



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**2 WHYTELADYES ROAD,**

**COOKHAM,**

**BERKSHIRE**

**SP 8842 8447**

*On behalf of*

*Superior Construction (UK) Ltd.*

**OCTOBER 2009**

**REPORT FOR** Superior Construction (UK) Ltd.  
18 Greys Road  
Henley-on-Thames  
Oxfordshire  
RG9 1RY

**PREPARED BY** David Gilbert

**ILLUSTRATION BY** David Gilbert

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**ENQUIRES TO** John Moore Heritage Services  
Hill View  
Woodperry Road  
Beckley  
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ  
Tel/Fax 01865 358300  
Email: [info@jmheritageservices.co.uk](mailto:info@jmheritageservices.co.uk)

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**Archive Location:** Reading Museum  
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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological watching brief during ground works for a new building at Whyteladyes Road, Cookham. No archaeological features were recorded.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The site is located at the junction of Whyteladyes Lane and Bridge Avenue in Cookham Rise (NGR SU 8842 8447 centred). The underlying geology is alluvium over Chalk. The development was carried out within a domestic garden and an area of a previous building.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

A planning application (08/00256) to demolish the current house and build 4 x 2bed-apartments with parking was applied for by Pinkneys Green 06 Ltd. This application was refused by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead but later allowed on appeal. Due to the potential for the work to disturb archaeological deposits a planning condition was attached to the permission requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief. This was in line with PPG16 and Local Plan policies.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The site is located in an area of archaeological potential due to a number of sites noted on the Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record for this area. A number of Palaeolithic artefacts were recovered from a field a short distance to the west. These included two hand axes (SMR 00641.00.000). Sherds of Saxon and medieval pottery were found at the Cannonbridge estate to the south-west (SMR 02607.00.000) and excavations at the nearby Strand Castle gravel pit located a complex of pitches, gullies, pits, possible huts and a drying oven, all dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries (SMR 00616.00.000).

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

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

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

In particular:

- to record any remains relating to the prehistoric, Roman and medieval activity known in the area.
- to inform on the likelihood of archaeological remains having been disturbed without recording by the previous building on the site.



Figure 1. Site location

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Berkshire Archaeology. Standard John Moore Heritage Services 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.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

#### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist monitored the course of the majority of the groundwork, which involved the excavation of the foundation trenches for the new building, drainage and soakaways.

Only the shallow machine strip of the area of the parking at the rear of the property was not monitored as this would not have an impact on any archaeological horizon.

### **4 RESULTS**

All features were assigned individual context numbers. Numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material. A general description of the feature fills is given.

#### **4.1 Excavation Results**

The lowest natural geological deposit in the area was a yellow-brown sandy-clay with small quantities of flint pebbles (03) related to the alluvial deposits known in the area. The chalk solid geology was not observed. Above this was a dark orange-brown sandy-clay with flint (02) alluvial layer up to 0.6m thick. Numerous modern service trenches were seen cut into this layer

Overlying this in the area of the previous building was a dark orange-brown sandy clay 0.3m thick containing charcoal, brick fragments and flint pebbles (04) representing the construction and demolition of the previous building. In the garden areas the uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown sandy clay topsoil (01) up to 0.6m thick.

#### **4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results**

The results can on the whole be considered to be good. The majority of the work took place on dry days, although work continued through a snow blizzard on one day.

### **5 FINDS**

No artefacts were recovered.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The area had been considerably disturbed during the erection of the previous building. In less disturbed areas a thick garden soil was seen to lie above alluvial deposits. No archaeological features were seen.

## 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 records

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Reading Museum.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief.*