Enborne Road, Newbury
West Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief
For R. A. Rawlings and Sons Ltd

by Clare Challis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ERN 03/11

February 2003
Summary

Site name: Enborne Road, Newbury, West Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 4654 6657

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 11th and 13th February 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Clare Challis / Steve Hammond

Site code: ERN 03/11

Area of site: 555 sq m

Summary of results: No archaeological finds or features present

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services at 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5 NR and will be deposited with Newbury Museum in due course

This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder

Report edited/checked by: Jo Pine  21.02.03
                      Steve Preston  21.02.03
Enborne Road, Newbury, West Berkshire
An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Clare Challis

Report 03/11

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Enborne Road, Newbury, West Berkshire (SU 4654 6657) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Anthony Bridge, 7 Crawford Place, Northcroft Park, Newbury, RG14 1XG on behalf of R. A. Rawlings and Sons Ltd, 105 Russel Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5JX. Planning permission (02/01319/FUL) has been granted by West Berkshire Council for the construction of one house and garage on a parcel of land, formerly garages, off Enborne Road, Newbury. This is subject to a condition which requires an archaeological watching brief to take place during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District’s policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Veronica Fiorato, County Archaeologist at West Berkshire Heritage Service. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Hammond and Clare Challis on 11th and 13th February 2003 and the site code is ERN 03/11.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the west of the central core of Newbury, south of the River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon canal, which flows through the centre of town. The main railway line to Reading and London passes to the north of the site (Fig. 1). The site lies on the edge of the valley of the River Kennet on an area of low lying ground. The underlying geology is River and Valley Gravel (BGS 1947) though no natural geology was observed on site. The site lies at approximately 85m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The site lies within the archaeologically rich Kennet Valley. To the north-east of the site at the confluence of the Rivers Kennet and Lambourn there are at least ten known Mesolithic sites alone (Healey *et al* 1992; Wymer 1962). A fieldwalking survey in the mid-section of the Kennet Valley (Lobb and Rose, 1996) has also located a number of flint scatters, possibly Mesolithic in date. Finds of Neolithic pottery exist to the west.
The site is also recorded as being the location where Protestant martyrs (Palmer Gwin and Askew) were burned at the stake in the 16th century (V. Fiorato pers. comm; WBHTS 2002).

**Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to observe, excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the construction of the new house and garage. The site was to be levelled and piled prior to construction, and the excavation of the pileheads and the groundbeams was to be monitored. Archaeological deposits threatened by the development were to be excavated and recorded. Sufficient time would be allowed to carry this out within the ground workers schedules but without causing undue delay.

**Results**

The watching brief was conducted over a period of two days, coinciding with excavations on site. The first visit examined ground beam trenches for the garage (Fig. 3). The trenches were 1.40m wide and excavated to a depth of 0.60m. Stratigraphy observed consisted of made ground (dark brown silty clay) containing brick and tile, metal, frequent flint, coal and charcoal. No natural geology was observed in the trenches.

The second visit examined ground beam trenches for the house (Fig. 3). The trenches were 1.45m wide and to a depth of 0.70m. The stratigraphy consisted of made ground similar to that observed on the previous visit. No natural geology was observed.

**Conclusion**

The results of the watching brief at Enborne Road, Newbury showed that the archaeologically relevant levels were not reached during excavation of the ground beams for the new house and garage. The ground beam trenches were shallow and only excavated through what appears to be modern made ground. Demolition of previous existing garages on the site had occurred and the site was then levelled up prior to building construction. The made ground encountered within the ground beam trenches was likely to be material generated during this demolition episode or during construction of the garages.

**References**

Wymer, J J, 1962, ‘Excavation at Thatcham (second interim report)’, *Trans Newbury and District Fld Club* 11, 2, 41–52
Figure 1. Location of site within Newbury and West Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1187 SU 46/56 1:25000
Ordnance Survey Licence AL52324A0001
Land off Enborne Road, Newbury, West Berkshire, 2003

Figure 2. Location of site on Enborne Road, Newbury, West Berkshire

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Siteplan SU466NE 1:1250
Figure 3: Location of building foundations