Huntswood Farm House, Mill Lane, Hurley, Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs Bishop

by Andy Taylor
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HHH 06/14

May 2006
Summary

Site name: Huntswood Farm House, Mill Lane, Hurley, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8266 8390

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 15th-17th May 2006

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andy Taylor

Site code: HHH 06/14

Area of site: c.80 sq m

Summary of results: No deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 19.05.06
                                 Steve Preston✓ 18.05.06
Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Huntswood Farm House, Mill Lane, Hurley, Berkshire (SU 8266 8390) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Bishop of Huntswood Farm House, Mill Lane, Hurley, Berkshire.

Planning permission (app no 05/02386) has been gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of a new garage following demolition of existing outbuildings at Huntswood Farm House, Mill Lane, Hurley, Berkshire. The consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology which requires the site to be investigated during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Royal Borough’s policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona MacDonald, Principal Archaeologist with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor on the 15th and 17th May 2006 and the site code is HHH 06/14.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the south side of Mill Lane in the centre of the village of Hurley, which lies c.5km east of Henley. The site comprises a residential dwelling and the site of former outbuildings demolished to make way for the proposed garage, at a height of 30.50m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying geology consists of flood plain gravel (BGS 1990).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from the presence of Hurley Priory, which was a Benedictine Priory founded in AD1086 and suppressed in 1536 (Ford 1987). The priory is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM19020) and lies just to the north of the development area. Various watching briefs have been carried out
both within and beyond the scheduled area. One of these revealed a probable ditch and two pits of medieval date at Monks Garden (Pine 1999) with further medieval pits at Tuckenhay to the east (Ford 2004). More generally, the site also lies within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley (Ford 1987; Gates 1975).

**Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve examination of all intrusive groundworks, in particular any ground reduction, and the digging of foundation trenches and service runs.

The foundation trenches observed (Fig. 3) measured 0.50m wide and c.1.00m deep. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

**Results**

The foundation trenches comprised topsoil (0.00m–0.15m) overlying a mid brown sandy silt (0.15m–0.95m) overlying gravel natural 0.95m–1.00m+ (Figure 4). A concrete soakaway was observed in the north west corner of the footings but no deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed.

**Finds**

No finds of an archaeological nature were retrieved and no archaeological deposits or features observed.

**Conclusion**

Despite the site’s close proximity to the medieval priory and previously identified archaeological deposits at Monks Garden, across the street, no deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed during the watching brief.

**References**

Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Counc Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap 1, Reading
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Figure 1. Location of site within Hurley and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site within Hurley.
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Scale: 1:1250.
Figure 3. Location of footings observed.

Scale: 1:100.
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Figure 4: Representative Section HHH 06/14

Topsoil

Mid Brown Sandy Silt

Gravel Natural
Base of trench

0 1m