

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
VALLEY HOUSE
MIDDLE END
LECKHAMPSTEAD
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

NGR: SP 72653 37625

on behalf of Mrs L.C. Goodlad



Calli Rouse BA PIFA

September 2009

ASC: 1210/LVH/2



Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: office@archaeological-services.co.uk
Website: www.archaeological-services.co.uk



Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	LVH	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1210
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-66715	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	AYBCM: 2009.209
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Leckhampstead		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Leckhampstead		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 72653 37625		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.800sqm		
<i>Present use:</i>	Grassland		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Creation of a manège		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	09/01108/APP		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	01/09/09 – 03/09/09		
<i>Client:</i>	Mrs L.C. Goodlad Valley House Middle End Leckhampstead Buckinghamshire MK18 5NS		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mrs L.C. Goodlad		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Calli Rouse	<i>Date:</i>	15 th September 2009
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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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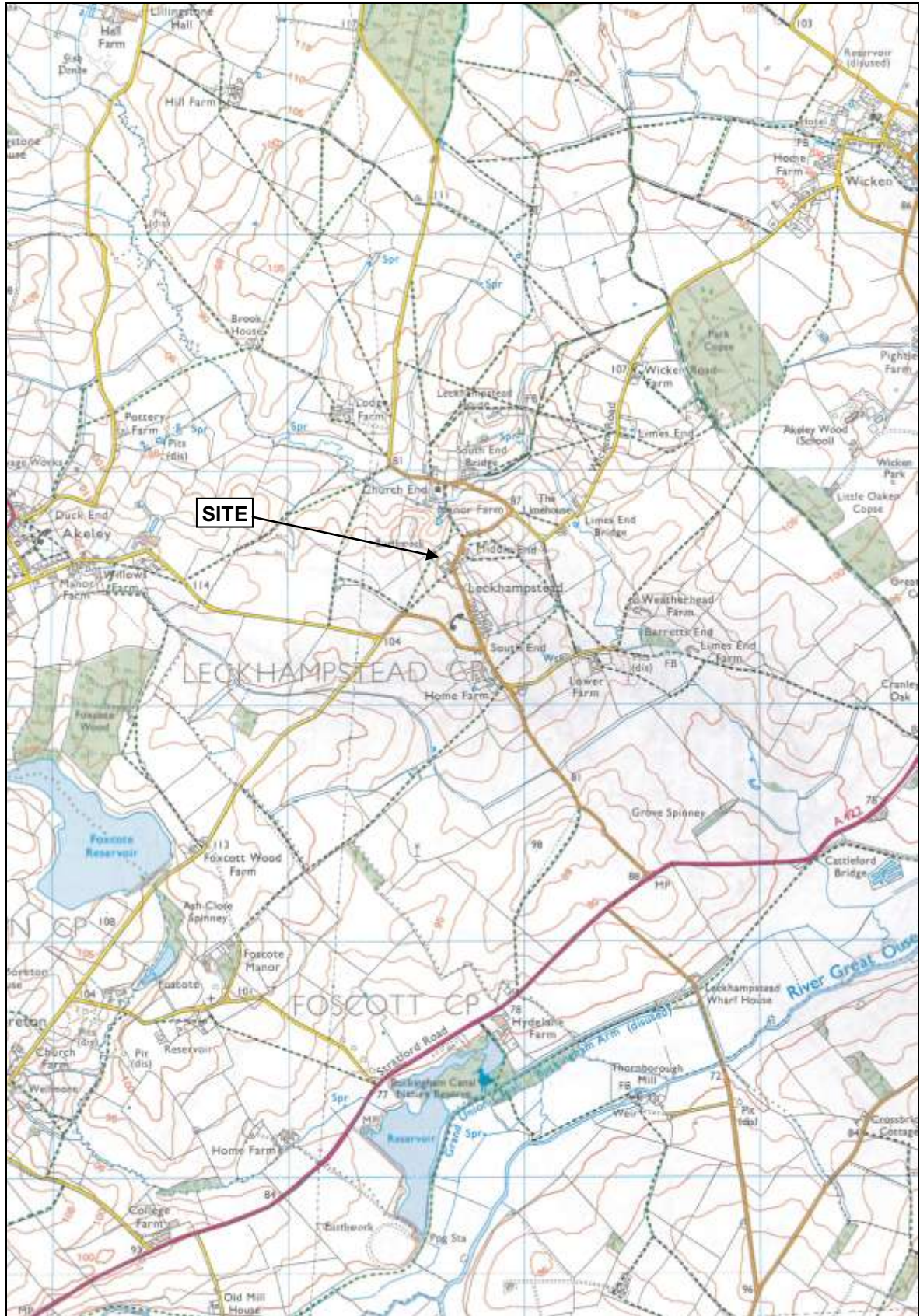


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

During September 2009, an archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks for construction of a manege at Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead, Buckinghamshire. The proposed development was located within the vicinity of earthworks associated with two medieval manor houses and a possible Civil War gun battery. The northeast of the development footprint was subject to a shallow, partial topsoil strip prior to deposition of levelling material and the presence or absence of archaeological remains was not determined. Ground level was substantially reduced at the southwest of the development footprint; no archaeological finds, features or deposits were present at this location and the archaeological impact of the development was low.

1. Introduction

1.1 In September 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead. The project was commissioned by *Mrs L.C. Goodlad*, and was carried out according to a brief (Beckley 2009) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*. It also conformed to a project design agreed with the AA, which was prepared by ASC (Rouse 2009). The relevant planning application reference is 09/01108/APP.

1.2 *Planning Background*

The watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16) as a condition of planning permission for construction of the manege.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 *The Site*

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The development site lay within the district of Aylesbury Vale, in the parish and village of Leckhampstead, centred at NGR SP 72653 37625 (Fig. 1). It comprised a rectangular area of grassland, located within a field lying directly to the north west of Leckhampstead House and its gardens (Fig. 2).

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area are of the Ashley Association, which comprise *fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, associated with similar but wetter soils. Some calcareous and non-calcareous slowly permeable clayey soils* (Soil Survey 1983, 572q). The underlying geology consists of Quaternary till: stony clay generally with flint and clay pebbles (BGS, Sheet 219).

1.5.3 *Development*

The development comprised the construction of a manege (Fig. 3).

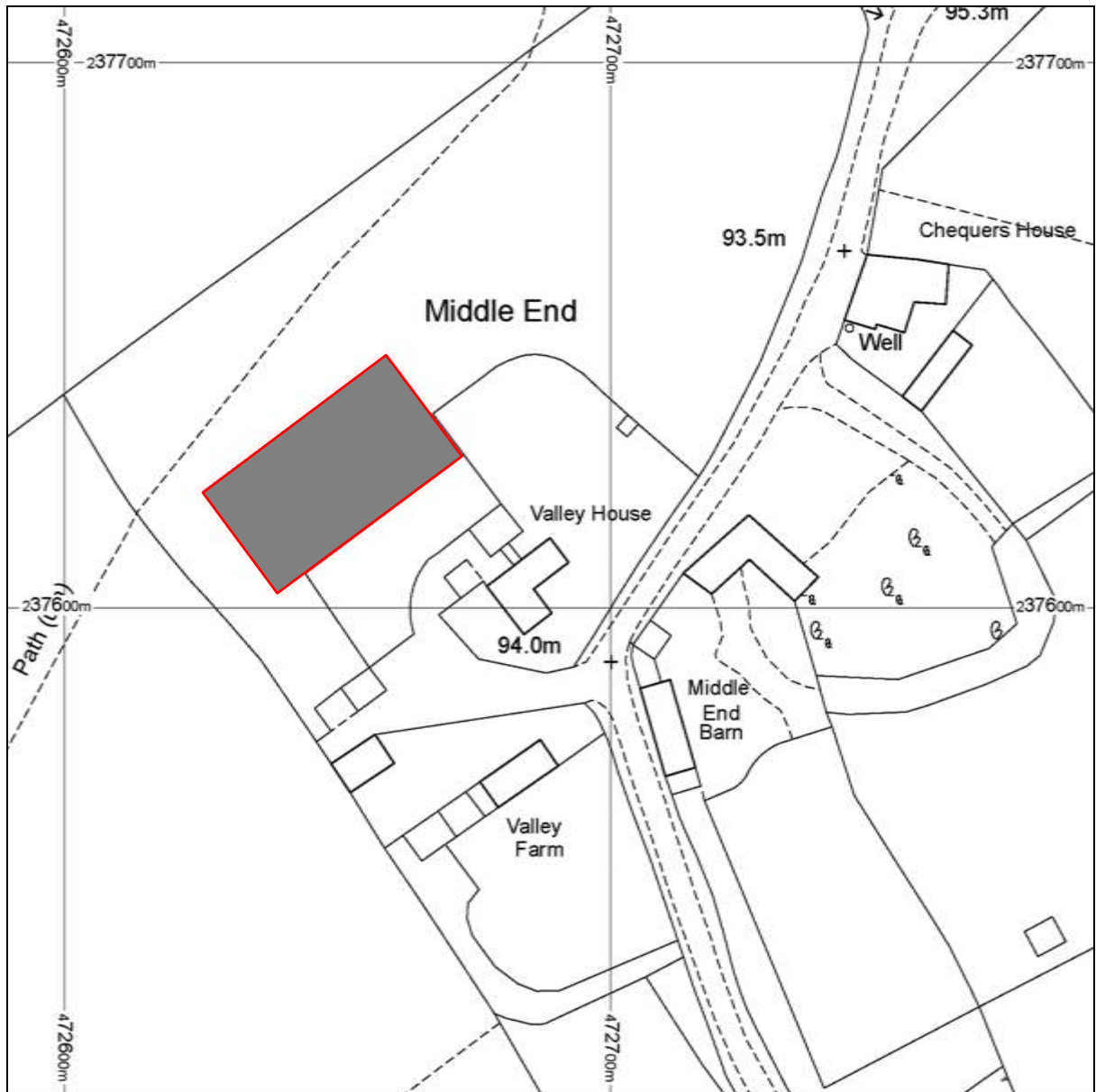


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims and Objectives*

As described in the brief (Section 6), the objectives of the watching brief were:

- To identify and record any significant archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks, paying particular regard to the potential for Saxon and medieval deposits.

2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 *Methods*

The work complied with the brief (Section 8) and ASC's project design, which required:

- An intensive watching brief during the stripping of the manege, undertaken using an appropriate machine fitted with a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision. Machining to be halted either at an archaeological level where features are observed, or, if none were present, at the formation level.
- The presence/absence of archaeological features was noted. If features were identified, then sufficient work was done to date, characterise and record the remains in accordance with the project aims.
- If an "unexpected discovery" was made then the AA and the developer were informed as soon as possible. Initial consideration should be given to preservation in-situ, but if impractical then such discoveries may result in salvage excavation.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods.

This section has been compiled with information from the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER), ASC's own library and other readily available sources.

3.2 *Prehistoric* (before 600BC-AD43)

A circular cropmark visible on an aerial photograph (HER1306) is located c.0.8km to the east of the development and could locate a prehistoric ring ditch (ploughed out burial mound). Apart from the occasional sherd of Iron Age pottery (HER1945), recorded evidence of prehistoric activity is scarce in the immediate vicinity of the development site.

3.3 *Roman* (AD43-c.450)

The Whittlewood Project examined eleven parishes in and around Whittlewood, with the objective of explaining the origin and survival of contrasting patterns of nucleated villages and of dispersed settlements. Several fields in the vicinity of Leckhampstead have been fieldwalked (Jones 2004), the quantity and distribution of Romano-British pottery recovered has suggested that three discrete, small settlements may have been present c.900m north east (HER6812), c.750m north west (HER6794), and c.500m south west (HER6815) of the site.

3.4 *Saxon* (c.450-1066)

The Whittlewood project excavated over 50 test pits within the parish of Leckhampstead (Jones 2002). A number of sherds of early-middle Saxon handmade pottery were recovered from pits excavated immediately to the north east of the church, which is located c.400m north of the development. A *foci* of early Saxon settlement is possible (HER9722).

3.5 *Medieval* (1066-1500)

Leckhampstead was recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Williams and Martin 2003) as being divided between three landholders. The largest area was held by Gilbert Maminot from the Bishop of Bayeux. It answered for 18 hides and had land for 12 ploughs. There were 18 villagers with 6 smallholders, and woodland for 400 pigs (HER9304).

Three discrete areas of Medieval settlement were present and are preserved within the modern village layout. At the north lies Church End, which is focused on the 12th century church of the Assumption of the Virgin (HER2541); at the centre Middle End, within which lies Valley House; and South End/Barrett's End. Results of the Whittlewood Project have suggested that the settlement at Middle End may have comprised a single row of houses in contrast to a double row at Church End (HER9719).

Medieval earthworks suggesting reorganisation of the village layout or village shrinkage surround the three parts of Leckhampstead. The earthworks include house platforms and a hollow way located close to Church End Road, *c.*400m to the north of the site (HER2812); a further house platform or possible windmill mound located *c.*400m north of the site at the Old Forge (HER5399); fishponds and part of an enclosure *c.*180m to the north at the Manor House (HER2593); earthworks at Middle End *c.*200m to the east (HER5400), and earthworks in the immediate vicinity of the site associated with a former manor house known as The Toy.

The fields directly north of the development enclose two cultivation terraces and remnants of ridge and furrow of the medieval open field system. Parts of three similarly aligned, possible terraces are visible to the east (HER5401). Other fields surrounding the modern village also contain remnants of ridge and furrow.

3.6 *Post-Medieval-Modern* (1500-present)

Located *c.*200m to the northwest of the development is an earthwork (HER2215) which may define the site of a Civil War (1641-1651) gun battery. The earthwork comprises a single ditch and rampart identified from an aerial photograph. The size and shape of the earthwork is very similar to a battery known at Cornbury, Oxfordshire. The battery may be linked with the Parliamentarian Tyrells, who were lords of the manor of Leckhampstead during the Civil War (Chadburn, 1984, 46-7).

The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 indicates that the development area may have been an orchard. The Second Edition (1900) OS map shows fewer trees within the development area. A limited amount of built development occurred in the village during the 20th century but there is little difference between the current layout of Leckhampstead and that evident at the turn of the century.

4. Results

- 4.1 The development comprised cut and fill levelling of approximately 800sq m of gently sloping grassland located at the rear of Valley House (Plates 1 and 2). The level of *c.*260sq m of ground at the southwestern end of the manege was reduced, while the remaining *c.*540sq m was built up (Fig 3).
- 4.2 The entire footprint of the development was partially stripped of topsoil to a depth of *c.*100mm. The area at the northeast, where ground level was to be built up was not subject to any further stripping and the presence or absence of archaeological features or deposits could not be determined at this part of the development.
- 4.3 Reduction of ground level at the southwest of the development footprint revealed a soil profile comprising *c.*150mm of dark brown silty topsoil overlying *c.*250mm of orange brown silty clay subsoil, formed on an unknown depth of mottled olive green/grey-brown natural clay containing occasional chalk nodules. The maximum depth of ground reduction, *c.*1.2m, occurred at the southwest of the manege.
- 4.4 Archaeological finds, features or deposits were not observed within the upcast spoil or cutting the subsoil or natural clay during monitoring of the area where ground level was reduced.



Plate 1: General view of site stripping, looking northwest



Plate 2: Working shot showing area partially stripped, looking east



Figure 3: Areas of cut and fill (scale 1:500)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The depth of ground reduction at the northeast of the development footprint was very shallow. Only a partial strip of topsoil occurred and the presence or absence of archaeological remains at this part of the development could not be determined.
- 5.2 The southwestern third of the development footprint was subject to more significant ground reduction. Monitoring during reduction of ground level showed that archaeological remains were not present at this part of the development.
- 5.3 The conditions for the watching brief were good; all monitoring took place during dry and relatively sunny weather and full co-operation was received from the contractors.
- 5.4 Results of the watching brief indicate that the archaeological impact of the development was low.

6. Acknowledgements

The watching brief was commissioned by *Mrs L.C. Goodlad*. The project was monitored by Ruth Beckley on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Martin Cuthbert BA PIFA. The report was prepared by Calli Rouse BA PIFA and edited by Alastair Hancock BSc PgDip MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum (AYBCM: 2009.209).

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- Beckley, R 2009 *Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead* Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Rouse, C 2009 *Project Design for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead, Buckinghamshire ASC/1210/LVH/1*.

Secondary Sources

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Chadburn, A.D.B, 1984 *Parish Survey of Leckhampstead*
- Jones R 2002 Medieval Settlement and Landscapes in the Whittlewood Area: a pilot. *South Midlands Archaeology* **32**. CBA.
- Jones R 2004 Signatures in the Soil: The Use of Pottery in Manure Scatters in the Identification of Medieval Arable Farming. *The Archaeological Journal* **161**. Pp 160-188.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Williams, A. & Martin, G.H. 2003 *Domesday Book: a complete translation* Penguin (London).

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

Project: valley House, middle end Leckhampstead		Project No/Code: 1210 / LVH	Sheet: 1 of 3
		Date of visit: 1/9/08	
Client/Developer			
Contact:		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 09:30	Finish: 12:00	
Completed by: M.C			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: dry + sunny			
Observations: Initial top strip over whole area, 40m x 20m			
Proposed ground reduction to take place tomorrow will return then.			
Comments:			

Project: Valley House		Project No/Code: 1210 1 LVH		Sheet: 2 of 3	
Leckhampstead		Date of visit: 2/9/06			
Client/Developer					
Contact: Mr Forrow - digger driver			Phone: 07734105343		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 07:40		Finish: 1600	
Completed by: M.C					
Development Type:					
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling ✓	Quarrying	Pipelines
Other (specify):					
Site & weather conditions: damp overcast					
Observations: turf all stripped from whole area. c. 100mm further 150mm of topsoil dark brown silty clay. over 250mm of orange-brown silty (60%) clay (40%) subsoil into olive green-grey brown clay with occ chalk nodules. dig depth varies across site - from 100mm to 1.2m Area at eastern end of site is built up - no digging is to take place. North Western area completed. - NO act.					
Comments: REDC Southwestern Area to be excavated tomorrow					

Project: Valley House		Project No/Code: 1210 1 LVH		Sheet: 3 of 3	
Leckhampstead		Date of visit: 3/9/08			
Client/Developer					
Contact:			Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 07:40		Finish: 12:30	
Completed by: M.C					
Development Type:					
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling ✓	Quarrying	Pipelines
Other (specify):					
Site & weather conditions:					
Observations: Southwestern corner excavated topsoil (250mm) and part of subsoil removed. -No ash See sketch on other side of page P.T.O					
Comments: NO more visits required					

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead			SITE NO/CODE: 1210/LVH
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	General view of site stripping, looking northwest
2	✓	✓	General view of site stripping, looking northwest
3	✓	✓	Working shot showing stripped area, looking east
4	✓	✓	Working shot showing stripped area, looking east
5	✓	✓	Working shot showing stripped area, looking east
6	✓	✓	Section showing geology, looking southeast 1m scale

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead, Buckinghamshire		
Short Description:	<i>During September 2009, an archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks for construction of a manege at Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead, Buckinghamshire. The proposed development was located within the vicinity of earthworks associated with two medieval manor houses and a possible Civil War gun battery. The northeast of the development footprint was subject to a shallow, partial topsoil strip prior to deposition of levelling material and the presence or absence of archaeological remains was not determined. Ground level was substantially reduced at the southwest of the development footprint; no archaeological finds, features or deposits were present at this location.</i>		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None
Current land use:	Field	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	No
Monument type:	-	Monument period:	-
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 72653 37625
District:	Aylesbury Vale	Parish:	Leckhampstead
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead, Buckinghamshire		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	800sqm	Height OD: (metres)	c.100
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	R. Beckley	Project design originator:	C. Rouse
Project Manager:	K. Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	R. Zeepvat
Sponsor / funding body:	L.C. Goodlad		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	01/09/09	End date:	03/09/09
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Buckinghamshire County Museum (AYBCM: 2009.209)	None	
Paper:		Archive	
Digital:		CD	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief at Valley House, Middle End, Leckhampstead, Buckinghamshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1210/LVH/2		
Author(s):	Calli Rouse BA PIFA		
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