



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
FOR A NEW BUS SHELTER BY
107 LONDON STREET, READING, BERKSHIRE**

SP 71855 72950

On behalf of

JCDecaux

FEBRUARY 2013

REPORT FOR JCDecaux
991 Great West Road,
Brentford, Middlesex
TW8 9DN

PREPARED BY Paul Riccoboni MIFA

EDITED BY John Moore MIFA

ILLUSTRATION BY Andrei Celovsky

FIELDWORK 21st February 2013

REPORT ISSUED 25th February 2013

ENQUIRES TO John Moore Heritage Services
Hill View
Woodperry Road
Beckley
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ

Tel/Fax 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

Site Code RGLS13
JMHS Project No: 2802
Archive Location The archive is currently held by JMHS and will be deposited with the HER in digital format.

CONTENTS

	Page
SUMMARY	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	1
3 STRATEGY	1
3.1 Research Design	1
3.2 Methodology	3
4 RESULTS	3
4.1 Field results	3
4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results	3
5 FINDS	3
6 DISCUSSION	3
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY	4
FIGURES	
Figure 1 Site location	2
Plate 1: Showing general working shot of new bus shelter	4
Plate2: Showing posthole where the burnt animal bone was from context (01)	4
APPENDIX 1: HER summary sheet	5

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during ground works for a new bus shelter at 107 London Street, Reading. One site visit was made after bones were found beneath the pavement. The bones were identified as animal bones. No other finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Fig. 1)

The site is located at the bus shelter by 107 London Street, Reading, Berkshire (Fig. 1).

1.2 Planning Background

There was no requirement for a programme of archaeological works at the site, but during excavation the ground contractors found a small assemblage of burnt bones. The contractors contacted Berkshire Archaeology and a site visit was made by Fiona Macdonald. As a result of this visit it was decided that it would be appropriate for a watching brief to be maintained during the excavation of the remaining postholes. John Moore Heritage Services were contacted and immediately went to the site to monitor the remaining groundworks.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site lies within the historic core of Reading thought to have been occupied since the medieval period with a likely late Saxon origin. Earlier settlement at Reading has been proved by the recovery of prehistoric finds, such as flint tools, dating from the Mesolithic period to the Bronze Age. Such finds have been found at various sites throughout the town. A map reproduced from cartographic sources shows the medieval town of Reading to have extended along London Street (Astill 1978, Fig. 23). Numerous investigations over the years have produced medieval evidence from Reading. An archaeological evaluation at 67-73 London Street by John Moore Heritage Services revealed a medieval pit which contained oyster shell and medieval pottery alongside 13th century slag and copper alloy objects (JMHS 2001).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the

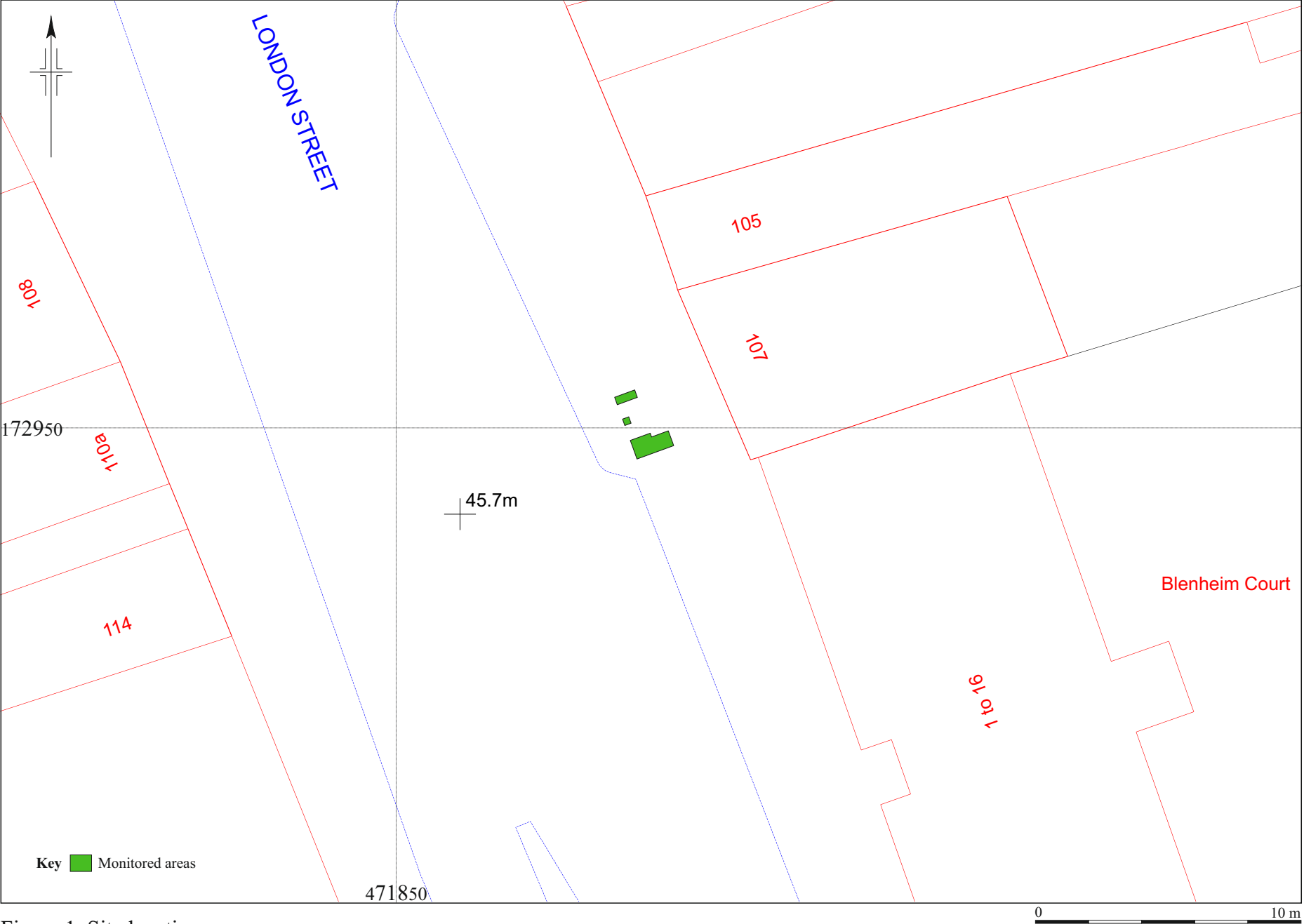


Figure 1. Site location

Institute for Archaeologists (1994). As the work was undertaken as a fast response to an unexpected discovery, no *Brief* or *Written Scheme of Investigation* was in place prior to the commencement of on-site ground works.

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present on site during ground reduction of two of the three postholes. All ground reduction was achieved using a pneumatic drill, shovels and trowels.

A journal, recorded on specially designed record sheets, was maintained which detailed times and duration of the site visit as well as notes on areas monitored by the archaeologist. Deposits (overburden) were recorded on context recording sheets. A general photographic record of the work was kept. It is not considered necessary to archive the work.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results

The general overburden was described as follows (earliest to latest). The natural ground was not seen during the course of the excavations. The earliest deposit seen was dark greyish black silty clay (02) but was not impacted upon. Overlying this was *c.* 0.30m thick dark greyish brown silty clay (01) with frequent gravels and occasional specks of ceramic building material. This deposit contained the burnt animal bones. The pavement slabs were the latest deposit.

No cut features were seen during the excavations.

4.2 Reliability of Results

The watching brief was carried out in wintry conditions with excellent co-operation from the contractor carrying out the groundworks. A confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved.

5 FINDS

A small assemblage of burnt animal bones (180g) were collected from context (01). The bones were generally small and fragmentary meaning animal species were difficult to identify. One long bone from a cow or ox was identifiable.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological watching brief was useful and determined the depth of the soil which contained the burnt animal bones. No other finds were discovered and it assumed that the animal bones were probably of medieval or early post-medieval origin and were residual within a deposit of silty clay used to make up the ground level of pavement. The reason they are burnt remains unknown but they may have been waste bone from a medieval butchers or tannery which may have existed along London Street.



Plate 1: general view of work in progress



Plate 2: Context (01) with burnt animal bones

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Astill 1978 *Historic Towns in Berkshire. Berkshire archaeological committee publication 2.*

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

English Heritage 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*

Hardy M-L, 2001 *96-102 London Street, Reading, Berkshire; An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment.* Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd.

Institute for Archaeologists, 1999 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* Revised 2008

John Moore Heritage Services 2001 *An Archaeological Evaluation at 67-73 London Street, Reading, Berkshire.* Unpublished client report.

Appendix 1: HER Summary Sheet

Site Name: 107 London Street Bus Shelter, Reading	
Site Address: 107 London Street, Reading, Berkshire	
Summary: <i>An archaeological watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during ground works for a new bus shelter at 107 London Street, Reading. One site visit was made after bones were found beneath the pavement. The bones were identified as animal bones. No other finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.</i>	
District/Unitary: Reading	Parish: Reading
Period(s): None	
NGR (centre of site: 8 figures): SU 718 729	
Type of archaeological work (delete) Watching Brief	
Date of Recording: 21 st February 2013	
Unit undertaking recording: JMHS	
Geology: Thames Valley Gravels	
Title and author of accompanying report: An Archaeological Watching Brief at 107 London Road bus shelter, Reading, Berkshire Prepared by Paul Riccoboni BA (Hons) Arch MIFA	
Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) No archaeological features. A small assemblage of burnt animal bone was collected by the ground contractors. It was not retained.	
Location of archive/finds:	
Contact at Unit: <i>Paul Riccoboni</i> info@jmheritageservices.co.uk	Date: 22/03/2013