

T H A M E S      V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Rivermead, Reading Road,  
Wallingford, Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Luis Esteves and Michael Johnson**

**Site Code: LWW16/60**

**(SU 6065 8875)**

# **Rivermead, Reading Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Mr Chris Sale**

by Luis Esteves and Michael Johnson

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code RRW16/75

**July 2016**

## Summary

**Site name:** Rivermead, Reading Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SU 6065 8875

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 20th–29th June 2016

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Michael Johnson and Luis Esteves

**Site code:** RRW16/75

**Area of site:** c. 58 sq m

**Summary of results:** The digging of a series of foundation trenches and test pits were observed. However, 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 with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

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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 ✓ 06.04.16 Steve Preston ✓ 04.07.16
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# Rivermead, Reading Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Luis Esteves and Michael Johnson

Report 16/75

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Rivermead, Reading Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire (SU 6065 8875) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Chris Sale of the same address.

Planning permission (P15/S4133/HH) has been gained from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of an extension to the main house. The consent is subject to conditions (3 and 4) relating to archaeology which require 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 District's policies on archaeology. The investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist with Oxfordshire County Council, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Luis Esteves and Michael Johnson between 20th and 29th June 2016 and the site code is RRW16/75.

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

## Location, topography and geology

Wallingford lies on the southeast of Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford, north of Cholsey and next to the River Thames (Fig. 1). The site is located at Rivermead House, on the east side of Reading Road, just west of the Thames, in a residential area, with a hospital on the opposite side of the road (Fig. 2). Bradford's Brook feeds into the Thames just to the south of the site. The underlying geology is mapped as Younger River Gravels (BGS 1980) and on site it was observed a clayey sand with gravel. The site lies at a height of approximately 46m above Ordnance Datum.

## Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (Oram 2016). In summary, the site lies just to the south of the line of the Saxon

defences in an area of possible medieval suburban settlement (Airs *et al.* 1975; Christie 2013). Various finds have been recorded nearby which include Roman coins to the north, Bronze Age and medieval finds to the south east with Middle Iron Age settlement and late Saxon pits to the south-west. Recent fieldwork at Winterbrook, further to the south-west across Bradford's Brook also revealed archaeological features (some already identified from geophysical survey and aerial photographs) spanning several phases of activity, with an appreciable density in the early Iron Age (Lewis 2009).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This would involve the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular any ground reduction, the digging of foundations and service trenches and soakaways etc.

## **Results**

The groundworks of archaeological interest comprised three components,; the digging of test pits, the digging of foundation trenches for the extension and the digging of a foundation trench for a boundary wall.

### *Test pits*

Five test pits (Fig. 3: 1–5) were observed which were dug closely along the line of the foundation trenches for the new extension of the house. These were dug using a mini-digger fitted with a 0.6m wide bucket. The five test pits observed measured 0.60m wide, between 2.30m and 3.20m long and were dug to a depth of between 1.20m and 1.50m. The stratigraphy observed comprised 0.30m of dark brown topsoil overlying 0.40m mid brown clay of subsoil overlying a light yellowish brown clayey sand with some gravel natural geology (Fig. 4). Spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

### *Foundation trenches*

The foundation trenches measured 0.60m wide and were dug to a depth between 1.20m and 1.60m. They were dug in the natural geology for between 0.50 and 0.70m deep. The upper stratigraphy stratigraphy was the same as the test pits (Pl. 2). Apart from a number of modern truncations, no archaeological deposits were observed.

### *Boundary Wall*

A foundation trench for a new boundary wall, 12m long and 0.70m wide was only 0.6m deep and did not penetrate below the subsoil level (Pl. 1).

No features of archaeological interest were observed in any of the trenches or test pits.

## **Finds**

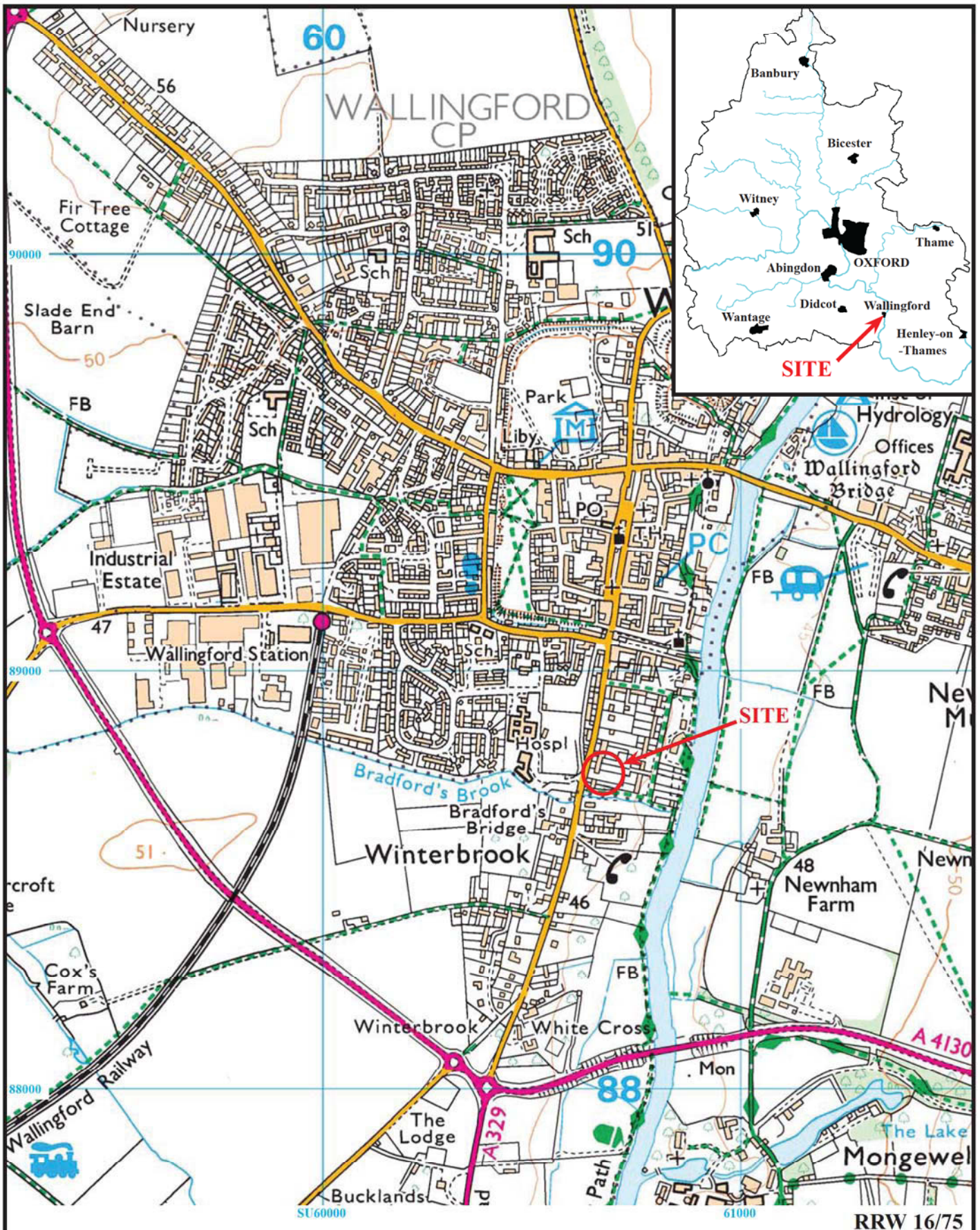
No finds of archaeological interest were uncovered during the groundworks.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the site, no deposits or finds of any archaeological interest were observed.

## **References**

- Airs, M, Rodwell, K and Turner, H, 1975, 'Wallingford', in K Rodwell (ed), *Historic Towns in Oxfordshire*, Oxford Archaeol Unit Survey **3**, Oxford, 155–62
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- Lewis, J, 2009, 'Land at Winterbrook, Wallingford, Oxfordshire: An Archaeological Evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **09/57b**, Reading
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
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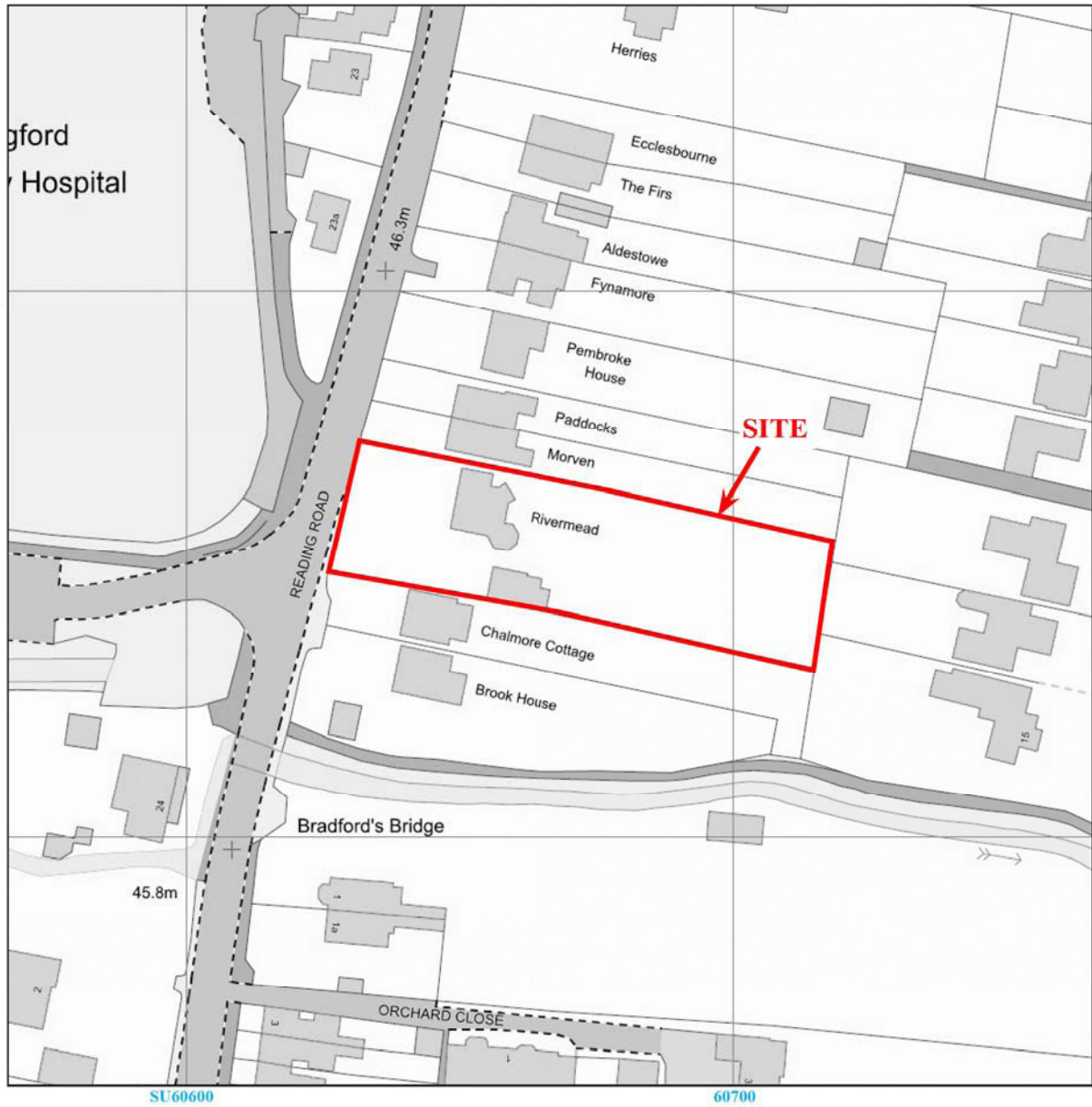


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Figure 1. Location of site within Wallingford and Oxfordshire

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Reading Road.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Boundary wall footing, looking south, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Footing sections, looking east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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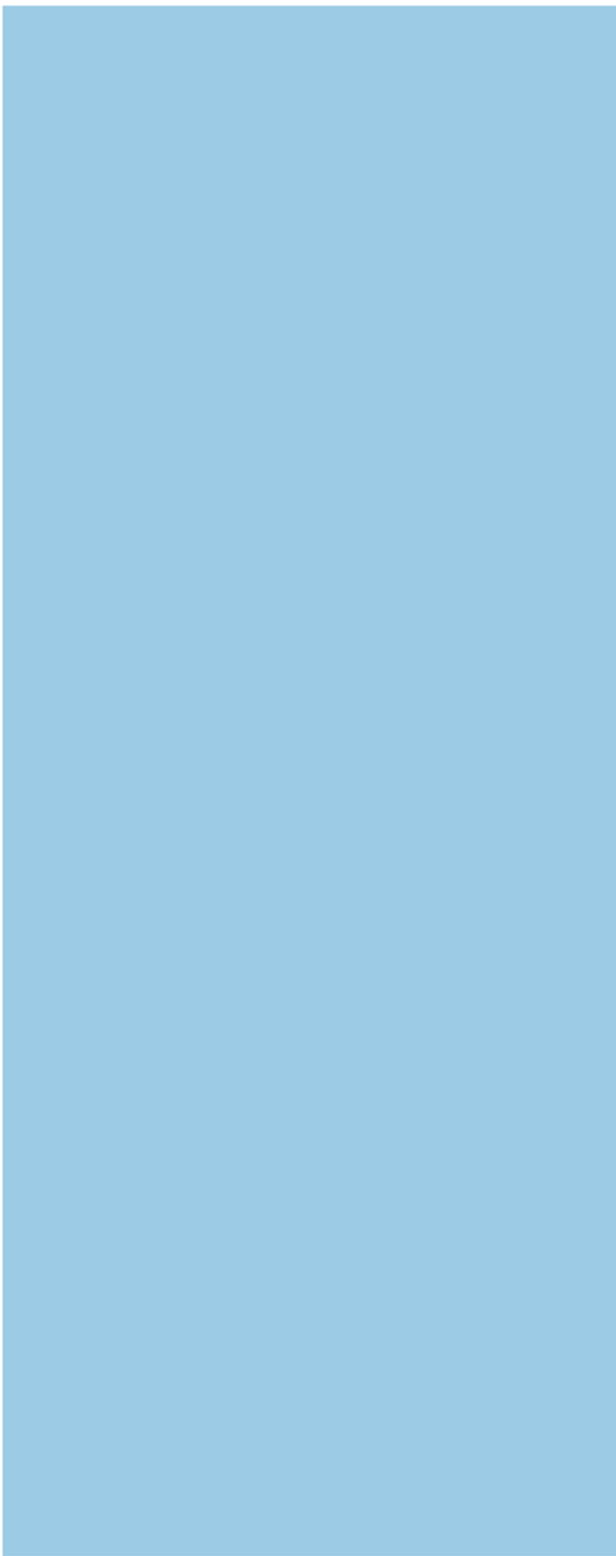
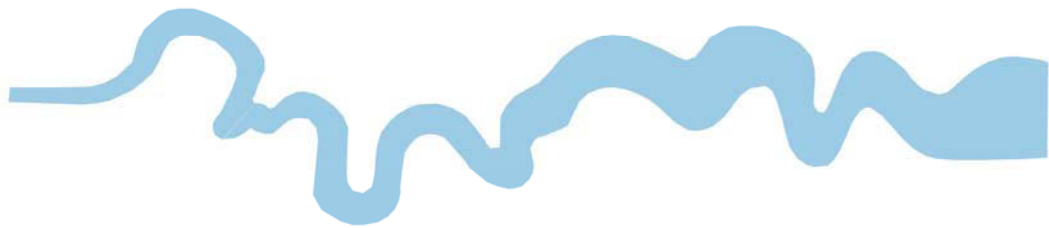
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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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