

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land to the rear of Parliament House,
St Laurence Way, Slough, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Site Code: LWS14/73

(SU 9803 7940)

Land to the rear of Parliament House, St Laurence Way, Slough, Berkshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Mr R Maru

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LWS 14/73

May 2014

Summary

Site name: Land to the rear of Parliament House, St Laurence Way, Slough, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9803 7940

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 8th May 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: LWS 14/73

Area of site: 0.05ha

Summary of results: The evaluation revealed that the site was heavily truncated by modern services and the remains of modern walls.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an approved local museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 09.05.14 Steve Preston✓ 09.05.14

Land to the rear of Parliament House, St Laurence Way, Slough, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 14/73

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out behind Parliament House, St Laurence Way, Slough (SU 9803 7940) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Albert Alaba Ogunsanya of Zyntax Chartered Architects, 8 Arbofield Close, Slough, SL1 2JW on behalf of their client Mr Rashmi Maru.

A planning consent (app P/02161/015) has been gained from Slough Borough Council to construct four new houses with car parking on the site. The consent includes a condition (8) relating to archaeology which states that no development shall take place until the applicant or their agents have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This was determined to take the form initially of a field evaluation (trial trenching), based on the results of which further mitigation measures might be required.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, adviser to the Borough on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Tom Stewart on the 8th May 2014 and the site code is LWS 14/73. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an approved local museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on an irregular parcel of land on Grove Close to the rear of Parliament House in eastern Slough, off St Laurence Way (Figs 1 and 2). The site is currently in use as a car park and is covered in Tarmac. The underlying geology is shown as Taplow Gravels (BGS 1981) which was observed in the trenches although a brown silty clay cap in one trench may also have been part of the natural geology. The site lies at c. 28.5m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

In summary the potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded in the Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record for the general area during archaeological fieldwork, aerial photography, mineral extraction and dredging of the river Thames (Ford 1987, Foreman *et al.* 2002; Gates 1975). Less is recorded for the urban and suburban areas of Slough. The site lies to the west of the medieval village of Upton where the original manor house still stands along with the parish church. Other medieval activity is recorded to the north-east, and a Roman coin was found to the east. An Iron Age enclosure with evidence of metalworking has recently been excavated to the south-west.

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 aims of this project were:

- to determine if any archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; and
- to determine if archaeological deposits of medieval date were present that relate to the settlement at Upton.

Two trenches were to be dug, each 10m in length and 1.6m wide equating to 4% coverage of the site. The trenches were to be excavated using a JCB type machine fitted with a ditching bucket under constant supervision, to reach archaeological sensitive areas. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project, without compromising the integrity of any that might better be investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Results

The trenches were dug as intended and were 10.0m in length and 1.8m wide (Fig. 3) and ranged in depth from 0.70 to 0.72m. Trench 2 was relocated to the south by 1m to avoid a live power cable that ran through the area. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned SSW - NNE and was 10.0m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.13m Tarmac, 0.08m compacted red brown sandy gravel, 0.08m light yellow brown sandy gravel, 0.18m dark brown grey silty clay with gravel, brick and tile (made ground) and 0.23m of brown silty clay (subsoil or natural geology) overlying clayey sandy gravel natural geology with clay patches (Fig. 4). The northern end of the trench was truncated by two walls and an old service pipe. No deposits nor finds were recovered.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned WNW - ESE and was 10.0m long and 0.72m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.06m Tarmac, 0.08m compacted red brown sandy gravel, 0.11m light yellow brown sandy gravel, 0.29m dark brown grey silty clay with gravel, brick and tile (made ground) and 0.18m of dark black grey silty clay with modern inclusions overlying overlying clayey sandy gravel natural geology with clay patches . Areas of modern disturbance were recorded in the trench but no deposits or artefacts of archaeological interest.

Finds

No finds were recovered

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that the site has been disturbed in the past with the presence of walls and drains present in the trenches. No archaeological deposits were identified in the trenches although it is possible that the brown clay seen in trench 1 is the remains of subsoil. The site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

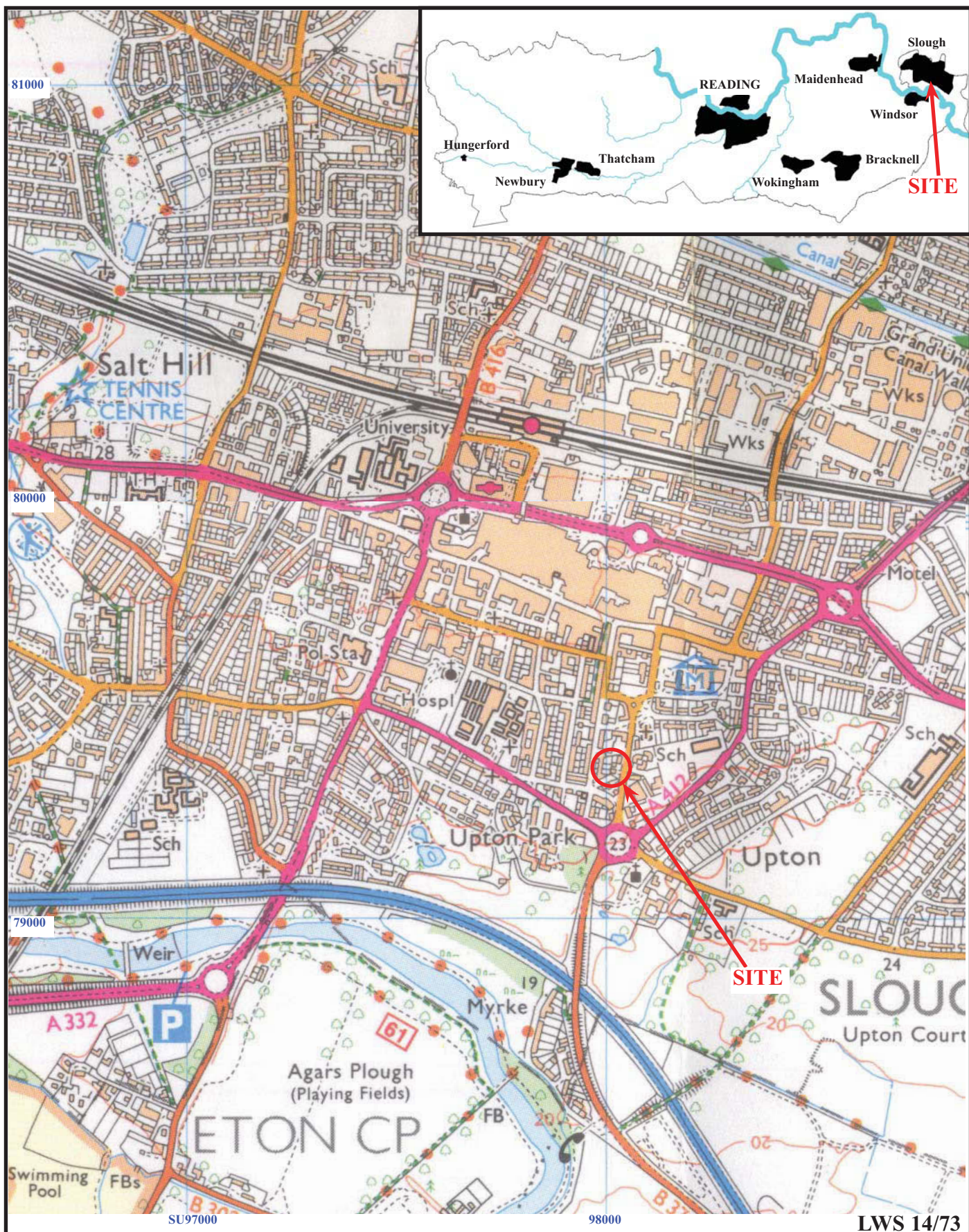
References

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- Foreman, S, Hiller, J and Petts, D, 2002, *Gathering the people, settling the land, the archaeology of a middle Thames landscape, Anglo-Saxon to post-medieval*, Oxford Archaeol Thames Valley Landscapes Monogr **14**, Oxford
- Gates, T, 1975, *The Thames Valley; an archaeological survey of the River Gravels*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ **1**, Reading
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

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	10	1.8	0.70	0–0.13m Tarmac; 0.13-0.21m red brown sandy gravel; 0.21-0.29m light brown sandy gravel; 0.29-0.47m dark brown grey made ground; 0.47-0.70m brown silty clay (subsoil?); 0.70m+ clayey sandy gravel with silty clay patches natural geology [Pl. 1]
2	10	1.8	0.72	0–0.06m Tarmac; 0.06-0.14m red brown sandy gravel; 0.14-0.25m light brown sandy gravel; 0.25-0.54m dark brown grey made ground; 0.54-0.72m dark black grey made ground; 0.72m+ clayey sandy gravel with silty clay patches natural geology. [Pl. 2]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Slough and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off St. Laurence Way.

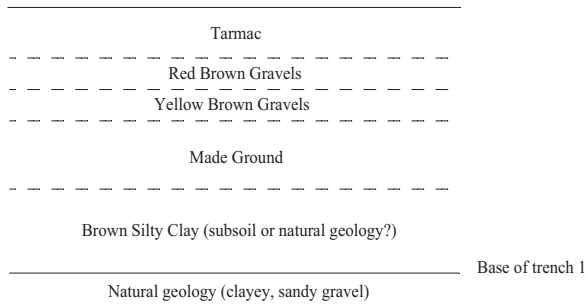
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Figure 4. Representative section.

0 1m

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.2m.

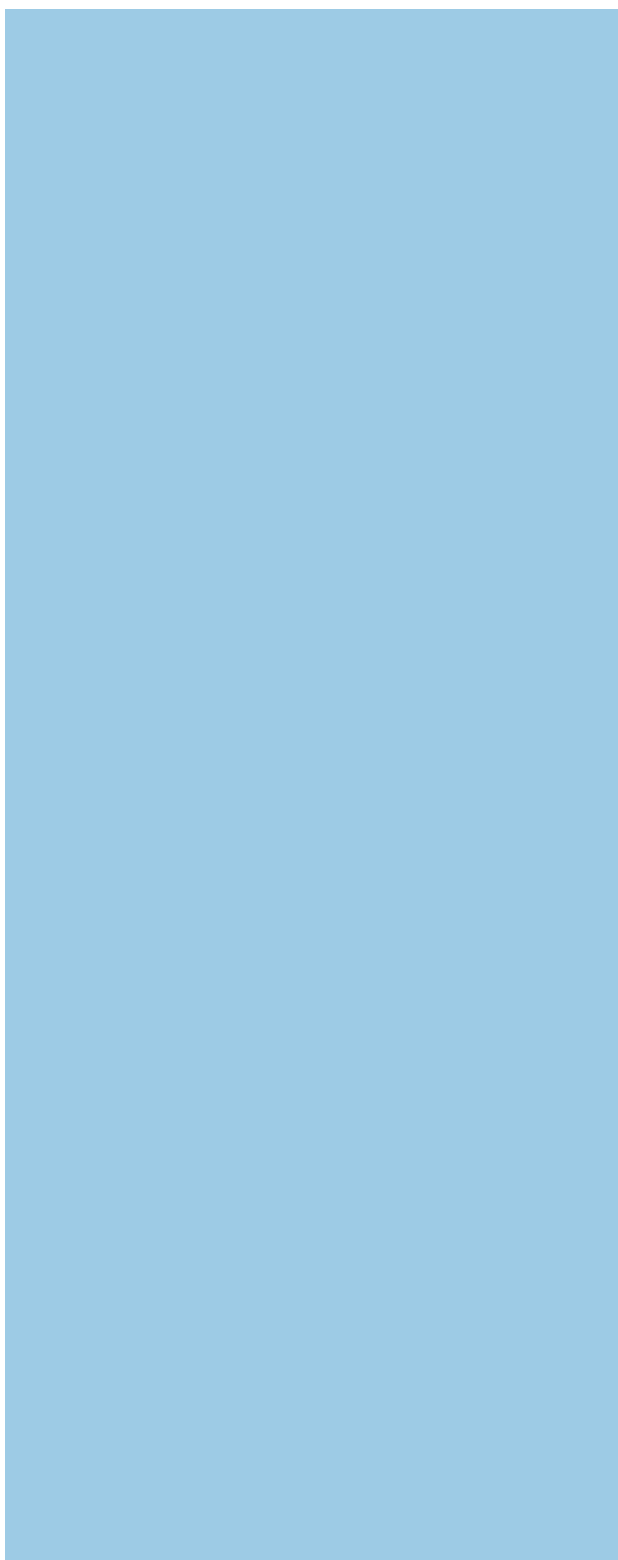
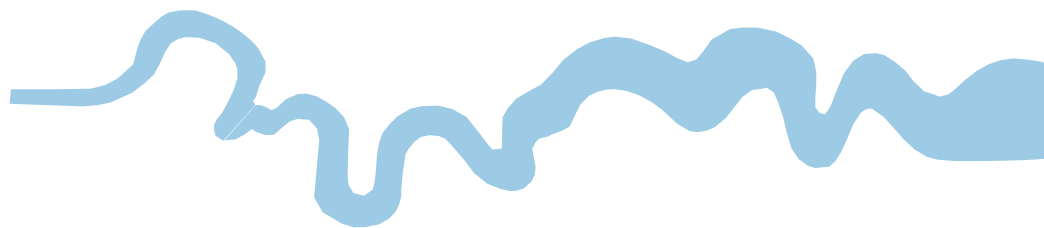
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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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