

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common,
Reading, West Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor

Site Code: ALA15/13

(SU 5759 7486)

Ashampstead Lodge, Ashamptead Common, Reading, West Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ali Rowe Interiors

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ALA 15/13

December 2015

Summary

Site name: Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common, Reading, West Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 5759 7486

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 6th-19th October 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Tim Dawson, David Platt and Andy Taylor

Site code: ALA 15/13

Area of site: c. 120 sq m

Summary of results: No traces of any medieval pottery production sites were observed and no deposits or finds of any archaeological interest were recorded.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the West Berkshire Museum in due course.

*This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. All TVAS unpublished fieldwork reports are available on our website:
www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 17.12.15 Steve Preston ✓ 15.12.15

Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common, Reading, West Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor

Report 15/13

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common, Reading, West Berkshire (SU 5759 7486) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ali Grundy of Ali Rowe Interiors of the same address.

A planning consent (app 14/02886/HOUSE) has been gained from West Berkshire Council for an extension to the existing house at Ashampstead Lodge (formerly known as Baggage Chute). This consent includes a condition (4) relating to archaeology which requires a watching brief to 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 Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Alex Godden, Archaeological Officer with West Berkshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson, David Platt and Andy Taylor between the 6th and 19th October 2015 and the site code is ALA 15/13.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the West Berkshire Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on an sloping plot of land that lies on the eastern end of the Berkshire Downs c.4km west of Pangbourne (Fig. 1). It is currently occupied by the garage of the adjacent property with the driveway immediately to the south and gardens to the north (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is mapped as Reading Beds gravel (BGS 1946), although clay and chalk was actually observed in the foundations. The site lies at a height of c.100m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a consultation response prepared by Mr Alex Godden of West Berkshire Archaeological Service. In summary, areas of Ashampstead Common have been used for pottery production in medieval times. A variant of the pottery types commonly encountered in the Kennet

Valley and surrounding regions ('Newbury C' after Hawkes 1997, 119) has been shown to have been produced in the Ashampstead area. Previous works at the site revealed a kiln structure where this pottery was produced as well as kiln furniture and pottery wasters (Mepham and Heaton 1995). The development therefore may have the possibility of encountering additional pottery production evidence.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits or finds affected by the new construction work. In general the watching brief would involve examination of any areas of ground reduction, the digging of foundation trenches for the new structure and the digging of any deep trenches for services as necessary.

Results (Figs 3 and 4)

Reduced Area

An area on the eastern side of the existing garage was reduced down and sloped from North-South. The northern end was dug down *c.* 1m and the stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of topsoil directly overlying clay and chalk natural geology. The southern end was reduced by 0.40m and the stratigraphy also consisted of 0.10m of topsoil overlying clay and chalk natural geology.

Foundations (Pl. 1)

The foundations observed within the existing garage measured 0.60m wide and were dug to a depth of 0.80m and consisted of 0.15m of concrete overlying natural chalk. An exterior footing between the garage and house was dug to a depth of 0.75m and consisted of 0.13m of gravel pathway overlying natural chalk geology.

Fuel Tank Area (Pl. 2)

An area to the rear of the garage was reduced into the terrace to a depth of up to 1.40m and the stratigraphy consisted of 0.35m of topsoil overlying 0.35m of subsoil overlying chalk natural geology (Fig. 4). Some truncation was evident in the section of this area containing modern tile.

Finds

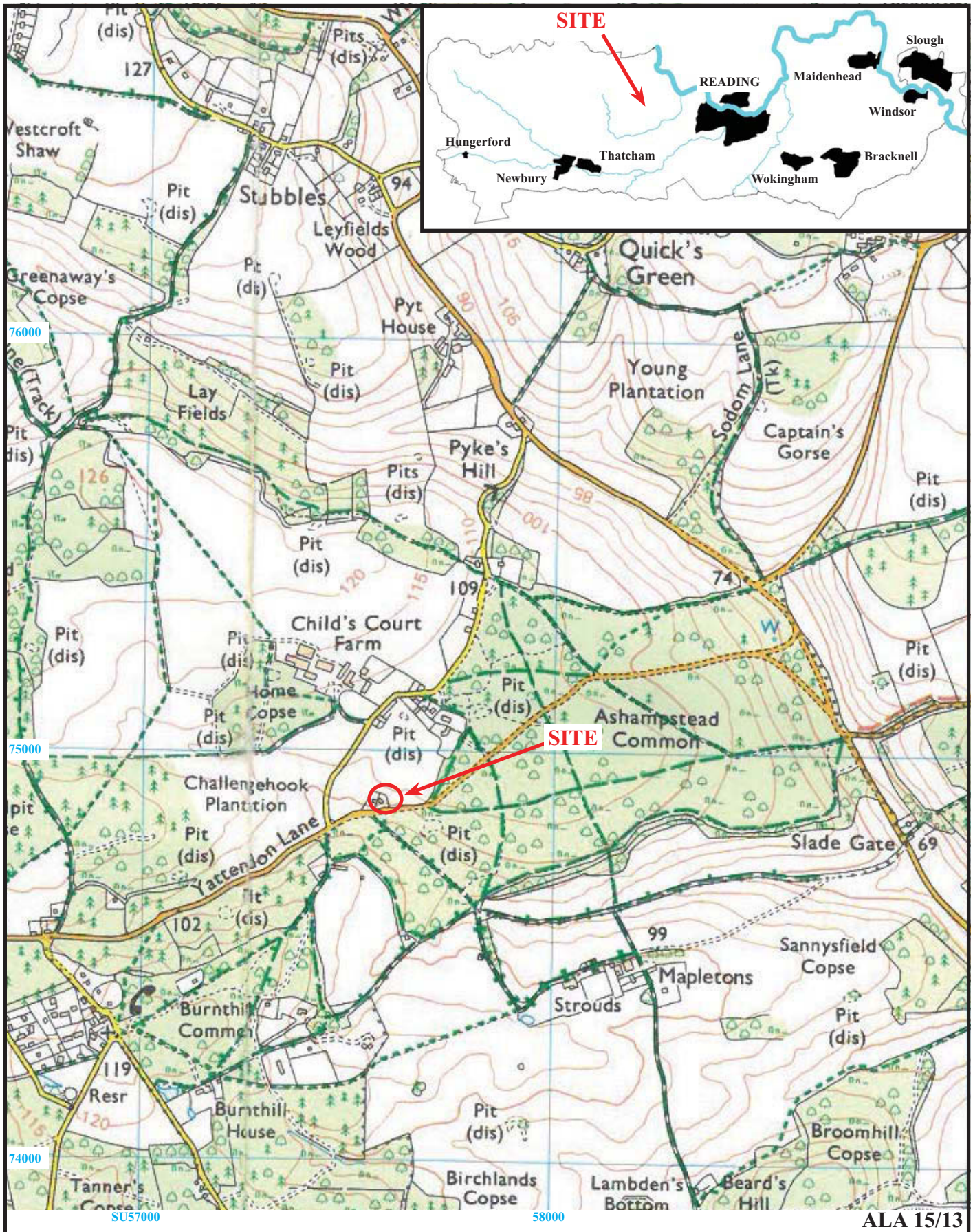
No finds of archaeological interest were recovered during the watching brief.

Conclusion

Despite the potential for archaeology being present on the site the watching brief did not identify any deposits or finds of an archaeological nature. The areas observed mostly appeared to have been reduced down previously, cutting into the natural chalk, with subsoil mostly absent.

References

- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63360, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Hawkes, J, 1997, 'Pottery', in A Vince, S Lobb, J Richards and L Mepham, *Excavations in Newbury, Berkshire 1979–1990*, Wessex Archaeol Rep **13**, Salisbury, 116–28
- Mepham, L N and Heaton, M J, 1995, 'A Medieval pottery kiln at Ashampstead, Berkshire', *Medieval Ceram* **19**, 29–43
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London



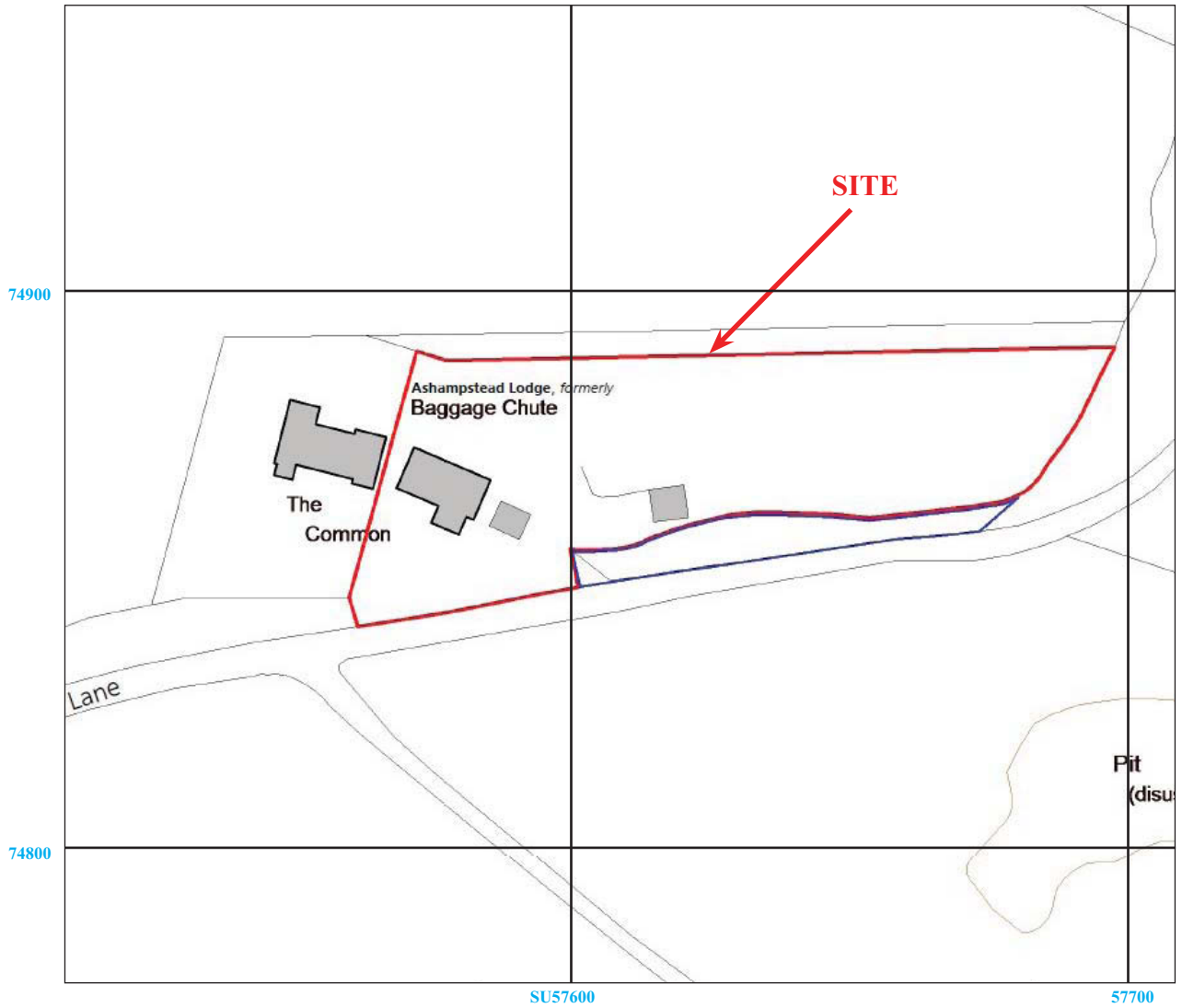
**Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common,
West Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Ashampstead Common and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 159 at 1:12500
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
 SERVICES

ALA 15/13



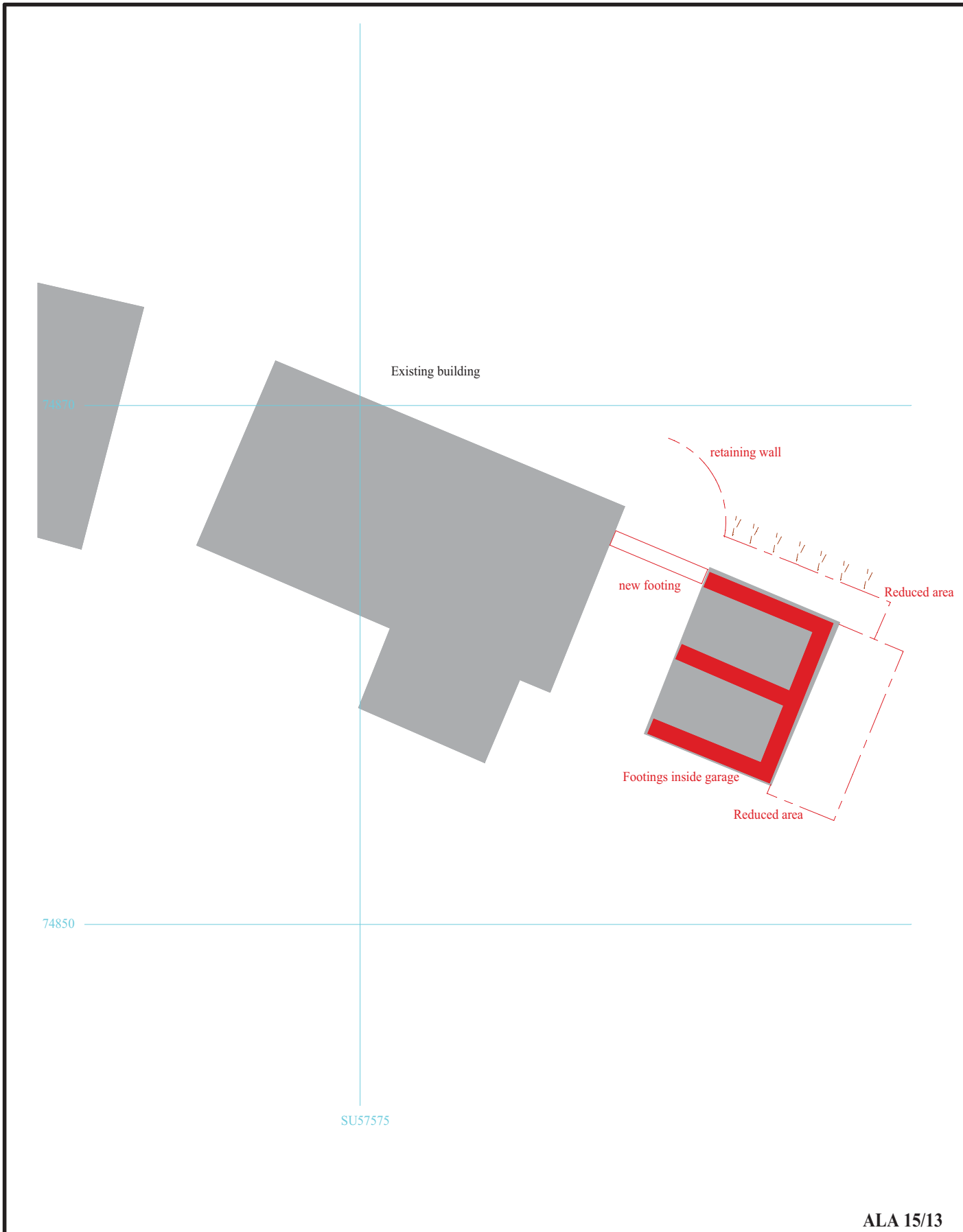
ALA 15/13



**Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common,
West Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief
Figure 2. Detailed location of site.**

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping under licence.
Crown copyright reserved. Scale 1:1250

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



ALA 15/13

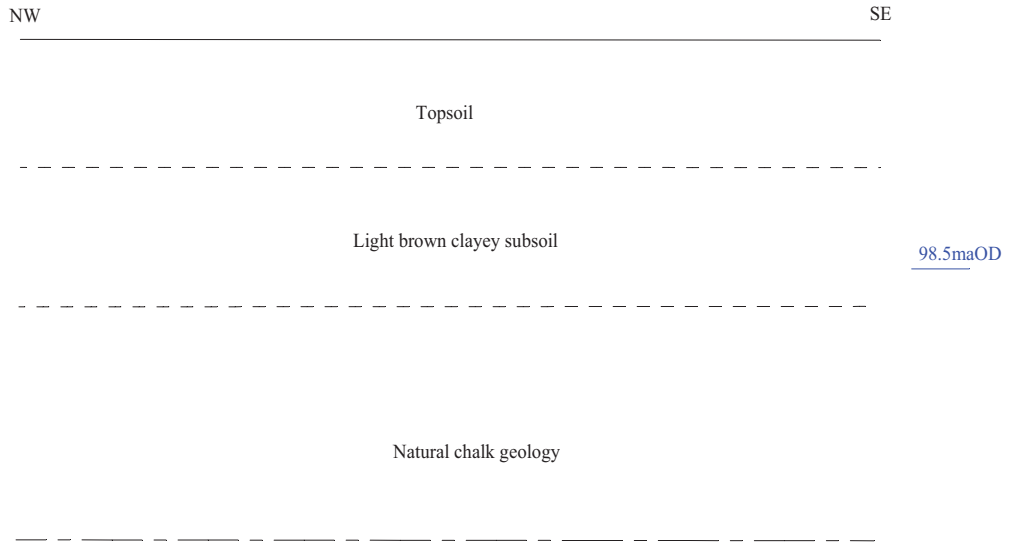
**Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common,
West Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

Northern reduction into terrace



ALA 15/13

Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common,
West Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief

Figure 4. Representative section.



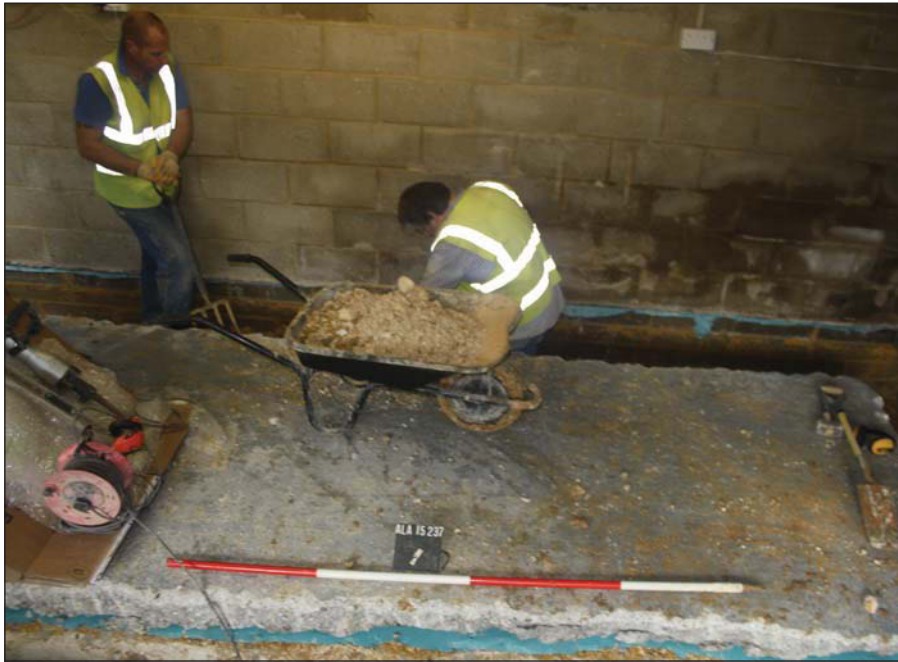


Plate 1. Interior footings, looking north, Scale: 2m.



Plate 2. Exterior ground reduction in east, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.

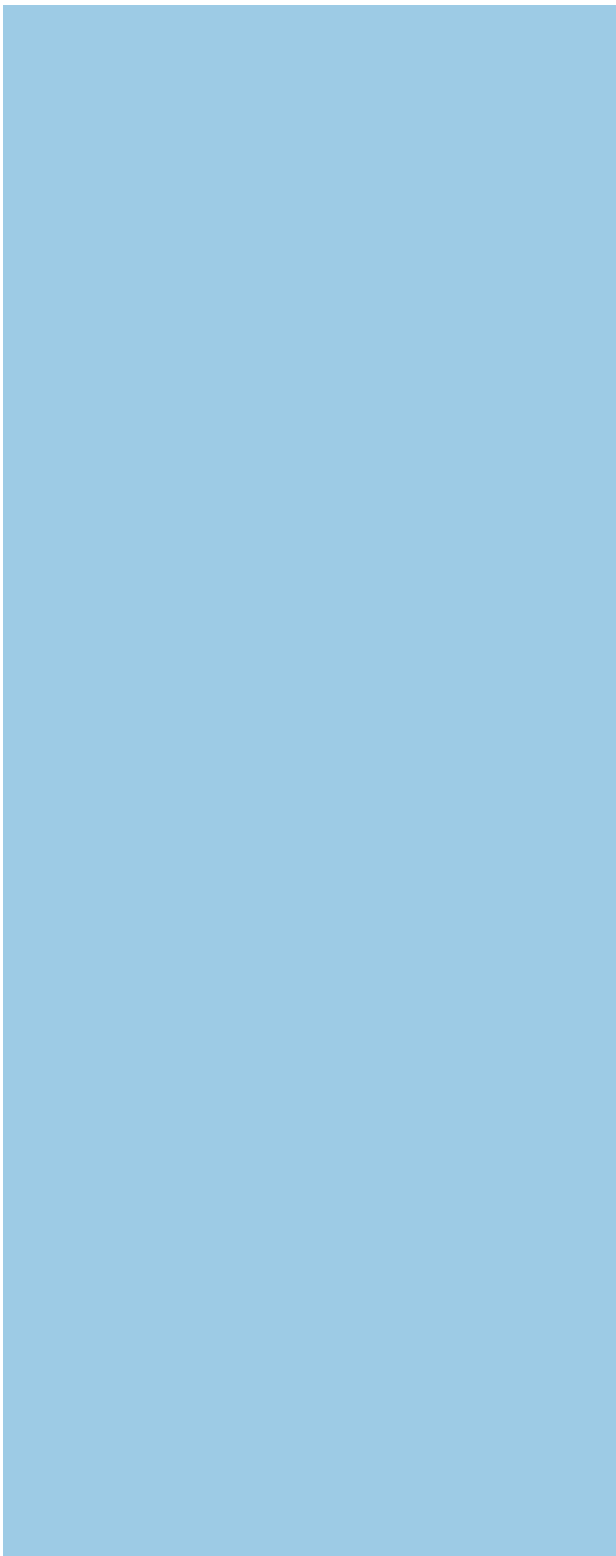
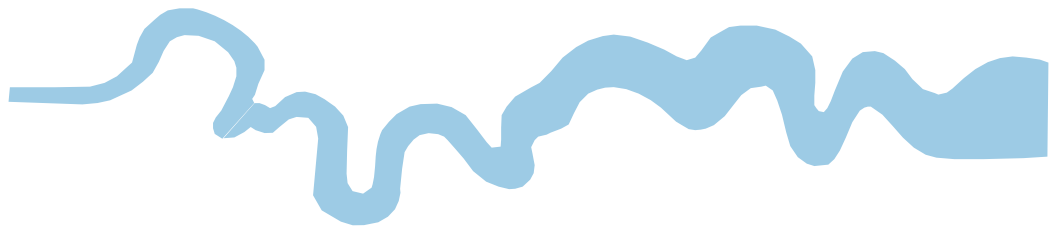
ALA 15/13

**Ashampstead Lodge, Ashampstead Common,
West Berkshire, 2015
Archaeological Watching Brief
Plates 1 - 2.**

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

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
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**