

Bridge House, Ham Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
for Mr A Chadwick**

by Alan Ford
Thames Valley Archaeological
Services

Site Code BHHI98/55

August 1998

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Report 98/55

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on land adjacent to Bridge House, Ham Island, Old Windsor (SU 99357515)(Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Mr. A. Chadwick of Bridge House, Ham Island, Old Windsor.

A planning application (no. 98/76746) was submitted to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead proposing the erection of a new stable block and tackroom on land adjacent to Bridge House. An archaeological watching brief was requested as a condition on the granting of planning consent and as a requirement of Scheduled Monument Consent. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Policy and Planning Guidance Note, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16, 1990). The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr R Bourn of Babtie, archaeological advisors to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Mr. R. Perrin of English Heritage. The fieldwork was undertaken by Alan Ford on 3rd August 1998 and the site code is BHHI 98/55.

Location, Topography and Geology

The site is located within a paddock, adjacent to the east of the grounds of Bridge House, Ham Island, and is bounded to the south by Ham Lane (Figure 2). The site is level and lies at a height of c 20.0 m above Ordnance Datum on floodplain gravels (BGS 1981).

Archaeological Background

The application area lies on the periphery of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (BK97) which includes the site of Edward the Confessor's Palace which was an extensive Royal site during the Saxon and early Medieval periods. A number of cropmarks (SMR nos 347.00.001-347.00.005) are present on Ham Island to the north of the site. These have been interpreted as a field system with enclosure ditches and pits of unknown date. A watching brief undertaken by Thames Valley Archaeological Services (Saunders 1995) during the excavation of

a pipe trench across these cropmarks failed to date any of the ditches but did unearth a small selection of Prehistoric flints. Another watching brief conducted during the digging of foundation trenches and a soakaway in the back garden of Bridge House (Smith 1996) did not locate any archaeological deposits.

Objectives and Methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character and quality of any archaeological deposits within the development area. This was to be accomplished by monitoring the reduction in level of the present ground surface for the new stable block. The spoil was monitored for the presence of artefacts.

Results and Conclusion

The stable block was L-shaped in plan and being a lightweight wooden structure did not require deep solid foundations and no deep service runs such as sewer pipes were needed.

The groundwork for the new stable block entailed terracing into the existing hedgebank alongside Ham Lane and depositing the resultant spoil over the adjacent area to the north in order to level the area for the placement of a concrete slab 10 m. square (Figure 2). The only intrusive work undertaken was the cutting back of the present hedgebank by a width of 4.0 m over a length of 30.0 m. The maximum height of the bank removed was 1.10 m. Visual inspection of the bank showed it to contain fragments of clear bottle glass and tile for the full depth exposed. This showed the bank to be a relatively modern feature. At no point were the underlying gravels exposed nor were any artefacts of archaeological note recovered. No archaeological features were present.

References

- BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 269, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, HMSO
- Saunders, M J, 1995, Ham Island, Old Windsor, An Archaeological Watching Brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 95/18, Reading
- Smith, A, 1996, Bridge House, Ham Island, Old Windsor, An Archaeological Watching Brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 96/50, Reading



**Bridge House, Ham Island, Old Windsor,
Berkshire, 1998**

Figure 1. Location of site within Old Windsor and Berkshire.

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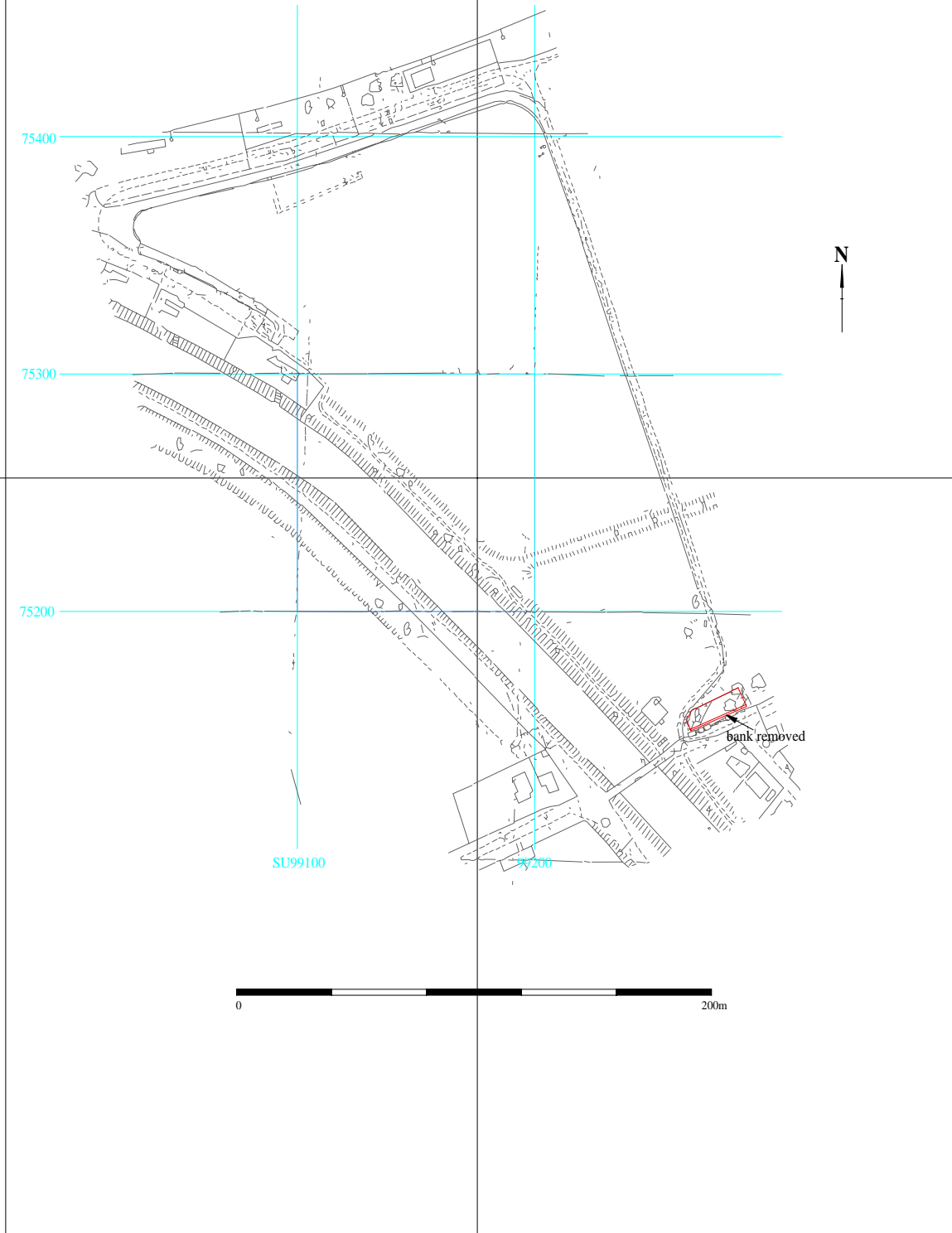


Figure 2. Location of site.

Brigham Road, Reading, Berkshire, 1999

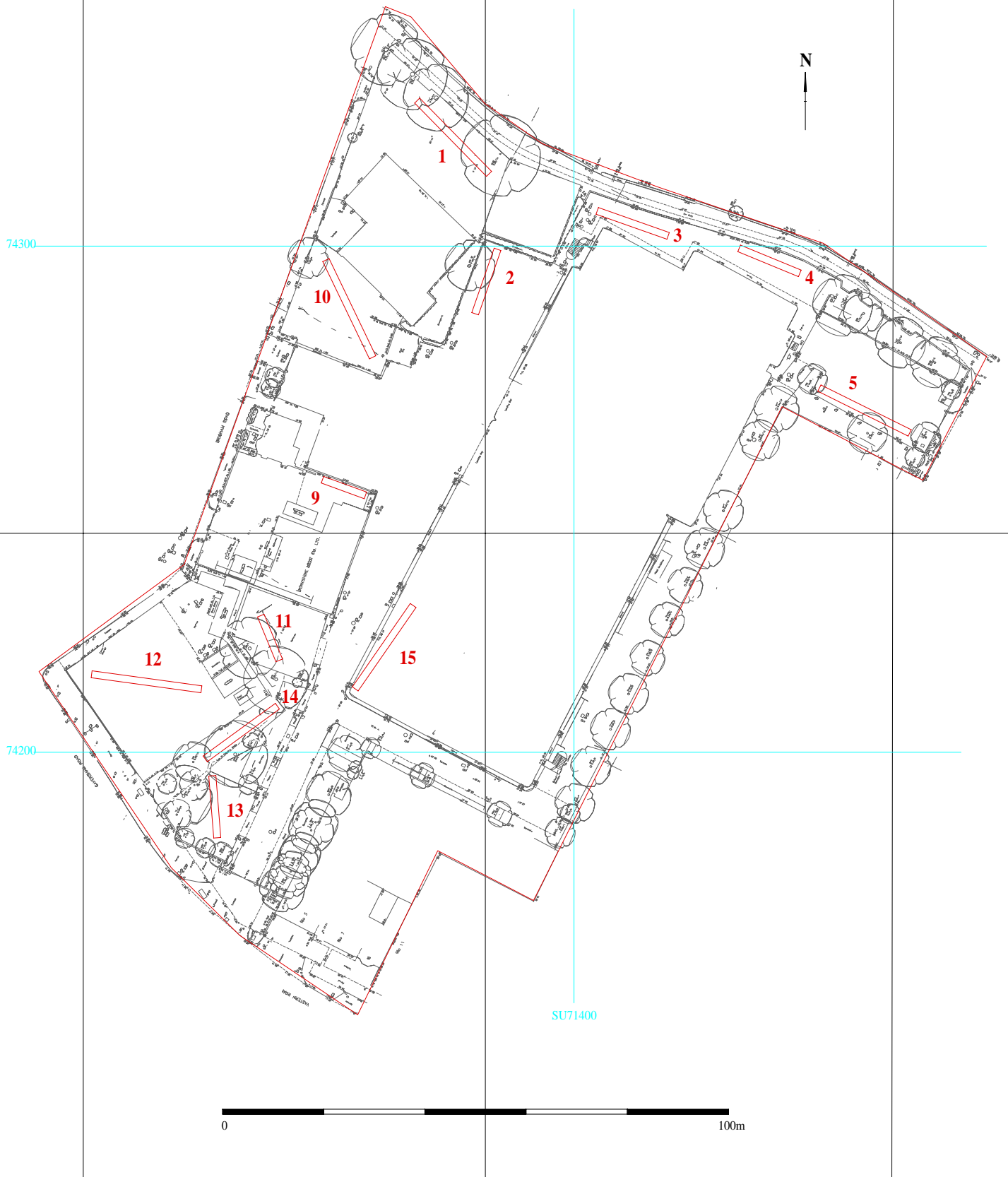


Figure 3. Plan of trenches relative to pre-demolition buildings.