

**Land to the rear of 14 Upper Lees Road,
Slough, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Austins

by James McNicoll-Norbury and

Andrew Weale

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ULR 09/58

September 2009

Summary

Site name: Land to the rear of 14 Upper Lees Road, Slough, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9555 8295

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 21st August 2009

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: ULR 09/51

Area of site: 0.2ha

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits nor artefacts were identified. Parts of the site had been previously stripped of topsoil and subsoil and these north eastern parts of the site may have be truncated to an unknown extent.

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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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 1.09.09 Steve Preston✓ 1.09.09

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Report 09/58

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land adjacent to and to the rear of 14 Upper Lees Road, Slough, Berkshire (SU 9555 8295) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Mark Singleton, of Austins, Unit D1, Fareham Heights, Standard Way, Fareham, Hants PO16 8XT.

Planning consent has been gained (app nos P/14368/000) from Slough Borough Council to construct new housing on the site, along with associated car parking areas and access road. The consent is subject to a condition (10) relating to archaeology, stating that no development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall take place in accordance with the detailed scheme approved pursuant to this condition. This was to take the form, initially, of field evaluation, based on the results of which an appropriate mitigation strategy could be devised if necessary.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough Council's policy EN20 of the Local Plan for Slough 2004 on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved Ms Mary O'Donoghue, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury on 21st August 2009 and the site code is ULR09/51. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site comprised an irregular parcel of land of c. 0.2ha to the rear of 14 Upper Lees Road, Slough (Fig. 2). The site is currently an open space covered in part by crushed concrete, brick demolition, and gravel make up deposits from the garages which previously occupied part of the site. The south western portion previously lay beyond the garage block in an area of open space used as a play ground. The underlying geology is Boyn Hill

Gravel which was observed in the trenches (BGS 2005). The site lies at a height of *c.* 45m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been considered in a brief for the project prepared by Berkshire Archaeology (O'Donoghue 2009). In summary, the site lies on one of the gravel terraces of the Thames Valley, which is archaeologically rich with a range of sites and finds of many periods recorded from field survey, aerial photography and trial trenching (Ford 1987; Gates 1975; Foreman *et al.* 2002). The deeply underlying gravel deposits are also noteworthy in this vicinity for the presence of Palaeolithic finds though in-situ deposits if present at all, are likely only to occur beneath the gravel (Wymer 1968; 1999). For later Prehistoric and historic periods a number of finds of Roman and medieval date are recorded for the area. Recent fieldwork on a similar topographic and geological outcrop to the east has revealed extensive Iron Age, Roman and Saxon deposits (Ford 2008a and b).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. The specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- to determine if any stray finds of Palaeolithic date are present;
- to determine if any deposits of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval date are present
- to assess the significance of any such deposits according to local, regional and national research priorities.

Six trenches were to be dug, 1.6m wide and 10m long, using a back-hoe (JCB-type) machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant supervision by an archaeologist. The spoil heaps were to be monitored for finds.

Results

The six trenches were dug as close as possible to the positions intended (Fig. 3). The trenches ranged from 10.0m to 10.6m in length, and all were 1.6m wide. They varied between 0.40m to 0.56m in depth. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was 10.2m long, 0.56m deep and aligned west-east. It was located in the area of former open space beyond the limit of the garage blocks. The stratigraphy comprised 0.12m of made ground, consisting crushed concrete overlying 0.29m of grey silty clay subsoil, which in turn overlay the natural geology of gravel (Fig. 4). Some modern disturbance was noted at the western end. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was 10.6m long, 0.45m deep and aligned NNW-SSW. The stratigraphy comprised 0.26m of made ground comprising redeposited gravel overlying 0.14m of grey clay subsoil which in turn overlay the natural silty gravel. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was 10.1m long, 0.40m deep and aligned west-east. The stratigraphy comprised 0.20m of made ground overlying 0.13m of grey silty clay subsoil which in turn overlay the natural silty gravel. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was 10.0m long, 0.52m deep and aligned south–north. The stratigraphy comprised 0.48m of made ground, overlying the natural sandy gravel geology. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was 10.1m long, 0.43m deep and aligned south west-north east. The stratigraphy comprised 0.37m of made ground overlying the natural sandy gravel with clay patches. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was 10.2m long, 0.45m deep and aligned west–east (Plate 2). The stratigraphy comprised 0.33m of made ground overlying the natural sandy gravel with clay patches. No archaeological features were identified.

Finds

No finds were recovered from the archaeological deposits nor trench spoilheaps.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that no deposits or features of archaeological interest within the trenches. No artefacts of archaeological interest were recovered from any of the spoilheaps of excavated material from any of the trenches. The absence of subsoil within three of the trenches (trenches 4 to 6) indicates that this part of the site may have been truncated in the past which may have removed any shallow archaeological features or deposits within this area. The other trenches, though not truncated, showed no deposits of interest. Based on the results of this exercise it is considered that the site has negligible or no archaeological potential.

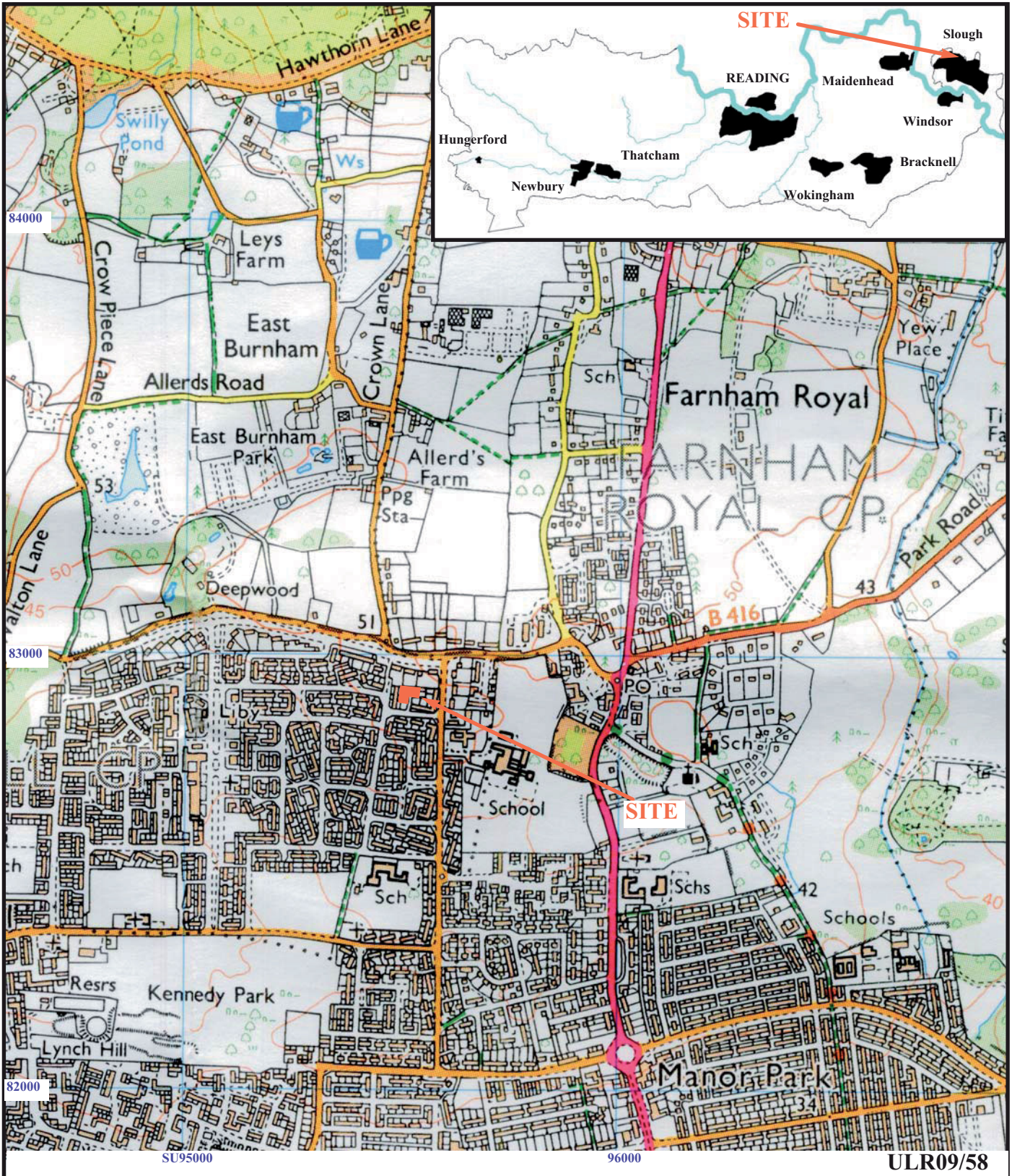
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.2	1.6	0.56	0–0.12m Made ground (crushed concrete); 0.12–0.41m grey clay subsoil; 0.41m+ gravel (natural geology). Modern disturbance at the western end
2	10.6	1.6	0.45	0–0.26m Made ground (redeposited gravel); 0.26–0.40m grey clay subsoil; 0.40m+ gravel (natural geology).
3	10.1	1.6	0.40	0–0.20m Made ground; 0.20–0.33m grey silty clay subsoil; 0.33m+ gravel (natural geology).
4	10.0	1.6	0.52	0–0.48m Made ground; 0.48m+ gravel (natural geology).
5	10.1	1.6	0.43	0–0.37m Made ground; 0.37m+ gravel (natural geology).
6	10.2	1.6	0.45	0–0.33m Made ground; 0.33m+ gravel (natural geology). [Pl. 2]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Slough and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off
Upper Lees Road.

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Scale: 1:1250

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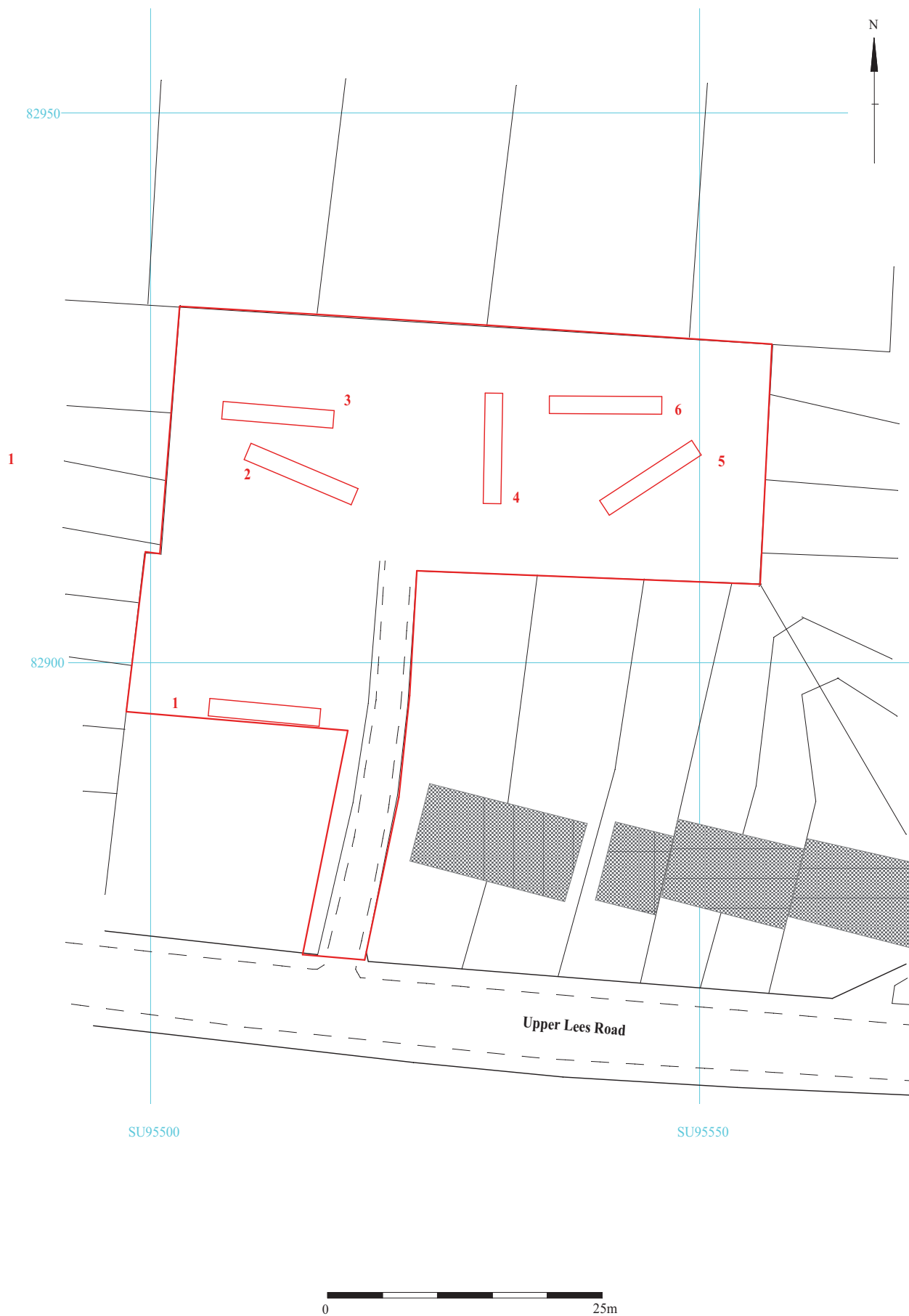


Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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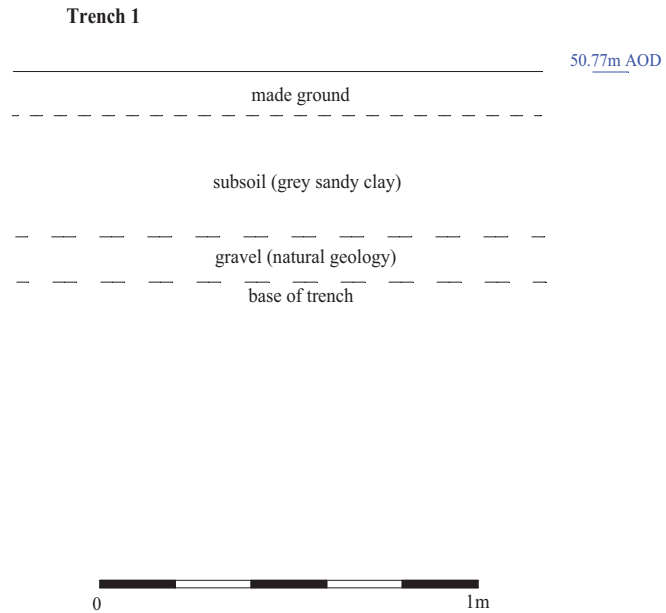


Figure 4. Representative sections (trenches 1-3).



Plate 1. General view of site looking west.



Plate 2. Trench 6, looking east, scales 2m, 1m and 0.5m