

T H A M E S      V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Former Garages, Evesham Road, Emmer Green,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Daniel Bray**

**Site Code: ERR12/84**

**(SU 7191 7626)**

**Former Garages, Evesham Road, Emmer Green,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**for Grace Allen Homes Ltd**

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code ERR12/84

**January 2013**

## Summary

**Site name:** Former Garages, Evesham Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 71915 76260

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 2nd – 3rd January 2013

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Daniel Bray

**Site code:** ERR 12/84

**Area of site:** c. 1400 sq m

**Summary of results:** No archaeological features or artefacts were found.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course, with accession code REDMG:2012.987

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 08.01.13 Steve Preston ✓ 07.01.13
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# Former Garages, Evesham Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Report 12/84

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land off Evesham Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire (SU 71915 76260) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Diana Angell of Grace Allen Homes Ltd, 6 Stanhope Gate, Stanhope Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3DW.

Planning consent (08/01569/FUL) has been granted by Reading Borough Council for the construction of housing and a garage on a c.1400 sq m parcel of land formerly occupied by garages and accessed off Evesham Road, Emmer Green, Reading. The consent is subject to a condition (4) relating to archaeology, which requires a field evaluation to be carried out prior to groundworks, as part of a phased programme of work to mitigate the archaeological impact of development. Further work might be required dependent on the results of the evaluation.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The renewed application falls within the remit of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012). The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald, Principal Archaeologist with Berkshire Archaeology and archaeological adviser to Reading Borough Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray along with Aidan Colyer and the site code is ERR 12/84. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course, with accession code REDMG:2012.987.

## Location, topography and geology

Emmer Green is 3km north of Reading town centre and 2.5km north of the River Thames (Fig. 1). The c. 1400 sq m site was formerly occupied by blocks of garages which were accessed off Evesham Road to the south (Fig 2). Residential houses form the southern and eastern boundaries to the site. The site is located on sloping ground with a dry valley to the west. Prior to the construction of the garages the site had obviously been terraced. There was a single row of garages to the east on the upper terrace which then sloped gradually down to the west to the second terrace which then immediately stepped down to the third before sloping more gradually down to the

north-west towards the dry valley. The ground level therefore varies between 77m and 80m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is mapped as Reading Beds (BGS 1946). The main geology observed was light blue grey gravel although in Trench 3 and part of Trench 2 yellow clay was revealed below the gravel.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within an area of Emmer Green with a variety of sites and finds recorded in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record. Gravel extraction of the higher terraces of the River Thames has led to the recovery of large numbers of Palaeolithic flint tools (Wymer 1968), though these are usually only to be found *in-situ* deep in the gravel matrix. Later periods are represented by finds of Neolithic flint tools, Bronze Age bronze tools and pottery, and Roman coins. Excavated evidence is less common but Iron Age occupation was recorded at Lyefield Court c. 350m to the north-west (Ford 2006) and Late Iron Age/Roman occupation at Emmer Green Youth Centre also to the north-west (MoLAS 2010). Other investigations in Emmer Green have revealed very little of archaeological interest (Oram 2001; Ford 2005; Colls 2006; Milbank 2006a and b and 2007).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; and
- to determine if there are any Iron Age or Roman deposits present on the site.

It was proposed to excavate four trenches all measuring 11m long and 1.6m wide which covers c. 5% of the site area. The trenches were positioned to target the footprints of the proposed buildings. A contingency of up to a further 5m of trenching was included if advised by Berkshire Archaeology.

A breaker was initially used to remove the concrete slabs then a JCB-type machine equipped with a ditching bucket was used to expose the archaeologically sensitive levels. This work was supervised at all times by an archaeologist and spoil heaps were monitored for finds. Where archaeological features were exposed they were to be cleaned and excavated by hand.

## **Results**

All four trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 3). They ranged in length from 10.80m to 11.30m and in depth from 0.37m to 1.03m. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1 (Fig. 3 and Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NE - SW and was 11.00m long and 0.84m deep at the southern end and 1.00m deep in the northern end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of concrete slab above 0.23m of dark brown gravel above 0.41m of dark grey silty clay with gravel on top of natural geology. The dark grey silty clay deposit was thicker at the northern end. The natural geology consisted of a light blue grey gravel with patches of yellow clay. Small flecks of red brick or tile were seen in both of the deposits above the natural geology. No archaeological features or finds were present.

### Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4 and Pl.2)

Trench 2 was aligned NW - SE and was 10.80m long. The trench measured 1.03m deep at the western end and shallowed to 0.70m in the middle where the ground level then stepped vertically up to give the trench a depth of 1.05m and the natural geology continued to rise to 0.54m depth at the northern end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of concrete slabs above 0.23m of dark brown gravel above 0.60m of dark grey silty clay with gravel overlying natural geology. The concrete was the same thickness at the eastern end, where the brown gravel measured 0.17m which was above 0.17m of dark grey silty clay with gravel. The geology for most the trench was the same as Trench 1 but at the eastern end the deposits were overlying a yellow clay natural geology. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

### Trench 3 (Fig 3)

Trench 3 was aligned WSW - ENE and was 11.20m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of concrete slab above 0.17m of brown gravel on top of a yellow clay natural geology. A modern drainage pipe back filled with pea grit was observed diagonally across the trench between 2.3m and 5.0m. No archaeological features or finds were present.

### Trench 4 (Fig 3)

Trench 4 was aligned SW - NE and was 11.30m long and 0.87m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of concrete slab above 0.27m of mid brown gravel above 0.30m of dark blue sandy silt gravel on top of a mid blue

grey sandy clay with gravel (natural geology). A French drain backfilled with bricks and large stones ran through the middle of the trench for the whole length. No archaeological features or finds were found.

## Conclusion

Despite the archaeological potential of the site, the trenches revealed no features or finds of archaeological interest. The site lies on the edge of a dry channel and naturally slopes steeply towards this. The underlying geology towards the eastern side of the site has most likely been truncated while the western side of the site was built up in order to level the terraces for the garages that previously occupied the site.

## References

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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**  
0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	11.00	1.60	0.84–1.00	S End: 0–0.20m concrete slabs; 0.20–0.43m dark brown gravel; 0.43–0.84m dark grey silty clay with gravel 0.84m+ light blue grey gravel natural geology with patches of yellow clay. N End: 0–0.20m concrete slabs; 0.20–0.43m dark brown gravel; 0.43–1.00m dark grey silty clay with gravel patches; 1.00m+ light blue grey gravel with patches of yellow clay natural geology. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
2	10.80	1.60	0.54–1.03	W End: 0–0.20m concrete slabs; 0.20–0.43m dark brown gravel; 0.43–1.03m dark grey silty clay with gravel; 1.03m+ light blue grey gravel natural geology. <b>[Pl. 2]</b> E End: 0–0.20m concrete slabs; 0.20–0.37m dark brown gravel; 0.37–0.54m dark grey silty clay with gravel; 0.54m+ yellow clay natural geology.
3	11.20	1.60	0.37	0–0.20m concrete slabs; 0.20–0.37m mid brown gravel; 0.37m+ yellow clay natural geology. Modern pipe
4	11.30	1.60	0.87	0–0.20m concrete slabs; 0.20–0.47m mid brown gravel; 0.47–0.77m dark blue sandy silt gravel; 0.77m+ mid blue grey sand clay with gravel. French drain





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Figure 1. Location of site within Emmer Green, Reading  
and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Evesham Road.

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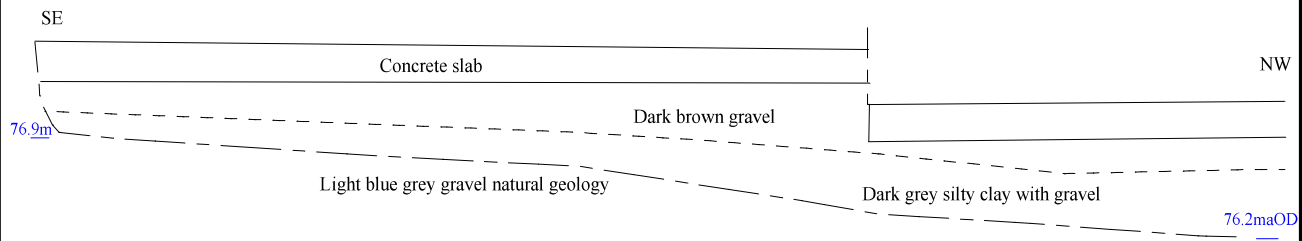
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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**Trench 2**



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Figure 4. Section from Trench 2.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north-east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking south-east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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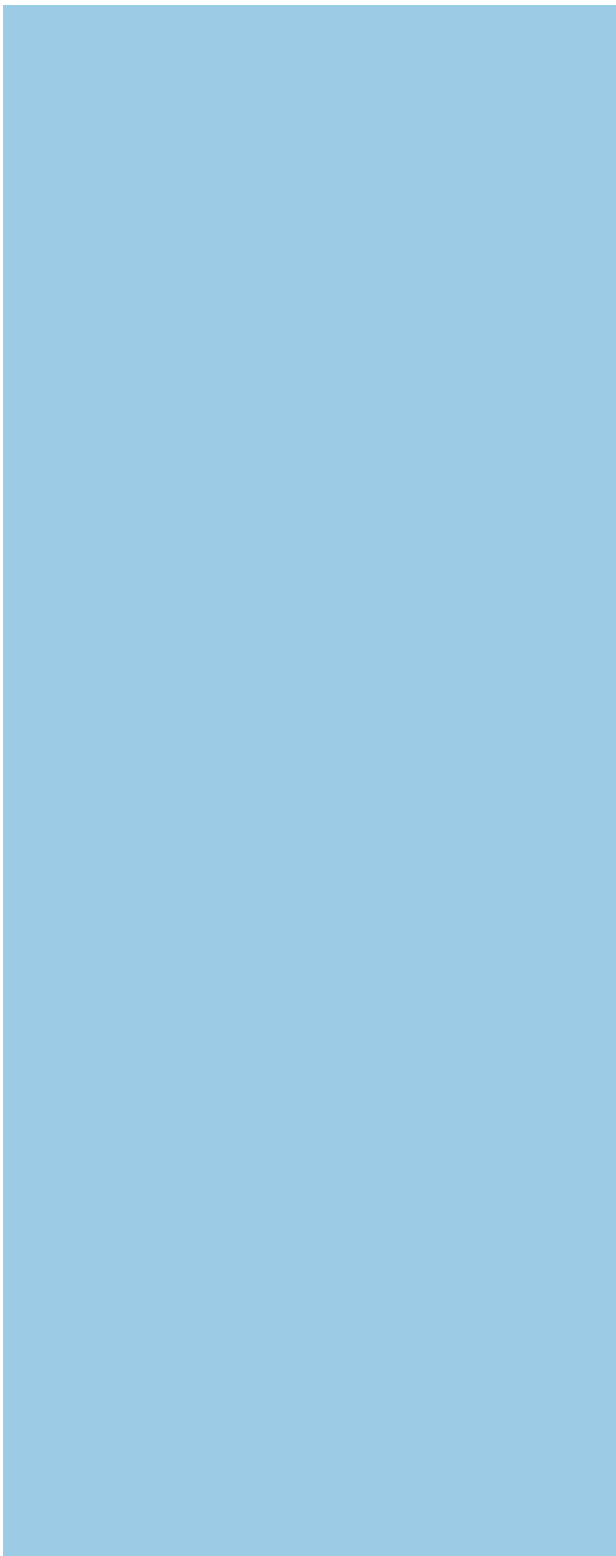
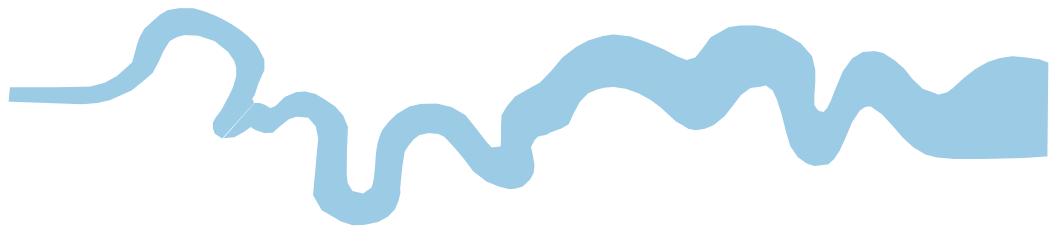
Plates 1 and 2.

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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





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