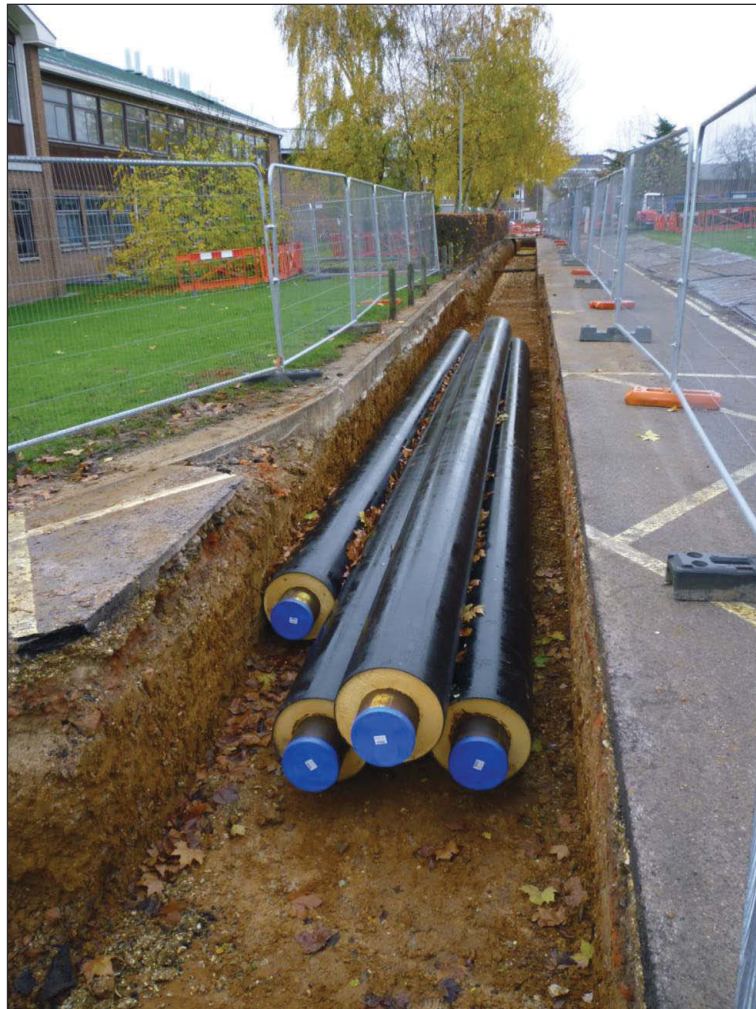




making sense of heritage

# Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme University of Reading, Berkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Reading Borough Council (Planning Ref 131160)  
Wokingham Borough Council (Planning ref F/2013/1630)  
WA ref: 101770.02  
August 2015



**Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme,  
University of Reading, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**Prepared for:**  
Provelio Limited  
The Meeting House  
Lewins Mead  
Bristol BS1 2NN

**On behalf of:**  
The University of Reading

**Prepared by:**  
Wessex Archaeology  
Portway House  
Old Sarum Park  
SALISBURY  
Wiltshire  
SP4 6EB

[www.wessexarch.co.uk](http://www.wessexarch.co.uk)

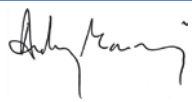
**August 2015**

**Report Ref 101770.02  
Reading Borough Council (Planning Ref 131160) and Wokingham Borough Council  
(Planning ref F/2013/1630)**



## Quality Assurance

<b>Project Code</b>	101770	<b>Accession Code</b>		<b>Client Ref.</b>	
<b>Planning Application Ref.</b>	Reading Borough Council (ref 131160) Wokingham Borough Council (ref F/2013/1630)  Approved September 2015 by Berkshire Archaeology	<b>Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)</b>	473380 171660		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	F	SLR	AIM		10/08/2015
File:	X:\PROJECTS\101770\Report\101770_ReadingUniversity_WB_SLR.docx				
File:					
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\* I= Internal Draft; E= External Draft; F= Final

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# Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme, University of Reading, Berkshire

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Fig 1: Site location, known HER sites and watching brief area

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Fig 3: Representative sections of trenches 1, 4, 5 and 8

Front cover: Trench 6

# Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme, University of Reading, Berkshire

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Provelio Limited on behalf of the University of Reading to undertake an archaeological watching brief during excavation of an extensive network of service trenches within the University campus (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 473380 171660.

Planning permission was granted in May 2013 for the construction of a new Energy Centre to supply heat and low temperature hot water to buildings within the university campus (Ref EXT/2013/0486). In order to supply the hot water, a new network of underground services was required.

The archaeological watching brief was carried out during the initial phase of excavation of the service trenches from October 2013 into 2014. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during these works.



# **Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme, University of Reading, Berkshire**

## **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

### **Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Provelio Limited on behalf of The University of Reading and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Chris Winn in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Fiona Macdonald (Principal Archaeologist for Berkshire Archaeology) for her advice and assistance.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Mike Dinwiddy, Benjamin Cullen, Simon Flaherty, Olly Good and Gareth Chaffey. This report was compiled by and illustrations prepared by Sian Reynolds and Ken Lymer. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Manning.



# Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme, University of Reading, Berkshire

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Provelio Limited on behalf of the University of Reading to undertake an archaeological watching brief during excavation of an extensive network of service trenches within the University campus (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 473380 171660 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 Planning permission was granted in May 2013 for the construction of a new Energy Centre to supply heat and low temperature hot water to buildings within the university campus (Ref EXT/2013/0486). In order to supply the hot water, a new network of underground services was required.
- 1.1.3 The Site lies on the boundary of two Local Planning Authorities, two planning applications were submitted to Reading Borough Council (ref 131160) and Wokingham Borough Council (ref F/2013/1630).
- 1.1.4 Previous archaeological work in the vicinity of the proposed groundworks, and a series of entries in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record (BHER) indicated some archaeological potential and the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authorities recommended that an archaeological watching brief would be required during the course of the development.
- 1.1.5 A series of archaeological monitoring visits were made during the first phase of groundworks in the southern part of the Site, between October 2013 and up to mid-2014. At this point the main excavations were within areas which had not been previously adjacent to other watching briefs.
- 1.1.6 This watching brief report presents the results of all watching brief attendances made during the works on the Site.

#### 1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises the main area of the University of Reading's Whiteknights campus and lies at approximately 64 m aOD (above Ordnance Datum). The underlying geology comprises London Clay and Boyn Hill Gravel (BGS, Drift, Sheet 268, Reading).
- 1.2.2 The new proposed services connected with the majority of the main campus buildings (**Figure 1**).



## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record (BHER) contains details of a total of 12 known sites or findspots within 600 m of the Site (**Figure 1, WA1-WA12**). Five of the entries (WA4-WA8, BHER **MRM16114, MRM16207-10**) refer to medieval, post-medieval and modern landscaping and developments of the Whiteknights Site.
- 2.1.2 The earliest evidence for activity comprises a Neolithic axe fragment (**WA1, BHER 02027.00.000**) found approximately 400 m to the west of the Site. Nearby, two further Bronze Age sites/findspots are known, the first being a possible ring ditch/barrow (**WA3, BHER 01118.00.000**) and a socketed bronze knife (**WA2, BHER 02049.00.000**) both of which were located between 400 m to 600 m to the southwest of the Site. A later evaluation in 2007 also found Romano-British features in broadly the same area, some containing additional Bronze Age pottery (**WA17 see below**).
- 2.1.3 While there is currently no evidence for medieval settlement within the immediate Whiteknights Site, it seems probable that the seat of the manor would have been located near to the now demolished White Knights House (BHER Website). Four undated linear and rectangular cropmarks have been noted within the Site itself (**WA9-12, BHER 01155.00.000 to 01155.03.000**). No formal investigation of these features has taken place, although a watching brief in 2010 (**WA16**) appears to have uncovered either one of the known elements of the cropmarks or an additional element, associated with post-medieval material (*see below*).

### 2.2 Previous archaeological investigations

- 2.2.1 A number of archaeological investigations have taken place within the Site or immediately adjacent to the university campus (**Figure 1**). In 2006 a watching brief was undertaken during works on the Old White Knight House (**WA15, Syaer 2006**). No significant archaeological deposits were uncovered. In the same year, a watching brief was conducted on groundwork associated with the erection of a new building (**WA14**) recorded two dubious pit features along with a large number of modern services (McNicol 2006).
- 2.2.2 In 2007, a watching brief (**WA13**) was conducted during groundworks for the construction of a new car park did not record any archaeological finds or features (Parry 2007). In 2010, a watching brief (**WA16**) was maintained during the excavation of a series of trenches for the installation of an 11 kv cable which appears to have cut two linear ditches (Rous 2010). These may relate to the known undated cropmarks, although dating was poor but thought to be of post-medieval date.
- 2.2.3 An evaluation in 2007 (**WA17**) in advance of a proposed residential development recorded Roman ditches and a dump of tile. A single sherd of Bronze Age pottery was recovered from a Roman feature (Milbank 2007).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 With due regard to the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a), the generic aim of the project can be defined as;





- To identify, in the initial excavations, the presence/absence, condition and nature of any significant archaeological deposits or features, and to inform any subsequent mitigation which may be required
- To enable the preservation by record of any archaeological features, buildings or deposits uncovered or extant, and to establish the extent (where possible), date, character, relationship, condition and significance of surviving archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the area to be impacted by the subsequent construction work
- To place any identified archaeological remains within their historical context.

### **3.2 Fieldwork methodology**

- 3.2.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out within the WSI (WA 2013). All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the guidance and standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014a).
- 3.2.2 The fieldwork consisted of the monitoring of the excavation of new service trenches, each approximately 1 m in depth below the modern ground surface and approximately 1 m in width.
- 3.2.3 It was agreed with the archaeological advisor (Berkshire Archaeology) that a regular series of visits to the Site during the course of the groundworks would be sufficient to adequately assess the survival of the archaeological horizon in a site known to have been heavily disturbed during previous landscaping schemes. To this end, monitoring visits were made to the Site on 22nd October, 5th and 20th November, 19th December 2013 and 21st March 2014.

### **3.3 Recording**

- 3.3.1 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.
- 3.3.2 A complete drawn record of archaeological features and deposits was compiled and included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 for plans, 1:10 for sections), and with reference to a site grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels was calculated and plans/sections were annotated with OD heights.
- 3.3.3 A photographic record was maintained during the watching brief using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

### **3.4 Health and Safety**

- 3.4.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 3.4.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992*, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.



## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

### **4.1 Site-wide stratigraphy**

4.1.1 A mid-dark brown grey silty clay loam topsoil measuring approximately 0.25 m deep, overlay mid orange brown sandy clay natural where present.

4.1.2 Due to the developed nature of the Site and the location of the trenches in close proximity to extant buildings, the majority of the trenches monitored contained made ground deposits and levelling layers recorded to a minimum depth of 0.56 m in Trench 4 to over 1.2 m in Trench 2. These deposits were often noted as containing modern ceramic building material and are likely to originate from the construction and continuous development of this part of the university campus in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **4.2 Results**

4.2.1 Occasional visits were made during the long term-excavation of the system of services, although the main focus of the watching brief was particularly concentrated on excavations within areas either close to recorded HER recorded sites (which were largely based on potential cropmarks and undated) or areas which had had no previous archaeological investigation nearby.

4.2.2 No archaeological remains, features, deposits were recorded during the course of the watching brief within the monitored trenches, and no finds were recovered.

## **5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE**

5.1.1 No finds were recovered during the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks.

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

6.1.1 No deposits were considered suitable for environmental sampling.

## **7 CONCLUSIONS**

7.1.1 The actual area revealed by the excavations was naturally limited by the narrow size of the excavation trenching, although the full extent of the works did cover a large significant area, largely uninvestigated by previous archaeological work.

7.1.2 However, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during the course of the groundworks. No evidence for the potential cropmarks noted on the HER (especially in the vicinity of WA 9, 11 and 12) was noted, although A series of made ground deposits were noted in Trenches 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 which indicate that the Site has been subjected to extensive landscaping schemes prior to the construction of the University in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

7.1.3 It is therefore likely that if any archaeological remains had been present within this area, it is highly likely that these would have been heavily truncated by construction activity and removed.

## **8 STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **8.1 Museum**

8.1.1 It is recommended that project archive resulting from the watching brief will be deposited with either Reading Museum Services or the Wokingham Museum, once the transfer



agreement has been confirmed and agreed. The project archive will be recorded under the Wessex Archaeology project code 101770 with the accession code to be subsequently confirmed. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

## 8.2 Preparation of archive

8.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014b; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.2.2 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Berkshire HER. A copy of the OASIS entry form has been included in this report (**Appendix 2**).

## 8.3 Discard policy

8.3.1 WA follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2011)

## 8.4 Security copy

8.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

## 9 REFERENCES

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British geological Survey information:

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

English Heritage information:

<http://www.pastscape.org.uk/>



## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Context summary

Trench 1			
Max. depth:0.91m			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
101	Layer	Topsoil. Soft reddish brown silty clay with occasional chalk flecks	0-0.07
102	Layer	Made Ground. Very mixed, redeposited reddish brown silty clay with rare-occasional modern CBM	0.07-0.72
103	Layer	Mid grey sandy clay band of alluvial deposit.	0.72-0.91
104	Layer	Natural. Orange brown gravels with pockets of sand. Disturbed by building footings etc.	0.91+

Trench 2			
Max. depth:1.20m			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
201	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Bioturbated. Common sub-angular flints <0.08m. Friable. Distinct horizon	0-0.22
202	Layer	Made Ground. Mid orange brown sandy silt with abundant sub-angular flints <0.08m and CBM. Compact. Distinct horizon.	0.22+

Trench 3			
Max. depth:1.26m			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
301	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Bioturbated. Common sub-angular flints <0.06m. Friable. Distinct horizon	0-0.26
302	Layer	Made Ground. Light grey brown sandy silt with common sub-angular flints <0.08m and sparse brick fragments. Compact. Distinct horizon.	0.26-0.9
303	Layer	Natural. Light-mid orange brown sandy clay with abundant sub-angular flints <0.2m. Compact. Distinct horizon	0.9+

Trench 4			
Max. depth:1.14m			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
401	Layer	Tarmac. Road surface	0-0.1
402	Layer	Made Ground. Mix of light grey, dark grey and light orange silty clay with abundant sub-angular flints <0.06m, bricks and old sleepers. Compact. Distinct horizon.	0.1-0.56
403	Layer	Natural. Mid orange brown sandy clay with abundant sub-rounded flints <0.09m. Compact. Distinct horizon	0.56+

Trench 5			
Max. depth:1.1m			
Context	Description		Depth (m)
501	Layer	Topsoil. Dark grey brown silty clay loam. Heavily bioturbated. Rare sub-rounded flints <0.06m. Friable. Distinct horizon	0-0.2
502	Layer	Natural. Mid orange brown sandy clay with abundant sub-rounded flints <0.09m. Compact. Distinct horizon	0.2+



Trench 6		
Max. depth: Unknown as no access to trench due to fencing		
Context	Description	Depth (m)
601	Layer Tarmac. Road surface	-
602	Layer Made Ground. Levelling layer of mixed material contains brick, gravel and modern detritus. Likely to have been built up prior to tarmac being laid. Layers of red bricks noted at western end of trench.	-
603	Layer Natural. Light reddish brown clay.	-

Trench 7		
Max. depth: Unknown as no access to trench due to fencing		
Context	Description	Depth (m)
701	Layer Turf/topsoil. Mid grey brown turf deposit with heavy root disturbance throughout. Common stone inclusions <0.05.	-
702	Layer Subsoil. Light reddish brown clay with sparse stone inclusions	-
703	Layer Natural. Mid reddish brown clay	-

Trench 8		
Max. depth: 1.4m		
Context	Description	Depth (m)
801	Layer Tarmac. Pathway	0-0.14
802	Layer Levelling Layer. Light-mid yellow brown sandy gravels. Deliberate backfill. Moderately sorted abundant sub-rounded and sub-angular gravel <0.50m	0.14-0.39
803	Layer Made Ground. Mixed grey black clay silt with common sub-rounded and sub-angular gravel inclusions <0.05m, moderately sorted	0.39-0.72
804	Layer Mid orange brown slightly sandy clay with rare, poorly sorted, gravels <0.05m	0.72+

Trench 9		
Max. depth: 1.5m		
Context	Description	Depth (m)
901	Layer Topsoil. Dark grey brown sandy clay loam.	0-0.31
902	Layer Natural. Mid-dark grey orange brown sandy clay with sparse gravel inclusions. Possible redeposited levelling layer.	0.31+

Trench 10		
Max. depth: 0.9m		
Context	Description	Depth (m)
1001	Layer Tarmac.	0-0.05
1002	Layer Hardcore.	0.05-0.2
1003	Structure Modern brick structure.	0.2+



## Appendix 2: Oasis summary

### OASIS ID: wessexar1-223410

#### Project details

Project name	Whiteknights Campus (WUI scheme)
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Provelio Limited on behalf of the University of Reading to undertake an archaeological watching brief during excavation of an extensive network of service trenches within the University campus (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 473380 171660. Planning permission was granted in May 2013 for the construction of a new Energy Centre to supply heat and low temperature hot water to buildings within the university campus (Ref EXT/2013/0486). In order to supply the hot water, a new network of underground services was required. The archaeological watching brief was carried out during the initial phase of excavation of the service trenches from October 2013 into 2014. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered during these works.
Project dates	Start: 01-10-2013 End: 01-08-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	101770 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	BERKSHIRE READING READING Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme,
Postcode	RG6 6AH
Study area	5 Hectares
Site coordinates	SU 73380 71660 51.438685203434 -0.944146675676 51 26 19 N 000 56 38 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 63m Max: 64m

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Berkshire Archaeology
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project	A Manning



director/manager  
Project supervisor M. Dinwiddy  
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer  
Name of sponsor/funding body Provelio Limited

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**Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists? No  
Digital Archive recipient Reading Museum  
Digital Contents "none"  
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"  
Paper Archive recipient Reading Museum  
Paper Contents "none"  
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "

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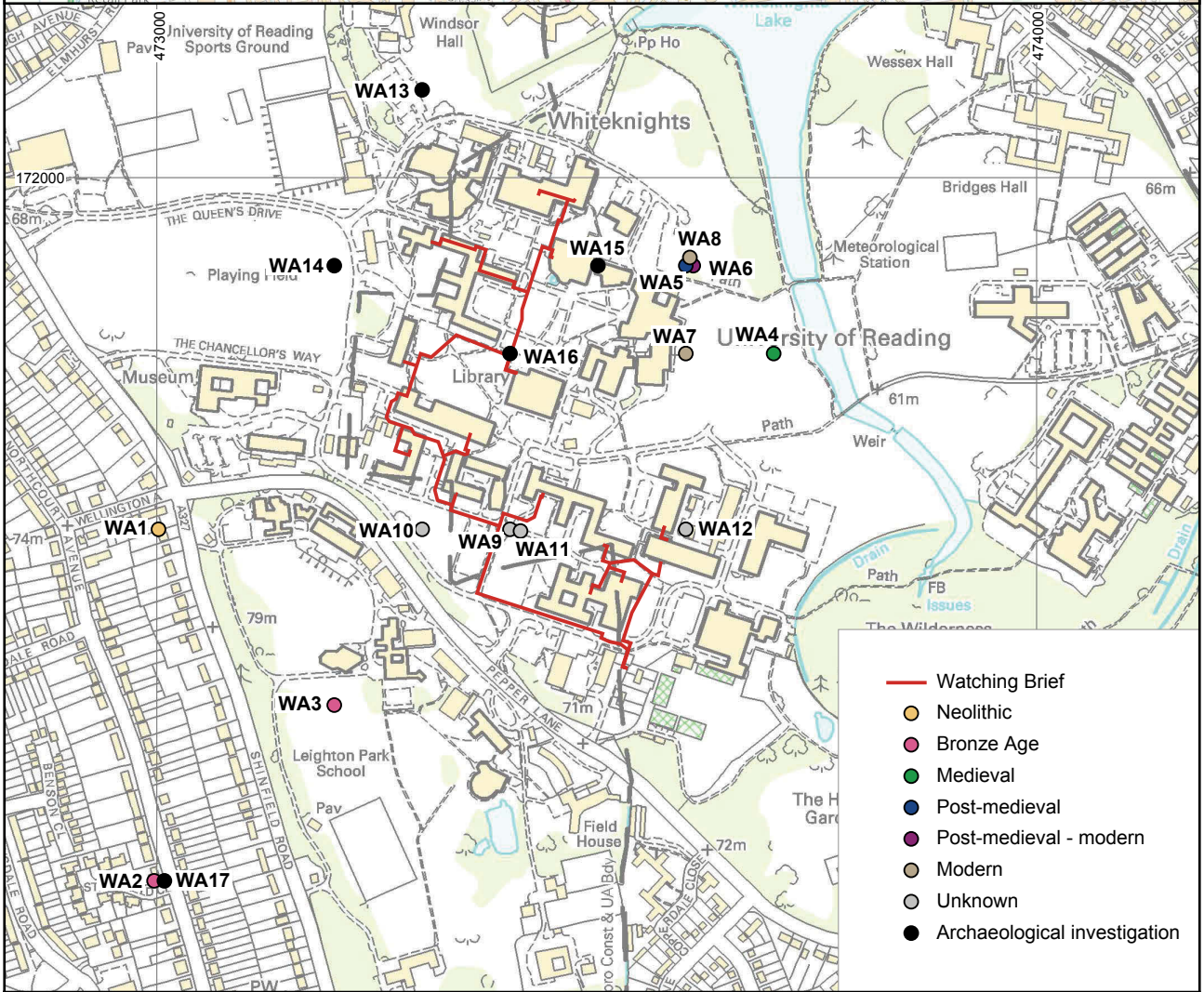
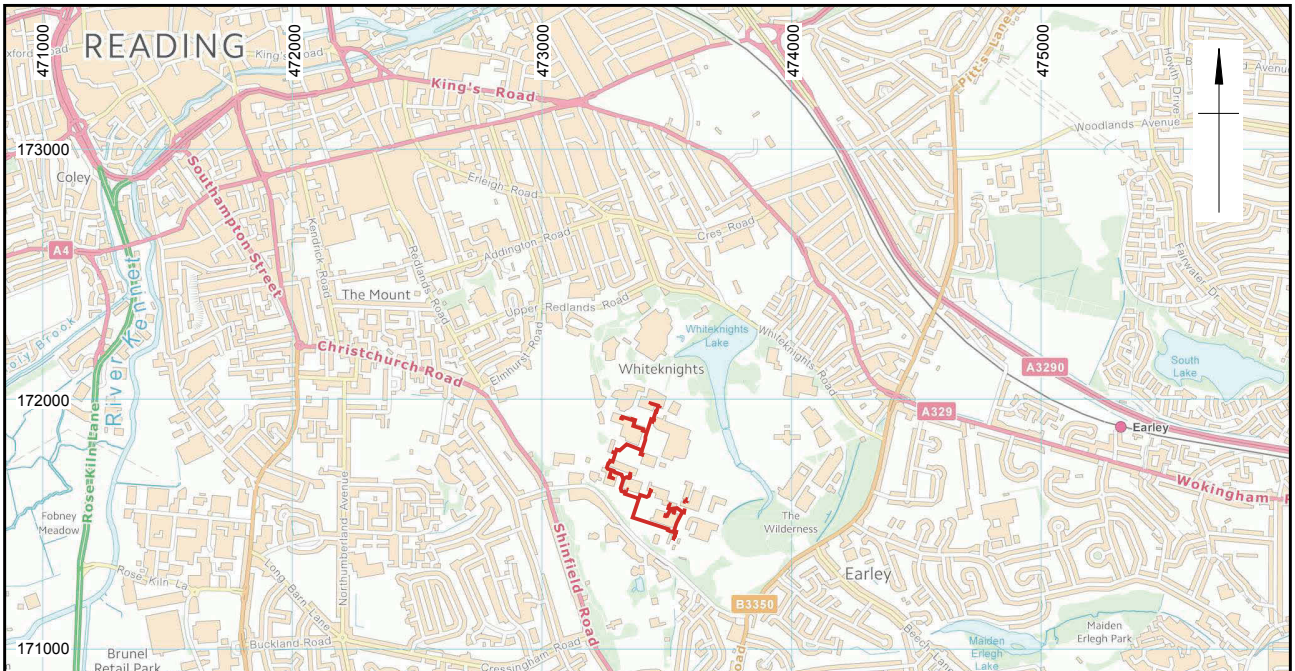
**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
Title Whiteknights Utilities Infrastructure Scheme, University of Reading, Berkshire, Archaeological watching brief Report  
Author(s)/Editor(s) Reynolds, S  
Other bibliographic details 101770.02  
Date 2015  
Issuer or publisher Wessex Archaeology  
Place of issue or publication Salisbury  
Description Standard soft-back illustrated watching brief report, c. 13 pages

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Entered by Andrew Manning (a.manning@wessexarch.co.uk)  
Entered on 14 September 2015





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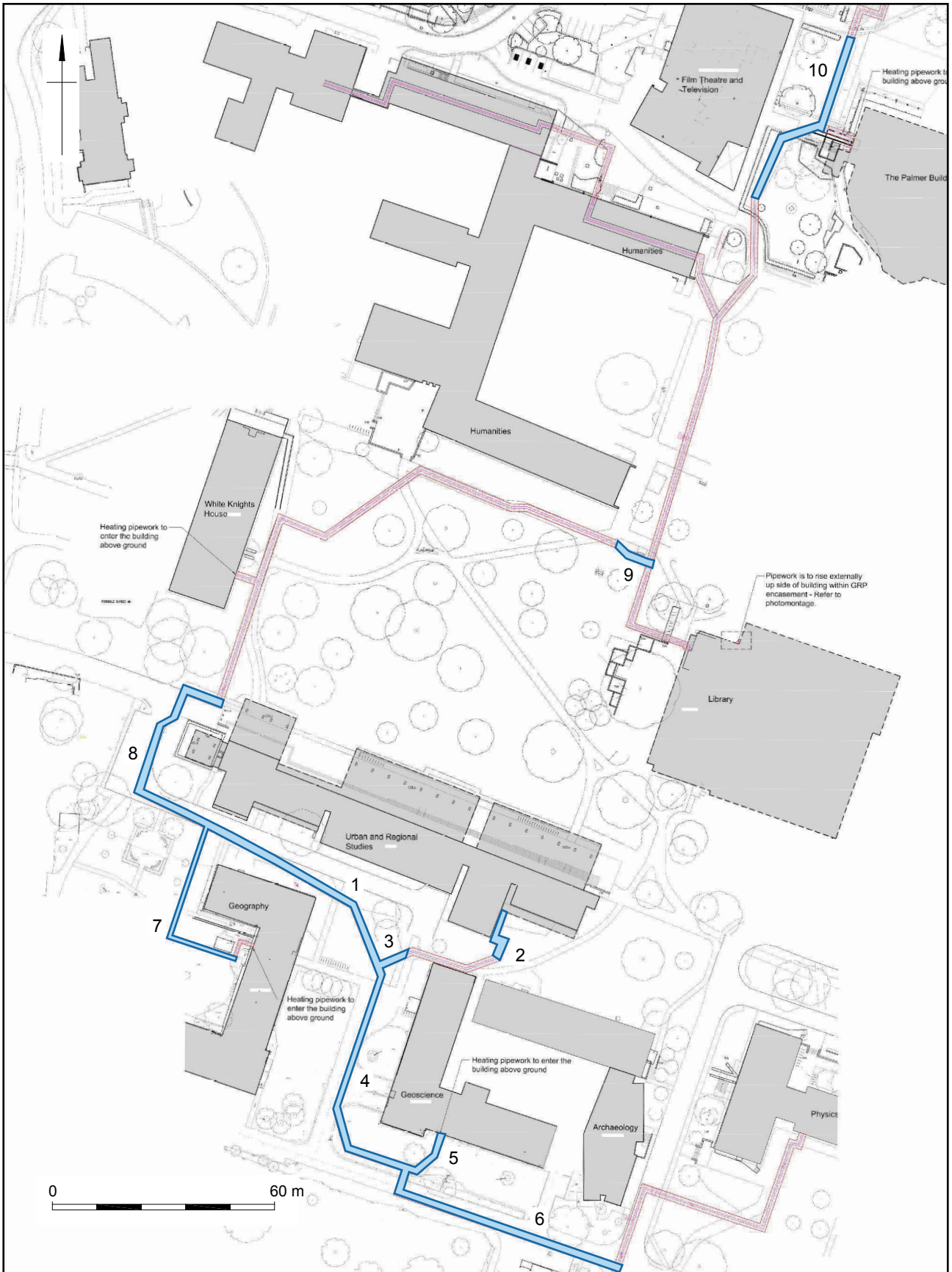
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Site location, known HER sites and watching brief area

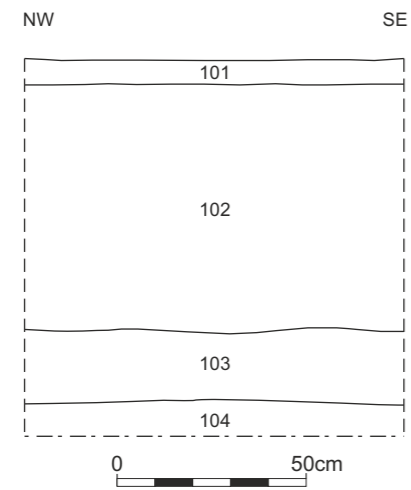
Figure 1



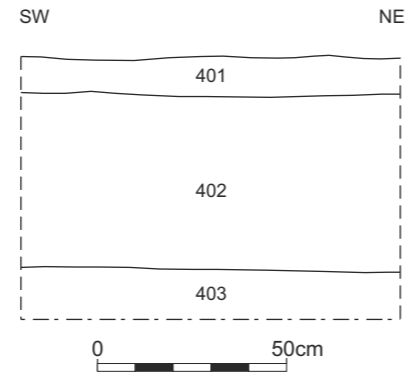
	 Proposed pipework route  WA watching brief	Survey data supplied by the Client. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.	
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Area of Watching Brief

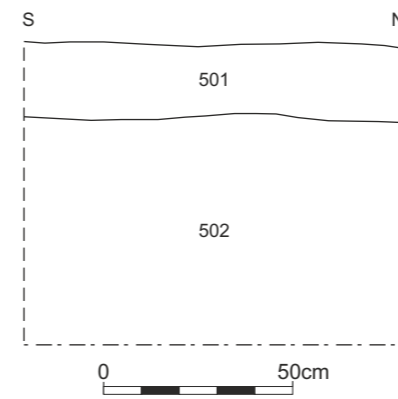
Figure 2



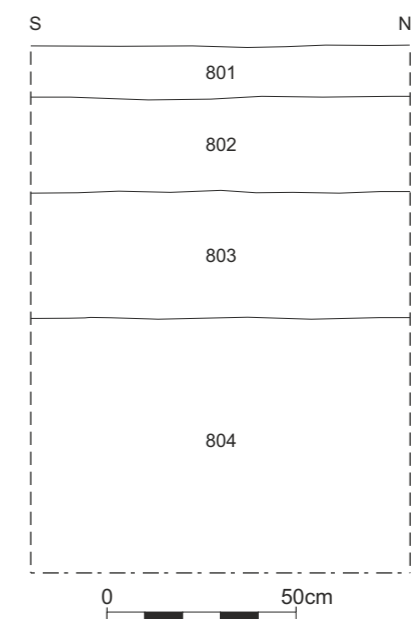
Southwest facing section of Trench 1



Southeast facing section of Trench 4



East facing section of Trench 5



West facing section of Trench 8



Plate 1: Trench 1, view from southwest



Plate 2: Trench 4, view from southeast



Plate 3: Trench 5, view from east



Plate 4: Trench 8, view from west



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salisbury rochester sheffield edinburgh



Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB  
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



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