

'Thameside', Sutton Road, Cookham, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

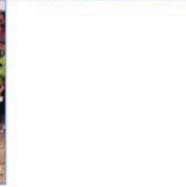
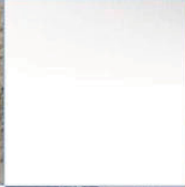
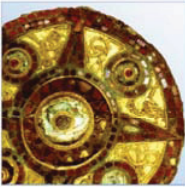
Planning Ref: 10/02970/FUL

National Grid Reference: SU 8974 8558

AOC Project No: 31011

Site Code: THC 11

Date: June 2011



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

'Thameside', Sutton Road, Cookham, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

On Behalf of: **Graeme Pritchard-Smith,**
Thameside,
Sutton Road,
Cookham,
Berkshire,
SL6 9SN

National Grid Reference (NGR): SU 8974 8558

AOC Project No: 31011

Prepared by: Helen MacQuarrie

Illustration by: Jon Moller

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

Author: Helen MacQuarrie

Date: June 2011

Approved by: Alan Ford

Date: June 2011

Draft/Final Report Stage:

Date: June 2011

Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group
Unit 7
St Margarets Business Centre
Moor Mead Road
Twickenham
TW1 1JS

Tel. 020 8843 7380
Fax. 020 8892 0549
e-mail. london@aocarchaeology.com



www.aocarchaeology.com

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Non-Technical Summary

This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief on ground works undertaken in advance of the construction of an extension to 'Thameside', Sutton Road, Cookham, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The works included the monitoring of two foundation trenches.

A study of the observed stratigraphy identified a series of undated alluvial deposits, 1.19m – 1.26m in thickness, overlying the natural clay which was encountered at 2.79 – 2.84m below ground surface. Overlying the undated alluvial deposits in both trenches was a late post medieval alluvial deposit. The deposit contained a very small assemblage of ceramics which date from the medieval to 19th / 20th century.

The investigation achieved its aims in establishing the absence of archaeological features in the foundation trenches associated with the proposed development.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief at 'Thameside', Sutton Road, Cookham, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (Figure 1). The watching brief took place on the 22nd and 23rd of June 2011.
- 1.2 The site is located in the centre of Cookham on the south side of the Thames, close to Cookham Bridge. The site is centred on national grid reference (NGR) SU 8974 8558.
- 1.3 The site is accessed along a short private drive on its south side. Neighbouring properties lie to the east and west, and the Thames runs along the north side of the site.
- 1.4 The site is currently occupied by a large two storey property. The development scheme comprises an extension measuring 8.0m by 3.0m, on the northern side of the house.
- 1.5 Works comprised the monitoring of any works that penetrated beneath recent made ground (below c 0.75 – 1.0m); as such the excavation of two foundation trenches were archaeologically monitored.

2. Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Government Authority. Archaeological advice to the borough is provided by Fiona Macdonald, Archaeological Officer at Berkshire Archaeology.
- 2.2 The site lies on the northern edge of Cookham High Street Conservation Area, and is considered to have archaeological potential due to the uncovering of archaeological remains when the house was originally built.
- 2.3 Archaeological monitoring of the geotechnical investigations and service check trenches on the site was required as a condition on the granting of the Planning Application for the site (10/02970/FUL); this is fully in accordance with Policy Planning Statement (PPS5): Planning for the Historic Environment (DCLG 2010).
- 2.4 The next stage in the planning process was the creation of a written scheme of investigation (WSI), detailing the methodology for recording, and including some background history of the site (AOC 2010). This methodology was approved by Fiona Macdonald, Archaeological Officer at Berkshire Archaeology.
- 2.5 The Watching Brief conforms with current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
 - English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2008c).
 - DoCLG – Planning Policy Statement (PPS5): Planning for the Historic Environment (DoCLG 2010)

3. Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 255) indicates that the site is situated upon Holocene Alluvium associated with the River Thames overlying Pleistocene Taplow gravels. The site is flat, at around 26mOD. Recent investigation reveals a depth of c.1m of made ground in the area of the extension.

4. Archaeological And Historical Background

- 4.1 Berkshire Archaeology report that previous archaeological excavations on the site were undertaken in 1987 when 'Thameside' was erected. Finds and deposits were found dating from the early Saxon period to the 13th century and beyond. The results of this work do not appear to have been published. There are a number of entries in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) for archaeological features or chance finds within 1km of the site: these provide the archaeological background.

Prehistoric (before c. AD 43)

- 4.2 The prehistoric periods in Cookham are represented by finds and features, as well as artefacts dredged from the Thames.
- 4.3 The earliest prehistoric artefacts are several Mesolithic Tranchet axeheads, recovered during dredging of the Thames.
- 4.4 Neolithic finds include a flint scraper and a fragment of pottery found on Cock's Hill approximately 1km northwest of the site. A Neolithic blade fragment was recovered from Church Paddock, and dredging has revealed two Neolithic artefacts: a knife and a bowl.
- 4.5 Dredging of the Thames has also recovered a Bronze Age sword and daggers. In addition, a pit or ditch terminal was identified during an archaeological watching brief undertaken at Thyme Cottage, School Lane. It contained a single flint flake of prehistoric date. Closer dating of the flake is not possible but it is thought unlikely to predate the Bronze Age.
- 4.6 Iron Age pottery was found in the garden of a property at Berries Road, which lies west of the site. A single sherd of mid – late Iron Age pottery was also recovered from Church Paddock. In addition dredging of the Thames has also recovered a perforated pestle-shaped macehead.
- 4.7 Geophysical surveys and aerial photography surveys have indicted several enclosures or ditch patterns in fields surrounding Cookham. However, due to the nature of the investigation no firm dating can be assigned to these potential features. A number of probably Bronze Age barrows were, however investigated in Cock's Fields during the 19th century.

Roman (c. AD 43 – 410)

- 4.8 The Roman road that ran from St Albans to Silchester is thought to have crossed the Thames via Sashes Island in Cookham (Ford, 2001). At the time, this is likely to have been the only crossing point in the local area, which suggests that there is likely to have been local activity and occupation taking advantage of the passing trade. This may suggest that one of the approaches to the river is of Roman date or even earlier. Excavations at Berries Road, to the west of the site, revealed two road surfaces with ditches that appeared to be of Roman date.
- 4.9 Roman features remain few in Cookham, with only a handful of artefacts recovered from later features, including a single Antoninus 1st brass coin. The HER record indicates that a Roman urn

was found in Cookham in the early 20th century although unfortunately the exact location of its origin was not recorded.

- 4.10 Crop marks identified as a large and complex settlement at Hillgrove Farm to the north-west of the site have also been attributed to this period.

Anglo-Saxon (c.410 – 1066)

- 4.11 Cookham is thought to have originated as *Cocheham* ('cook village/ village by the hill') during the early Saxon period. It is thought to have been in the territory of the Middle Saxons (Middlesex) until the 7th century when it became part of *Provincia of Sonning*. The establishment of a Minster at Cookham in the 8th century would have formed a focal point for the local population. There is a possibility that Cookham also had a Royal Palace, as a will of 995-999 mentions the meeting of King Ethelred's council, possibly at a royal palace in Cookham. No evidence of a palace has been found to date, although Saxon palaces are often found in association with Minster Churches. The HER record suggests that by the late Saxon period Cookham had become a 'Proto-Urban' village.
- 4.12 Archaeological remains relating to the Saxon settlement are sparse. Investigations at Riverdene, to the south of the site uncovered several dump deposits along the waterfront dating to the Saxon period. A number of Saxon spearheads have also been recovered during dredging along the nearby Thames.
- 4.13 The greatest archaeological evidence on the south side of the river relating to Saxon Cookham is a Saxon burial site excavated in the fields to the north-west of Marsh Meadows. The results of this work are currently unavailable.

Medieval (c. 1066 – 1538)

- 4.14 Cookham is recorded in the Domesday Book as *Coccham* / *Cocheham* and was described as a Royal Manor of 24,000 acres. From 1117 the land was owned by the Abbey of Cirencester until its dissolution in 1535. A large Sarsen stone formerly marked the boundary of the lands belonging to the Abbot of Cirencester but is now part of a war memorial. It is likely that most of the medieval population would have been agriculturally based with much of their crop being produced for the Abbey. In 1225 Cookham became a borough and was split into the 6 estates/manors of Bradley, Bullocks, Pinkneys, Harwoods, Spencers and Cannons.
- 4.15 Cookham Church of Holy Trinity dates to the 12th century and lies within 200m to the north of the site. The chancel, north chapel and north aisle were added in the early 13th century and the west tower in c. 1500. There have been several renovations of the building throughout much of the post-medieval period. On the north side of Cookham High Street, the Bel and Dragon Hotel was first built in the late 15th century and subsequently altered.
- 4.16 Medieval pottery was recovered during groundworks in the middle of Cookham High Street on the north side. The sherds were of a sandy fabric with few inclusions, similar to the pottery produced by the Camley Kilns. A medieval *gisame* or bill was found in the backwater below Cookham and 11 sherds of 12th – 14th century Ashampstead ware pottery were recovered from a tree throw during an archaeological evaluation on land at Odney Club, Odney Lane. The feature itself indicates the possibility of medieval settlement along the road frontage in that area of Cookham. An auguring survey at Church Paddock also yielded finds of medieval date, including building material, a sherd of pottery and a piece of glass.
- 4.17 It is thought that Cookham's decline in importance probably occurred shortly after c.1280, when a new bridge over the Thames at Maidenhead was built.

Post-Medieval (c.1538 – modern)

- 4.18 Most of the listed buildings on the High Street in Cookham date from the 15th and 16th centuries, with houses on The Pound dated to the 18th century. Another Listed building is a granary at Old Farmhouse, which has a timber frame with brick infill. The current centre of Cookham lies south of the church, away from the Saxon archaeological evidence, suggesting a refocusing of the town southwards. Most of the archaeological record illustrates the post-medieval development of the town.
- 4.19 A property in the middle of the High Street was subject to archaeological investigation in 1977, proving to have a brick and tile floor and an inglenook fireplace that may be 16th century in date. An early post-medieval structure was also identified at Churchgate House during an archaeological watching brief, including the brick footings of a chimney.
- 4.20 A watching brief undertaken during work at Holy Trinity Church in Cookham identified a brick and mortar vault measuring 2.5 square metres with a shallow, barrel ceiling (MRW6336). One lead coffin and three further graves were partially revealed, all aligned east-west, the coffin bearing a lead name plate dating to 1808.
- 4.21 Two post-medieval ditches were located during an evaluation at the Vicarage. These features were both aligned east-west and contained sherds of pottery and tile. These ditches may be property boundaries. Excavation also revealed a single grave containing a well-preserved skeleton. Its proximity to the south edge of the churchyard suggested that this was an outlying burial from the churchyard. Foundations of a later building were also revealed.
- 4.22 Cookham railway station was opened in 1854 by the Wycombe Railway Company, and lies on the line from Maidenhead to Wycombe. The station building was constructed of red brick and knapped flint. The cast iron Cookham Bridge (DRM827) was completed in 1867, supported on 7 piers, and constructed by Pease Hitchinson and Co.

5. Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were defined as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
 - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
 - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
 - To enable Fiona Macdonald, archaeology advisor to Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
 - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the watching brief were:
- To identify whether any evidence for Prehistoric or Roman activity survives at the site?
 - To identify whether any evidence for Saxon activity survives at the site?
 - To identify whether any archaeological horizons revealed can be related to the previous findings from excavation work?

- 5.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

6. Methodology

- 6.1 Site procedures were defined in the written scheme of investigation (AOC 2011).
- 6.2 The site code THC 11 was generated by AOC, and used for all fieldwork.
- 6.3 All work was carried out in accordance with local and national guidelines:
- Archaeological Guidance Paper (AGP) 3: *Standards and Practises in Archaeological Fieldwork* (English Heritage 1998)
 - Institute for Archaeologists – *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. (IfA 2009).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010).
 - Museum of London's *Archaeological Field Manual* (MoL 1994).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – *Conservation Guidelines No.2* (UKIC 1983).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice* (UKIC 1990).
- 6.4 A continuous unique numbering system was employed. For each test pit/trench, a block of numbers in a continuous sequence was allocated.
- 6.5 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.
- 6.6 The monitoring was undertaken by Project Supervisor Helen MacQuarrie under the overall direction of Alan Ford, Project Manager. Fiona Macdonald, Archaeological Officer at Berkshire Archaeology was notified of the commencement of work..

7. Results of the Watching Brief

Trench 1

Context	Depth (BGL)	Thickness	Description/Interpretation
100	0.00m	0.20m	Patio surface. Modern
101	0.20m	0.90m	Type 1 deposit. Modern
102	1.10m	0.50m	Mixed dark green brown silty clay. 19/20 th century alluvial deposit.
103	1.60m	0.55m	Medium compaction light green brown silty clay. Undated alluvial deposit.
104	2.15m	0.64m	Medium compaction dark green brown clay silt. Undated alluvial deposit.
105	2.79m	0.40m (NFE)	Firm light orange brown silty clay with frequent irregular flint nodules. Natural.

- 7.1 Trench 1 was located along the eastern edge of the proposed extension (Figure 3). The trench measured 4m x 0.8 – 1.20m and was orientated north-south.
- 7.2 Natural firm light orange brown silty clay (105) was observed at a depth of 2.79m BGS, this was overlain by 0.64m deposit of medium compaction, dark green brown clay silt (104). This deposit was overlain by a 0.55m deposit of medium compaction, light green brown silty clay (103). Overlying this deposit was 0.50m of mixed dark green brown silty clay (102). 0.90m of Type One sealed the trench

with an associated modern patio surface which was 0.20m in depth. No archaeological features or finds were encountered in this trench.



East facing section Trench 1 (mid excavation) Looking west

Trench 2

Context	Depth (BGL)	Thickness	Description/Interpretation
200	0.00m	0.20m	Patio surface. Modern
201	0.20m	0.90m	Type 1 deposit. Modern
202	1.10m	0.48m	Mixed dark green brown silty clay. 19/20 th century alluvial deposit.
203	1.58m	1.26	Medium compaction light green brown silty clay. Undated alluvial deposit.
204	2.84m	0.12m (NFE)	Firm light orange brown silty clay with frequent irregular flint nodules. Natural.

- 7.3 Trench 2 was located along the western edge of the proposed extension (Figure 3). The trench measured 4m x 0.8 – 1.20m and was orientated north-south.
- 7.4 Natural firm light orange brown silty clay (204) was observed at a depth of 2.84m BGS, this was overlain by 1.58m deposit of medium compaction, light green brown silty clay (203). Overlying this deposit was 0.48m of mixed dark green brown silty clay (202). 0.90m of Type One sealed the trench with an associated modern patio surface which was 0.20m in depth. No archaeological features or finds were encountered in this trench.



Trench 2 - looking south

8. Finds

- 8.1 A very small, mixed date, assemblage of ceramic and bone were retrieved from an alluvial layer (202), as well as an unstratified single Roman coarse grey ware rim piece (100).
- 8.2 The sherds from (202) are mixed in date. One small sherd of medieval green glazed ware was found with a Westerwald stoneware sherd <1580-1800>, a plain red ware sherd of uncertain date, a blue/white transfer printed ware sherd (1780-1900+), a plain white glazed earthenware sherd (1800+), and a multi-coloured fruit/floral earthenware plate sherd (1800+).
- 8.3 Also recovered from (202) was a single piece of peg tile from the medieval to post medieval period and eight pieces of animal bone, including two teeth. These appear to be small mammal, including pig, and a possible bird bone.

9. Conclusions and Interpretation

- 9.1 The stratigraphic sequence appears generally consistent across the site with natural clay (105 and 204) encountered at 2.79 – 2.84m BGS in both trenches. Overlying the natural was a series of alluvial deposits associated with the Thames which lies adjacent to the northern limit of the development site. The alluvial deposits varied between the two trenches with a single thick band of light green brown clay-silt with occasional shell and flint fragments (203) in the western part of the site. To the east a deposit of dark green brown very silt clay (104) and light green brown silty clay

- with occasional shell, flint and charcoal fragment (103) overlay the natural. None of these alluvial deposits contained archaeological materials to enable the dating of these deposits.
- 9.2 Overlying the undated alluvial deposits in both trenches was a 0.48 – 0.55m thick mixed dark green brown silty clay deposit with frequent charcoal, flint and shell fragments (102 and 202). The deposit contained a very small assemblage of ceramics and animal bone. The ceramics recovered range in date from medieval to 19th / 20th century, thus the deposit most likely represents a period of flooding in the late post medieval period.
- 9.3 Sealing the alluvial deposits in both trenches was a 0.90m deposit of modern Type 1 (101 and 201) consolidating the ground under a patio surface, 0.20m thick, which occupied the area of investigation prior to development.
- 9.4 It is difficult to make meaningful conclusions about potential Roman activity within the area based on the single un-stratified sherd of coarse grey ware rim recovered during the investigation: possibly associated with flooding activity associated with the Thames.
- 9.5 The investigation revealed no significant remains of Roman or Saxon date. A further aim of the investigation was to relate the findings to the unpublished results of the archaeological excavations undertaken in 1987 prior to the construction of 'Thameside'. The 1987 investigation revealed finds and deposits dating from the early Saxon period to the 13th century and beyond. The AOC Archaeology investigation concludes that the site is located on the flood plain of the Thames and residual archaeological materials from the Roman to post medieval periods have most likely been naturally deposited within the site.
- 9.6 The investigation achieved its aims in establishing the absence of archaeological features in the foundation trenches associated with the proposed development.

10. Publication

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project and the limited results, publication is expected to be limited to publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).

11. Archive Deposition

- 11.1 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, and digital photographs, will be deposited with the receiving local museum (TBC).

12. Bibliography

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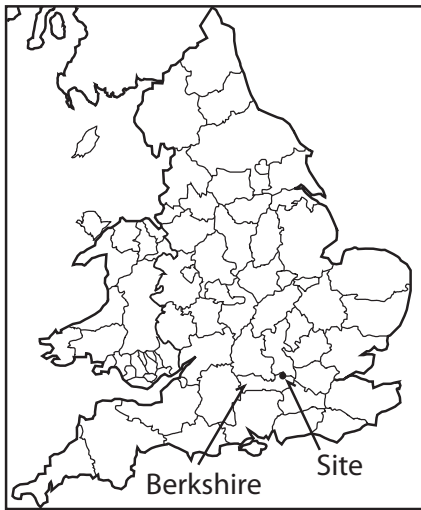
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THAMESIDE, SUTTON ROAD, COOKHAM, ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT



Approximate Site Location
Within England & Wales



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 2000
with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office,
© Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 100023757

500m 0 2 km

1:50 000

Figure 1: Site Location

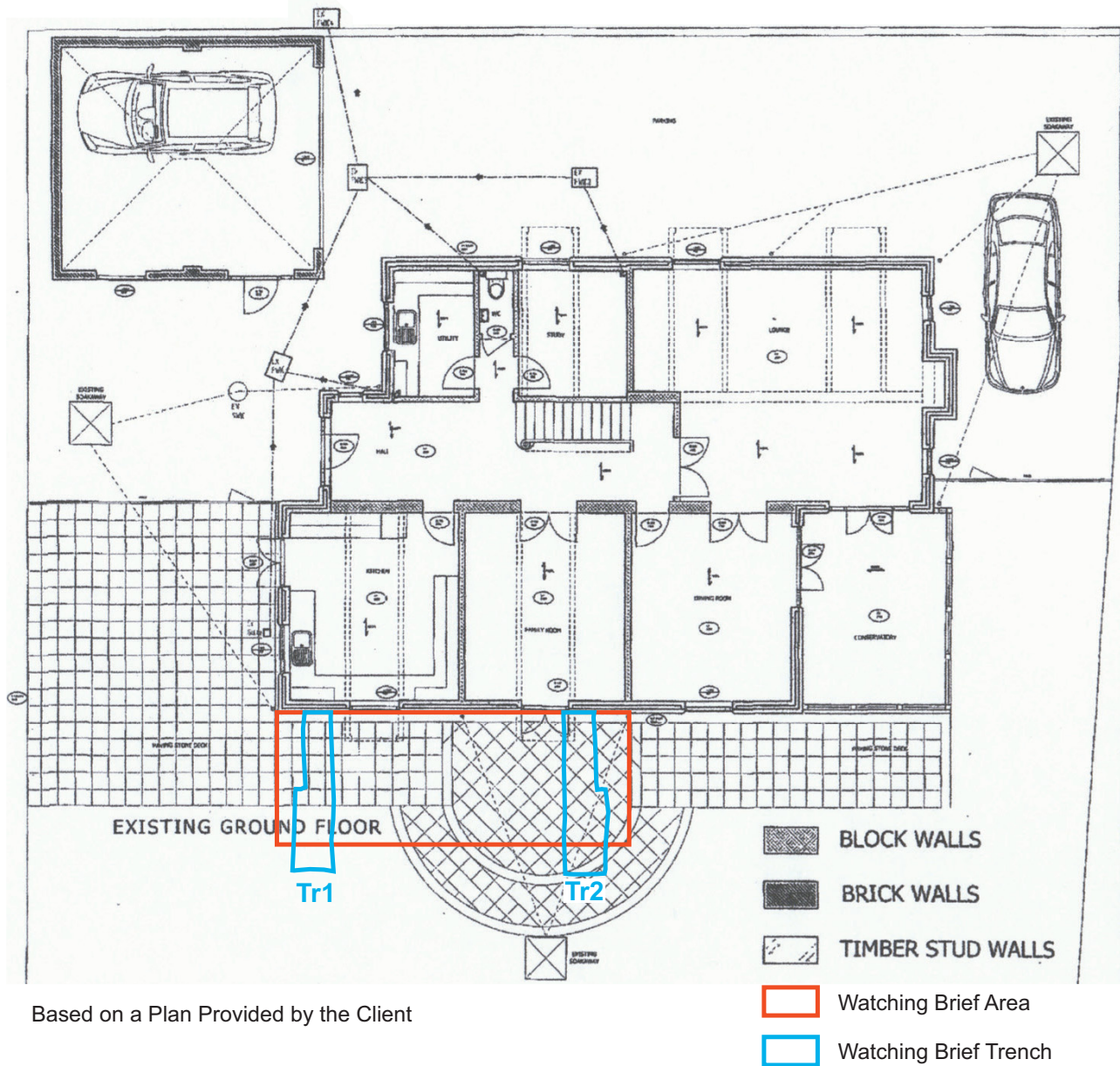


Figure 2: Detailed Site / Watching Brief Trench Location Plan

Not To Scale



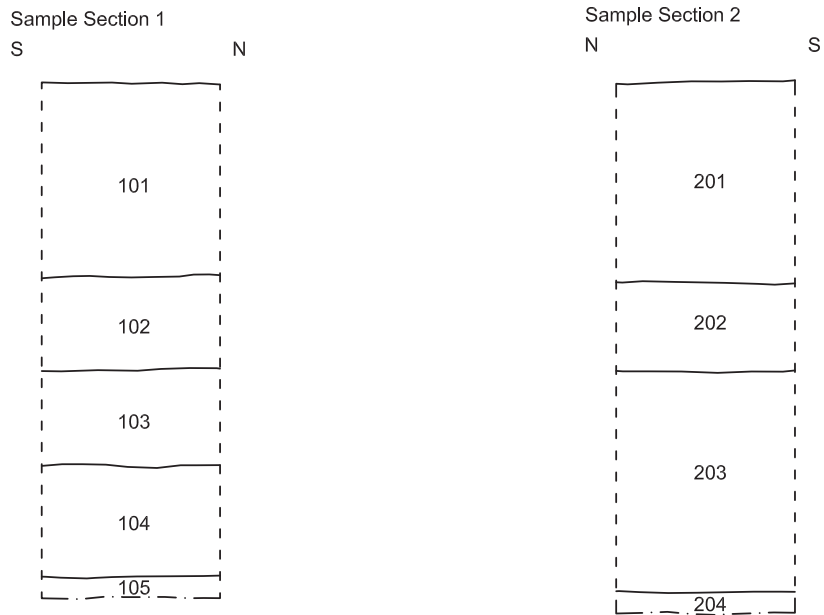
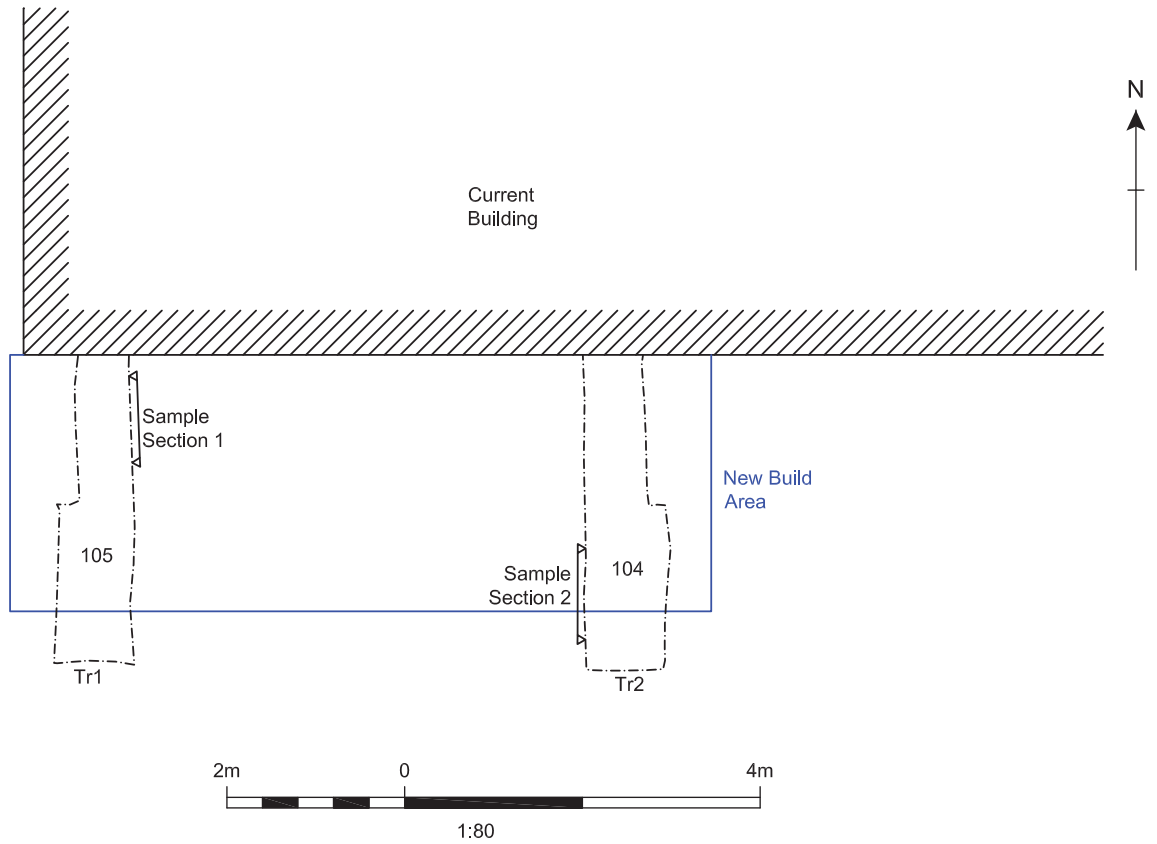


Figure 3: Detailed Watching Brief Area Plan (1:80) and Sample Sections

Appendices

Appendix A- Context Register

Context	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Finds
100	Context given for unstratified find	4	0.8 – 1.2		Yes
101	Type 1 – Modern	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.9	-
102	Mixed, loose, dark greenish brown silty-clay with frequent charcoal and flint fragments, occasional shall fragment, very occasional pot fragment and animal bone. 19/20 th century alluvial deposit.	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.5	-
103	Medium compaction, light green brown silty clay, occasional shell and flint fragments. Undated alluvial deposit.	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.55	-
104	Medium compaction, dark green brown slightly clay silt, occasional shell and flint fragments. Undated alluvial deposit.	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.64	-
105	Firm light orange brown silty clay with frequent irregular flint nodules. Natural.	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.4 (NFE)	-
201	Type 1 – Modern	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.9	-
202	Mixed, loose, dark greenish brown silty-sandy-clay with frequent charcoal and flint fragments, occasional shall fragment, very occasional pot fragment and animal bone. 19/20 th century alluvial deposit.	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.48	Yes
203	Medium compaction, mid green brown clay silt clay, occasional shell and flint fragments. Undated alluvial deposit.	4	0.8 – 1.2	1.26	-
204	Firm light orange brown silty clay with frequent irregular flint nodules. Natural.	4	0.8 – 1.2	0.12 (NFE)	-

Appendix B – Finds Assessment

An Assessment of finds from Thamside ,Sutton Road, Cookham

Site code. THC11

Paul Fitz
AOC Archaeology

Summary

A very small, mixed date, assemblage of ceramic and bone were retrieved from an alluvial layer, as well as a single un-stratified sherd of Roman pot.

The Pottery

Seven sherds of pot (weighing 72 grams) were retrieved from Context (202) and topsoil/unstratified (100). The sherd from (100) is a coarse grey ware rim piece from the Roman period.

The sherds from (202) are mixed in date. One small sherd of medieval green glazed ware is found with a Westerwald stoneware sherd <1580-1800>, a plain red ware sherd of uncertain date, a blue/white transfer printed ware sherd (1780-1900+),and a plain white glazed earthenware sherd (1800+), a multi-coloured fruit/floral earthenware plate sherd (1800+)

Building Material

A single piece of peg tile (28 grams) was also recovered. Due to the mixed dates from the pot sherds it can only be ascribed to the medieval or post medieval periods.

Animal Bone

Eight pieces of animal bone, including two teeth, were retrieved from (202). These appear to be small mammal, including pig, and a possible bird bone.

Discussion/Recommendations

The finds assemblage is small in size and has little significance on a local or national level. The pot sherds are all quite small in size. The Roman sherd suggests nearby Roman activity or could have been deposited in alluvium by flooding. Whilst they may help date the context there is little to be gained from further analysis.

The finds will be catalogued and stored at AOC South until a suitable museum repository is found, hopefully in the not too distant future.

Appendix C – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: *aocarcha1-101670*

Project details

Project name Thameside, Sutton Road, Cookham

Short description of the project AOC completed a two day watching brief on ground works associated with an extension to 'Thameside', Sutton Road, Cookham. A series of undated alluvial deposits were recorded, sealed with a late post medieval deposit. The investigation achieved its aims in establishing the absence of archaeological features in the foundation trenches associated with the proposed development.

Project dates Start: 23-06-2011 End: 24-06-2011

Previous/future work Not known / Not known

Any project codes associated reference 31011 - Contracting Unit No.

Any project codes associated reference THC 11 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Other 2 - In use as a building

Significant Finds CERAMICS Roman

Significant Finds CERAMICS Medieval

Significant Finds CERAMICS Post Medieval

Significant Finds CERAMICS Modern

Significant Finds ANIMAL BONE Uncertain

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country England

Site location BERKSHIRE WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD COOKHAM Thameside, Sutton Road.

Postcode SL6 9SN

Site coordinates SU 8974 8558 51.5614711449 -0.705261955642 51 33 41 N 000 42 18 W Point

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology
Organisation

Project design AOC Archaeology Group
originator

Project Alan Ford
director/manager

Project supervisor Helen MacQuarrie

Type of Private resident
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Graeme Pritchard-Smith
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive Windsor and Royal Borough Museum
recipient

Physical Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics'

Digital Archive Windsor and Royal Borough Museum
recipient

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Images vector','Text'
available

Paper Archive Windsor and Royal Borough Museum
recipient

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'
available

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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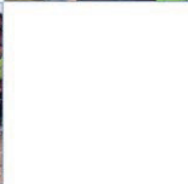
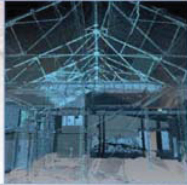
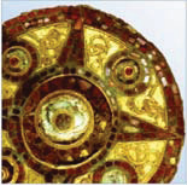
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AOC Archaeology Group, Unit 7, St Margarets Business Centre, Moor Mead Road, Twickenham TW1 1JS
tel: 020 8843 7380 | fax: 020 8892 0549 | e-mail: london@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com