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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**Land to the rear of 48 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Aidan Colyer and Andy Taylor**

**Site Code: HHR14/135**

**(SU 7116 7703)**

**Land to the rear of 48 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Mr and Mrs G Roberts**

by Aidan Colyer and Andy Taylor  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HHR 14/135

**October 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land to the rear of 48 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7116 7703

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 26th and 27th September 2017

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Aidan Colyer

**Site code:** HHR 14/135

**Area of site:** c. 240 sq m

**Summary of results:** No deposits or finds of any archaeological interest were observed.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum 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 ✓ 03.11.17 Steve Preston ✓ 02.11.17
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# Land to the rear of 48 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Aidan Colyer and Andy Taylor

Report 14/135

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the rear of 48 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8QP (SU 7116 7703) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Philip Shell of Architectural Services, 31 Redshank Court, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 3UE on behalf of Mr and Mrs G Roberts of 48 Highdown Hill Road.

Planning permission has been granted on appeal (APP/E0345/W/15/3006773 ) from Reading Borough Council to construct a new house at 48 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire. The consent subject to a condition (4) relating to archaeology which required the implementation of a scheme of archaeological investigation, in this case, 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 Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald, Principal Archaeologist with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Aidan Colyer on the 26th and 27th September 2017 and the site code is HHR 14/135.

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

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the western side of Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green which lies on the northern margins of Reading (Fig. 1). It is located on a flat parcel of land to the rear of the house on the gardens associated with the property (Fig. 2). The underlying is mapped as Upper Chalk (BGS 2000), which was observed in the foundation trenches with many gravelly clay-filled solution hollows. The site lies at a height of *c.*74m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from a number of records for Roman sites and finds in the area recorded in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record. To the south a Roman site was recorded at 7 Highdown Hill Road and at Emmer Green youth centre further to the south, various Roman enclosures were recorded during evaluation and follow-up excavation (MoLAS 2010). However evaluation just to the south found nothing of interest (Milbank 2007) with a second evaluation to the south (Ford 2005) finding only a single undated ditch.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This would involve all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular the digging of foundation and service trenches.

The foundations were dug using a small 360° type machine fitted under constant archaeological supervision and spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

## **Results**

The foundation trenches (Fig. 3) measured 0.60m wide and were dug to a depth of between 1.20m in the western corner of the site to 2.20m in the eastern corner of the site (Pls 1 and 2). The stratigraphy observed consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying natural chalk with pockets of gravel (Fig. 4). No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

## **Finds**

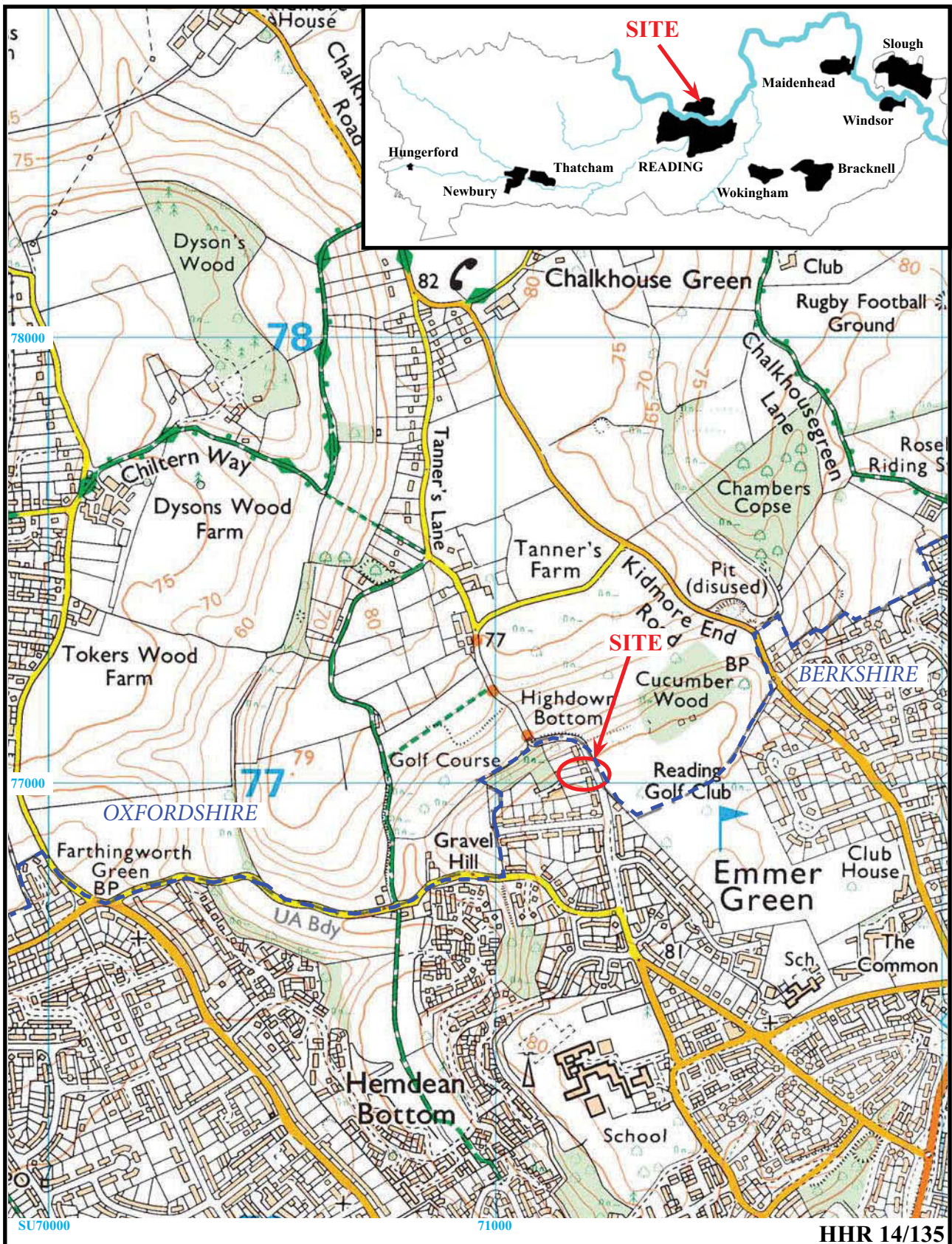
No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered during the watching brief.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the sites potential for archaeology to be present on the site no deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed during the course of the watching brief.

## References

- BGS, 2000, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 268, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Ford, S 2005, '10-18 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **05/99**, Reading
- Milbank, D, 2007, '42 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **07/51**, Reading
- MoLAS, 2010, 'Emmer Green Children's Centre, Grove Road, Reading, RG4 - Excavation Report', Museum of London Archaeology Service unpubl rep, London
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London



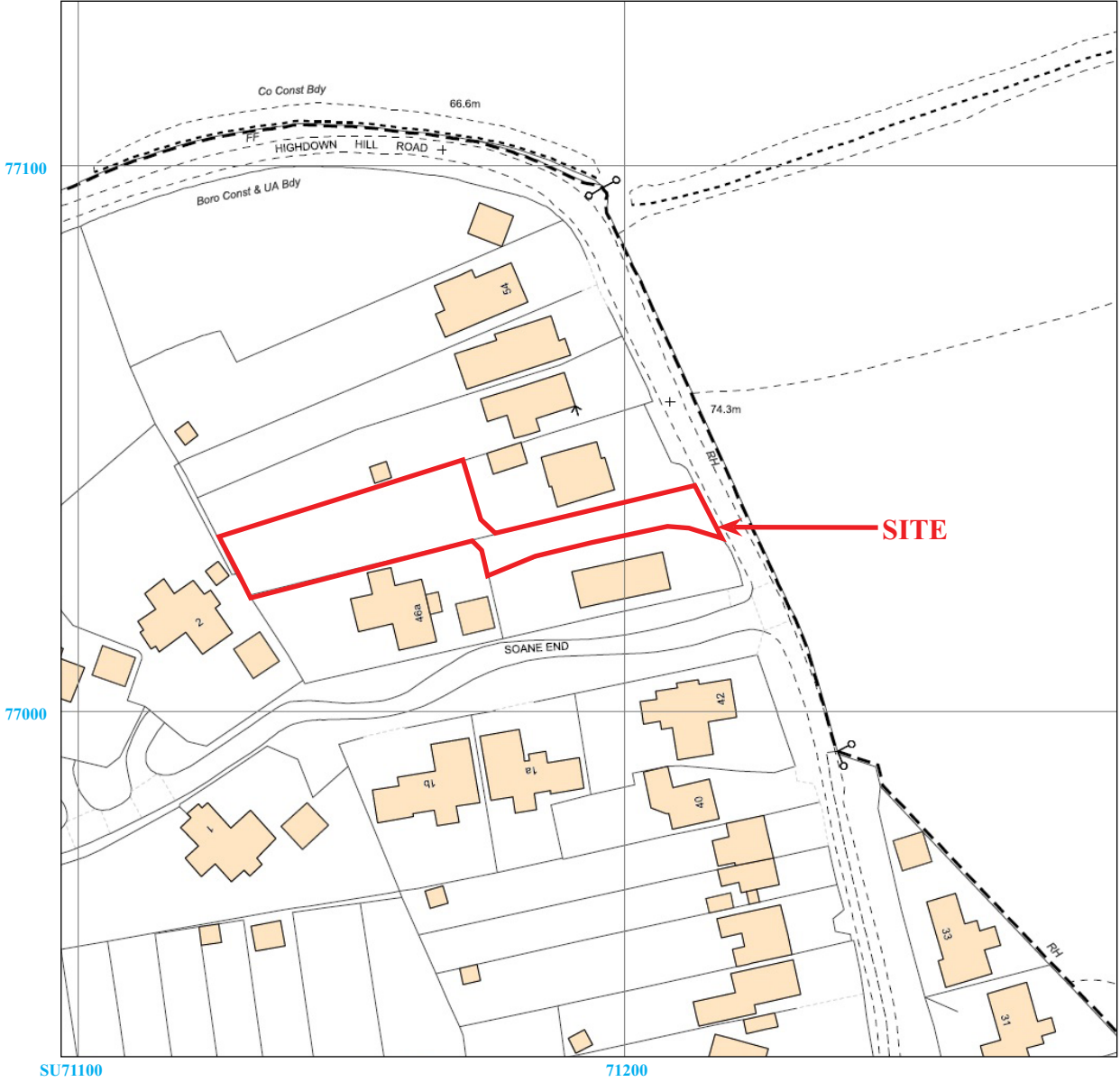
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Figure 1. Location of site within Emmer Green and in relation to Reading and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Highdown Hill Road.

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Figure 3. Location of observed area.



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NW

SE

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Disturbed topsoil mixed with debris

Chalk with flint and solution hollows

base of footing

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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Overview of footings, looking north west, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. View into the sections, looking east north east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

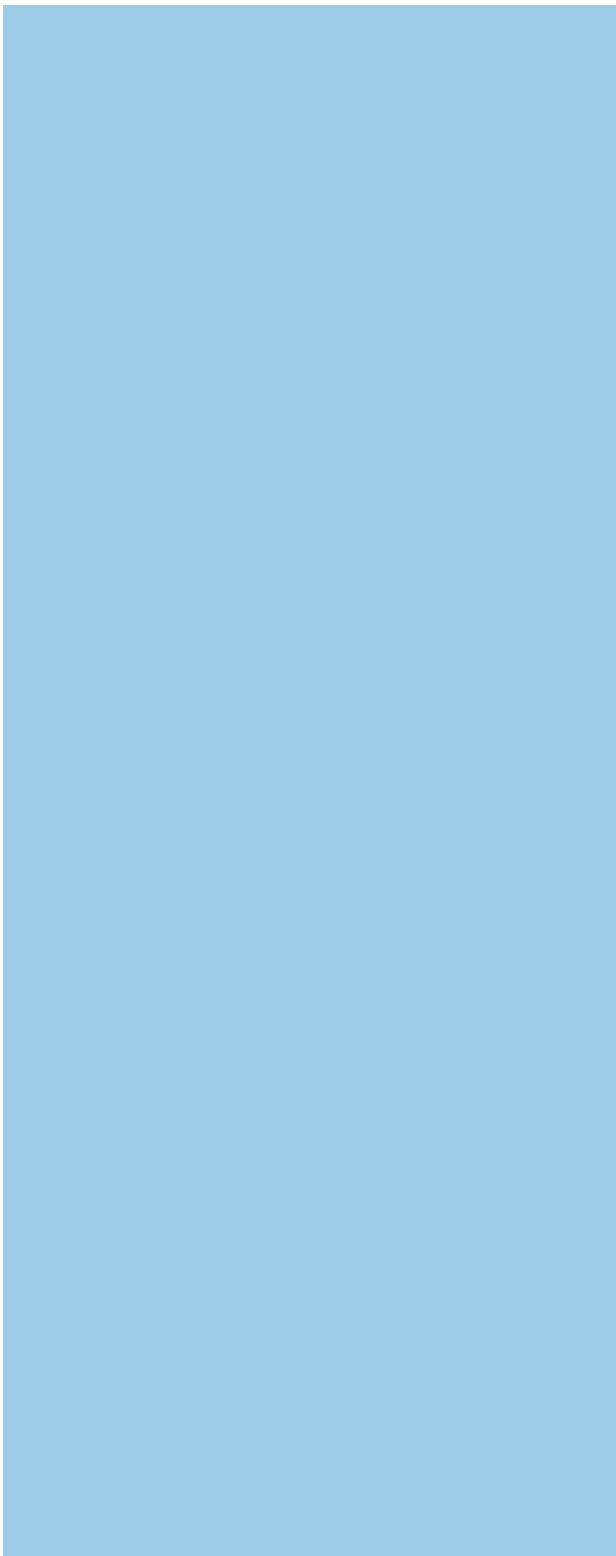
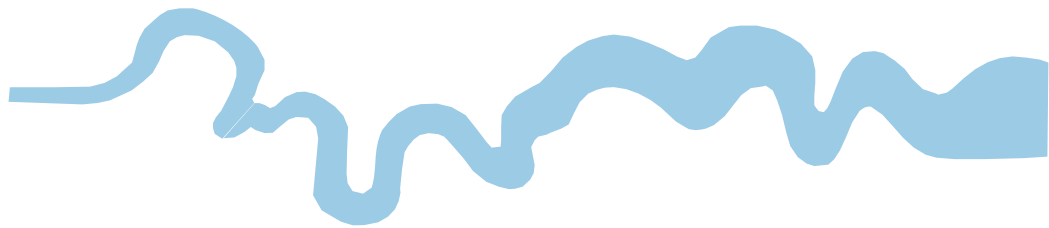
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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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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