

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**New wet dock, Longview, Bisham Road,
Bisham, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Daniel Bray

Site Code: LDB15/131

(SU 8493 8589)

**New wet dock, Longview, Bisham Road,
Bisham, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Stoney Ware Estate Ltd

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LDB 15/131

July 2015

Summary

Site name: New wet dock, Longview, Bisham Road, Bisham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8493 8589

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 1st - 10th July 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Bray, Tim Dawson and Andy Taylor

Site code: LDB 15/131

Area of site: 100 sq m

Summary of results: The watching brief observed the excavation of a deep wide trench through part of the sequence of alluvium adjacent to the river Thames. No deposits of archaeological or palaeoenvironmental interest were recorded.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 27.07.15 Steve Preston ✓ 27.07.15

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Report 15/131

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at to the rear of Longview, Bisham Road, Bisham, Berkshire (SU8493 8589) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Russell Dalton of Stoney Ware Estate Limited, Corner Cottage, Bisham Road, Marlow SL7 1RN.

Planning permission (ref. 15/00328) has being gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of a new wet dock. The consent includes a condition (3) relating to archaeology which requires that a watching brief be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Royal Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeological Officer at Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Royal Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray, Tim Dawson and Andy Taylor between 1st and 10th July 2015 with the site code LDB 15/131.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a local museum willing to accept material in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the garden of Longview in the village of Bisham, Berkshire on the southern bank of the River Thames, just across the river from Marlow (Figs 1 and 2) The underlying geology is mapped as alluvial silts and clays (BGS 2005) which was observed across the area. The garden is flat and lies at a height of 28.5m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing document prepared by Roland Smith of Berkshire Archaeology. In summary, the site lies in the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of sites recorded in the Berkshire (and Buckinghamshire) Historic Environment Records, with many sites recorded from the air (Gates 1975) as well as numerous stray finds, both prehistoric and later, of flint, bronze and iron

retrieved from the Thames (e.g. Chappell 1987). Further finds have been recorded during fieldwork carried out in advance of mineral extraction (Barnes and Cleal 1991) and other fieldwork carried out as part of planning process (Foreman *et al.* 2002). The site lies close to a palaeochannel of the Thames, raising the possibility of specific waterside structures being present such as mills, fish traps, or rich Bronze Age sites such as those at Runnymede Bridge, Egham (Longley 1980) or Whitecross Farm, Wallingford (Boyle *et al.* 2006). The latter sites were located in a similar topographic position to the current site. Any associated archaeological features discovered could therefore include well preserved organic remains.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular any overburden stripping prior to ground reduction, and any deeply invasive landscaping as necessary. In this instance the excavation of the new dock was monitored at all times.

Results

The new wet dock was 20.0m long and 5.0m wide (Fig. 3; Pls 1 and 2) and was excavated to a depth of 1.80m. The stratigraphy consisted of yellow brown alluvial deposits with blue patches and contained a large amount of tree roots. Towards the river, made ground consisting of chalk and rubble was observed above the alluvial deposits, deepening towards the river and reclaiming c. 4m of land. The rubble was held in place by metal sheeting and piles against the river and 2m behind this large vertical wooden stakes made of pinched pine and connected via steel tie rods were sunk into the made ground.

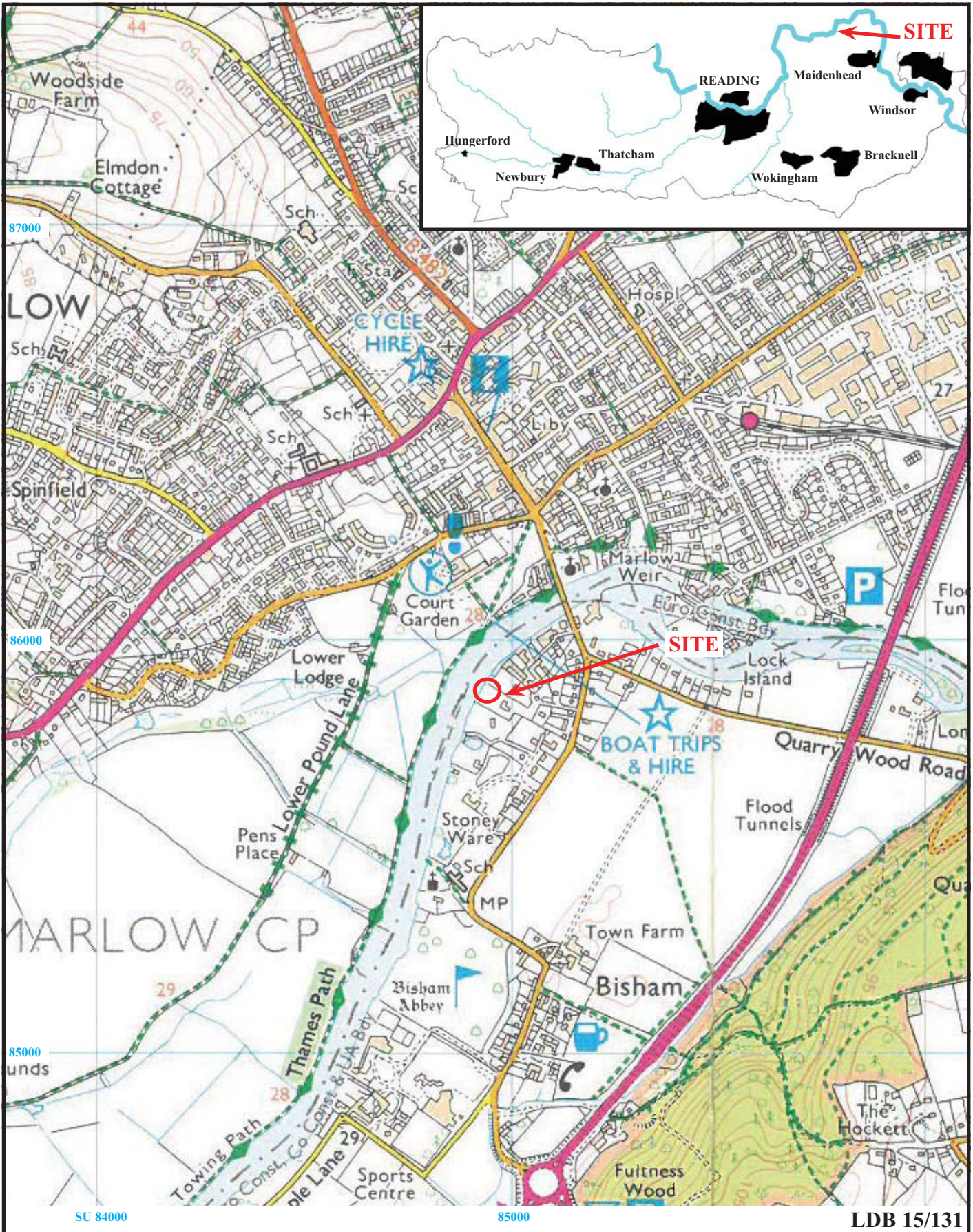
The full depth of alluvium above gravel was not exposed and no stratigraphy was encountered within the levels excavated to suggest the presence of a discrete palaeochannel. No evidence of peat formation and no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were encountered.

Conclusion

The fieldwork examined the removal of a deep thickness of alluvium but without exposing a full sequence of deposition above gravel. Part of the site had been reclaimed from the river in modern times. Nothing of archaeological interest was observed during the watching brief.

References

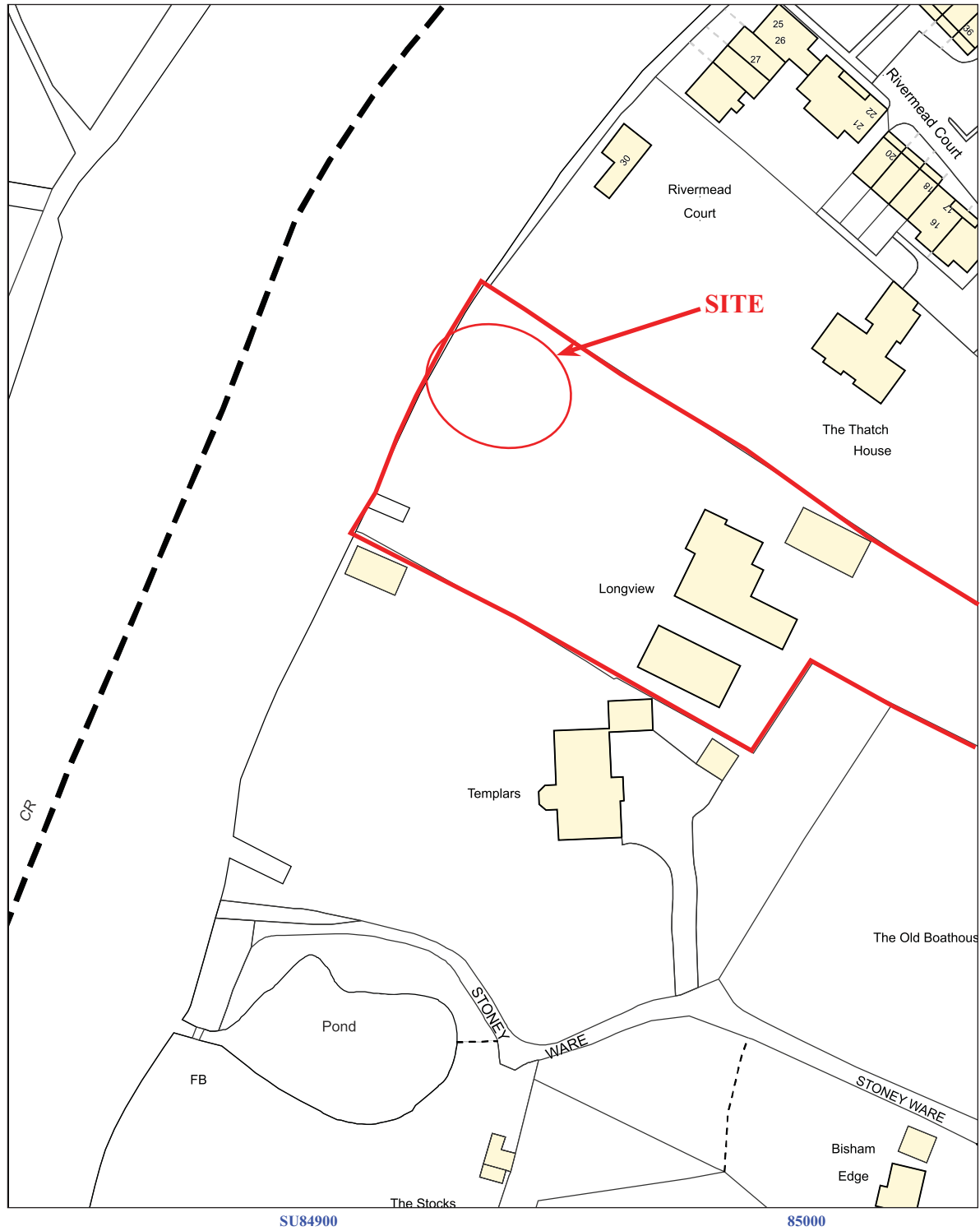
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Figure 1. Location of site within Bisham and Berkshire

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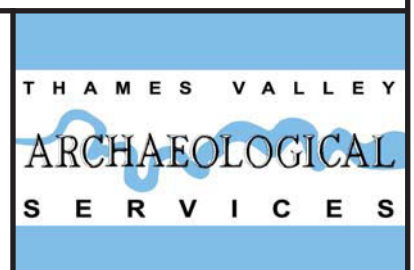


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site**

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Figure 3. Location of observed area



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Plate 1. Excavating the wet dock, looking west



Plate 2. Excavated wet dock, looking northwest.

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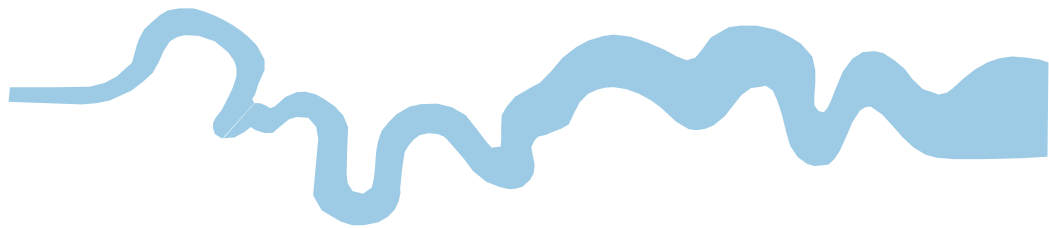
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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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