeological watching brief.

It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief is maintained during the relevant stages of car park preparation in order to recognise and record any archaeological remains encountered.

To the rear of Rotherly, the development is in an area where levels were cut when the house was put in, the ground was further disturbed by the construction of the house and gardens, and further disturbed by the construction of the boarding block. It is recommended that the archaeological potential of this area has been thoroughly compromised and does not merit further investigation.

An additional block is to be built at the present location of the car park to the south east of Rotherly House. This area has been compromised by the construction of the car park. It is recommended that the archaeological potential of this area has been thoroughly compromised and does not merit further investigation.

To the front of Rotherly House a block will be built in the west part of the area that was historically the front garden. This area has been comprised by level reduction when the garden was laid out in order to reduce the steepness of slope. To the north this terracing is likely to have removed the archaeological potential. To the south it is

possible that the archaeological potential is more intact. In any event the area has been compromised to some extent.

It is recommended that, rather than carrying out a watching brief during construction, it would be more effective to place a single evaluation trench in the footprint of the new block to explore the archaeological survival/potential. If this trench finds no archaeological remains no further archaeological recording will be necessary. If archaeological remains are encountered appropriate archaeological recording provision will be made prior to the construction of that block.

### **Archaeological Condition**

The archaeological potential of the site is only generally understood. It has been compromised to a large degree and to some degree will have been entirely removed. The archaeological potential at this site are not an over riding issue. It is recommend that an archaeological condition is attached to any planning permission which is issued. This should secure an archaeological watching brief on the construction of the two car parks, and an appropriate archaeological response to the new block to the front of Rotherly House preceded by a trial trench laid out within the footprint of the building.