

**Site Watching Brief:** Leightons Opticians, 46 Downing Street, Farnham, 1996

Planning No.: unknown - clause inserted by Waverley B.C.

SU 8400 4673

Carried out for the Principal Archaeologist at Surrey County Council, by David Graham, Stannards View, Frith End, Bordon, Hants GU35 OQR

### **Introduction**

The development, to the rear of the existing shop, consisted of the erection of a rectangular extension in part of the former paved garden area, adjacent to the central car park. Waverley Borough Council presumably imposed the archaeological condition because the site lies within the conservation area of Farnham town centre.

### **Results**

The site was visited on two occasions and all the footing trenches were inspected and the spoil heaps checked for archaeological material. No material of any interest was found. The section consisted of a thoroughly mixed 1.16m deep unstratified layer of ashy black soil, containing a light scatter of oyster shell and roof tile. This lay on clean gravel which is likely to be a relatively recent natural deposit.

The stratigraphy is unsurprising since the area was covered by hop fields in the 18th century and is likely to have been deeply cultivated during that period.

The garden walls, however, are of some interest, particularly since the northern wall contains a carved greensand block (34 x 18cm):



'JNB' stands for James Newland Baker (1821-1857) who was responsible for constructing the walls. Given the historical interest of the block, Waverley Borough Council was persuaded to insist that it be removed from the area of the extension and re-inserted in the remaining section of the garden wall.

David Graham  
1996