

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Moorlands Cottage, High Street,  
Cookham, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Lizzi Lewins**

**Site Code: MCC15/187**

**(SU 8947 8536)**

# **Moorland Cottage, High Street, Cookham, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Mr Lowden**

by Lizzi Lewins

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MCC 15/187

**October 2015**

## Summary

**Site name:** Moorlands Cottage, High Street, Cookham, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 8947 8536

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Tim Dawson

**Site code:** MCC 15/187

**Area of site:** 24 sq m

**Summary of results:** No archaeological features or finds were observed during the course of the watching brief.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an appropriate designated museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 09.11.15 Steve Preston ✓ 09.11.15
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# Moorland Cottage, High St, Cookham, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Lizzi Lewins

Report 15/187

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Moorland Cottage, High St, Cookham, Berkshire (SU 8947 8536) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Mark Lowden of Moorland Cottage, High St, Cookham, Berkshire.

Planning permission (ref. 14/02576/FULL) has been gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of an extension to the existing cottage. The consent is subject to a condition which requires the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the 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 for Berkshire Archaeology, who advise the Royal Borough on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson and Luis Esteves between the 15th and 21st September 2015 and the site code is MCC 15/187.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an appropriate designated museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern side of the High Street towards the western edge of Cookham and south of the River Thames (Fig. 1). It is a narrow, flat parcel of land occupied by a house and garden (Fig. 2). The site lies on the boundary of two geological deposits: Alluvium and Shepperton Gravel (BGS 2005). The natural geology observed across the site was a coarse, yellow-brown sand. The site lies at a height of *c.*25m above Ordnance Datum.

## Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing document prepared by Mr Roland Smith of Berkshire Archaeology. The site lies within the historic core of Cookham, thought to have middle Saxon origins and a minster church by the 8th century AD (Astill 1978). The house is a grade II listed building.

Until relatively recently, almost no archaeological investigation had been undertaken in Cookham itself, but a number of watching briefs and evaluations conducted within the immediate area have revealed the presence of archaeological features dating mainly to the Saxon and Medieval periods, and some evidence of prehistoric activity has also been uncovered (summarized in McNicoll-Norbury and MUNDIN 2014: see also Ford 2005; MUNDIN 2008; McNicoll-Norbury 2009a). Five further small sites, however, revealed no archaeological features or finds (Hammond 2003; McNicoll-Norbury 2009b; Porter 2014; Platt and Porter 2014) or only post medieval finds (Platt 2014).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological features affected by the groundworks which form part of the new extension. This involved the examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks. The two foundation trenches and ground reduction were observed. All were dug using a mini-digger with a toothless ditching bucket to a maximum depth of 1.4m. Spoil heaps were monitored for finds.

## **Results**

### Foundation trenches (Fig. 3)

Two foundation trenches were dug within the footprint of the new extension. Both trenches were 0.7m wide and 7.3m long. The western trench was dug to a depth of 1.2m whilst the eastern trench was dug to a depth of 1.4m (Pl. 1). The stratigraphy seen in both trenches is as follows: topsoil was observed to a depth of 0.25m and the subsoil to 0.43m. The subsoil consisted of a grey-brown silty sand. The natural geology geology of coarse yellow-brown sand was observed at a depth of 0.68m (Pl. 2). Fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) and mass-produced transfer-printed earthenware pottery ('china') were observed mixed into the subsoil.

### Ground reduction (Fig. 30)

Following the concreting of the foundation trenches the ground in between was then reduced by a depth of 0.43m. No topsoil remained when the ground was reduced. The subsoil (appearing more reddish-brown probably from the amount of brick it contained) was reduced to the top of the concreted foundation trenches (0.43m) and was again noted to contain fragments of CBM and china of post-medieval date.

## **Finds**

No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered.

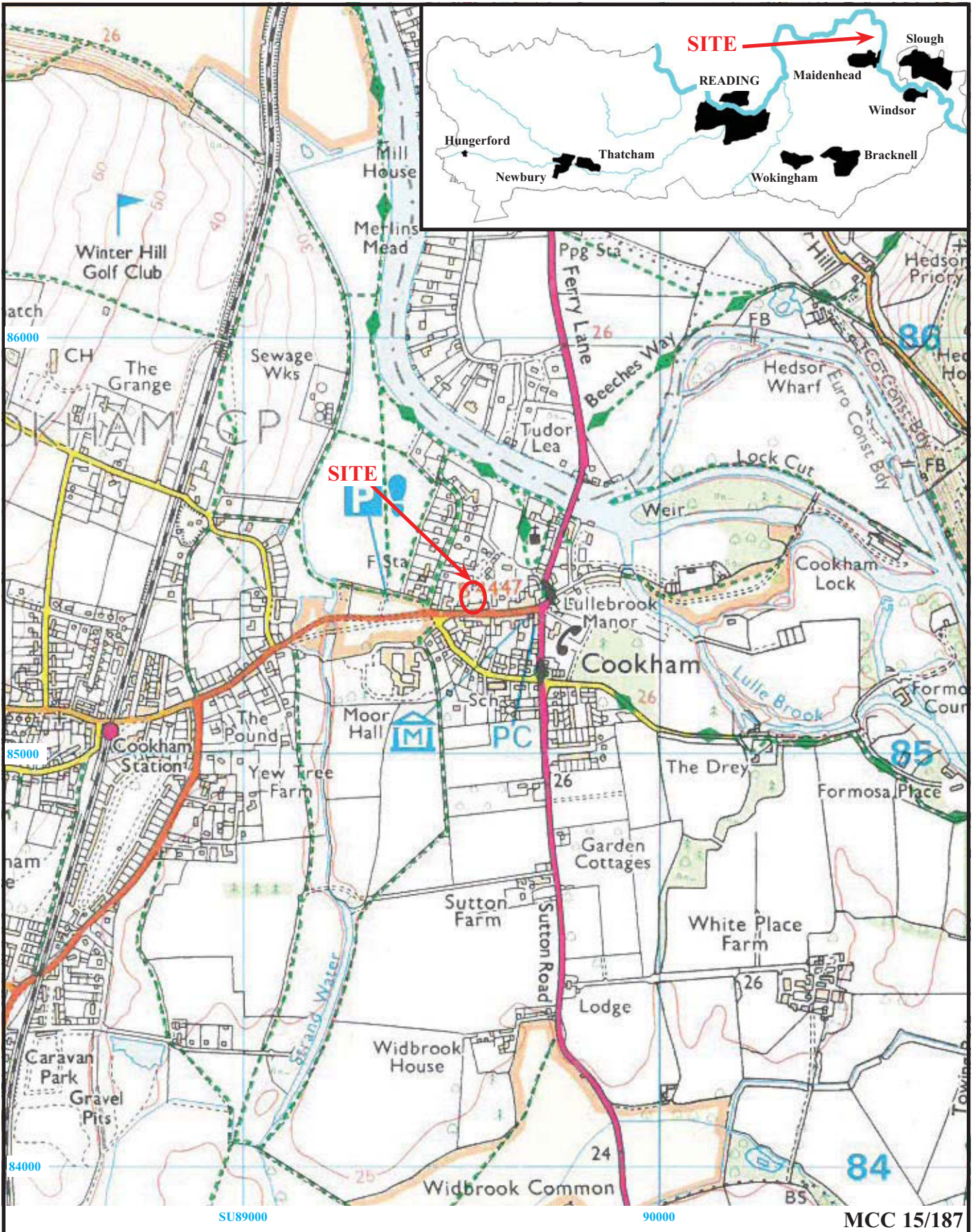
## Conclusion

No archaeological features or finds were encountered during the course of the watching brief despite the site's lying within the historic core of Cookham and close to previously investigated productive sites.

## References

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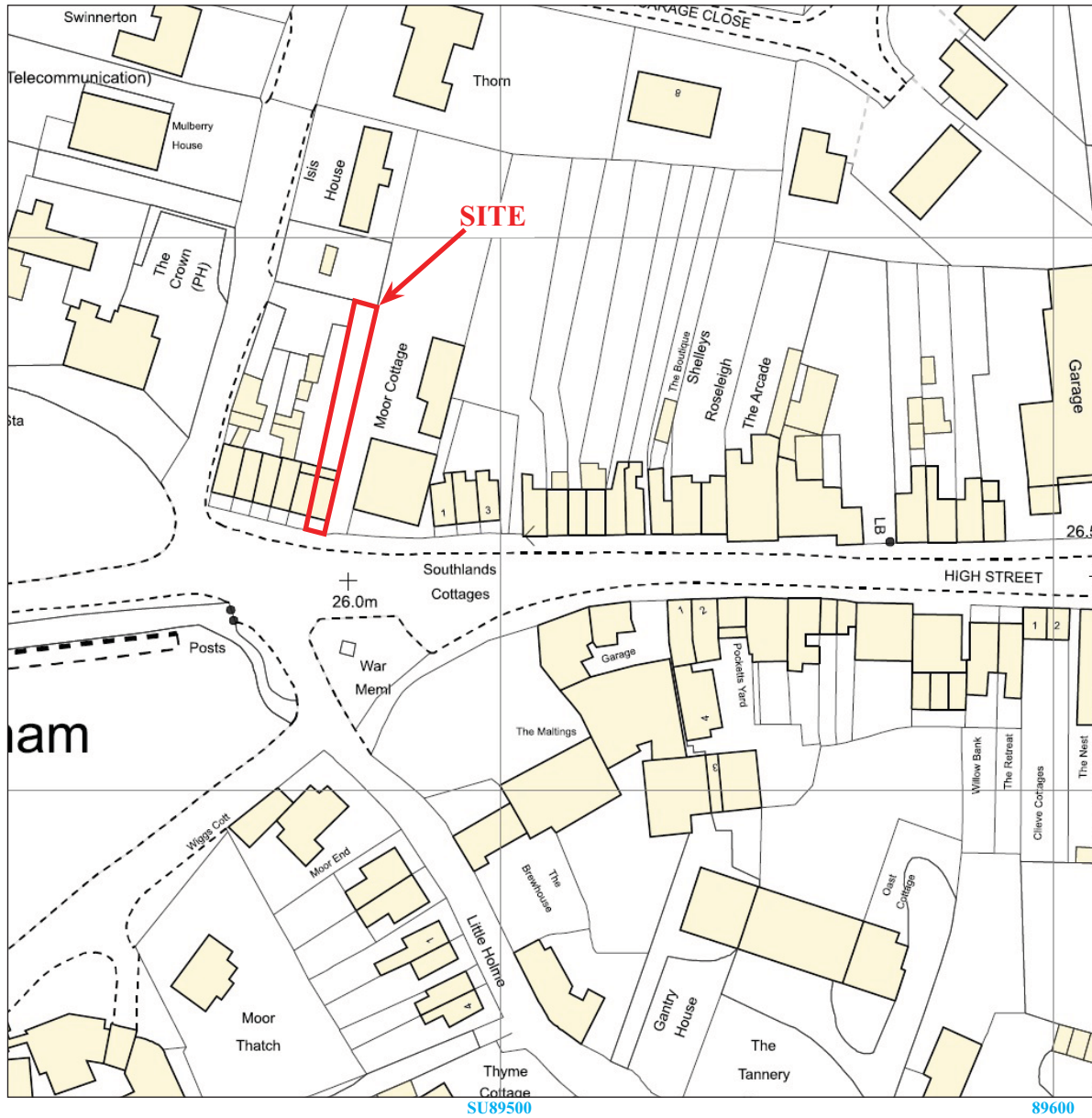
Figure 1. Location of site within Cookham and Berkshire.

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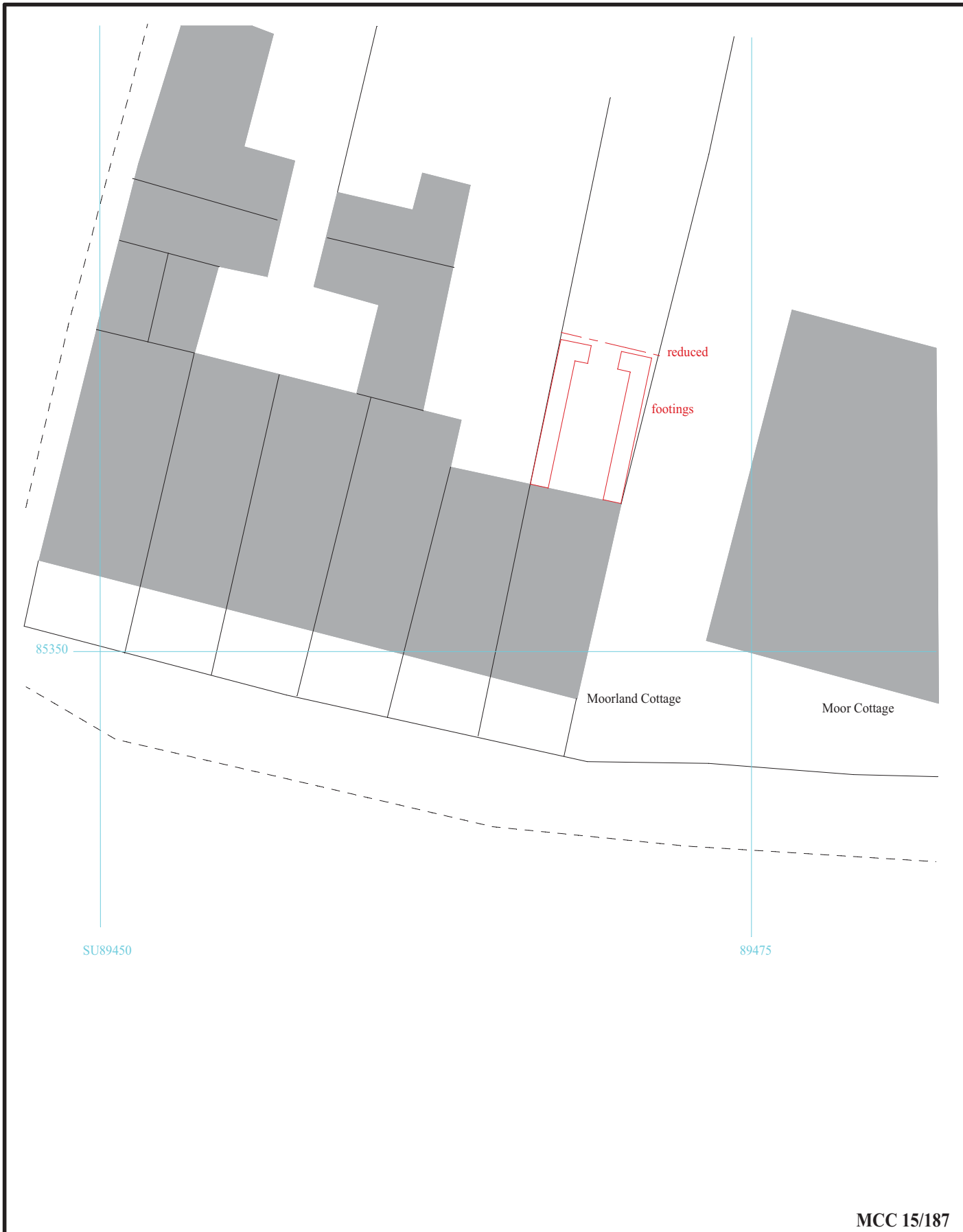


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off High Street.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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Grey brown sand silt with stones

Brown grey silty sand

Course grey sand natural geology

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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Full excavated depth of footing, looking south, Scale: 2m.



Plate 2. Representative section, looking west, Scale: 2m.

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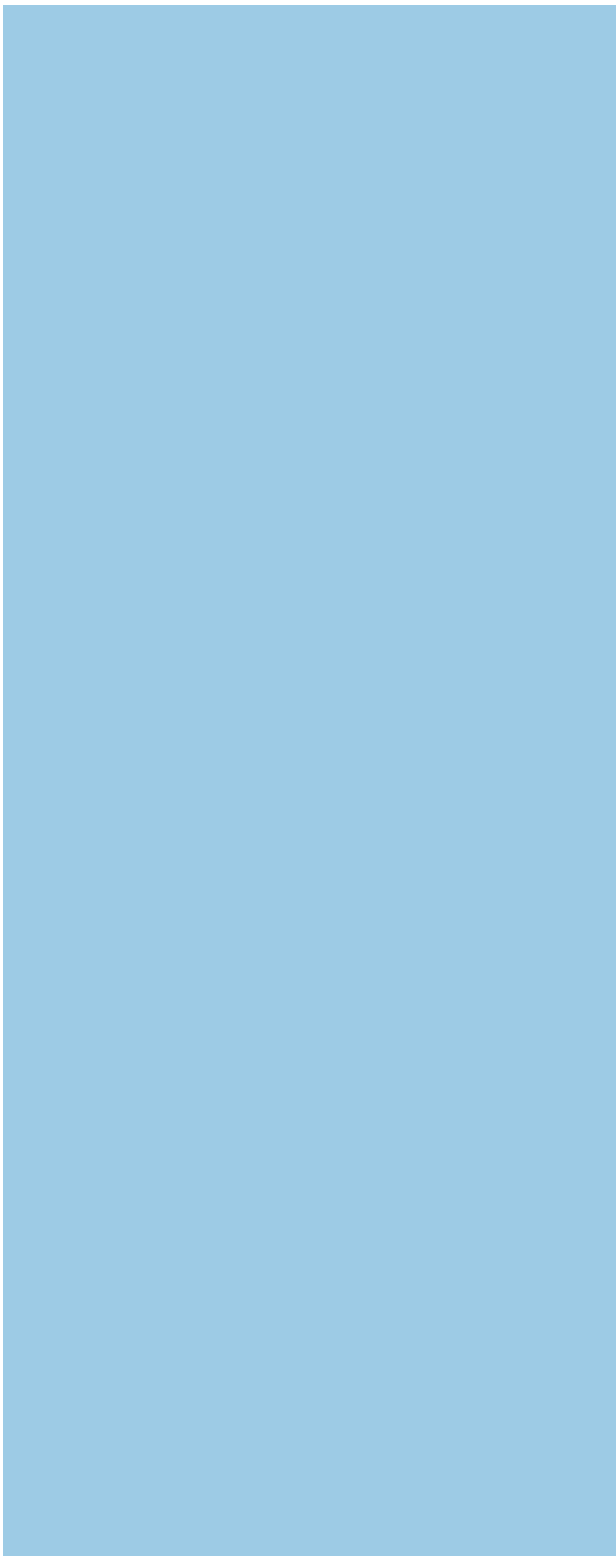
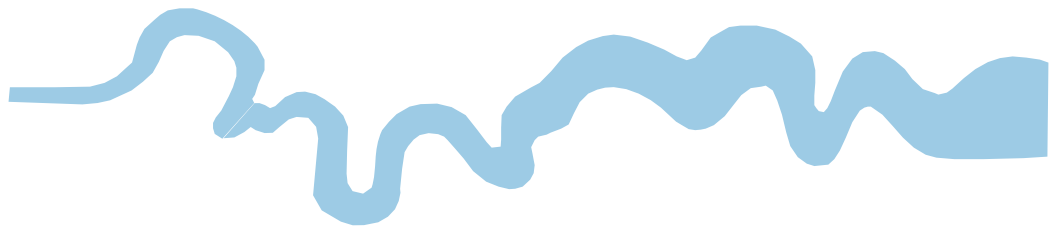
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Plates 1 - 2.

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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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,  
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,  
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552  
Fax: 0118 9260553  
Email: [tvas@tvas.co.uk](mailto:tvas@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk](http://www.tvas.co.uk)**