

**89–95 Ladbroke Road, Redhill,
Surrey**

An Archaeological Evaluation

For Bovis Homes Ltd

by Stephen Hammond

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LRR 03/36

November 2003

Summary

Site name: 89–95 Ladbroke Road, Redhill, Surrey

Grid reference: TQ 282 511

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 27th–28th October 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Stephen Hammond

Site code: LRR 03/36

Area of site: 0.6 ha

Summary of results: Trenching failed to reveal any finds or archaeological features.

Monuments identified: None

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 03.11.03
	Steve Preston ✓ 03.11.03

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Report 03/36

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 89-95 Ladbroke Road, Redhill, Surrey (TQ 282 511) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr John Strange, Land Director for Bovis Homes Limited, Retirement Living, The Manor House, North Ash Road, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8HQ.

Planning consent has been granted by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council to redevelop the site for residential use (sheltered apartments) (P/02/00313/F). The consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology which requires an evaluation to be implemented prior to groundworks commencing. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The potential of the site has been highlighted by a desktop study (Lowe 2003). This report showed that the site lies in an area of few records of archaeological deposits or finds but an adjacent property located a find-spot of Roman pottery which could indicate the presence of a Roman settlement within the vicinity.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Tony Howe, Archaeological Officer for Surrey County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Stephen Hammond with the assistance of Natasha Bateman between the 27th-28th October 2003 and the site code is LRR 03/36.

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

Location, topography and geology

The site is an irregular parcel of land approximately 0.6 ha in size on the west side of Ladbroke Road, to the north of Redhill town centre (TQ 282 511). The land slopes down from an approximate height of 85m above Ordnance Datum at the east to 82m at the west. According to the geological map (BGS 1978) the underlying geology is Folkestone Beds with brickearth, alluvium and Sandgate Beds close by. Fine sand was observed during this evaluation exercise.

Archaeological background

In general there is relatively little information about the archaeology of Redhill and in particular the area encompassing the proposal site. Despite the presence of the neighbouring town of Reigate which had its origins in the early medieval period, Redhill's origins are likely to lie in the late post medieval period and the arrival of the railway in 1841 saw the town expand considerably (O'Connell 1977).

The earliest activity discovered is a Mesolithic flint scatter close to Redhill station. To the north of the site at Merstham an excavation revealed considerable prehistoric activity (Saunders and Weaver forthcoming). Although small quantities of Neolithic and Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age features were recorded the most intensive period of occupation of the site was during the Late Iron Age/ Roman times, with some later activity dating to the Saxon period.

A bowl dating to the 1st-2nd century was recovered from the garden of 96 Ladbroke Road, located immediately east of the site. Similarly a Roman coin was recovered from the playing fields immediately to the rear of the site dating from the 4th century (Lowe 2003).

A charter dated to AD 947 mentions the presence of 'beorgas' or barrows north of Ladbroke Road at Merstham and in the same spot the supposed 9th century battle of 'Battlebridge' was supposed to have occurred.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. This work would be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation in-situ, or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. Specific research aims of the project were:

- To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site.
- To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
- To determine if any finds or deposits of Roman date are present on the site.

In order to achieve these aims it was agreed to dig five trenches each 20m long and 1.6m wide targeted at the footprints of the proposed new structures (4% of the developable area) with a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless bucket. It was intended to dig the trenches as close as possible to the positions laid out in the project specification but the positioning could vary to avoid services or large trees. The trenches would be taken down in

spits under constant archaeological supervision and where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas would be cleaned using appropriate hand tools before being investigated further. Sufficient of any archaeological features uncovered would be excavated by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Results

Five trenches were dug ranging in length from 11.00m to 27.80m, all being 1.6m in width. Trench 2 had to be relocated from its intended position due to the presence of a large tree. Complete details of all trenches are given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1

This trench was aligned approximately east-west and was 27.80m long. Typically, the section revealed 0.23m of sandy/silty topsoil with very occasional rounded flint gravel and occasional charcoal flecking covering a madeground layer of light yellow/white sand 0.25m thick. Below this a mid brown/orange silty sand with moderate root disturbance 0.54m in depth was noted with occasional chalk flecking, sandstone and angular flint and very occasional pieces of brick and tile. This overlay 0.21m of mid orange sand thought the first natural horizon. This was dug into further to reveal a fine light yellow/white sand with mid orange patches at a depth of 1.24m which continued to the total trench depth of 1.30m. No finds or archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 2

Aligned approximately east-west this trench was 11.00m long. It could be seen that 0.56m of sandy/silt topsoil with occasional rounded flint gravel covered a mid brown/orange silty sand with moderate root disturbance and occasional sub angular flint 0.84m thick. At a depth of 1.4m a fine light yellow/white natural sand was encountered which continued to trench depth of 1.5m. No finds or archaeological features were observed.

Trench 3 (Plate 1)

Trench 3 was 22.00m long and aligned approximately east-west. The stratigraphy revealed consisted of 0.30m of mid grey/brown sandy/silt topsoil with occasional rounded flint gravel above a mottled light yellow/white fine sand natural which continued to the depth of trench of 0.52m. A test pit 1.2m deep was dug at the western end of the trench to check the stratigraphy of the natural horizons. This test pit revealed the fine mottled yellow/white

sands subtly changed to a more light orange/yellow/white colour towards the base of the pit and became less compact (Plate 3). No finds or features were observed throughout the trench.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned approximately north-south and was 17.20m long. From the exposed section it could be seen that 0.18m of mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional rounded flint gravel overlaid a mid orange/brown silty sand 0.11m thick which in turn covered a light brown/yellow mottled sand natural which continued to the total trench depth of 0.40m. A possible feature 4m from the northern end of the trench was investigated but found to contain modern china and brick and tile. These finds were not retained. No archaeological finds or features were uncovered.

Trench 5 (Plate 2)

Trench 5 was 23.00m long and was aligned approximately east-west. The trench section consisted of 0.47m of light grey/brown sandy silt with occasional rounded flint gravel overlaying 0.26m of mid brown/grey sandy silt with occasional brick and tile inclusions onto a patchy light brown/orange/yellow sand at a depth of 0.63m. This continued to the total depth of the trench at 0.73m. A test pit 0.93m deep was placed in the eastern end of the trench.

Finds

No finds were recovered from the evaluation.

Conclusion

No finds or archaeological features were revealed during the evaluation. In particular no finds or archaeological deposits of the Roman or Mesolithic periods were uncovered. The evaluation results indicate the site has no archaeological potential and it is unlikely that any ground intrusive building work will damage or destroy any archaeological deposits.

References

BGS, 1978, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 286, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
Lowe, J, 2003 '89-95 Ladbroke Road, Redhill, Surrey. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 03/36, Reading
O'Connell, M, 1977, *Historic Towns in Surrey*, Surrey Archaeological Society, Guildford
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

Saunders, M J and Weaver, S (forthcoming), 'The excavation of a late Iron Age/Early Roman settlement enclosure and prehistoric and early/middle Saxon deposits at Battlebridge Lane, Mersham, Surrey 1999', Thames Valley Archaeological Services draft publication report 98/65, Reading

APPENDIX 1: Trench details
0m at S/W end

<i>Trench No.</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	27.80	1.6	1.30	0-0.23m of sandy/silt topsoil with very occasional rounded flint gravel and occasional charcoal flecking. 0.23-0.48m madeground layer of light yellow/white sand. 0.48-1.03m mid brown/orange silty sand with occasional chalk flecking, sandstone and angular flint and very occasional pieces of brick and tile. 1.03-1.24m mid orange sand thought the first natural horizon. 1.24m+ fine light yellow/white sand with mid orange patches.
2	11.00	1.6	1.50	0-0.56m sandy/silt topsoil with occasional rounded flint gravel. 0.56-1.40m mid brown/orange silty sand with occasional sub angular flint. At a depth of 1.4m+ fine light yellow/white natural sand.
3	22.00	1.6	0.52	0-0.30m mid grey/brown sandy/silt topsoil with occasional rounded flint gravel. 0.30m+ mottled light yellow/white fine sand natural. Test pit 1.2m deep dug at western end of the trench. Test pit revealed fine mottled yellow/white sands subtly changed to a more light orange/yellow/white colour towards the base of the pit and became less compact.
4	17.20	1.6	0.40	0-0.18m mid grey/brown sandy silt with occasional rounded flint gravel. 0.18-0.29m mid orange/brown silty sand. 0.29m+ light brown/yellow mottled sand natural. Possible feature 4m from the northern end of the trench investigated, found to contain modern chinaware and occasional brick and tile. Finds not retained
5	23.05	1.6	0.73E 0.93W	0- 0.47m light grey/brown sandy silt with occasional rounded flint gravel. 0.47-0.73m mid brown/grey sandy silt with occasional brick and tile inclusions onto a patchy light brown/orange/yellow sand at a depth of 0.63m. Test pit 0.93m deep at eastern end.

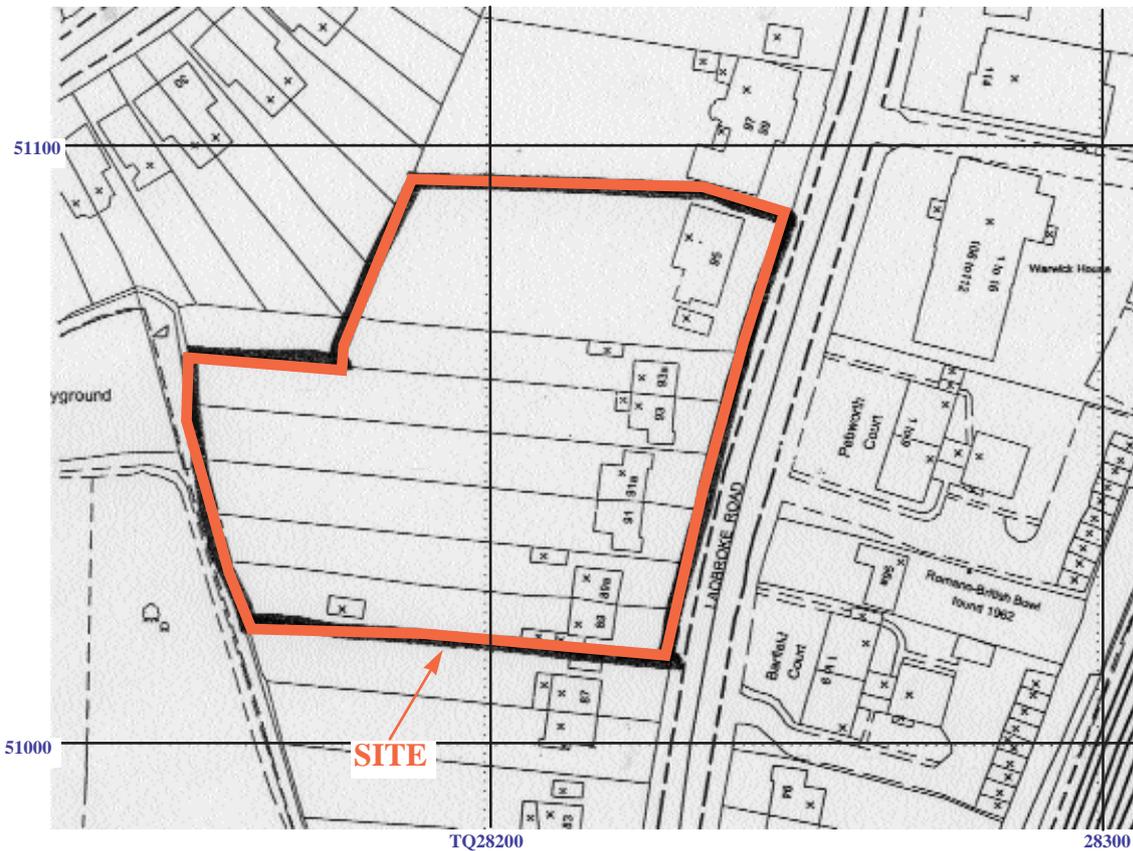


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Figure 1. Location of site within Redhill and Surrey.

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Figure 2. Location of site on Ladbrooke Road.

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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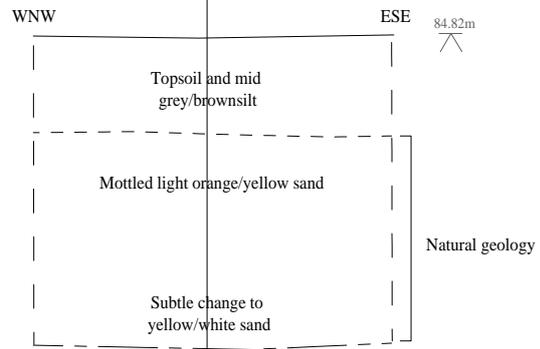


Figure 4. Representative section (test pit from Trench 3).



Plate 1. Trench 3 looking east, scales: 1m and 2m.



Plate 2. Trench 5 looking west, scales: 1m and 2m.



Plate 3. Trench 3, test pit, facing north, vertical scale 1m.