

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

THYME COTTAGE, SCHOOL LANE, COOKHAM,

BERKSHIRE

NGR SU 89485 85240

On behalf of

Ms Anna Hitchen

SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT FOR

Anna Hitchen
Thyme Cottage
School Lane
Cookham
Berkshire
SL6 9ZJ

PREPARED BY

Andrej Čelovský
with contributions by David Gilbert

EDITED BY

John Moore

ILLUSTRATION BY

Andrej Čelovský

FIELDWORK

29th July 2013

REPORT ISSUED

6th September 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

CHSL 13

JMHS Project No:

2906

Archive Location

The archive is currently held by JMHS and will be deposited in due course when a repository becomes available

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	3	
3.1 Research Design	3	
3.2 Methodology	3	
4 RESULTS	3	
4.1 Field Results	3	
4.2 Reliability of Results	4	
5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS	4	
5.1 Post-medieval Pottery	4	
5.2 Environmental Remains	7	
6 DISCUSSION	7	
7 ARCHIVE	7	
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	8	
 FIGURES		
Figure 1	Site location	2
Figure 2	Plan and sections	5
Plate 1	Soakaway 105, view southeast	6
Plate 2	Soakaway 110, view south	6

Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a foundation trench for a new extension at Thyme Cottage, School Lane, Cookham, Berkshire (NGR SU 89485 85240). Two rubble soakaways were unearthed during the watching brief. They contained ceramic building material, pottery sherds, table glass and fragments of glass bottles, late 19th - early 20th century in date. No other features or finds of archaeological significance, in particular prehistoric or of later date were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located towards the north end, on the south west side of School Lane, Cookham (NGR SU 89485 85240). The site lies at approximately 26m above Ordnance Datum and is currently in domestic use. The underlying geology is Shepperton Gravel (BGS 255).

1.2 Planning Background

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead granted planning permission for the erection of a two-storey extension to the property. Due to the site's potential to contain archaeological remains a condition was attached to the permission for a programme of archaeological work to be carried out. Berkshire Archaeology had indicated that this should be a continuous watching brief during the course of groundworks. This was in line with NPPF and the Local Plan.

Based on the above a *Written Scheme of Investigation* was prepared by John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS 2013). This document outlined the method by which the watching brief would be carried out in order to preserve by record any archaeological remains of significance.

1.3 Archaeological Background

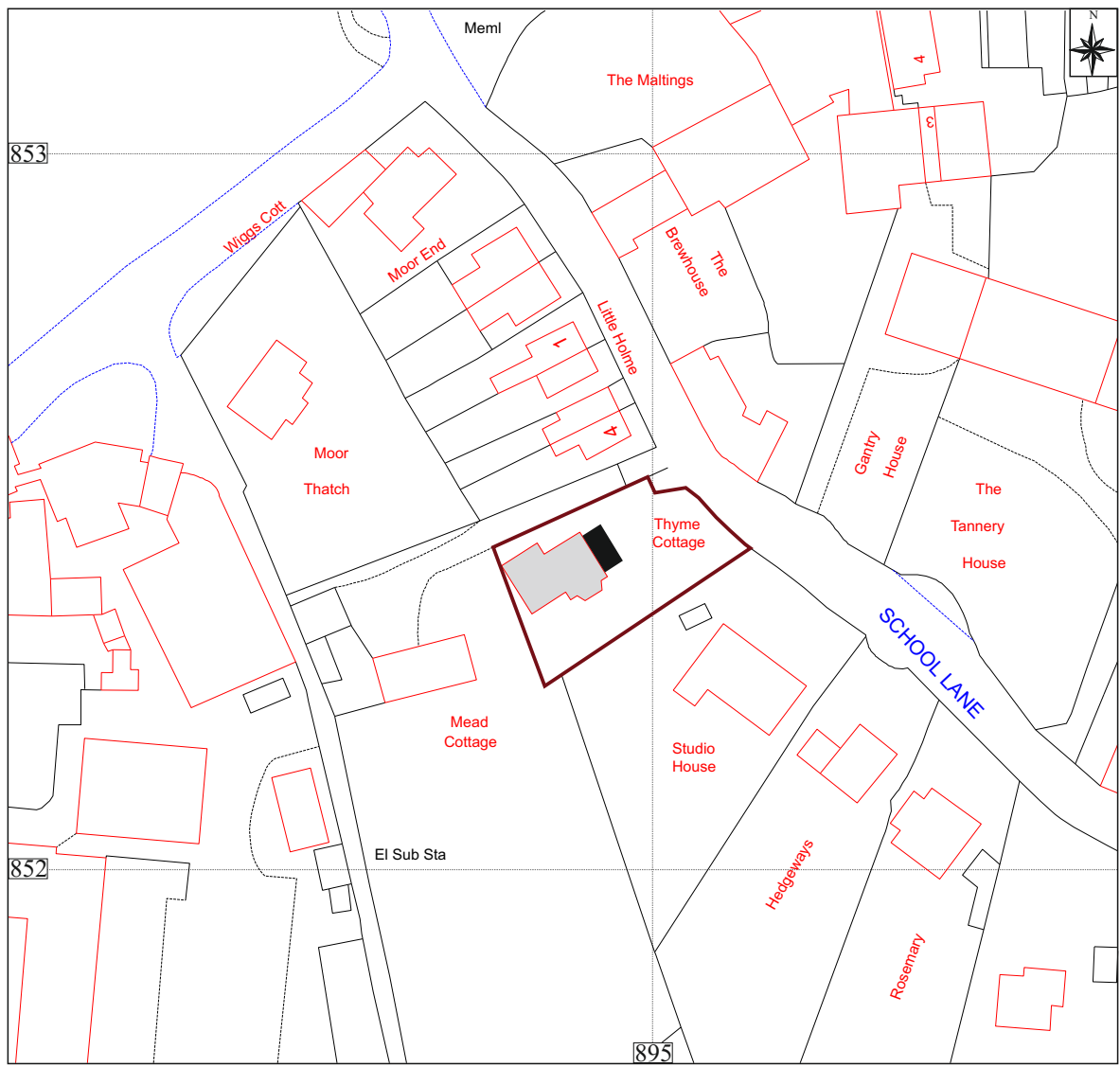
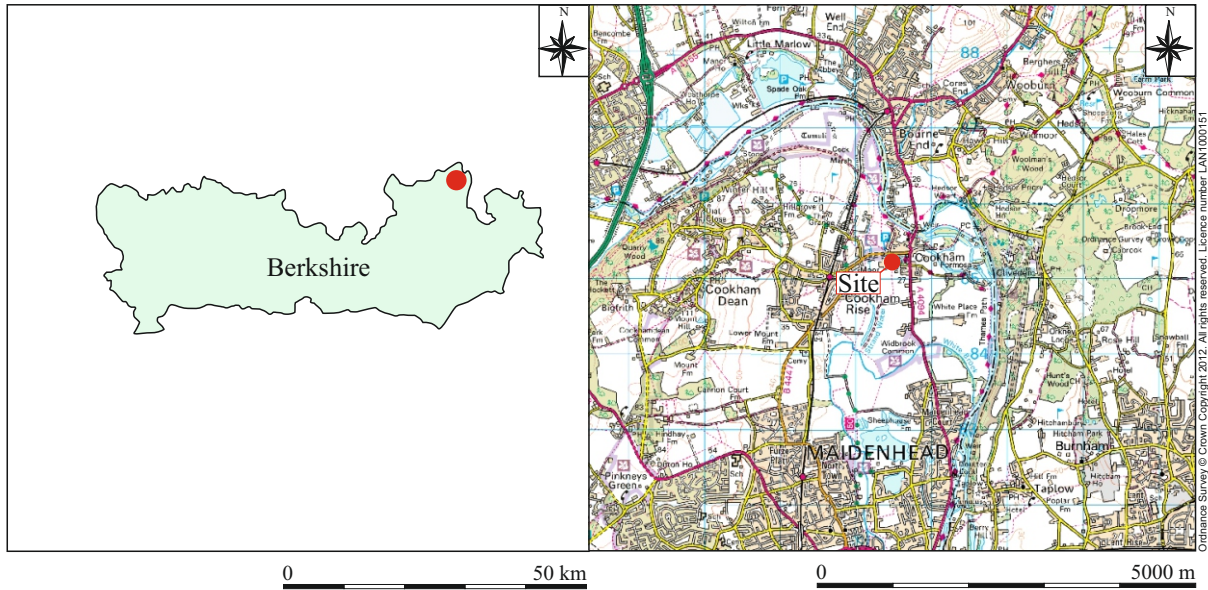
The *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2013) set out the brief archaeological background to the site. The development site lies on the fringes of the historic core of the medieval town, to the south of a possible market place. The focus of the Saxon settlement is thought to lie further to the northeast (JMHS 2013).

A watching brief undertaken in 2004 for a rear extension to the property found an undated pit or ditch terminal containing a prehistoric flint flake (TVAS 2005).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* were as follows:

- To record any archaeological remains that will be impacted on by the groundworks.



Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2013. All rights reserved. Licence number 100022432

Key Site outline Monitored area Existing building

Figure 1: Site location

In particular:

- To record any further remains related to the undated feature previously found on the site.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (2013). The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present on site during the course of groundworks associated with the development of extension to the existing house. All ground reduction was achieved using a 360° 1.5 tonne tracked excavator fitted with a trenching bucket and limited hand excavation.

Fieldwork was carried out to a *Written Scheme of Investigation*. Standard techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

A sample of pottery were taken from two contexts (106) and (111) for identification and were not retained.

4 RESULTS

All features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers with no brackets indicate feature cuts, numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material and numbers in bold indicate any form of masonry.

4.1 Field Results (*Figure 2*)

The excavated footing trench for extension was 11.45m long, 0.75m wide and reached maximum depth 1.20m from the present ground surface.

The lowest natural deposit (108) was yellowish brown sandy silt, 1.17m below present ground level. Overlying the deposit (108) was subsoil (104), composed of orange brown sandy clay, 0.86m thick.

Located in the southeast part of footing trench, cut into deposit (104) was sub-rectangular cut 105 (Fig. 2a, b; Plate 1). It was 1.24m wide with vertical 0.64m deep sides and flattish base. Filled by rubble (106), mainly formed of ceramic building material (CBM), table glass, occasional pottery sherds and sandy mortar, late 19th to early 20th century in date (See 5.1). Cut feature (105) was interpreted as a rubble soakaway, which was connected to the existing rainwater drain.

Overlying soakaway 105 and deposit (104) was thin loose chalk layer (107) (Fig. 2b), possible associated with construction of the external wall **100** of the existing building. Its maximum thickness was 0.06m, which gradually decreased towards the northeast end of the excavated footing trench.

In the northwest part of footing trench another chalk deposit (109), 0.12m thick and 0.96m wide in section (Fig. 2c) was recorded, perhaps it was also associated with construction of existing wall **100**.

Cut through deposit (109) into the subsoil (104) was the second rubble soakaway 110 (Fig. 2a, c; Plate 2). It was sub-rectangular in shape, c.1.60m long, 1m wide and had steep concave sides 0.30m deep and a concave base. Soakaway was filled by rubble (111), consisted of frequent late 19th – early 20th pottery sherds (See 5.1), ceramic building material, fragments of glass bottles and the metal part of a shotgun shell.

Overlying the soakaway (110), chalk deposits (107) and (109) was 0.36m thick topsoil (103) composed of dark grey brown silt. It was disturbed by a 20th century sewerage pipe that was laid on thin concrete, a brick manhole and rainwater drain pipes.

Located on southwest edge of monitored area was exiting building (Fig. 2a). Cut into deposit (103) was foundation trench 101, 0.36m deep with vertical sides and a possible flattish base, which was orientated northwest to southeast (Fig. 2b, c). Only the northeast side of the foundation cut was exposed. Wall **100** was of brick, 223mm long 104mm wide and 68mm deep, laid in a stretcher formation and bonded with a light gray mortar. Dimensions of bricks suggested, that wall was possible constructed in second half of 19th century or in the beginning of 20th century.

Northeast end of monitored area was covered by loose light greyish white gravel (102) lying on geotextile, which was part of modern driveway.

4.2 Reliability of Results

The reliability of the results is considered to be good. The archaeological watching brief took place in clement, dry conditions with very good light and visibility. Excellent cooperation from the ground workers ensured that sufficient time was allowed to investigate and record the archaeological features to the appropriate standards.

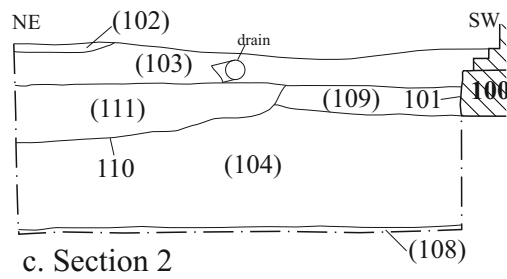
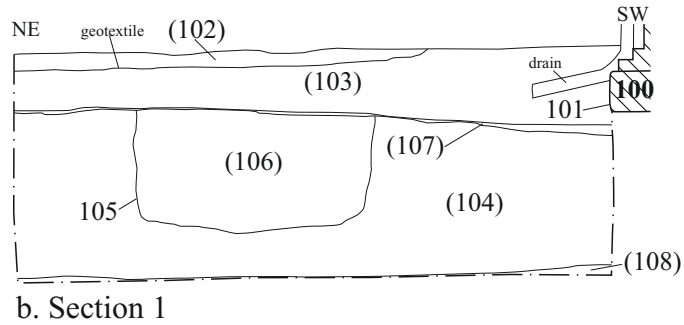
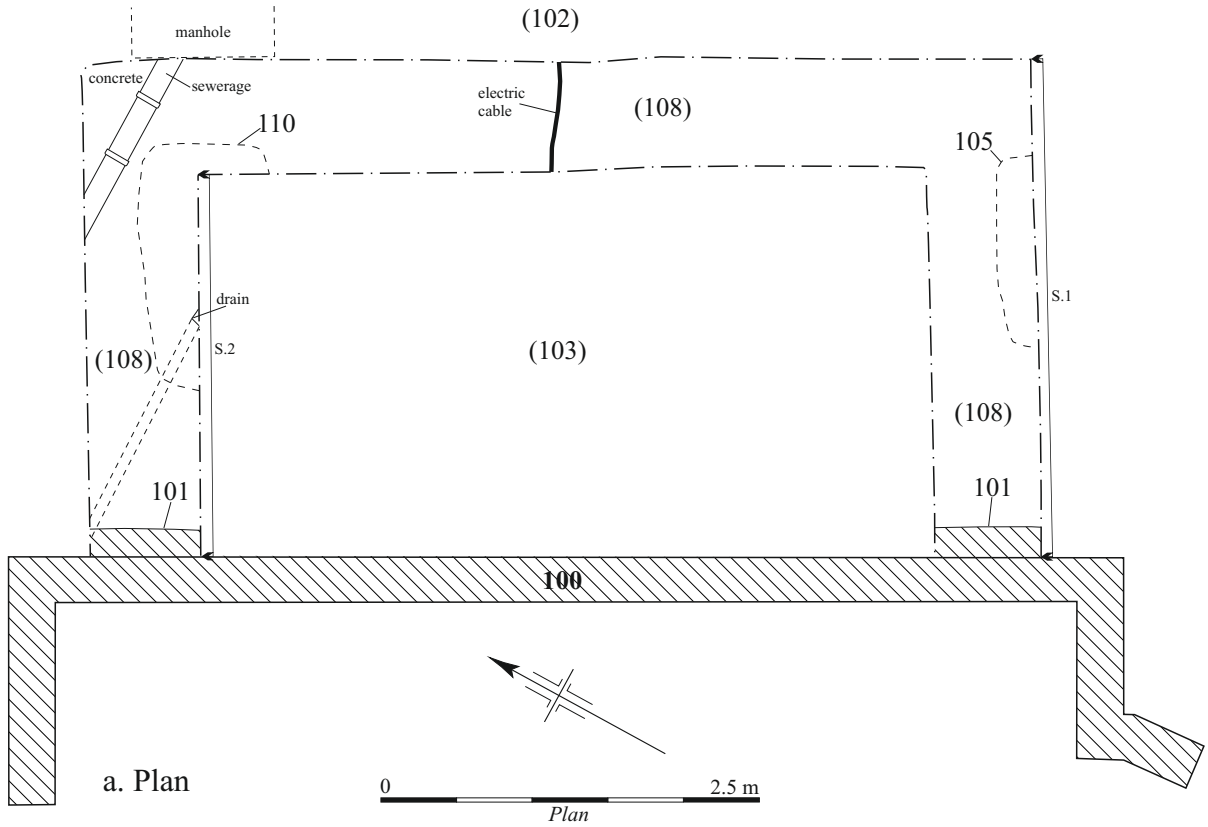
5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

5.1 Post-medieval Pottery *(By David Gilbert)*

A sample of post-medieval pottery were taken from two contexts (106) and (111) for identification and not retained. This was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Reading Waterfront type-series (Underwood 1997), the following fabrics were noted:

Context (106)

BWPW Blue and White printed ware




Key  Existing building

Figure 2: Plan and sections



Plate 1: Soakaway 105, view southeast



Plate 2: Soakaway 110, view south

Context (111)

STAFFS Staffordshire type slipware

REW Red earthenware

Bf1 Salt-glazed Stoneware

Bf2 Salt-glazed Stoneware

CRM Creamware

WHEW Mass produced White earthenware

BWPW Blue and White printed ware

PO European Porcelain

The material is in a range of domestic forms and includes a stone ware colander. One base sherd has a maker's mark reading B.G indicating porcelain manufactured by Danish potters Bing & Grøndahl which was founded in 1853, this dates the assemblage to the mid to late 19th century.

5.2 Environmental Remains

No deposits suitable for environmental analysis were identified, and no samples were taken

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological watching brief at Thyme Cottage, School Lane, Cookham, was successful in proving that no archaeological remains of significance were observed in the excavated foundation trench for the extension.

All archaeological features were related to construction activities associated with the existing building, dated in to late 19th and 20th century.

The first stage of construction work was represented, by standing external brick wall 100, which was possibly erected in late 19th or early 20th century. Two chalk deposits (107) and (109) seem to be related to the construction of wall 100. Possibly shortly after existing building was completed, two rubble soakaways 105 and 110, were built approximately 1.5m to the northeast from the building. Although, pottery recovered from those soakaway is mostly late 19th century in date, is more likely that soakaway were constructed in early of 20th century.

Other services (sewerage pipe, manhole, electric cable) observed in excavated foundation trench were of modern date.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site record

Physical record

None of finds were retained

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be deposited when a suitable depository is available.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 (Revised), *Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading: IfA.

John Moore Heritage Services, 2013, *Thyme Cottage, School Lane, Cookham, Berkshire. Archaeological Watching Brief, Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished document.

Thames Valley Archaeological Service 2005, *Thyme Cottage, School Lane, Cookham, Berkshire*. Unpublished client report

Underwood, C, 1997 Pottery in JW Hawkes and PJ Fasham 'Excavations on Reading Waterfront Sites, 1979-1988' *Wessex Archaeological Report 5*, 142-161