

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**127-139 St Leonard's Road,
Windsor, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation
Phase 1**

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Site Code: SLW10/94

(SU 9630 7570)

**127-139 St Leonard's Road,
Windsor, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 1)
for Shanly Homes Limited**

by James McNicoll-Norbury
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
Ltd

Site Code SLW10/94

March 2011

Summary

Site name: 127-139 St Leonard's Road, Windsor, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9630 7570

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 1)

Date and duration of project: 8th – 11th March 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: SLW 10/94

Area of site: 0.8ha

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits were identified

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an approved local museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 17.03.11
	Steve Preston ✓ 17.03.11

127-139 St Leonard's Road, Windsor, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 1)

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 10/94b

Introduction

This report documents the results of the first phase of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 127-139 St Leonard's Road, Windsor, Berkshire (SU 9630 7570) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Duncan Gibson, for Shanly Homes, Sorbon, Aylesbury End, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 1LW.

A resolution to grant planning permission (app no 10/03056/FUL) has been gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for development of the site for residential use. The consent would be subject to a condition relating to archaeology, as a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a field observation by means of machine dug trenching has been requested. This was to take place over two phases, the first in open unused areas and the second phase following demolition of the current buildings on site.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Paul Falcini, Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Royal Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Andrew Munda between 8th and 11th March 2011 and the site code is SLW 10/94. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading, pending identification of a suitable approved depository.

Location, topography and geology

The site is an irregular-shaped parcel of land covering 0.8ha on the southern edge of Windsor and is bounded to the west by St Leonard's Road and surrounded by residential properties with the southern tip of the site on Victor Road (Fig. 2). Most of the site is occupied by the large buildings of a former late 19th- or early 20th-century commercial laundry in a Tarmacadamed yard, with one small area cobbled; towards the rear is a concrete hard standing area with container cabins. A small group of terraced houses at the street frontage was demolished not long ago. The northern portion of the site is occupied by number 127, a former public house now a nursery school, with a large single-storey structure also part of the nursery school behind this and a large area

of car park to the rear. The natural geology is described as London Clay (BGS 1981) which was observed in the trenches and the site lies between 23m and 25m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Preston 2011). In summary the site lies within an area of high archaeological potential due to its position in the general vicinity of the site of the medieval leper hospital of St Peter. The precise location of the hospital is unknown but it gives its name to the area (Spital) and is thought to have been in the near vicinity of the site. It has been considered that it was likely to have stood on the borough boundary; one suggested location is at the junction of St Leonard's Road and Bolton Road (Astill 1978, 62), although perhaps a more isolated spot would have been preferred. Research undertaken for the desk-based assessment suggested a location further south and west (Preston 2011). The hospital was first mentioned in AD1168. Windsor itself expanded southwards during the medieval period, away from the chalk hill on which the castle stands, but the site is well beyond the edge of the medieval growth of the town, as the leper hospital would have been located well away from the settlement.

Until relatively recently little archaeological investigation has been carried out within Windsor. An important exception to this was the excavation at Jennings Yard close to the Thames (Hawkes and Heaton 1993), which revealed extensive evidence of buildings spanning the 12th to 17th centuries. Recent work has emphasized the extent to which medieval and early post-medieval remains do survive below modern development (Pine 2005; Taylor and Preston 2005; Weaver and Hull 2005). However, a recent watching brief very close to the proposal site at 16A Victor Road revealed nothing of archaeological interest (Mundin 2002).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development and to inform further mitigation measures which may be necessary, in line with national and local planning policy.

The specific aims of the project are:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits relating to buildings on 19th century maps are present;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and

to determine if any deposits relating to the medieval hospital (buildings, graveyard) are to be found on the site.

Nine trenches were to be dug over two phases. Seven trenches were to be 20m long, one 25m and another 15m long, all at 1.6m or 2m wide (5% of the site) using a JCB-type machine fitted with a ditching bucket. Trenches in open unused areas will be dug in phase 1 and the remainder in phase 2. Archaeological features and deposits were to be excavated by hand and all finds retained.

Results

During this phase six trenches were dug, corresponding to five of the intended trenches, as one had to be subdivided to avoid live services in the immediate area. The trenches ranged in length from 8.2–25.1m and in depth from 0.74–1.00m (Figs 3 and 4).

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned roughly S-N and was 25.1m long and 0.90m deep at the north, 1.10m deep in the south. The stratigraphy comprised 0.32m of disturbed ground above 0.50m mottled dark grey brown sandy clay with modern inclusions overlying natural geology (London clay). The southern end of the trench was heavily truncated and natural geology was found at a depth of 1.10m below the surface. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 2 (Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned SW-NE and was 8.2m long and 0.74m deep. The stratigraphy comprised of 0.06m Tarmac, 0.17m concrete and 0.49m made ground overlying natural geology. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 3 (Pl. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned SE-NW and was 10.4m long and 1.00m deep. The stratigraphy comprised of 0.03m Tarmac, over 0.20m concrete above 0.74m made ground overlying natural geology. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned SE-NW and was 20.1m long and up to 0.92m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.02m of Tarmac, above 0.12m brick cobbles, overlying 0.19m gravels and sands above 0.44m black grey sandy silt with modern inclusions overlying contaminated natural geology. No archaeological features were identified.

Trench 5 (Pl. 4)

Trench 5 was aligned S-N and was 19.95m long and 0.78m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.02m of Tarmac over 0.12m brick cobbles, above 0.15m gravels and sands above 0.43m grey black sandy silt with modern inclusions overlying natural geology. Modern truncation was observed at the southern end and middle of the trench.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned W-E and was 19.98m long and between 0.91m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.09m concrete, on 0.31m made ground including brick and gravels, over 0.48m silty black grey sand with modern inclusions, which in turn overlie natural clay. No archaeological features were identified.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered from the site.

Conclusion

The evaluation has shown that archaeologically relevant levels have survived on site, although contaminated in places and truncated by old services in other areas. Despite this no archaeological deposits nor artefacts of any period were identified in the trenches nor any evidence of buildings that used to exist near the site entrance on the western side of the site. This would suggest that the site was levelled down then built up again prior to the building of the current buildings which would have resulted in the removal of previous building foundations and also having an impact on archaeological levels.

References

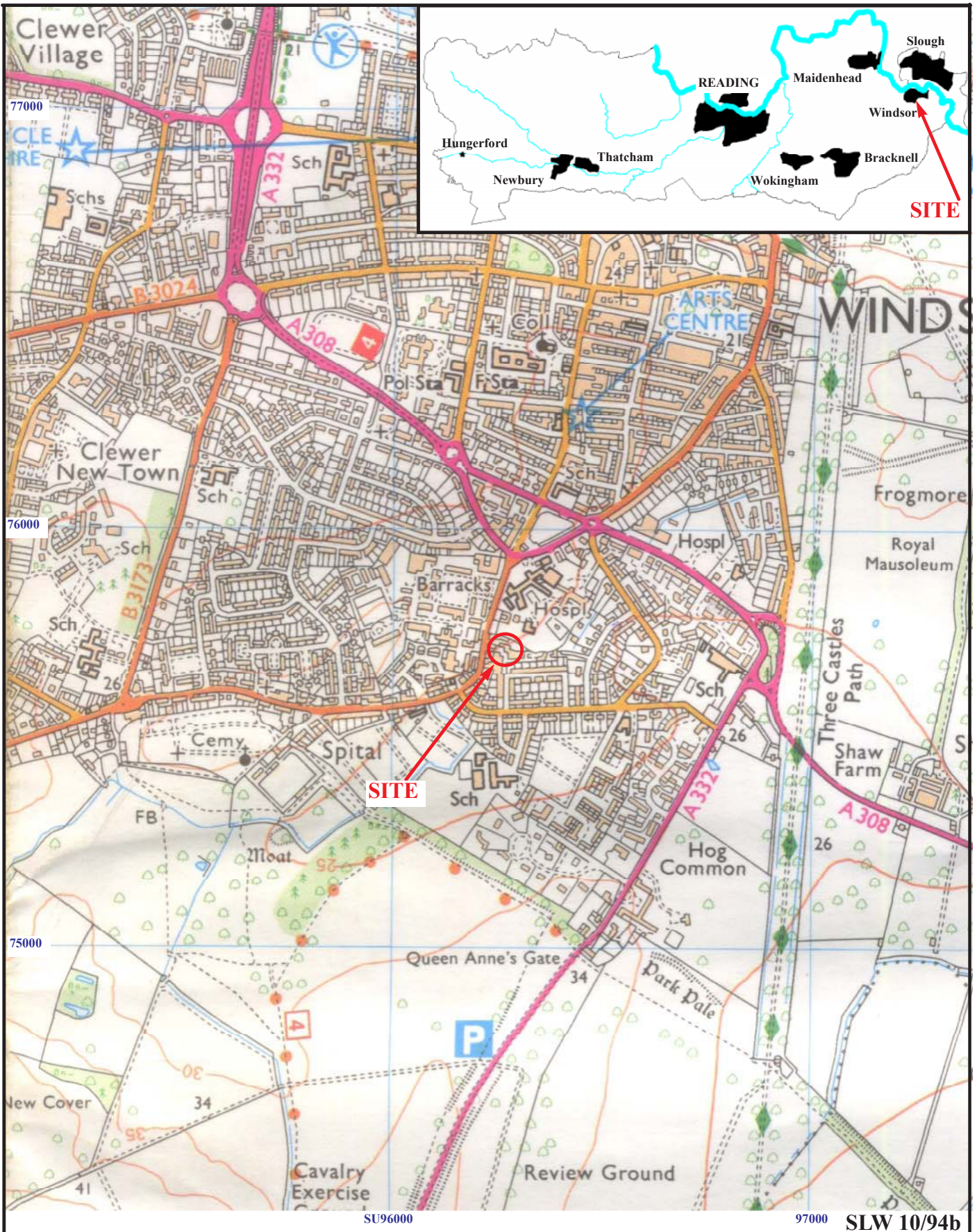
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S, SE and W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	25.1	1.6	N: 0.90 S: 1.10	0–0.32m disturbed ground, 0.32-0.82m mottled grey brown sandy clay with modern inclusions, 0.82m+ natural geology. [Pl. 1]
2	8.2	1.6	0.74	0-0.06m Tarmac, 0.06-0.23m concrete, 0.23-0.72m made ground, 0.72m+ natural geology. [Pl. 2]
3	10.4	1.6	1.00	0-0.03m Tarmac, 0.03-0.23m concrete, 0.23-0.97m made ground, 0.97m+ natural geology. [Pl. 3]
4	20.1	1.6	0.92	0-0.02m Tarmac, 0.02-0.14m brick cobbles, 0.14-0.33m gravels and sands, 0.33-0.77 black grey sandy silt, 0.77m+ natural geology.
5	19.95	1.6	0.78	0-0.02m Tarmac, 0.02-0.14m brick cobbles, 0.14-0.29m gravels and sands, 0.29-0.72m black sandy silt, 0.72m+ natural geology. Various modern truncations [Pl. 4]
6	19.98	1.6	1.20	0-0.09m concrete, 0.09-0.40m brick rubble, 0.40-0.88m silty black grey sands, 0.88m+ natural geology.



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Figure 1. Location of site within Windsor and Berkshire.

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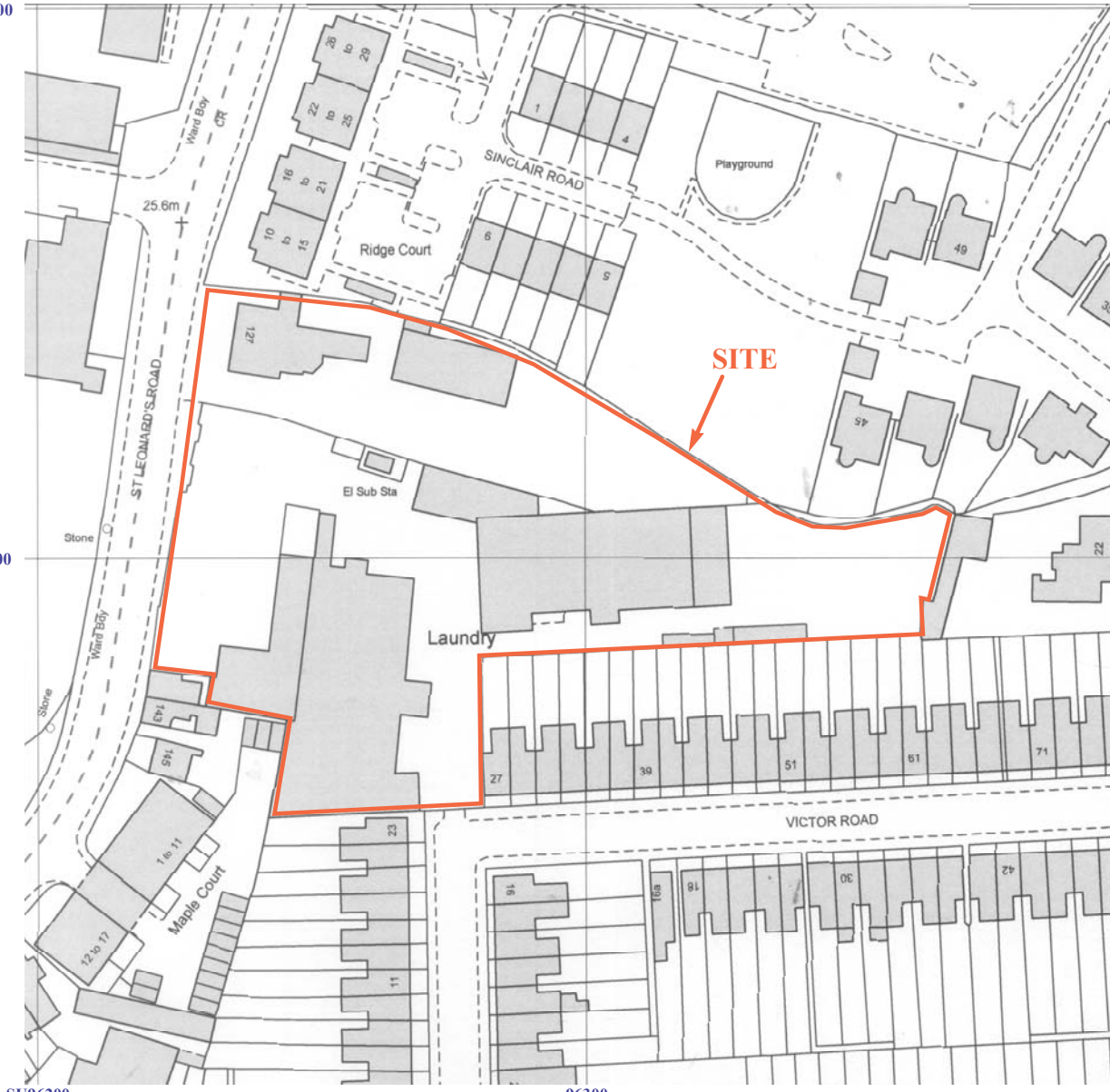
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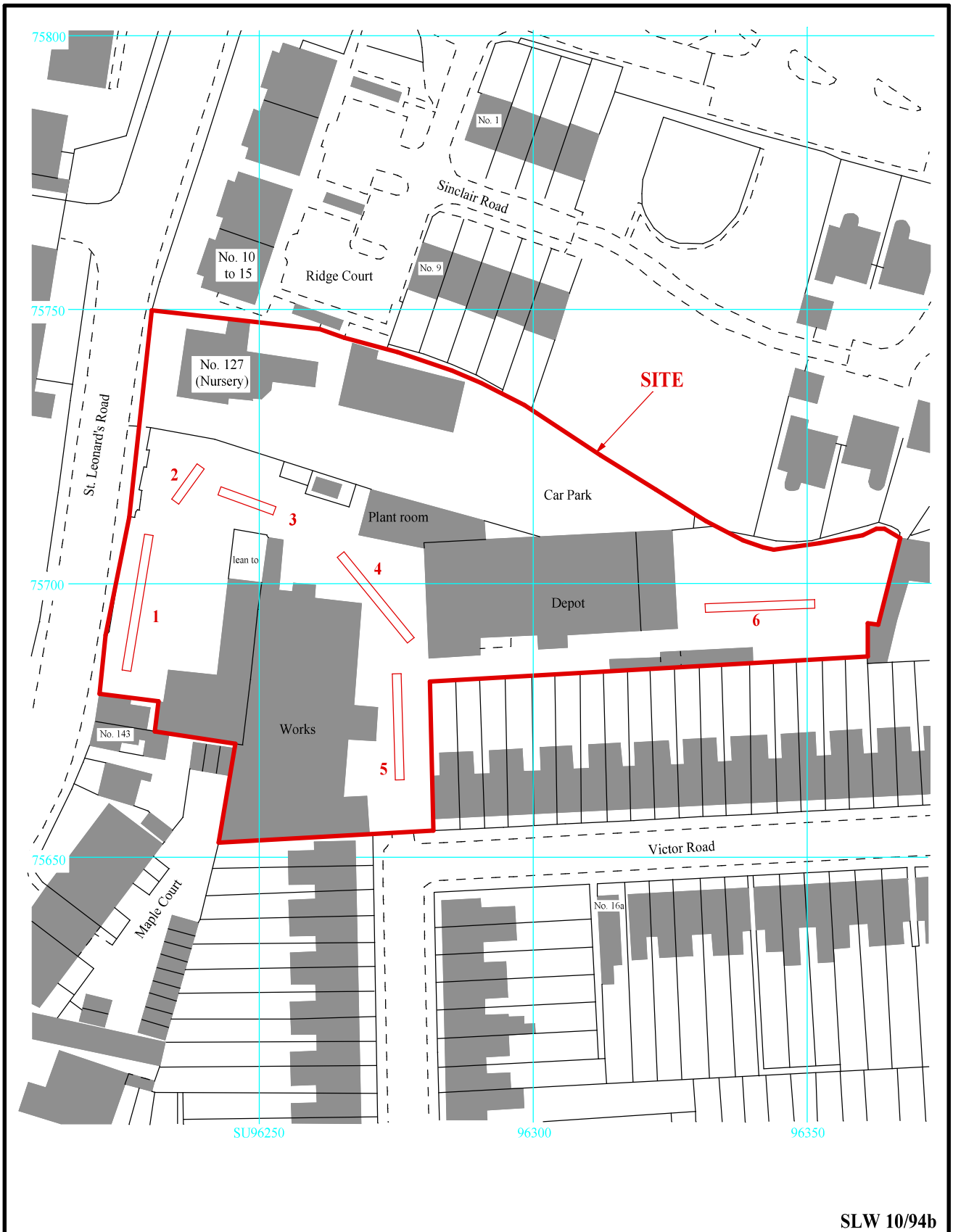
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off St Leonard's Road.

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Trench 1

S _____ N [24.69m](#)

Disturbed Ground

Mottled dark grey brown silty clay

Natural Geology
base of trench

Trench 4

NW _____ SE [23.98m](#)
Tarmac

Brick Cobbles

Gravels and Sand (Hoggin)

Black grey sandy silt

Natural Geology
base of trench

Trench 6

W _____ E [23.75m](#)

Concrete

Made Ground (Brick rubble)

Black grey sandy silt

Natural Geology
base of trench

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Figure 4. Representative Sections





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking south; Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m

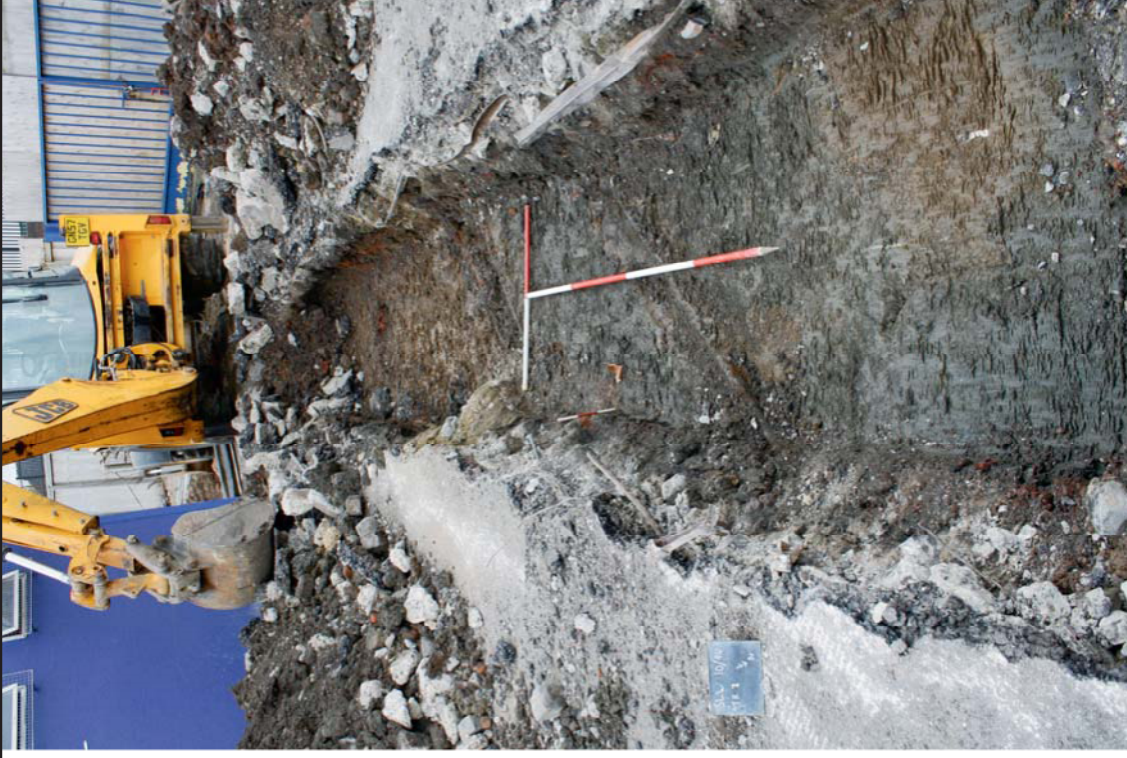


Plate 2. Trench 2, looking south east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m

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Plates 1 and 2



Plate 3. Trench 3, looking east; Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m



Plate 4. Trench 5, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m

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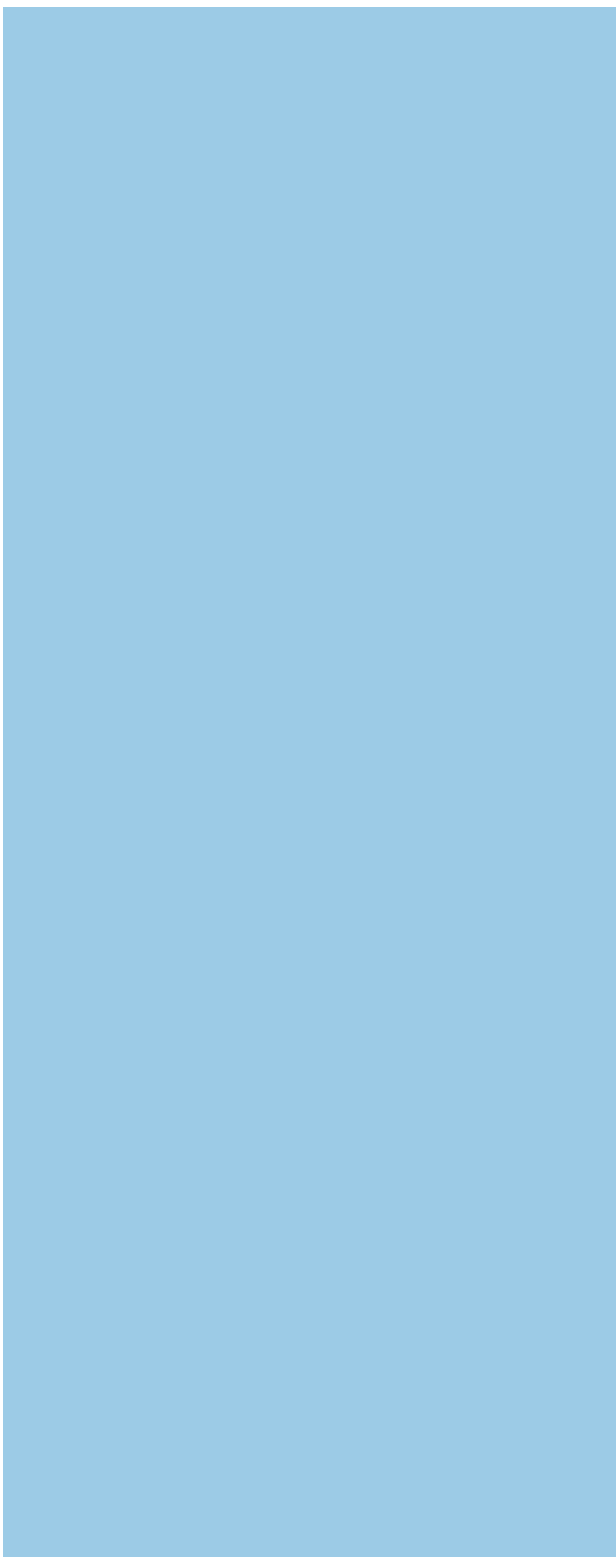
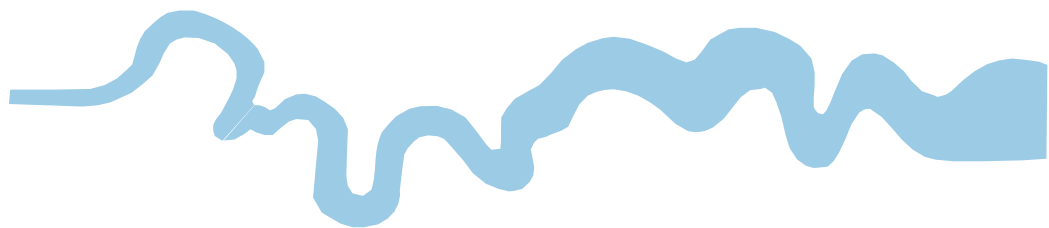
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Plates 3 and 4

TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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