

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
Prepared for the site at 125 HIGHGROVE STREET, READING

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. In response to a pre-application request Reading Borough Council's Planning, Development & Regulatory Services team have requested that a preliminary assessment of risk around the probability of discovering items of archaeological interest to be submitted as part of the proposed planning application. Within the pre-application it was noted that there may be a requirement for an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation to be secured by condition.
- 1.2. The Site does not fall within an Area of Archaeological Potential as defined on the Sites and Detailed Policies Document Proposals Map as shown on the extract below from the RBC Local



development framework interactive proposals map. (Shown as purple square hatching.)

- 1.3. The Site lies is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 472116 172258 and covers an approximate area of 0.13 ha. A circular Study Area extending for 250m from the Site centre has been considered in order to provide an archaeological and historical context for interpretation – extent indicated by the purple circle on the map above.
- 1.4. Current development proposals include the demolition of all existing buildings within the site footprint to allow the construction of eight one or two-bedroom properties in a Mews cul-de-sac format with open spaces between the dwellings. The proposal includes the lowering of the site

by between 600 mm and 1400mm to lessen the impact of the proposed scheme and address potential contamination.

- 1.5. Listed Buildings are referenced within the Heritage statement contained in the separate Design and Assess Statement. There are four listed buildings close to the site and one property abutting the site which is catalogued on the RBC List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures.
- 1.6. The purpose of this report is to review the influence of archaeological and historical evidence relating to human presence in the Study Area from the prehistoric period through to the present day with an emphasis on medieval and Post-medieval occupation.
- 1.7. Reading grew as a settlement from the Saxon period, with the parish of St Giles (in which the Site lies) established in the 12th century. Archaeological investigation in the locality has identified archaeological deposits of medieval and Post-medieval date particularly relating to small scale industry.
- 1.8. The Site lies close to a historic main radial route that traverses south from the town, in use from medieval times. A turnpike is known to have been situated at the nearby intersection of Whitley Street and Christchurch Road. It later became known as the site of the 'Whitley Pump'.
- 1.9. The same strategic location is also acknowledged to be the site of Harrison's Barn, which was an outpost for the Royalist forces during the siege of Reading in 1643 by the parliamentary forces under the command of the then Earl of Essex.
- 1.10. While further excavation is planned it is of notable importance that ground intrusion associated with previous development from the 1950's onwards is likely to have impacted on any surviving pre-dating archaeological material.
- 1.11. The study of the Cartographic Sources confirms that the site is not immediately adjacent to 1 of the major transport routes and was probably either open countryside or part of a large estate garden prior to the surrounding development of housing from the mid-1950s.
- 1.12. Overall, the Site is situated in an area of low archaeological potential with a low- moderate potential for the survival of archaeological deposits. Given the relative scarcity of finds dating from the prehistoric periods within the Study Area, a low potential for the recovery of remains of this date has been identified. Romano-British evidence is limited to residual material within the Study Area; as such a low to moderate potential for the recovery of material from this date is predicted. There is a low potential for the recovery of medieval remains given the development of the area during this time as part of the parish of St Giles and the level of archaeological material already recorded in the Study Area.
- 1.13. As a result of the level of known archaeology dating from the Post-medieval period it is considered that there is a low - moderate potential for the recovery of Post-medieval material from the Site. A study of historical map data suggests a low potential for the survival of foundations and features associated with 18th, to early 20th century structures previously extant at the Site.
- 1.14. This initial assessment identifies a generally low or low to moderate potential for the survival of any archaeological remains, suggesting that it will not be necessary for any small scale archaeological evaluation fieldwork to be undertaken. The Cartographic study suggests the site was previously open land distant from the historic development and travel routes. There are no known historic paths across the site to suggest that it would have been traversed. The content of this initial assessment strongly suggests that there is no need for further investigations.

2. Introduction

2.1. Project Background

- 2.1.1. The Site lies is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 472116 172258 and the works have been described in the executive summary.
- 2.1.2. The Site is situated south-east of Reading town centre. The Site it is bounded by gardens on the west side along Highgrove Street and the east side along Kendrick Road. To the south there are the properties fronting onto Christchurch Road, some of which are listed.
- 2.1.3. The Site is currently occupied by a motor workshop and tyre fitting premises, a row of garages used for storage as well as other outbuildings on the south section which are used for storage.
- 2.1.4. Development will necessitate ground intrusion across the Site comprising foundation, services and landscaping excavation.

2.2. Landscape and Geology

- 2.2.1. The Yard at 125 Highgrove Street comprises of an inverted 'L' shaped strip of hardstanding concrete and slopes gently south to north following the natural contour of the land generally. There are numerous brick built lock-ups dating within the last fifty years as well as other outbuildings including a motor workshop an office and other storage units.
- 2.2.2. The current use is of a light industrial nature and research into the early history of the yard suggest that in the late 1880's the original builder of Highgrove Street, kept this area of land to the east of Highgrove Street for his own storage purposes during the building of the new terraced street.
- 2.2.3. It can be construed from Map evidence that the site remained in this unaltered state until the period between the wars and the first change can be noted (Berkshire Map 1931/32) showing evidence of a large glass house within the location of the site; however later maps reveal this to have been demolished during the construction of the enclosed parcel of land or yard as it is today; this is believed to have occurred during the 1950's.
- 2.2.4. All evidence suggests that from that period on, the yard has remained largely unaltered in this state with some further outbuildings and additions to the southern section in the 1970's.
- 2.2.5. 1.2.3 The Site is situated on sloping ground, on a bedrock geology of London Clay Formation: clay silt and sand and superficial geology comprising Boyn Hill Member: sand and gravel (Geological Survey of Great Britain Drift 1:50,00; Sheet 268 Reading).

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope

- 3.1.1. The aim of this assessment is to detail the known information relating to subsurface archaeology at the Site and to assess the potential for the presence of previously unknown elements that may be impacted by the proposed development.
- 3.1.2. The archaeological resource within a 250m circular Study Area of the Site centre has been considered in order to provide a context for the discussion and interpretation of the known and potential resource. In addition to this the wider area and the town of Reading have

been considered where appropriate. Listed Buildings are referenced where they exist in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

3.1.3. A detailed extract of the sources consulted is given later.

3.2. Research

3.2.1. This has been undertaken by searching online data sources and other publicly accessible sources of information as described below.

3.2.2. The Heritage Gateway contains a full and comprehensive list of Historic Environment Records (HER'S) for the town and the area within the scope. Also considered were the records held by the Archaeology Data Service and the Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record.

3.2.3. The Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record (HER) is a database containing records of all known archaeological sites and monuments, findspots, buildings, designations (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens) and archaeological interventions across the five unitary authorities in the east of Berkshire.

3.2.4. HER's are not a record of all surviving elements of the Historic Environment, but a record of the discovery of a wide range of archaeological and historical components of the Historic Environment. The information held within them is not complete and does not preclude the subsequent discovery of further elements of the Historic Environment that are at present unknown.

3.2.5. Documentary Sources

A search of other relevant primary and secondary sources was carried out via Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record, Berkshire Record Office, on line. The sources consulted are listed in the References (Section 7)

3.2.6. Cartographic Sources

A search of historic manuscripts and Ordnance Survey maps was undertaken. The study of maps and other associated historical sources helps to clarify the archaeological potential of the Study Area in two ways. Firstly, it suggests aspects of the medieval and later land-use prior to its modern development. Secondly, it pinpoints areas within the Study Area which, as a result of that development, are likely to have become archaeologically sterile. The maps relevant to the Site are listed in the References section (Section 8).

3.2.7. Aerial Photographs

Under certain conditions sub-surface archaeological features can be visible on Aerial Photographs. Given the urban setting of the Site, aerial photography would provide no additional historic information regarding the study area.

3.2.8. Site Visit

The Site has been visited on numerous occasions and was last visited on Wednesday 19th July 2017. The aim of the visit was to assess the general aspect, character, condition and setting of the Site and to identify any potential impacts not evident from sources described above. No new intelligence was gained from the site visit.

3.2.9.

3.2.10. Assumptions

The Berkshire HER data consists of secondary information derived from varied sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purposes of this Study. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate. Listed Buildings have been identified from Historic England's Listed Buildings Online database.

3.3. Legislative and Planning Background

3.3.1. National Legislation and Planning Guidance - Archaeology

3.3.2. The National Planning Policy Framework for England, March 2012, (NPPF), and subsequent alterations to it requires that due care and consideration is taken in terms of conserving and enhancing the historic environment and in particular, the archaeological record. NPPF paragraph 128 to 141.

3.3.3. The main legislation concerning the protection of important archaeological sites is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended). This act provides for *nationally important archaeological sites to be statutorily protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM's)*. Under this act *Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) must be sought* for any works which may affect a designated Scheduled Monument.

3.3.4. 'Historic England' published the following documents 25 March 2015.

3.3.4.1. Good Practice Advice Note1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans.

3.3.4.2. Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.

3.3.4.3. Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets

3.3.5. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

3.3.6. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are given statutory protection through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended. This protection is achieved by the inclusion of suitable buildings within the lists of buildings of special architectural and historic interest (Listed Buildings) and the designation of Conservation Areas.

3.3.7. Regional Planning Guidance

3.3.8. Reading Borough Council have statutory duties regarding the control of development within the Site. With regard to the historic environment, these authorities have drawn up policies and management plans incorporating statutory advice from the national guidelines outlined above (PPG15 and PPG16), and from the Berkshire Joint Strategic Planning Unit. These plans seek a balance between necessary development and the protection of the historic environment.

3.3.9. Berkshire Joint Structure Plan 2001-2016

3.3.10. The Berkshire Joint Structure Plan contains one policy related to the historic environment. Policy EN4: 'Historic Environment' states:

'1. Historic features and areas of historic importance and their settings will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced. The Councils will only allow development if it has no

adverse impact on features or areas of historic importance.'

2. Proposals will be expected to have regard to the wider historic environment and will only be permitted when they conserve or enhance the character or setting of Berkshire's historic landscape and built environment.'

3.3.11. The relevant local policies are contained in the:

- Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Adopted January 2008 with Alteration Adopted 27th January 2015; and
- Sites and detailed Policies Document, adopted October 2012 with alteration adopted 27 January 2015;

3.3.12. The key documents are Section 9. Built and Natural Environment in the Sites and detailed Policies Document and Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment. These address the setting of listed buildings, Historic parks and gardens, Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological remains, preservation of archaeological sites as well as potential development impact on archaeological remains

3.3.13. As noted in the Executive summary, the subject Site does not fall within an Area of Archaeological Potential as defined on the Sites and Detailed Policies Document Proposals Map. However, the applicant has been advised during the pre-application process to submit an initial assessment the site as there may be a requirement for an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation to be secured by condition.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1. Prehistoric (500,000BC-43AD)

4.1.1. To date, there has been limited evidence of prehistoric material to suggest significant early settlement at Reading. There is an increased potential for the recovery of prehistoric material in proximity to riverine environments. The Site is located outside the extremity of the River Kennet flood plain.

4.1.2. The topography and geology of a landscape can be used to interpret and substantiate the potential for the recovery of archaeological deposits. Rivers were commonly exploited by prehistoric people for a variety of means including as food and water sources, transportation routes, fording points, meeting points, votive sites and they commonly form a focus for transient or permanent settlement. To surmise, in spite of the apparent lack of prehistoric evidence for the Reading area, the location of the Site in proximity to two significant rivers (River Thames and River Kennet) does offer an increased potential for the recovery of prehistoric material.

4.1.3. Within the 250m Study area, there is no known prehistoric evidence outlined by the HER.

4.1.4. Beyond the Study Area, within 1000m there is some evidence of an Iron Age activity; an earthenware cup which was found in 1905 in a gravel pit on Southern Hill, about 100m south of Christchurch. A Palaeolithic implement, which may be a hand axe, was found under the cup. Other Palaeolithic implements have been found from Southern Hill.

4.1.5. The only other prehistoric evidence outlined by the HER' is the recovery of a stray find from Katesgrove, west of Crown Street and Southampton Street. The record comprises two artefacts, a greenstone axe and a ground flint axe. The artefacts have been attributed an early to late Neolithic date (4000BC-2351BC), a possible Bronze Age barrow is postulated 1km south of Reading at Whitley and an Iron Age dwelling at Southcote 2.5km to the south-west of the town.

4.2. Romano-British (*43AD-410AD*)

4.2.1. As with the prehistoric evidence, the recovery of Romano-British material from Reading is limited. There are no Romano-British roads in the locality and it would appear that activity in the wider area during this time was focussed on Roman Silchester (formally Calleva, the chief town of the British tribe of the Atrebates). While no settlements or roads are proven in proximity to Reading, it has been argued that the fording point was known (Phillips 1980, 12).

4.2.2. Within the 250m study area from the study area there are no recorded Romano British finds held with Berkshire Past scape records or HER's

4.2.3. Outside of the 250m but within 500m study area there was a Roman find of two Roman coin hoards. A hoard of 50 siliquae found in Feb. 1895 in a pot from the side of a gravel pit between Milman and Swainstone Roads, Whitley. Eleven coins from Julian II to Arcadius (AD 360-408), and fragments of the pot are in Reading Museum (Acc. No 15:48). B. A hoard of about a hundred and twenty coins in a glazed thumb pot of New Forest ware found in a gravel pit, or while excavating the foundations for a house, in Milman Road, Whitley in December 1895. One solidus, 49 siliquae and the beaker are in Reading Museum; the coins are from Constantius II to Honorius (AD 337-423). (Acc. No. 16:48). At least 47 other coins from hoard B were retained by the builder, Mr. Swain, but these have been lost.

4.2.4. Within 1000m of the study area the records of possible Romano-British activity are recorded by the SMR however both are represented by residual material. The first record includes residual Romano-British pottery recovered during excavations at 32-38 Silver Street, North of the site. The sherds were found within the fill of a linear feature. The second record comprises a watching brief at 67-73 London Street where again out of context residual Romano-British pottery was recorded.

4.3. Saxon (*AD410-1066*) -medieval (*AD 1066 -1499*)

4.3.1. It is with the onset of the Saxon era that the history of Reading begins to come to light. The place name suggests a Saxon origin, named after an individual named 'Reada', 'Readingas' meaning the 'people of Readas' (Phillips 1980, 12-13).

4.3.2. Early settlers at Reading were attracted by the flat gravel terraces created by the River Thames and River Kennet in proximity to the ford across the Kennet. Such land provided ideal fertile ground for agricultural production. The town is sited at the convergence of two main road routes, the first running east-west between London and Bristol, the second roughly north-south from the midlands through Oxford to Southampton. This followed the line of Southampton Street which runs west of the Site.

- 4.3.3. The first documentary records of the town date from the 9th Century. In the year 871, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records "in this year...the army came into Wessex to Reading" (Phillips 1980, 14). At this time, Reading would not have acted as an administrative centre being secondary to the nearby town of Wallingford whose importance is reflected in its fortification. The importance of Reading is however demonstrated by examples of coinage dating from the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066), known to have been minted at Reading (*ibid*).
- 4.3.4. At the time of Domesday in 1086, Reading was held by the King and included a small borough and two manors one belonging to the King and one to Battle Abbey. The King's estate comprised 56 plough teams, 85 peasants, 4 mills and 3 fisheries (Phillips 1980, 17).
- 4.3.5. An abbey was founded at Reading in 1121, by Henry I. The southern extent of Abbey lands was defined by the River Kennet, which flows roughly east-west, 1km west of the Site. It is likely that this foundation nurtured the growth of the town.
- 4.3.6. The Victoria County History suggests that an earlier abbey existed at Reading which was probably destroyed by the Danes in 1006 (1923, not numbered).
- 4.3.7. By the end of the 12th century Reading was expanding south and eastwards along the roads leading to London and Southampton. To serve the growing population, a daughter church of St Giles was built south of the town centre on the east side of Southampton Street approximately 800m north of the Site
- 4.3.8. During the medieval period, Reading developed rapidly as a manufacturing and market centre; particularly regarding the production of woollen cloth and leather goods. This phase in Reading's history is subsequently well documented in the SMR data.
- 4.3.9. Based on the SMR data, there is no archaeological evidence of any note discovered within 250m of the site and there is a low probability that any evidence will be as the site was so far from the centre of the historic growth and was a substantial distance away from the main road along which collectively took place.
- 4.3.10. However, there is Archaeological evidence from the medieval period recorded at locations within 1000m of the Study Area. The closest excavation was undertaken at Jubilee Square to the North of the Site, here a tile kiln and associated floors, rubbish and extraction pits were recorded. Archaeological evaluation at East Street, approximately 800m to the north of the Site, recorded ditches and associated pottery dating from the medieval period). There is speculation that these ditches may delineate the edge of the medieval town. This delineation of the town boundaries is far from the study area and at this distance would explain the lack of significant finds within the vicinity of the study area.

4.4. Post-Medieval (1500-1799)

- 4.4.1. During the Elizabethan era, the southern extent of the town was marked by the junction of Silver Street with Southampton Road approximately 200m north of the Site. The centre of the town was focused north of the River Kennett. During the Civil War period (1649-1651), Reading occupied a strategic location between the royalist forces based at Oxford and the parliamentary forces at London, it was adopted as a Royalist garrison.

- 4.4.2. Under Sir Arthur Aston, the Governor of Reading, the town was fortified with ditches and ramparts enclosing the town except where the River Kennet provided sufficient defence. An earthen redoubt was constructed at various locations across the town including at Castle Hill, the west end of Friar Street, Abbey Bridge and Silver Street (Phillips 1980, 61). The defences were tested in April 1643 when Reading was besieged by parliamentary forces commanded by the Earl of Essex.
- 4.4.3. Within 250m of the Site; 'Harrisons Barn', which would have been located at the current Junction of Whitley Street and Christchurch Road, was the scene of a defining skirmish in the siege of Reading in April 1643. Forces under the command of the Earl of Essex went on to advance 'through' Harrisons Barn and onwards past St Giles and into Reading, which soon fell under Parliamentarian control.
- 4.4.4. Rocque's Map from 1761 offers an insight into Readings post Medieval expansion, but also demonstrates clearly that the study area of the site had no discernible dwellings at that time and was either under farmland or open pasture; the site is within 100m of the Turnpike at Reading's southernmost boundary.
- 4.4.5. Outside of the 250m study area but within 1000m, two evaluations have taken place on London Street north of the Site, both revealed Post-medieval pits, probably representative of gravel quarrying, containing pottery. The first location at no. 68 London Street recorded significant Post-medieval and Modern disturbance comprising demolition and levelling layers.
- 4.4.6. Also dating from the Post-medieval period, evaluations on East Street, approximately 800m north of the Site revealed three pits and a possible oval well or cess pit containing Post-medieval pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe, bone, metal work, clay, brick and tile.

4.5. 18th - 20th Centuries

- 4.5.1. Urban development continued into the 18th and 19th centuries. There was rapid settlement increase at the end of the 19th century with the coming of the railways. A large population employed by the Great Western Railway, South-eastern and Chatham railways. This provoked increased industrial activity.
- 4.5.2. From the 18th century onwards, cartographic evidence offers very little as to the function and layout of the Site. Using John Rocque's town plan of 1761 as a guide and then onto the Commissioners Map of 1834, the Post Office Directory of 1842, right up to and including the Berkshire map of 1879; all of which suggest that the site was under field or gardens. The area west of what is known now as Highgrove Street was then known as Conduit Field; due to its close proximity to the reservoir at Conduit Street / Whitley Street and for all of this time formed either pasture or gardens within the Highgrove House Estate, which was built by town clerk, Mr JJ Blandy in 1842.
- 4.5.3. In the 1880's the building of Highgrove street and the terrace houses therein began to take shape; although cartographic evidence show that the site area remained largely unaltered * during this period and up until the 1950's. During this time (at the end of the 19th century) it is considered more than likely that the site area was used as a storage facility for the

materials and equipment belonging to the builders of the street. (*In the Berkshire Map 1931 / 32 there appears to be a large glass / house or possibly greenhouse growing facility located within the site study area. It is possible that the building was a part of the Highgrove estate)

- 4.5.4. The earliest outline of the site boundary markings appear much later in an Ordnance Survey Map from 1958, the narrow access to Highgrove Street and the perimeter wall can be identified. This is the period when it was known to have belonged to the established Reading building firm of PH Smith Ltd. This firm is responsible for much of the building work completed in the Reading area during the middle of the 20th century and it is highly probable that the first use of the site as a light industrial yard began in this period.
- 4.5.5. The tenure of PH Smith Ltd is very much likely the fore runner to the site as it is now known and used; mainly light industrial or for storage. The whole of the site is of hard standing concrete and high walls, outbuildings and garages. These buildings appear to have been built from the 1950's through to the 1970's. A great deal of excavation work will clearly have taken place up to a depth of between 500mm to 750mm for the concrete surface and builders rubble below, which covers the yard; and deeper still where the foundations have been laid for the various buildings and workshops now present on the site.
- 4.5.6. This level of excavation will no doubt have impacted greatly on any archaeological potential present within the site. To date no recorded finds or archaeological finds have been recorded from work that must have occurred during this short spell when the site became the yard we see today.
- 4.5.7. Negative evidence
- 4.5.8. An archaeological investigation undertaken within the 250m Study Area (Boults Road 2008) produced negative evidence. Whilst results such as these do not reveal specific evidence, they are significant in that they identify areas that are likely to be archaeologically sterile. Such information in conjunction with other methods of research can be used to identify the limits of occupation or archaeological activity within the wider landscape.

4.6. Cultural Heritage Definitions

- 4.6.1. The Site does not lie within a Borough Council Designated Conservation Area, Christchurch Road Conservation Area lies to the south and east of the site and the Kendrick Road Conservation area lies to the north and east. (Policy CS 33, SDPD paragraph 9.1.12 – 9.1.14).
- 4.6.2. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Study Area. The majority of the town Civil War defences lie outside of the Study Area to the west, north and north-east of the Site are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 4.6.3. There are no Listed Buildings within the Site footprint. However, on the Southern Boundary there is a row of listed Buildings on the Christchurch Road located 30m of the Site. All are afforded Grade II status, (refer to the Design and Access Statement which contains a Heritage Statement and also section 7 of this document)

5. Existing and Potential Archaeological Impacts

5.1. Potential Impacts

5.1.1. Relevant development activities which may impact upon the archaeological resource, are:

- Excavation, ground disturbance and ground compaction as a result of building;
- basement and foundation construction; and access, surfacing, service installation.

5.1.2. These activities could lead to the following effects on the Historic Environment resource:

- Permanent complete or partial loss of an archaeological feature or deposit as a result of ground excavation.
- Permanent or temporary loss of the physical and /or visual integrity of a feature, monument, building or group of monuments.
- Damage to resources, as a result of ground excavation. Damage to resources due to compaction, desiccation or water-logging. Damage to resources as a result of ground vibration caused by construction.

5.1.3. All ground intrusive activity proposed at the Site will pose threats to any surviving archaeological deposits or features, (if any), that survive in situ.

5.2. Existing Impacts

5.2.1. Existing impacts can be determined from the research into the existing knowledge of the recorded historic environment resource which can assist in the prediction of buried archaeological remains that may also be present, but as yet undiscovered. However, the potential for the survival of such remains depends partly on the impacts that previous land use may have had on any present remains.

5.2.2. The Site would appear to have been situated at the periphery of settlement activity from the medieval period. Prior to the 9th Century, evidence of settlement at Reading is limited, by the 12th Century settlement had expanded southwards to include the separate parish of St Giles.

5.2.3. Historic and cartographic analysis has determined limited or no rebuilding / alteration had been undertaken at the Site during the 18th & 19th centuries. However, from the inception of Highgrove Street at the turn of the 20th Century, through to an intense period of development in the middle of the 20th century; it is likely to have greatly impacted upon any predating archaeological deposits present.

5.2.4. The historic construction of infrastructure at the Site including services and sewers is likely to have impacted upon any predating archaeological remains. Geotechnical investigations have not been undertaken at the site therefore the depth of existing foundations, natural ground or sub-surface conditions are undetermined.

5.2.5. Conclusion: - Given the very limited development until the late 1950s and the then high level of previous intrusion across the whole of the Site footprint, it is considered that

conditions for the survival of potential buried archaeological remains are low.

6. Archaeological Potential

This section of the report details the archaeological constraints in terms of the proposed development and is based on information derived from the sources listed in the Methodology, taking into account the likely effects of previous land use on the preservation of potential remains.

6.1. Legislative and Planning Constraints

6.1.1. Refer to Section 2.3 for details of any statutory and/or local planning designations. The main constraint is compliance with the RBC relevant policies.

6.1.2. Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Study Area. Elements relating to the 17th century Civil War defences beyond the Study Area are afforded Scheduled Ancient Monument Status, however no part of the defences identified within the Study Area are scheduled.

6.1.3. Designated Areas

The Site does not lie within a Conservation Area – a . However, it is abutted on several sides by Conservation areas which are primarily for the purpose of protecting the architectural and street scape character and not the archaeological environment otherwise the area would be included in the Area of Archaeological Potential.

6.1.4. Listed Buildings

There are several Listed Buildings backing close to the Site on the Christchurch Road and Kendrick Road respectively. There would be no physical impact on the fabric of these structures as a result of development, it is also considered that any sympathetic development would not impact upon the setting and visual integrity of these buildings due to the visual impact currently on offer by the site. The listed buildings on Christchurch Road are recognised for their unusual frontage onto the road, whilst the rear of these buildings is of no significance.

6.2. Archaeology

6.2.1. Broadly speaking, little archaeological and historical evidence within the Study Area has been discovered to demonstrate human presence from the early prehistoric period through to the present day with an emphasis on Post-medieval and later activity. Historic settlement at Reading was concentrated on the north side of the River Kennet, the area around the Site developing south of the river as the suburb of St Giles (established in the late 12th century). Despite being close in close proximity to the strategic location of Southampton Street (an important long-distance route) and the Whitley Turnpike there is little archaeological evidence within the site or study area to indicate noteworthy archaeological activity or remains likely.

6.2.2. The Cartographic study has shown that the Site boundary has only come into being within the last 70 years and has never undergone any period of habitation. Any recent activity of the last seventy years must be seen to be for either light industrial or storage purposes and thus offers little or no archaeological interest.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1. Summary of Archaeological Constraints

- 7.1.1. Overall, a low potential for the survival of archaeological deposits within the Site footprint has been identified. This potential is limited by the significant amount of ground disturbance which has previously been undertaken at the Site.
- 7.1.2. Given the relative scarcity of finds dating from Prehistoric eras within the Study Area and considering the location of the Site in proximity to the River Kennet, a low potential for the recovery of Prehistoric and associated remains has been identified. Romano-British evidence within the Study Area is limited to residual material, as such a low potential for the recovery of material of this date at the Site is predicted.
- 7.1.3. There is a low potential for the recovery of material of medieval origin given the development of the area during this time as part of the parish of St Giles and the level of archaeological material already recorded in the Study Area.
- 7.1.4. As a result of the proximity of the Site to the site of the Civil War defences and the level of known archaeology dating from the Post-medieval period within the Study Area, it is considered that there is a low to moderate potential for the recovery of Postmediaeval material from the Site. The distance of the site from the epicentre of that activity decreases the likelihood and the most adjacent part of the site is towards Highgrove Street with a high probability of disturbance due to the laying of utility services.
- 7.1.5. There is a low to moderate potential for the survival of foundations and features associated with 18th, 19th and early 20th century structures previously extant at the Site.

7.2. Further Works and Mitigation

- 7.2.1. Overall, the Site is situated in an area of low archaeological potential. Any potential that there may be, is compromised by the significant level of previous ground intrusion undertaken at the Site. It is not anticipated that small scale archaeological evaluation fieldwork will be likely to be required by the Archaeological Office for Berkshire.
- 7.2.2. In the event that fieldwork is requested then it could comprise of the excavation of strategically placed archaeological test trenches designed to determine the actual degree of archaeological survival on a site. Such a requirement would be in line with Reading Borough Council's Policies.
- 7.2.3. Any future work in the form of a mitigation strategy would require agreement with the Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology on behalf of Reading Borough Council.

7.2.4. Mitigation regarding management of the impact of development on the visual integrity of the four Listed Buildings identified in proximity to the Site lies beyond the remit of this report.

8. References

8.1. Sources and Research Material

FROM BOULTS ROAD 100M WEST; 2008 WATCHING SURVEY

Location, topography and geology

The site is located south of Reading town centre, west of Whitley Street. Boults Walk is a passage between Milman Road and Essex Street, parallel to these roads, with the original Victorian terraced houses backing on to the lane (Fig. 2). The site is situated at the western end of Boults Walk. The road runs along the top of a ridge overlooking the south-western part of the town and is quite flat, at an approximate height of 66m above Ordnance Datum. The site prior to the new housing being built was scrubland. The underlying geology is listed as Plateau Gravel (BGS 1946).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential for the site is derived from its location within a general area known to contain sites and finds of prehistoric, Roman and medieval dates. Field evaluation to the south-west successfully revealed prehistoric struck flints and some pottery of Roman and medieval dates (Ford 1988). To the west, Iron Age pottery was located in a gravel working. On Milman Road to the south-east is the recorded findspot of an Iron Age gold coin and Palaeolithic handaxes and Bronze Age burial urns are recorded to the east, found during gravel extraction. However, a field evaluation carried out recently to the south-east (Coles and Ford 2005) and a watching brief immediately to the south on Milman Road (Cass 2007) found no deposits or finds of archaeological relevance.

Finds

No items pre-dating the late 19th or 20th centuries were recorded. Modern items noted were retained on site.

Conclusion

No finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were recorded for the site. A substantial portion of the site had been truncated in Victorian or later times.

The National Heritage List for England

The National Heritage List for England is the official and up-to-date database for all nationally designated assets, including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Protected Wreck Sites.

A search of the Heritage list identified the following list of listed buildings within the study area.

Title	Type	Location	Grade
<u>WHITLEY VILLA</u>	Listing	WHITLEY VILLA, 1, CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, READING, Reading	II
<u>CHRIST CHURCH</u>	Listing	CHRIST CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, READING, Reading	II*
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	50, MOUNT PLEASANT, READING, Reading	II
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	54, MOUNT PLEASANT, READING, Reading	II
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	175 AND 177, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, READING, Reading	II
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	3-9, CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, READING, Reading	II
<u>THE HOP LEAF INN</u>	Listing	THE HOP LEAF INN, 163, SOUTHAMPTON STREET 157-161, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, READING, Reading	II
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	27-33, CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, READING, Reading	II
<u>THE PHEASANT INN</u>	Listing	THE PHEASANT INN, 225, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, READING, Reading	II
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	11-25, CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, READING, Reading	II
<u>No name for this Entry</u>	Listing	52, MOUNT PLEASANT, READING, Reading	II
<u>THE BRITISH SCHOOL</u>	Listing	THE BRITISH SCHOOL, 153-155, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, READING, Reading	II

HE PASTSCAPE

The information within PastScape is taken directly from the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE). The NRHE contains over 410,000 records on the archaeology and buildings of England and its territorial waters. The HE PastScape returned 3 records matching in a search of this study area.

Title	Location	Description
<u>MONUMENT NO. 244984</u>	Reading	? Arrow or bolt head...
<u>THE CONDUIT</u>	Reading	Water supply for Reading Abbey (site)...
<u>MONUMENT NO. 245154</u>	Reading	Christ Church...

MONUMENT NO. 244984

County: Reading District: READING Parish: READING

Monument Number: (SU 77 SW 27)

Sources Field Investigators Comments F1 EG 20-MAR-63

General Reference Berks A.J. 42, (1938), 27, (F.M. Underhill)

General Reference F.M Underhill, Hon, Corr. 32, Eton Road, Datchet

*The Conduit – Refer to reference from search RESULT (3) from Berkshire Archaeology HER

MONUMENT NO. 245154

County: Reading District: READING Parish: READING

Monument Number: (SU 77 SW 139) POST MEDIEVAL **CHURCH** 1540 – 1901, Christ Church

Sources

List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

DOE (HHR) Royal Borough of Reading, 1978, 50 General Reference OS 1:1250 1972

The Excavation Index (EI) is a guide to the archaeological excavations and interventions carried out in England since the earliest days of scientific archaeology, and an index to the location of the excavation archives and finds. It is part of the National Monuments Record, England's heritage archive. A search of the NMR Excavation Index returned 2 records matching in a search of this study area.

Location 110/112 WHITLEY STREET, READING

Description:

A desk top assessment of the proposed site of a residential development. A number of sites of archaeological interest were recorded in the vicinity. Further work was recommended.

County: READING Grid reference: SU7198072190

Map reference: [EPSG:27700] 471980, 172190

Period/Subjects: PREHISTORIC - CREMATION CEMETERY

20TH CENTURY – CHURCH

MEDIEVAL – PIT

Identifiers: [ADS] Depositor ID – 1321073

[ADS] Associated ID - AIP Record Number: B.10.0008

Bibliographic References: Hall M/1996/110/112 Whitley Street, Reading, Berkshire: An archaeological desktop study. Thames Valley Archaeological Services [evaluation reports].

MONUMENT NO. 245018

County: Reading District: READING Parish: READING

Monument Number: (SU 77 SW 39) ROMAN **FINDSPOT** 395 - 432

Findspot of two Roman coin hoards. A. A hoard of 50 siliquae found in Feb. 1895 in a pot from the side of a gravel pit between Milman and Swainstone Roads, Whitley. Eleven coins from Julian II to Arcadius (AD 360-408), and fragments of the pot are in Reading Museum (Acc. No 15:48). B. A hoard of about a hundred and twenty coins in a glazed thumb pot of New Forest ware found in a gravel pit, or while excavating the foundations for a house, in Milman Road, Whitley in December 1895. One solidus, 49 siliquae and the beaker are in Reading Museum; the coins are from Constantius II to Honorius (AD 337-423). (Acc. No. 16:48). At least 47 other coins from hoard B were retained by the builder, Mr. Swain, but these have been lost.

Berkshire Archaeology HER

The Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record (HER) is a record of the known archaeology and historic environment within the 5 Unitary Authorities areas in the east of Berkshire - Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Slough Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The western half of what was the post 1974 county of Berkshire is covered by West Berkshire HER.

A search of the Berkshire Archaeology HER returned 5 records .

Name	Location
Post-medieval and modern activity at Abbey School Playing Fi...	Reading
Reading to Basingstoke Turnpike	Shinfield...
The Conduit - Highgrove Street, Reading, Berkshire	Reading
Brick/tile at Southampton Street, Reading, Berkshire	Reading
Well at the Old British School, Southampton Street, Reading....	Reading

The details of those individual finds are set out below.

Search result 1

Name: Post-medieval and modern activity at Abbey School Playing Fields, Kendrick Road, Reading

HER Number: MRM16638

Record Type: Monument

Grid Reference: SU 720 725

Administrative Area/Parish: Reading, Reading, Berkshire

Summary

An alignment of 18th-19th century pits and modern ditches were identified during an archaeological evaluation.

Monument Types (Post Medieval - 1740 AD to 1880 AD); (Modern - 1901 AD to 2050 AD)

Description

During an archaeological evaluation, a north-south alignment of four pits was excavated. They were between 0.7m-0.8m square and between 0.15m-0.27m deep, containing a fill of mid greyish brown silty sand. One of these contained a sherd of creamware pottery, dated 1740-1880 and another contained a sherd of Black Basalt Ware of similar date. Building materials, shell, clay pipe, glass and metal were also recovered. A series of ditches were also present on the site and may relate to the current use of the playing field

Sources - Thames Valley Archaeological Services. 2012. Abbey School Playing Fields, Kendrick Road, Reading, Berkshire. Archaeological Evaluation. [Unpublished document / SRM14403]

Associated Events: - ERM1362 Abbey School Playing Fields, Kendrick Road, Reading, Berkshire (Ref: ASR12/121)

Associated Monuments - None

Associated Finds: - FRM13132 - SHERD (Post Medieval to Modern - 1740 AD to 1999 AD)

Search result 2.

Name: Reading to Basingstoke Turnpike
HER Number: 05065.00.000
Record Type: Monument
Grid Reference: SU 720 721
Administrative Area/Parish: Shinfield, Wokingham, Berkshire
Swallowfield, Wokingham, Berkshire
Reading, Reading, Berkshire

Summary

A toll road which ran south of Reading to Basingstoke.

Monument Types - Toll Road (Post Medieval - 1718 AD to 1718 AD)

Description

The Reading to Basingstoke Turnpike was formed in 1718. It started in Reading at the Crown Inn that once stood at the corner of London Street and Crown Street .

Description from BIAG: A33 south of Reading (Reading to Swallowfield Road). Section under M4 destroyed, unclassified roads via Three Mile Cross to Spencers Wood. From Spencers Wood on B3349 to Riseley. From Riseley follows both lines of A32 to county boundary, representing a fork in the road going south.

Sources - Berkshire Archaeological Society, 1973-4, *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*, Page 77 (Bibliographic reference). SWK5401.

Search result 3.

Name: The Conduit - Highgrove Street, Reading, Berkshire
HER Number: 01022.14.000
Record Type: Monument
Grid Reference: SU 720 722
Administrative Area/Parish: Reading, Reading, Berkshire

Summary

A spring known as the conduit is thought to have supplied water to Reading Abbey.

Monument Types - Conduit House (Medieval to Post Medieval - 1066 AD to 1900 AD)

Description

A spring known as the conduit lies on the west side of Highgrove Street, approximately 50ft north of Christchurch Road. The site has a long tradition, documentary and oral of supplying water to Reading Abbey. This is strengthened by records of discoveries of lead pipes near the Kennet and Avon Canal leading in this direction.

Sources - Berkshire Archaeological Society, 1908, *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*, Pages 52-58 (Journal). SRD6887.

Search result 4.

Name: Brick/tile at Southampton Street, Reading, Berkshire
HER Number: RD15656
Record Type: Monument

Grid Reference: SU 718 726

Administrative Area/Parish: Reading, Reading, Berkshire

Summary

Four fragments of brick/tile unearthed during archaeological works at Southampton Street, Reading.

Sources - Foundations Archaeology, 2001, Land at Southampton Street and Silver Street -

Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation (Unpublished document). SRD12674.

Associated Events: - ERD93 Southampton Street and Silver Street, Reading

Associated Monuments - None

Associated Finds: - FRD11348 - BRICK (Post Medieval - 1540 AD to 1900 AD)

Search result 5.

Name: Well at the Old British School, Southampton Street, Reading, Berkshire

HER Number: MRM16811

Record Type: Monument

Grid Reference: SU 718 726

Administrative Area/Parish: Reading, Reading, Berkshire

Summary

A well was found at the eastern end of the Old British School, Southampton Street, Reading (NGR SU 7187 7263).

Monument Types - Well (Post Medieval - 1800 AD? to 1900 AD?)

Description - A well was found beneath an existing floor at the eastern end of the Grade II listed British School building. It measures approximately 1.2m wide and 6.00m deep. The school building dates from 1810. The well has now been backfilled and capped.

Sources:- Ben Pratley, 2013, Well at Old British School, Southampton Street, Reading (Photograph).

SRM14616.

Cartographic Sources

The following maps were reviewed and extracts are amended indicating the approximate location of the site in relation to the main roadways.

- 1761 Rocque's map of Berkshire
- 1834 Commissioners Map
- 1842 Post Office Directories Map
- 1878 Berkshire Map
- 1899 Berkshire Map
- 1912 Berkshire Map
- 1931 / 32 Berkshire Map
- 1958 Ordnance Survey
- 1966 / 72 Ordnance Survey Plan
- 1993 National Grid Data
- 1999 Historical Aerial Photograph
- 2017 Site plan al3d

The site was originally open countryside and as Reading grew new roads, houses shops and other buildings were erected around the site. Up until 1834 there was little development in the immediate area as the primary development was directly of the road in a traditionally linear growth format.

In the 1834 Commissioners Map there is a reference to Whitely Crescent. And this is more evident and better mapped in the 1842 Post Office Directory Map. There is more detail of the surrounding development on both the 1878 1899 & 1912 Berkshire Map much which is still in place today. Throughout that period the Site area remains unchanged as an undeveloped area.

The 1931 / 32 – Berkshire map is the first to indicate development on the site in the form of a glass house. It appears that the Site was part of a larger estate which grew in the early 1800's with other glass houses and orchards. By late 1890 the estate seems to diminish and what is now 124 Kendrick Road is noted on the map.

1912 – Berkshire Map indicates a secondary access to the new house which faces onto what was a road called Victoria. It is probable that the glass house was in the grounds of 124 Kendrick Road. Up unto 1958 the site appears to be in private residential ownership.

It can be concluded that the site was too far from the historic development along the former Southampton Road and Whitely St for there to be any likelihood of intervention of archaeological importance. It probably was open countryside that was consumed into residential use prior to its full development in the 1950s.



Rocques Map of Reading 1761

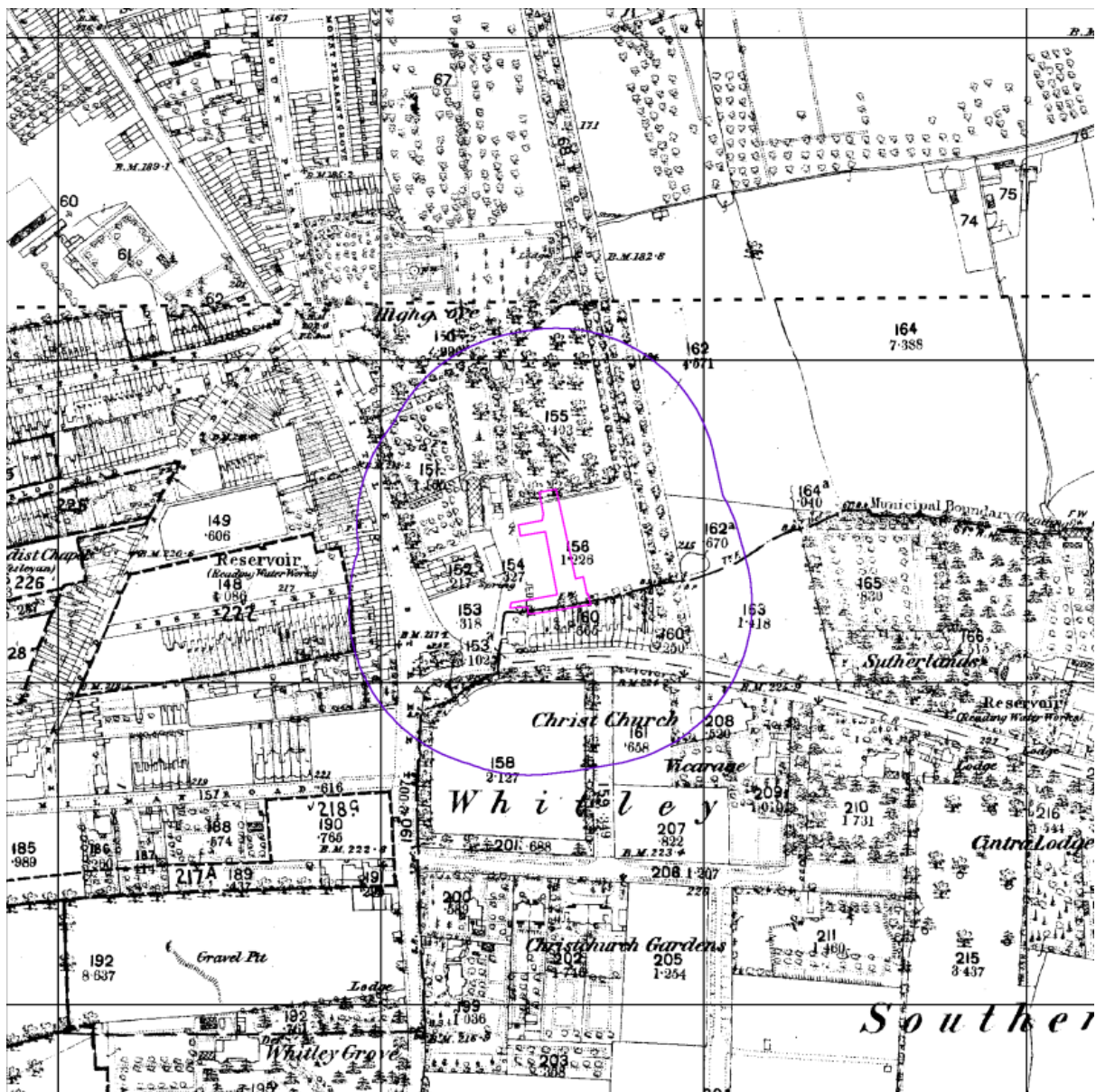


Extract from 1834 Commissioners Map – Reading Borough Library, Local Studies Department

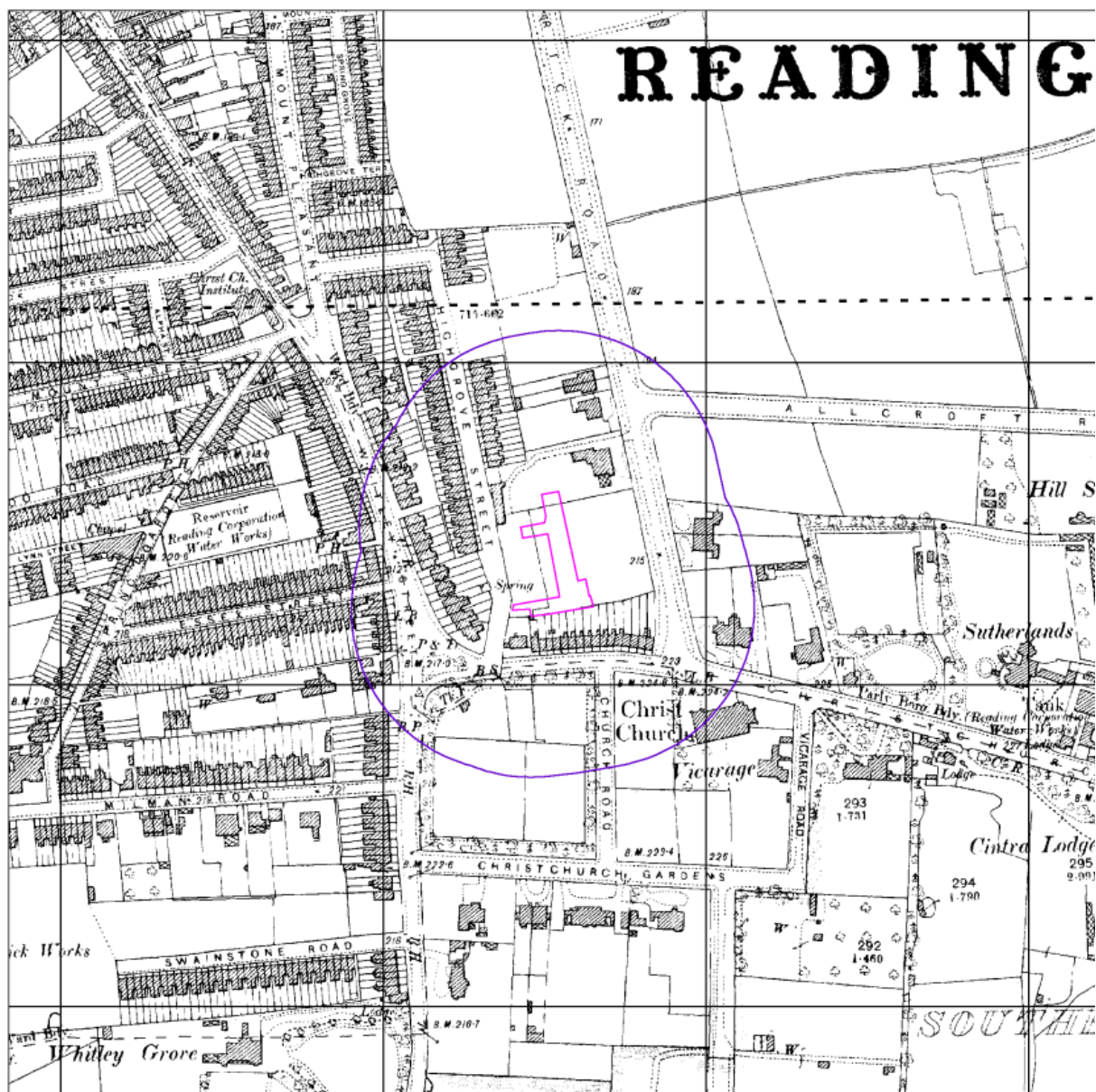
The [1842 Post Office Directory](#) includes a map that shows more houses had been built. The directory lists the residents of these houses.



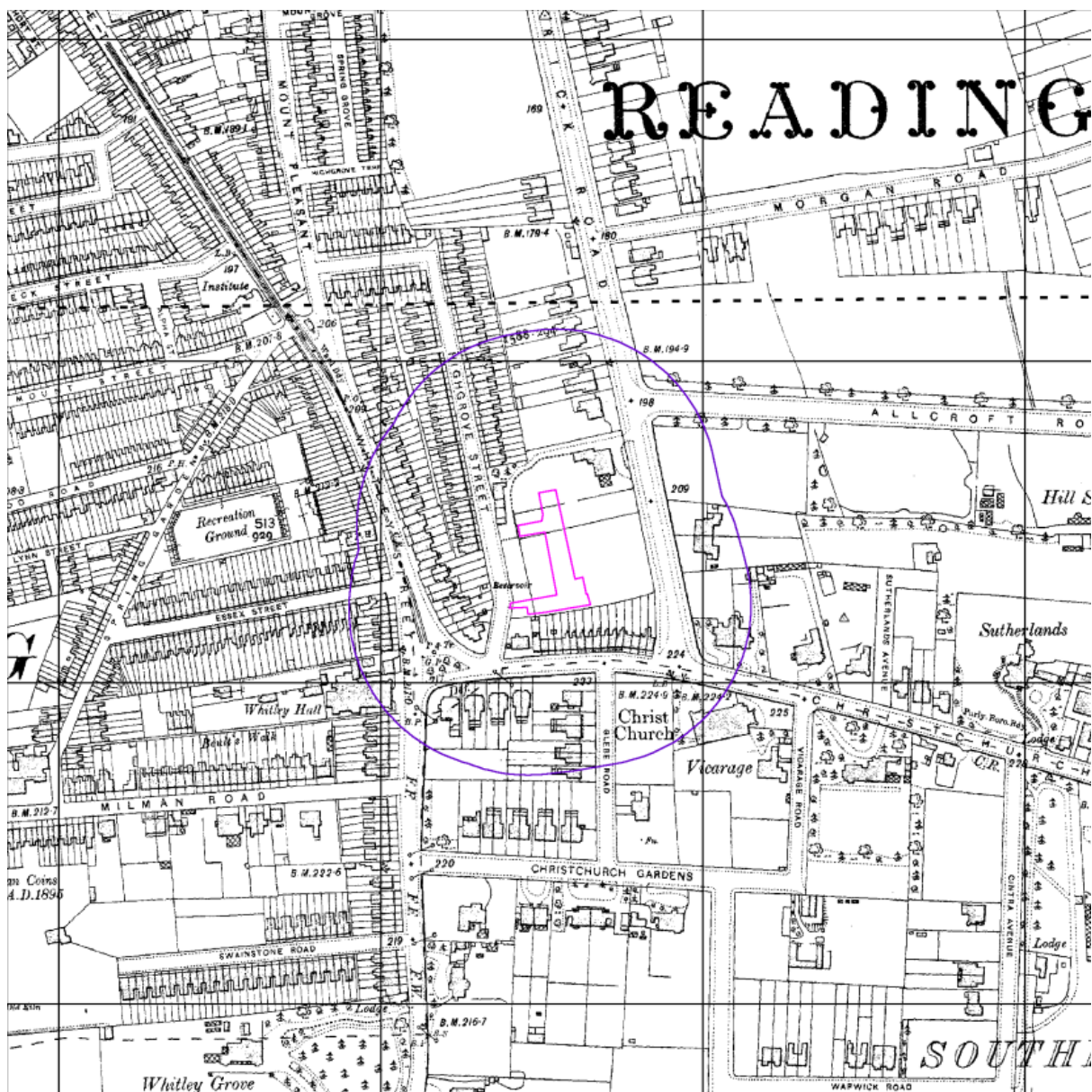
1842 Post Office Directory Map – Reading Borough Library, Local Studies Department



Published 1879 – Berkshire Map 1: 2,500



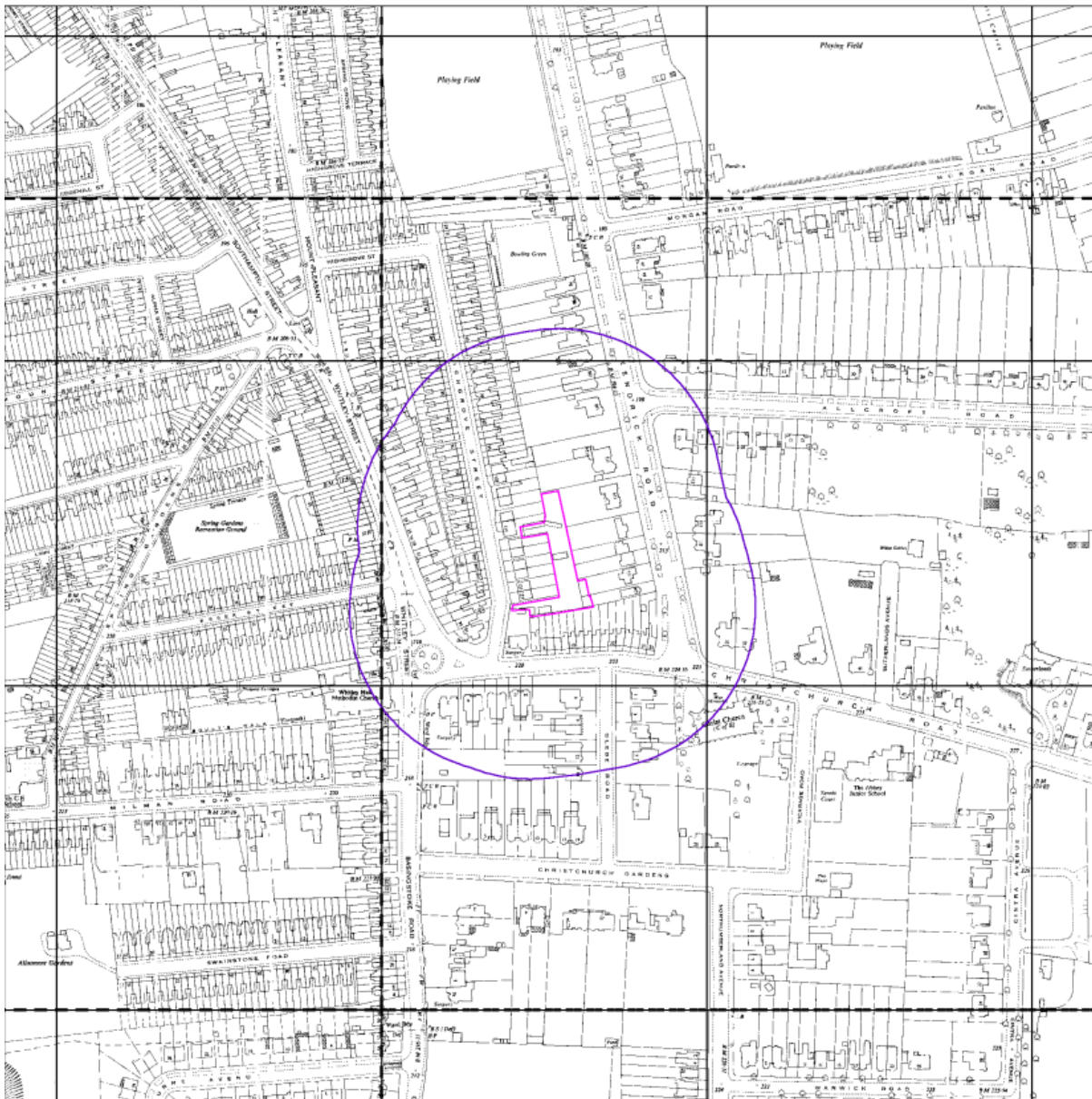
Published 1899 – Berkshire Map : 1: 2,500



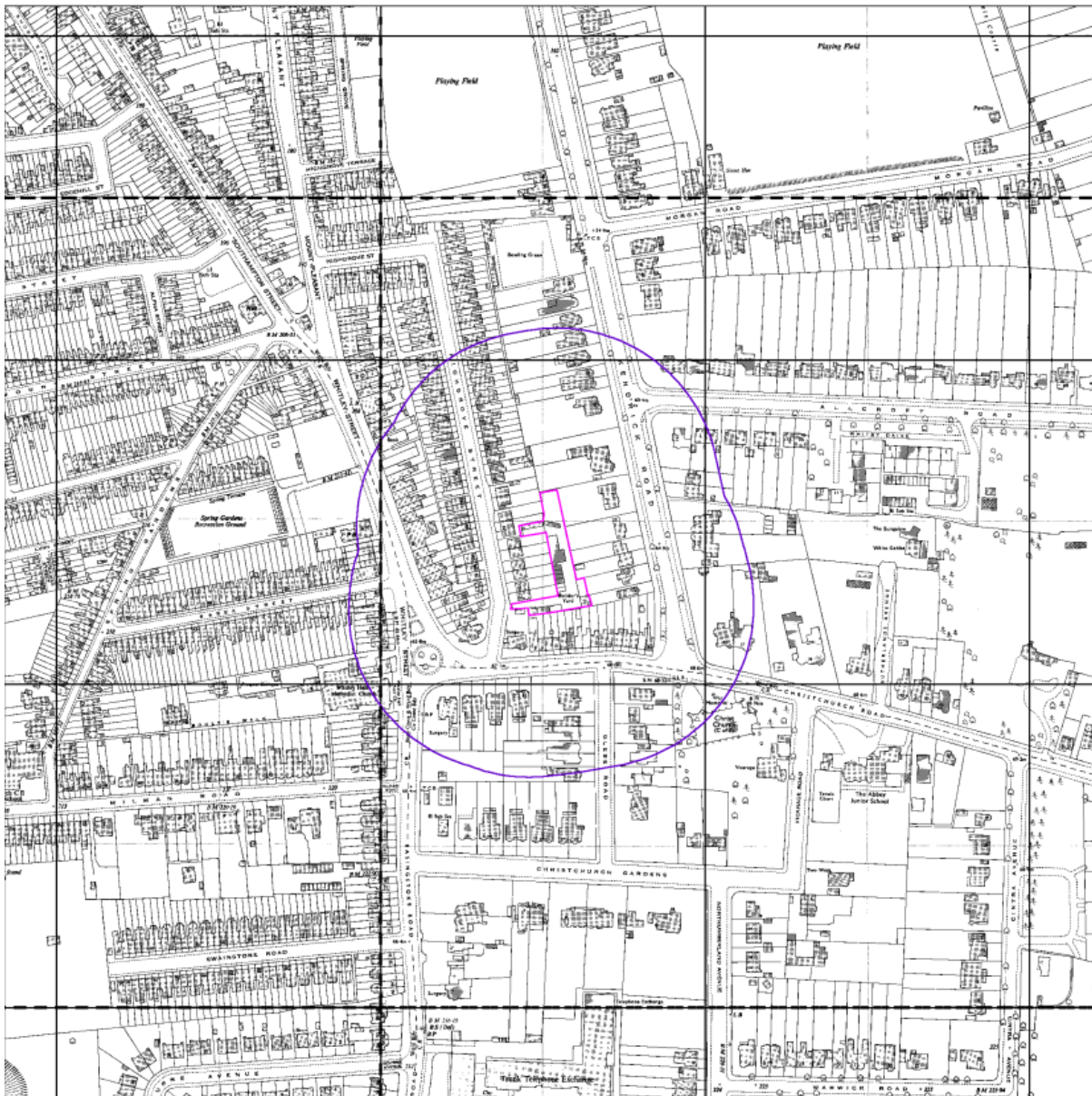
Published 1912 – Berkshire Map 1: 2,500



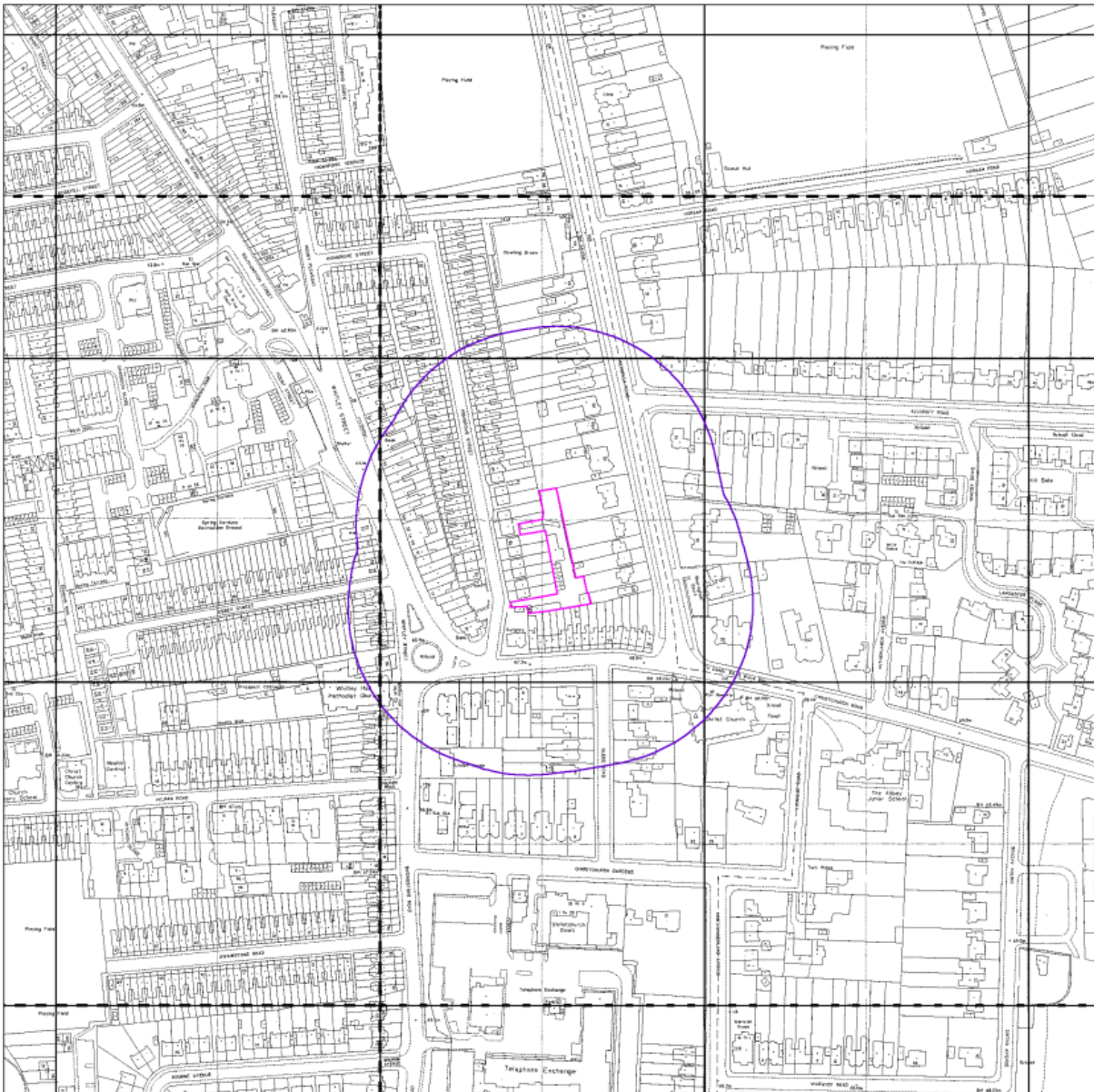
Published 1931 / 32 – Berkshire Map : 1: 2,500



Published 1958 – Ordnance Survey : 1: 1,250



Published 1966 – 1972 - Ordnance Survey Plan: 1: 1,250



Published 1993 – Large Scale National Grid Data: 1: 1,250



Published 1999 - Historical Aerial Photography



0 m 50 m 100 m
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Location plan 1:1250



0 m 50 m 100 m

Proposed site plan 1:500

The red scale dimensions from this drawing if it is used as a reference should be checked on site.

This drawing is to be used in conjunction with all relevant other drawings, including specifications, a project's design, and other documents and calculations. Assumptions have been made in relation to the structure existing below, any discrepancies or differences to be applied back to the main contractor upon opening up.

Any building work to be carried out with other documents and a project's design in accordance with regulation 1 of the Building Regulations. The plan may show variations with regulation 1 of a number of ways including the appropriate use of a project's design or a project's design.

Construction Products Directive (CPR) as amended by the CE Marking Regulations 2011, as a product complying with an appropriate technical specification (as defined in Water Drainage, a British Standard or an alternative national technical specification of any other which is a compliance with the European Standard) may be used in a building, or a product covered by a national or European certificate issued by a European Technical Approval (ETA) body, and the conditions of use are in accordance with the terms of the certificate.

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PROJECTS
Unit 1 - The Hall
High Street,
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Kent TN11 9JL
01894 281715

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Proposed development:
Highgrove Yards,
125 Highgrove St,
Reading RG1 5EJ
Berkshire.
Showing the
Location & site plan
Tunbridge Wells.

Site Plan August 2017, al3d