

**Unit 24 Suttons Business Park, London Road,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation Supplementary Report  
for Standard Life Assurance Ltd**

by Tim Dawson and Steve Ford  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SLR 11/58

**August 2011**

## Summary

**Site name:** Unit 24, Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading, Berkshire.

**Grid reference:** SU 7378 7367

**Site activity:** Supplementary Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 26th August 2011

**Project manager:** James Lewis

**Site supervisor:** Tim Dawson

**Site code:** SLR 11/58

**Summary of results:** An extra field investigation was carried out on one area of the site to determine if an undated deposit found by earlier fieldwork was of archaeological interest. This extra work confirmed that the deposit identified was of late post-medieval or modern date. Other areas of modern disturbance were noted. No deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were recorded

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a museum willing to accept it in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

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# 24, Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading, Berkshire, 2011 A Supplementary Archaeological Evaluation

by Tim Dawson and Steve Ford

Report 11/58b

## Introduction

This report documents the results of a supplementary archaeological field evaluation carried out at Unit 24, Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading, Berkshire (SU 7390 7360) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Colin Hall, Development Manager, Standard Life Investments, 1 George Street, Edinburgh.

Planning permission (app F/2011/0542) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council to redevelop the site as a distribution centre. Due to the location of the proposed site within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley and the potential for the survival of archaeological deposits, the consent included a condition (19) relating to archaeology. This allowed for a programme of archaeological works to be carried out to investigate the archaeological potential of the site and if necessary put in place appropriate mitigation scheme once consent was gained. That fieldwork took place in June 2011 and concluded that the site had little or no archaeological potential (Lewis 2011). However, to clarify the nature of one undated feature on the site, an extra trench was dug to supplement the original work and the results of this form the basis of the report here.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and Wokingham Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The original field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Mary Neale, Archaeological Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson and Steve Ford on 26th August 2011 and the site code is SLR 11/58. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a museum able and willing to accept it in due course.

## Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the supplementary trench was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the vicinity of feature 5 in evaluation trench 1 and if so excavate and record them prior to development. A single trench measuring a nominal 16m x 16m was to be stripped of topsoil and overburden using a machine fitted with a toothless bucket to expose the natural geology or until archaeological deposits were encountered.

## **Results**

A single trench (Trench A) was dug which was 16m x 16m and 0.4m deep centred on Feature 5 in trench 1 as intended (Fig. 1 and Pl. 1). The stratigraphy mostly comprised 0.2m of turf and topsoil above 0.15m of a subsoil comprising a brown sandy clay with chalk pellets (lime) above the natural geology. The latter had a greater proportion of sandy clay towards the north west corner compared to the remainder of the trench. The trench was also deeper to the south with the presence of c. 0.1m of gravelly made ground present beneath the topsoil.

Numerous disturbances of the surface of the natural geology were observed in the southern portion of the and which comprised a series of parallel linear stripes infilled with topsoil (dark brown humic clayey sand with gravel, brick/tile, coal and chalk pellets) (Fig. 2; Pls 1 and 2).

Feature 5 in the evaluation trench was revealed to have been the extreme end of a linear feature, 8m long and up to 0.8m wide on the same alignment as the other linear stripes. This feature was infilled with a grey clayey sand with few gravel pieces. It was markedly straight-sided suggesting a machine-made origin and again contained brick/tile, coal, and flower pot.

A few other shallow circular patches of dark brown clayey sand were noted (Fig. 2) and observed to contain modern material such as window glass or brick/tile fragments.

A further series of rectilinear stripes may also be present further to the south beyond the baulk with their northern limits just exposed within the trench (Fig. 2).

## **Finds**

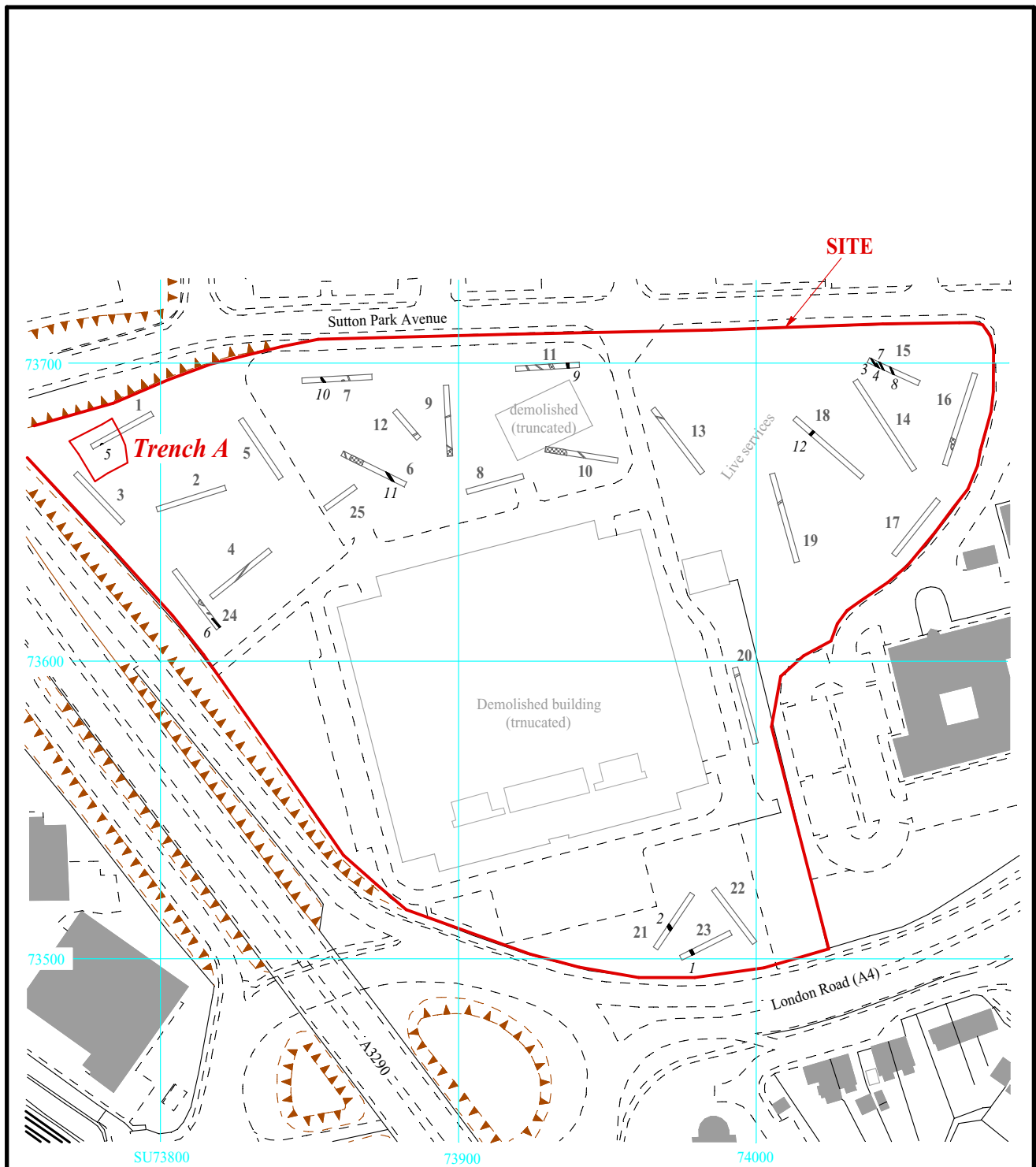
No finds of archaeological interest were recovered. Material of late 19th to 20th century date was retained on site.

## **Conclusion**

All of the deposits encountered which cut into the surface of the natural geology were of 19th century or later date. Most of these contained artefacts of these periods or had characteristics indicative of machine made origin. It is likely that these features relate to the previous use of the site as a trial ground for the seed producers, Sutton's. No features nor artefacts were dated earlier than this.

## **References**

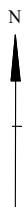
Lewis, J 2011, Unit 24, Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading, Berkshire, 2011, An archaeological evaluation, Thames Valley; Archaeological Services Report 11/58, Reading  
PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich



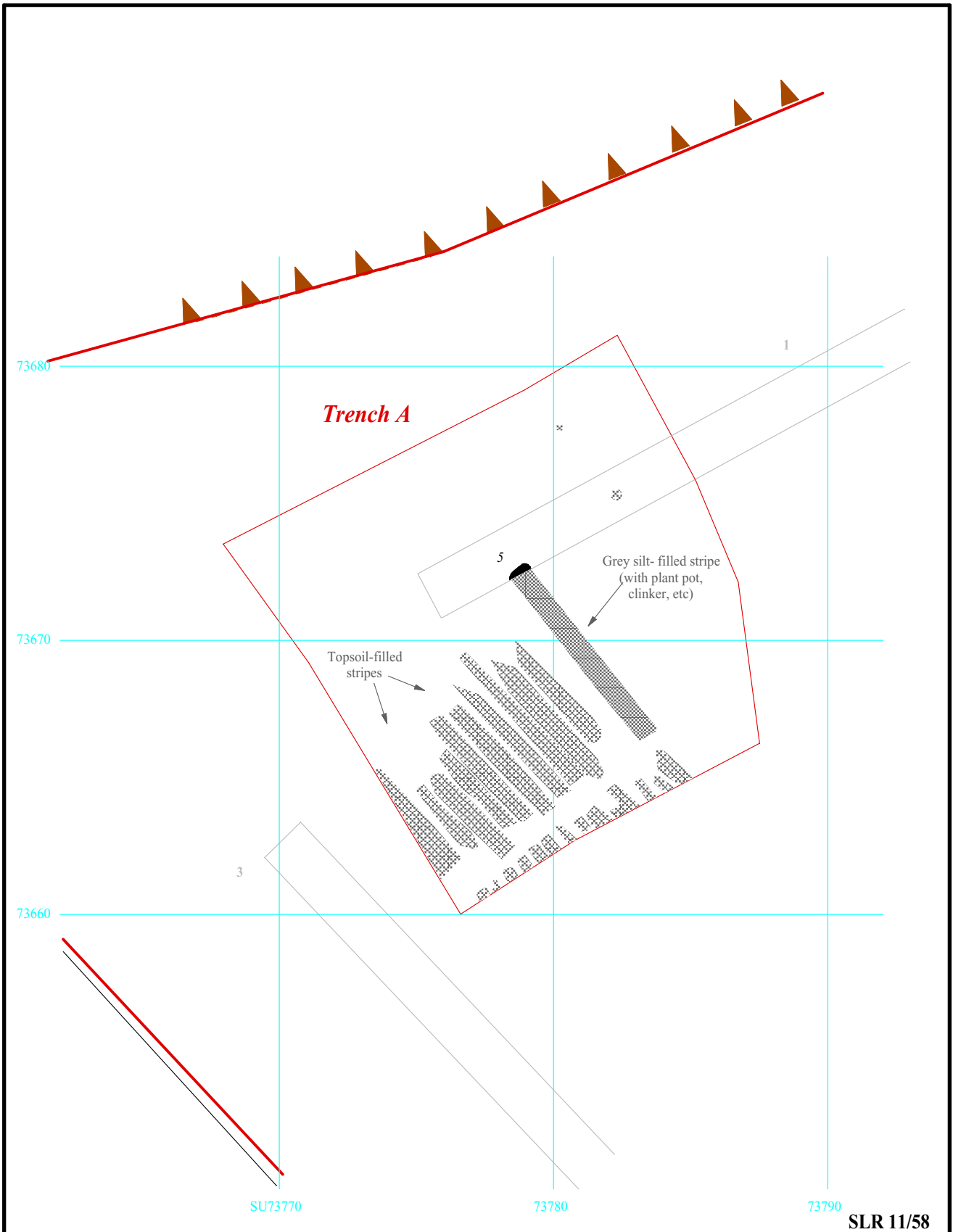
SLR 11/58

**Unit 24, Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2011  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of supplementary trench A.



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SLR 11/58



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Berkshire, 2011  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detail of Trench A.



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Plate 1. Trench A, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.  
(White arrow denotes position of feature 5 when originally exposed in evaluation trench 1)



Plate 2. Trench A, looking north east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

SLR 11/58b

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Berkshire, 2011**  
**Archaeological Evaluation Supplementary Report**  
Plates 1 and 2.

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