

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**New Grain Store, Barracks Farm,
North Stoke, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Steve Crabb

Site Code: BFS11/129

(SU 6136 8528)

**New Grain Store, Barracks Farm,
North Stoke, Oxfordshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Phyllis Earle Limited

by Steven Crabb

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BFS 11/129

May 2012

Summary

Site name: New Grain Store, Barracks Farm, North Stoke, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 6136 8528

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 16th January – 10th May 2012

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steven Crabb

Site code: BFS 11/129

Summary of results: No features nor artefacts of archaeological interest were revealed

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 15.05.12
	Steve Preston ✓ 15.05.12

New Grain Store, Barracks Farm, North Stoke, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Steven Crabb

Report 11/129

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Barracks Farm, North Stoke, Oxfordshire (SU 6136 8528) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Nick Parry of Adkin, Orpwood House, School Road, Ardlington, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8PQ on behalf of Phyllis Earle Ltd, Little Stoke Manor Farm, Little Stoke, Wallingford, OX10 6AX.

Planning permission (P11/W1609) has been granted by South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of a new grain store and the demolition of an existing grain store and hopper. The potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features has led to a condition (6) being attached which requires the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the period of ground works. This was in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service and based on a brief prepared by him (Oram 2011). The fieldwork was undertaken by Steven Crabb, between January and May 2012 and the site code is BFS 11/129.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the south of the village of North Stoke, located in south Oxfordshire, east of the River Thames, downstream from Wallingford. The site is a parcel of land to the south of the existing grain store which is to be demolished as part of the permitted development (Fig. 3). The site is currently open farmland adjacent to the existing farm complex. The site lies at approximately 50m above Ordnance Datum on first terrace river gravels (BGS 1980).

Archaeological background

The site is located within a landscape with a rich archaeological past. The site lies just to the east of a large cropmark complex which is scheduled as an ancient monument (SM 121) (Fig. 2). The complex includes a rare Neolithic bank barrow and mortuary enclosures, numerous ring ditches (levelled Bronze Age round barrows) and a Roman enclosure. Extensive field survey (fieldwalking) in the environs of North Stoke has located dense clusters of prehistoric flintwork many of which reflect settlement contemporary with the cropmarks (Ford 1987). The field in which the site lies was not itself surveyed but dense clusters of flint are present a few hundred metres further to the south. Roman, Saxon and medieval settlement sites have also been identified nearby (Ford and Hazell 1989).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the works. This was to involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks and include observation of surface stripping, geo-technical investigations, the excavation of foundations and service trenches, landscaping works and all other invasive work.

Results

Overburden stripping

The area of the site was stripped of 0.2m of topsoil. This did not reveal any archaeological deposits nor artefacts and a layer of hardcore was then spread over the site.

Foundation pads

A total of 36 foundation pads were dug for the construction of the new barn and were observed. The four corner pads were dug as 2m x 2m holes with 26 pads in between dug as 1.4m x 1.6m holes. A further six pads 1m x 1m in area were also excavated (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). All pads were excavated to a depth of 0.75m and revealed the same general stratigraphic sequence which comprised 0.4m of dark reddish brown clayey silt with frequent flint gravel which directly overlay the flint gravel natural (Pl. 2). No archaeological deposits nor artefacts were recorded.

Electricity cable trench

Also observed was a trench for an electrical cable, along the western side of the new structure towards the existing structures on the north side of the farmyard. The trench was 0.3m wide and 0.4m deep where made

ground was not encountered. The northern end of the trench was excavated through concrete slabs and made ground laid down to support a grain hopper. Here the trench was 0.8m deep with 0.4m of concrete above 0.3m of made ground onto the natural gravel geology. The trench also crossed a concrete road which was constructed of reinforced concrete 0.15m thick over 0.3m of made ground. The remainder of the trench to the south of the road was excavated through the same stratigraphy as described above. No archaeological deposits nor artefacts were recorded.

Finds

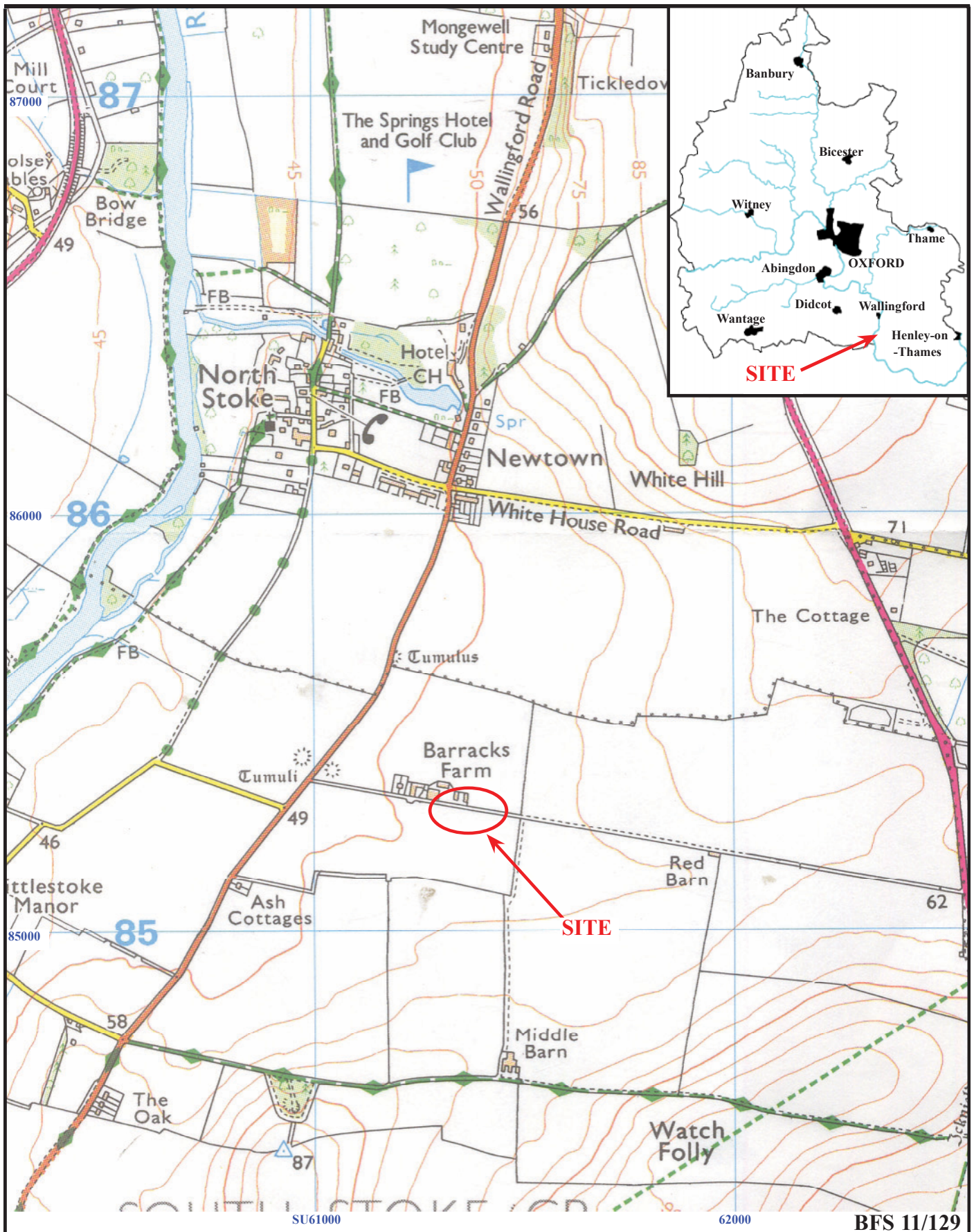
No finds were recovered from this site

Conclusion

Despite the archaeological potential for this site, neither features nor artefacts of archaeological interest were observed during these groundworks.

References

- BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 254, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Ford, S, 1987, 'Flint scatters and Prehistoric settlement patterns in South Oxfordshire and East Berkshire', in A G Brown and M R Edmonds (eds), *Lithic Analysis and Later British Prehistory*, BAR **162**, Oxford, 101–35
- Ford, S and Hazell, A, 1989, 'Prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement patterns at North Stoke, Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia* **54**, 7–23
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- Oram, R, 2011, 'Barracks Farm, North Stoke Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief', Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, Oxford



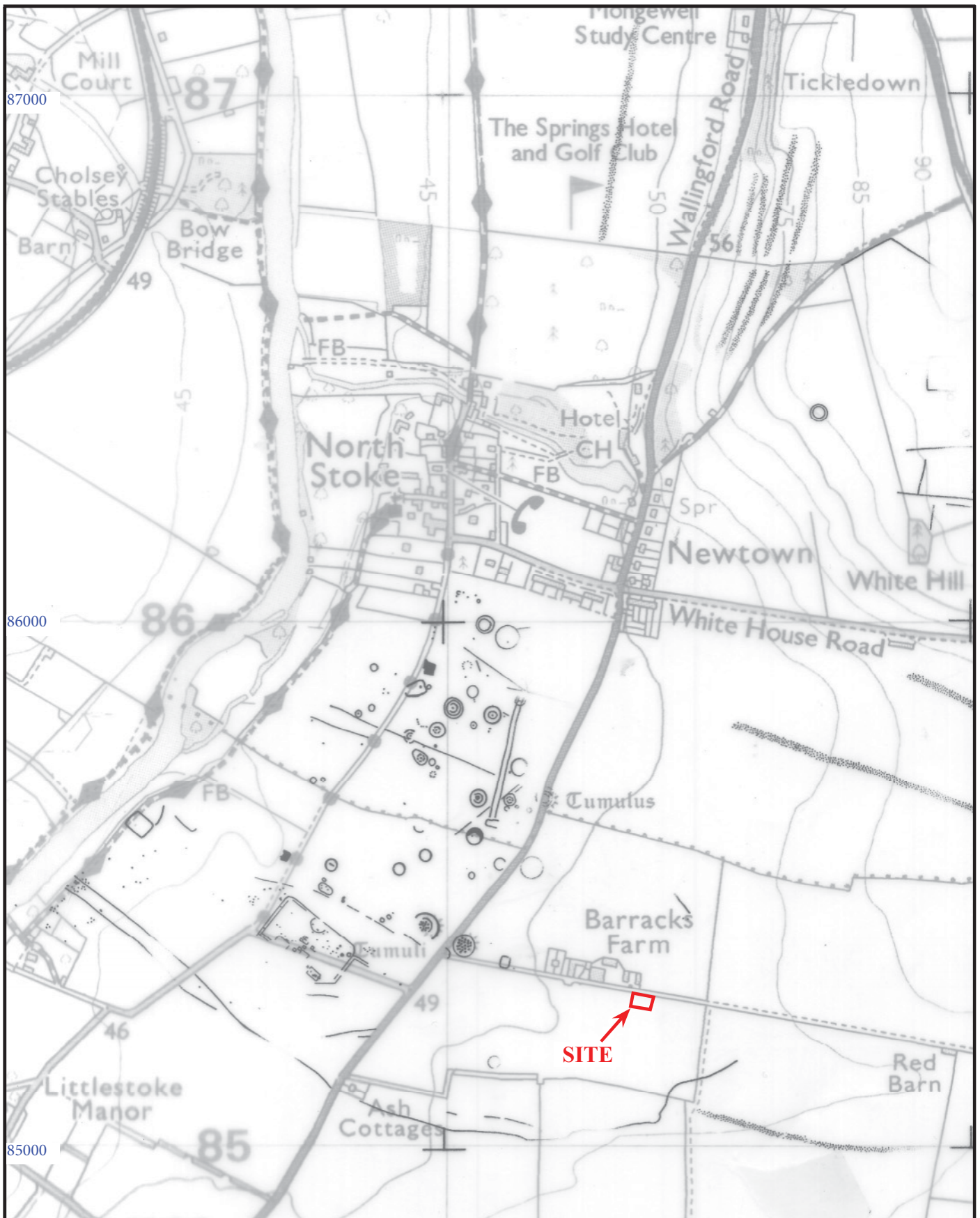
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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to North Stoke and within Oxfordshire.

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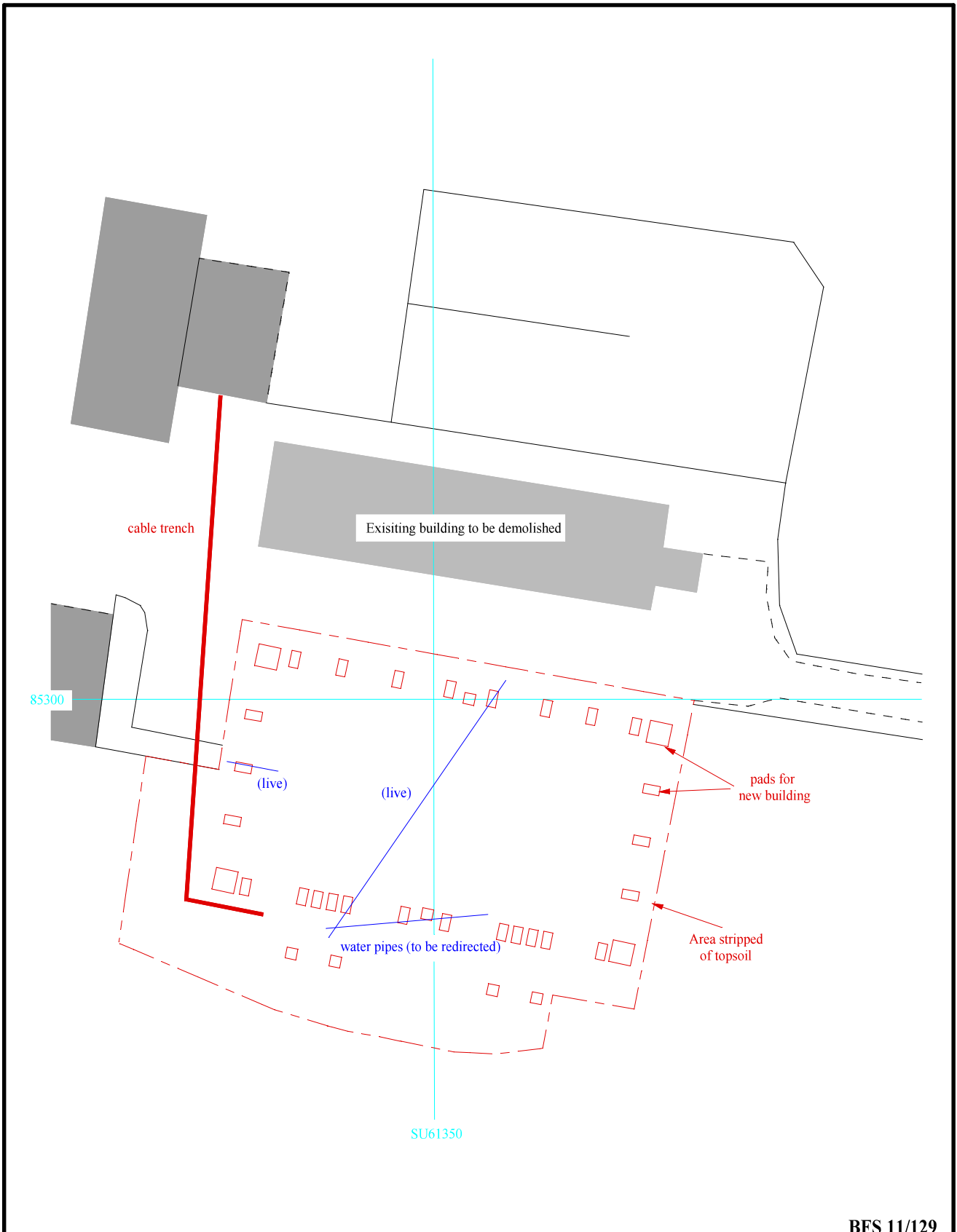
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Figure 2 Location of site and cropmarks in relation to site.

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Figure 3. Plan of the barn footing pads.



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Plate 1. Pad excavation, looking north-west, from south-eastern corner pad.



Plate 2. Close up of an excavated pad with water pipe, looking east; Scales 1m and 0.5m.

BFS 11/129

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Archaeological watching brief**

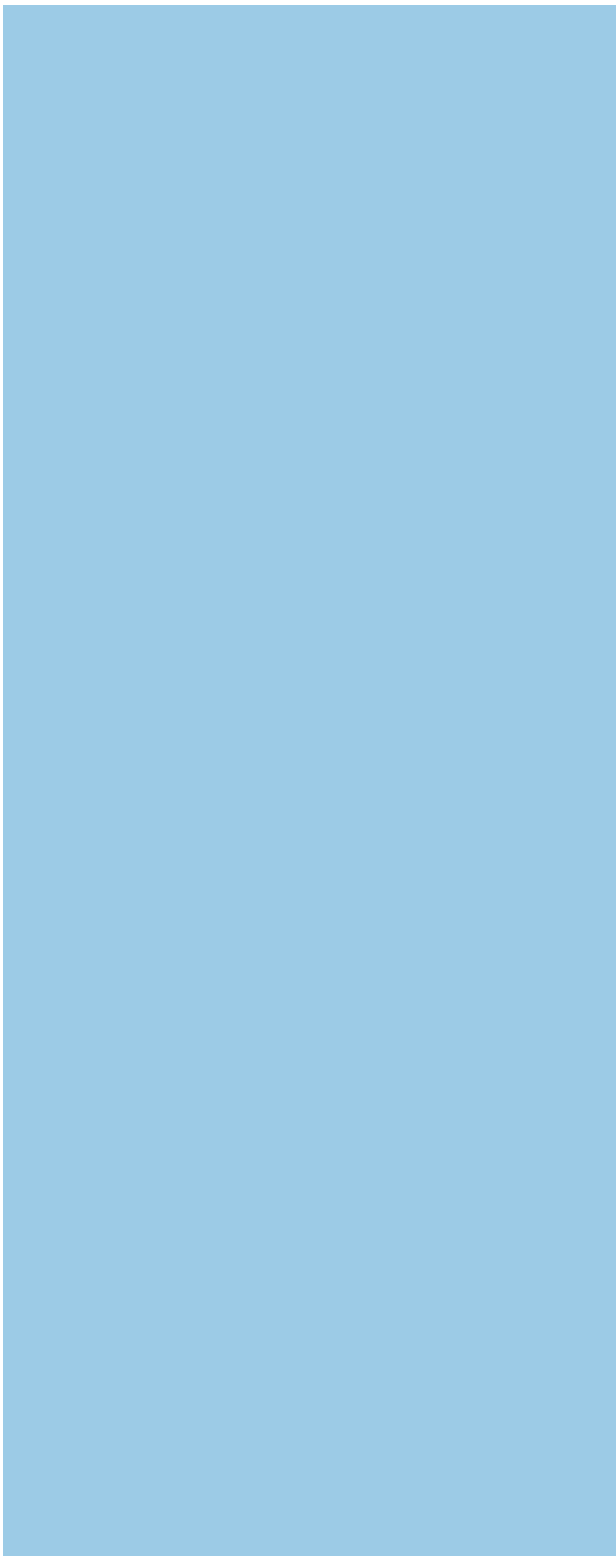
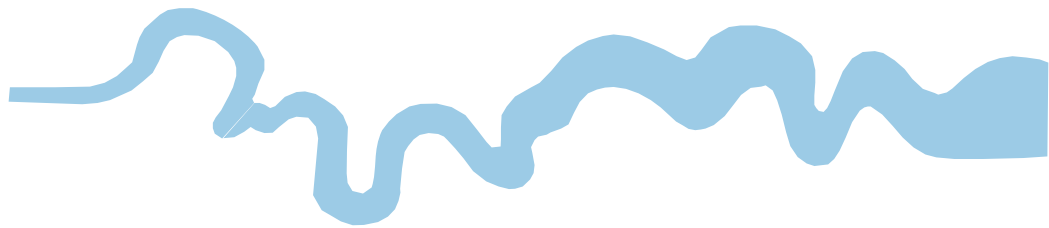
Plates 1 and 2.

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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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Fax: 0118 9260553
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**