Allan Dene, Basingstoke Road, 
Three Mile Cross, Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr J Pratley

by James Lewis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ABR 07/35

November 2007
Summary

Site name: Allan Dene, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7155 6798

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 29th March 2007

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Mundin

Site code: ABR 07/35

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits or artefacts were found.

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.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 06.12.07
                            Steve Preston✓ 06.12.07
Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Allan Dene, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Berkshire (SU 7155 6798) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Tony Grover of Building Design Services, Windward House, Hollow Lane, Shinfield, Reading Berkshire, RG2 9DX on behalf of Mr J Pratley.

A planning consent (F/2005/5652) has been granted by Wokingham District Council to construct a new double garage and replacement commercial building. The planning consent is subject to a condition (12) relating to archaeology which requires a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s Planning Policy Guidance, Archaeology and Planning (PPG16 1990), and the District Council’s policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Thomason of Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the district on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Mundin during March 2007 and the site code is ABR 07/135.

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

Location, topography and geology

The site lies to the east of the original Basingstoke Road within the centre of the village (Fig. 2). To the south and north are domestic buildings and to the east are open fields. The site lies on the margins of the Kennet Valley (Foudry Brook). The geology of the site is London clay (BGS 1946) and lies at an elevation of c. 40m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location on the margins of the Kennet Valley which is considered as archaeologically rich, with numerous sites recorded from field survey and aerial photography (Lobb and Rose 1996; Gates 1975). Recent fieldwork to the north-west at Green Park has revealed occupation
deposits of Neolithic, Bronze Age and later dates (Moore and Jennings 1992; Brossler et al. 2004). Recent evaluations to the west of the site located Iron Age and Roman deposits indicative of an occupation site (Hindmarch 2003; Cass 2007). To the north on Basingstoke Road a small amount of medieval activity has been recorded (Hammond 2005).

**Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This would involve the examination of areas affected by the new construction work for the proposed new garage, in particular ground reduction, landscaping and the digging of foundation trenches and service runs. Spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

**Results**

It was only possible to observe the groundworks for the new garage. Following superficial site clearance, these consisted of the digging of foundation trenches 1.08m deep and 0.6m wide (Fig. 3). The stratigraphy recorded was simple and comprised a dark brown silty clay that contained occasional brick fragments and roots which was 0.47m thick (Fig., 4). Below this was found light orange/yellow natural geology which was truncated to a depth of 0.61m.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

**Finds**

No finds or any archaeological interest were recovered during the watching brief.

**Conclusion**

No deposits of archaeological interest were observed nor any artefacts recovered during this watching brief.

**References**

Cass, S, 2007, ‘Mereoak Lane, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire, an archaeological evaluation’, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 07/102 Reading
Hammond, S, 2005, ‘Land adjoining Milestone Cottage, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire, an archaeological evaluation’, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 05/104, Reading
Hindmarch, E, 2003, ‘Grazeley Road, Three Mile Cross, Reading, an archaeological evaluation’, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 03/01, Reading
Moore, J and Jennings, D, 1992, Reading Business Park: a Bronze Age landscape, Oxford Archaeol Unit, Thames Valley Landscapes: the Kennet Valley, 1, Oxford
Land at rear of Allan Dene, Basingstoke Road, Three-Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire, 2007
Archaeological Watching Brief

Figure 1. Location of site within Three Mile Cross and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1188 SU66/76 at 1:12500.
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880
Land at rear of Allan Dene, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire, 2007
Archaeological watching brief

Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Basingstoke Road.

Scale 1:1250
Land at rear of Allan Dene, Basingstroke Road,
Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire, 2007
Archaeological watching brief

Figure 3. Detailed of area observed.

Scale 1:200

Footings observed
Land at rear of Allan Dene, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire, 2007

Figure 4. Representative section of north west corner of footing.

Dark brown silty clay made ground

Light orange yellow clay (natural geology)

Base of trench