New Telecommunications Mast, Little Gogs, Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire, 2006

An Archaeological Watching Brief
For Ericsson Services Ltd

by Stephen Hammond
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: LGS 06/122

December 2006
Summary

**Site name:** New Telecommunications Mast, Little Gogs, Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7492 7405

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 7th December 2006

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Stephen Hammond

**Site code:** LGS 06/122

**Summary of results:** No deposits of archaeological interest were revealed.

**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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Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on land at Little Gogs, Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire (SU 7492 7405) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Alwyn Hoogendyk for Ericsson Services Ltd, Great Brighams Mead, Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8DJ.

A planning consent (F/2004/2670) has been granted by Wokingham District Council to erect a new telecommunications mast and associated equipment. This consent is subject to a condition 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’s policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Mike Lang Hall, Archaeological Consultant with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the District on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Stephen Hammond on the 7th December 2006 and the site code is LGS 06/122.

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 at Little Gogs Farm, Holme Park Farm Lane, Sonning, close to the south-east of Thames Valley Park, Reading and in the south-west corner of Little Gogs (Figs 1 and 2). The underlying geology is mapped as being close to a boundary between Reading Beds and Plateau Gravel with both Loam and Valley Gravel nearby (BGS 1946). A sandy gravel natural was revealed during the groundworks. The site lies at a height of c.50m above Ordnance Datum and slopes down to the north-west. A railway cutting lies immediately to the south.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site is derived from its location on the margins of the Thames valley in an area which has been subject to archaeological excavation. Fieldwork in advance of the business park to the north
west revealed a wide range of deposits including an Iron Age enclosure, Early Bronze Age burial and Mesolithic occupation (Barnes et al. 1997). Further deposits are possible in surrounding areas such as the proposal site.

**Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This was to involve examination of a trench dug for a concrete foundation and any additional trenches for new service runs. The resulting spoilheaps would also be inspected for finds.

**Results**

Prior to the excavation of the main foundation trench, a large area of the site (4.80m by 8.70m) was stripped of topsoil and levelled using a 360° type tracked excavator fitted with a ditching bucket (Fig. 3). A significant proportion the site area was therefore exposed to the top of the natural geology (in this case, the archaeologically relevant horizon). No deposits of archaeological interest were observed during this initial phase of work.

The mast foundation trench was 4.0m square and 0.85m deep. The section revealed a stratigraphy consisting of 0.15m of mid grey/brown clay/silt with occasional to moderate sub rounded and sub angular flint gravel inclusions overlying a mid orange/yellow sandy gravel natural which continued to the base of the trench (Fig. 4). A mid orange/brown very slightly silty sandy/gravel was observed towards the eastern side of the footing but this could clearly be seen running under the mid orange/yellow sandy gravel natural.

No finds or archaeological features were revealed.

**Conclusion**

No deposits nor finds of archaeological interest were revealed during the watching brief.

**References**


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An archaeological watching brief

Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Location of site at Little Gogs.

Scale: 1:2500.
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An archaeological watching brief

Figure 3. Detailed location of site.

Scale: 1:100.
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Figure 4: Representative Section LGS06/122

Natural geology
(orange yellow sand and gravel)

Base of trench
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New Telecommunications Mast, Little Gogs, Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire, 2006
An archaeological watching brief

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