

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Cedars Road,
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Susan Porter

Site Code: CRM12/179

(SU 8939 8112)

**Land at Cedars Road, Maidenhead,
Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Shanly Homes Limited**

by Susan Porter
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
Ltd

Site Code CRM12/179

January 2013

Summary

Site name: Land at Cedars Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8939 8112

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 18th–21st December 2012

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Susan Porter

Site code: CRM 12/179

Area of site: c.0.9ha

Summary of results: No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered. The archaeologically relevant level on parts of the site had been deeply truncated. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 10.01.13 Steve Preston ✓ 10.01.13

Cedars Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Susan Porter

Report 12/179

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at Cedars Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SU 8939 8112 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Humm, for Shanly Homes Limited, Sorbon, Aylesbury End, Buckinghamshire, HP9 1LW.

Planning permission (app no 12/01026/FULL) has been gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the redevelopment of the site for residential use. The consent is subject to a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation prior to development. This was to take the form, initially, of field evaluation, based on the results of which a further programme of mitigation could be devised if required..

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Royal Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald, Principal Archaeologist for Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Royal Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Susan Porter and Kyle Beaverstock between 18th and 21st December 2012 and the site code is CRM 12/179. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited in due course with a local museum willing to accept archive material.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the east of the centre of Maidenhead (Fig.1), on the east side of Cedars Road, and comprises an irregular parcel of land of c.0.9ha, previously occupied by disused industrial buildings, which had been demolished at the time of archaeological investigation (Fig. 2). The site lies at a height of 24.5m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying geology is recorded as Shepperton Gravel with silt and clay alluvium to the east (BGS 2005). A sandy clay with gravel natural geology was observed on site.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the area stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded for the area during archaeological fieldwork, aerial photography, mineral extraction and dredging of the nearby River Thames (e.g., Ford 1987; Foreman *et al.* 2002; Gates 1975). The site lies close to but beyond the margins of the historic core of Maidenhead (Astill 1978). A number of medieval and post-medieval buildings are recorded in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record to the north on the main road to Maidenhead Bridge (High Street, Bridge Street) with 17th century almshouses to the north-east. A number of farms are indicated on Rocque's 18th century map, to the south of the road, though none obviously close to the proposal site. Although the zone between historic Maidenhead and the river is low-lying, there are areas of higher ground (gravel islands) which may have been favoured for early settlement.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development and to inform further mitigation measure which may be necessary, in line with national and local planning policy. This work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavations.

The specific research aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels had survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- to determine if any deposits relating to the Saxon settlement and subsequent medieval and post-medieval town were to be found on the site; and
- to determine if there was any preferential occupation in pre-historic times of gravel islands on this low lying part of the valley.

It was proposed to dig ten trenches each 1.60m wide and 20m long to cover *c.* 4% of the site area. A contingency of 15m of trenching was included should it be required to clarify initial findings. Topsoil and overburden was to be removed by a JCB-type machine equipped with a ditching bucket to expose the archaeologically relevant layers. Where archaeological features were present they were to be cleaned and excavated using hand tools.

Results

All ten trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 3). They ranged in length from 19.00m to 21.60m and in depth from 0.66m to 1.50m. All were 1.60m wide. The spoil heaps were checked for finds.

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

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned SE–NW and was 20.0m long and 0.87m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of crush (Tarmac had been previously removed) and 0.60m of made ground comprising crushed concrete and brick rubble overlying yellow brown sandy clay natural geology. A possible pit was investigated at 13.60–14.70m from the south end of the trench but was found to be of natural origin. No finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Fig.4; Pl. 1)

Trench 2 was aligned SW–NE and was 19.00m long and 0.76m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of crush and 0.40m of made ground comprising brown yellow gravel at the south-west end and brown grey brick and concrete at the north-eastern end, overlying 0.20m of black blue sandy clay (stained) which in turn overlay yellow brown sandy clay natural geology (more sandy to the north-east). No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned SE–NW and was 21.50m long and 0.66m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of crush, overlying 0.40m brick rubble made ground, which in turn overlay 0.06m black blue (fuel-stained) sandy clay, above yellow brown sandy clay natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned approximately north–south and was 20.20m long and 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m crush and 0.45m of brown grey silty clay with brick and concrete made ground, overlying 0.25m black blue sandy clay (stained), which in turn overlay yellow brown sandy clay natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned SE–NW and was 19.50m long and 1.00m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of crush, overlying 0.42m grey brown brick and concrete made ground, which in turn overlay 0.08m of black/blue stained sandy clay, overlying light yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology. The trench was heavily truncated at the north-west end by a modern foundation excavated to a depth of 1.20m. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned SW–NE and was 19.00m long and 1.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 1.50m of mixed made ground comprising yellow brown sandy clay, brick, concrete, metal and demolition rubble. The natural geology was not reached but in comparison to the level of natural geology on adjacent trenches it was clear that the relevant level here had been substantially truncated.

Trench 7 (Fig.4; Pl. 2)

Trench 7 was aligned SE–NW and was 20.10m long and 1.02m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.90m of red brown brick and gravel made ground, overlying 0.12m black/blue, stained, sandy clay, which in turn overlay yellow brown sandy clay natural geology. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Trench 8

Trench 8 was aligned approximately east–west and was 21.60m long and 1.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 1.40m of mixed made ground comprising yellow brown sandy clay, brick, concrete, metal and demolition rubble. The natural geology was not reached as it was again clear that the relevant levels had been substantially truncated.

Trench 9

Trench 9 was aligned approximately east–west was 19.50m long and 1.25m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 1.25m of mixed made ground comprising yellow brown sandy clay, brick, concrete, metal and demolition rubble. The natural geology was not reached as it was again clear that the relevant levels had been substantially truncated.

Trench 10

Trench 10 was aligned east–west and was 20.50m long and 1.00m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 1.00m mixed made ground comprising yellow brown sandy clay, brick, concrete, metal and demolition rubble. Yellow brown sandy clay natural geology was observed at the eastern end of the trench from 14m onward. A modern soakaway was observed at the western end at a depth of 0.60m. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed and no finds were recovered.

Finds

No finds were recovered from the site.

Conclusion

Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no deposits of archaeological interest were observed. Parts of the site had been deeply truncated during the previous building works. On the basis of the results of this evaluation it can be suggested that the site has negligible archaeological potential.

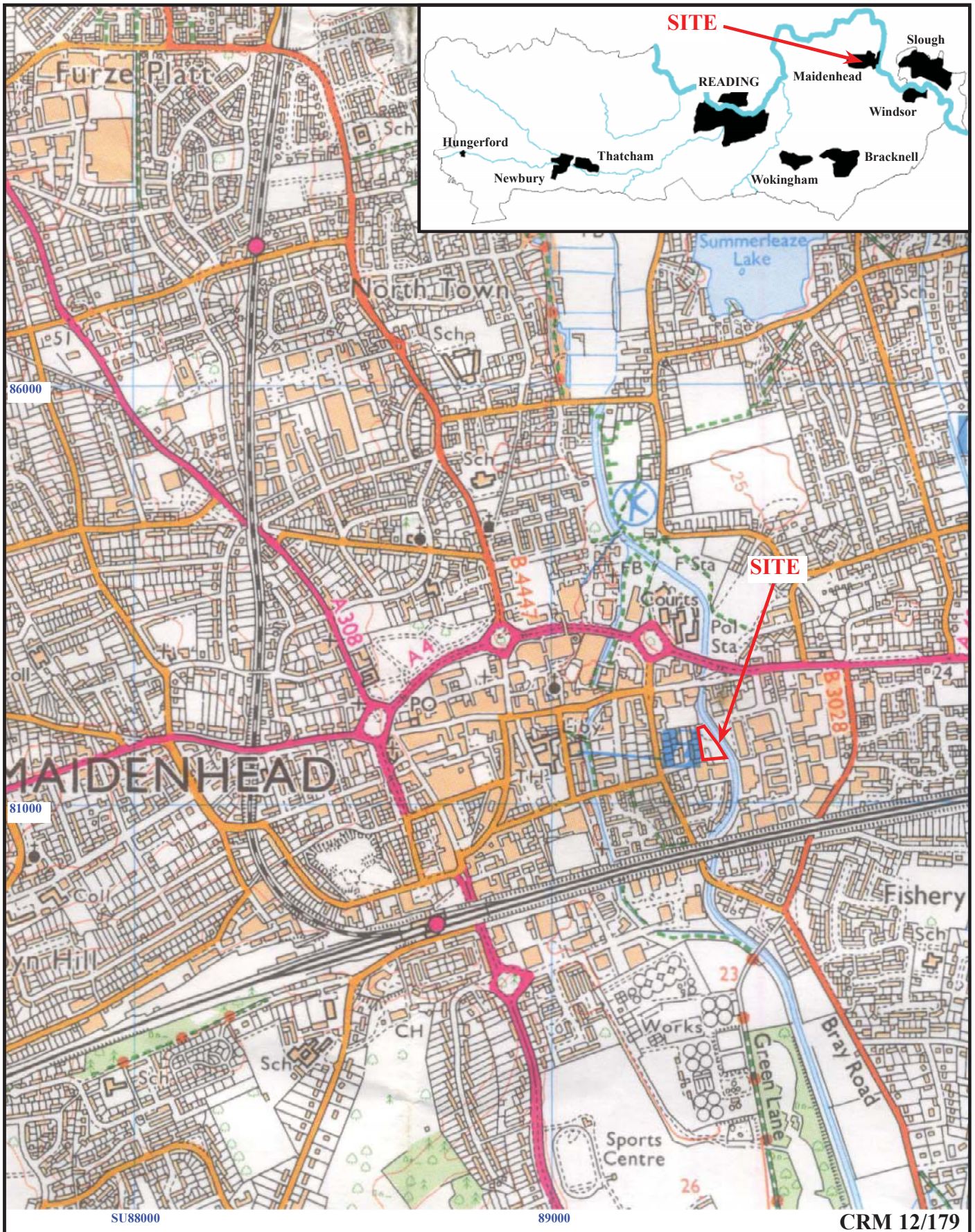
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at south or west end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	20.00	1.60	0.87	0–0.15m crush; 0.15-0.75m made ground, concrete and brick rubble; 0.75+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology.
2	19.00	1.60	0.76	0–0.16m crush; 0.16-0.56m made ground, brown yellow gravel at west end brown grey brick and concrete at east end; 0.56-0.76m black blue stained sandy clay natural geology; 0.76+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology. [Pl. 1]
3	21.50	1.60	0.66	0–0.10m crush; 0.10-0.50m made ground, brick rubble; 0.50-0.60m black blue stained sandy clay natural geology 0.60+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology.
4	20.20	1.60	0.90	0–0.20m crush; 0.20-0.65m made ground, brown grey brick concrete rubble; 0.65-0.90m black blue stained sandy clay natural geology 0.90+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology.
5	19.50	1.60	1.00	0–0.16m crush; 0.16-0.58m made ground, grey brown brick and concrete rubble; 0.58-0.66m black blue stained silty clay subsoil; 0.66-1.00m mid brown silty clay subsoil; 1.00+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology.
6	19.00	1.60	1.50	0–1.50m brick and concrete rubble, mid brown clay patches and yellow brown sand mixed made ground. Natural geology not reached, truncated
7	20.10	1.60	1.02	0–0.90m red brown brick gravel made ground and demolition rubble; 0.90-1.20m black blue stained sandy clay natural geology; 1.20+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology. [Pl. 2]
8	21.60	1.60	1.40	0–1.40m brick and concrete rubble, mid brown clay patches and yellow brown sand mixed made ground. Natural geology not reached, truncated
9	19.50	1.60	1.25	0–1.25m brick and concrete rubble, mid brown clay patches and yellow brown sand mixed made ground. Natural geology not reached, truncated
10	20.50	1.60	1.00	0–1.00m brick and concrete rubble, mid brown clay patches and yellow brown sand mixed made ground. 1.00+m at eastern end only 1.00+m yellow brown sandy clay natural geology, Modern soakaway at western end.



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Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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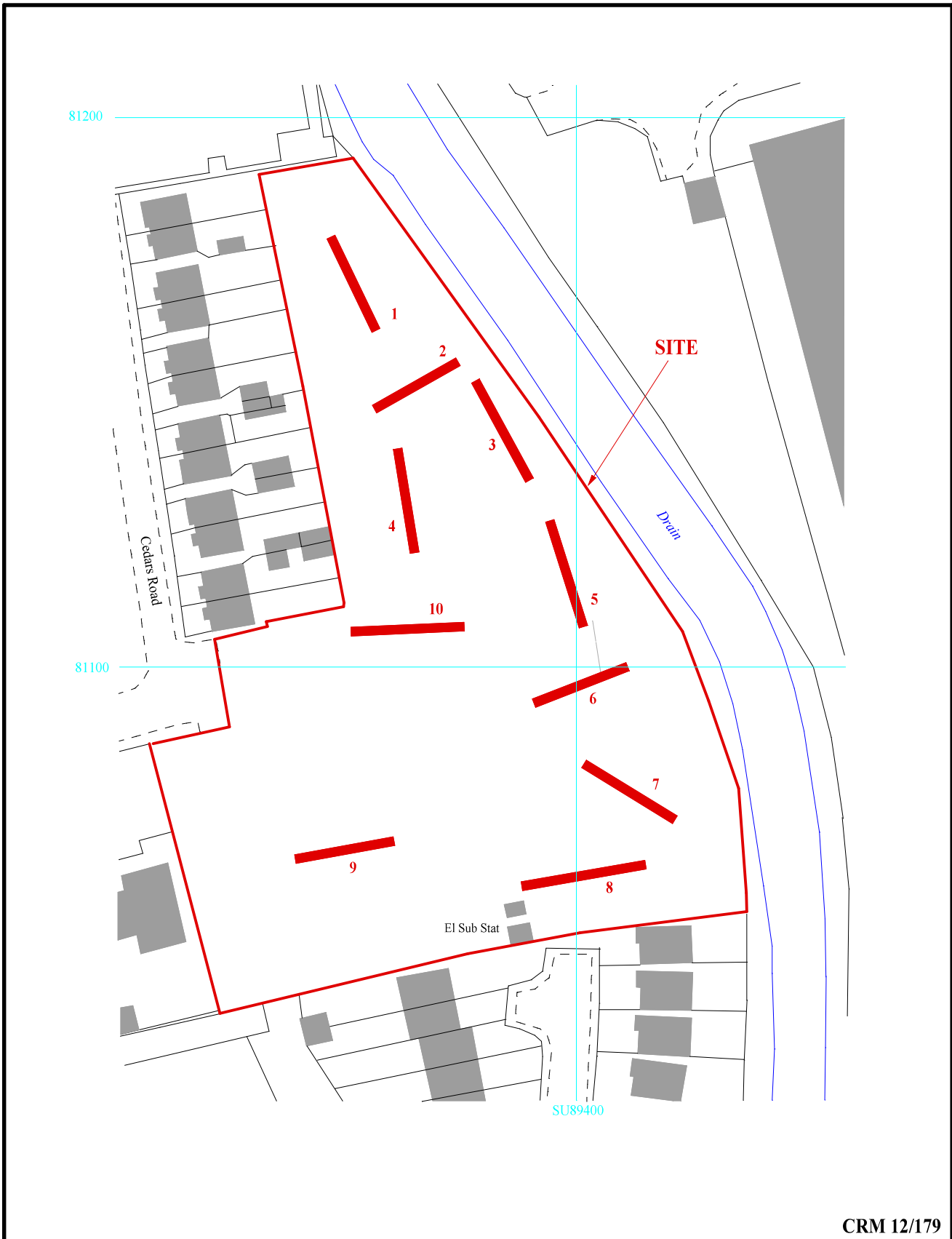


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Cedars Road.

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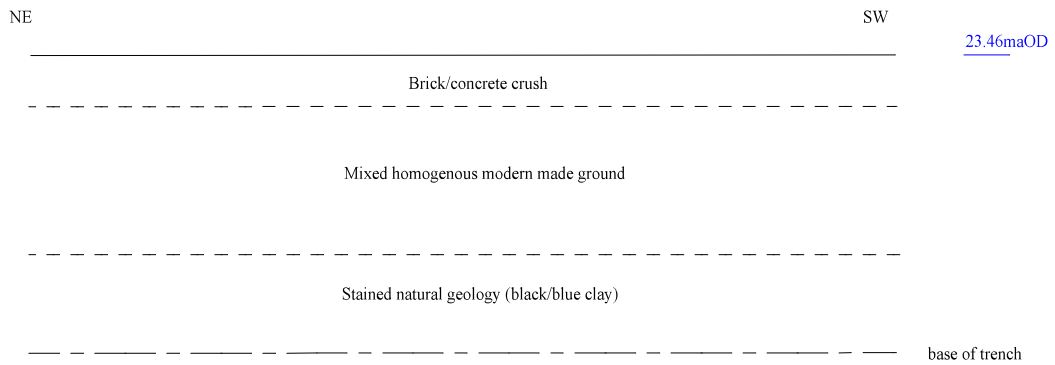
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

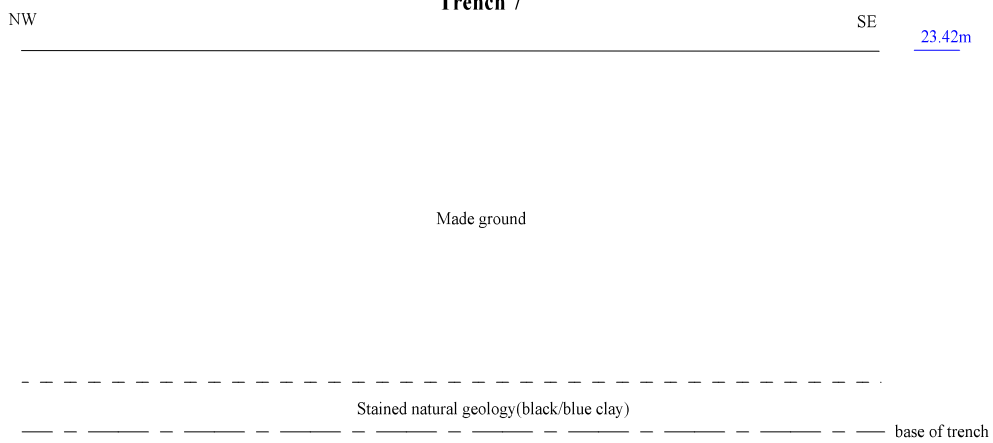


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Trench 2



Trench 7



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 2, looking east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 7, looking north west, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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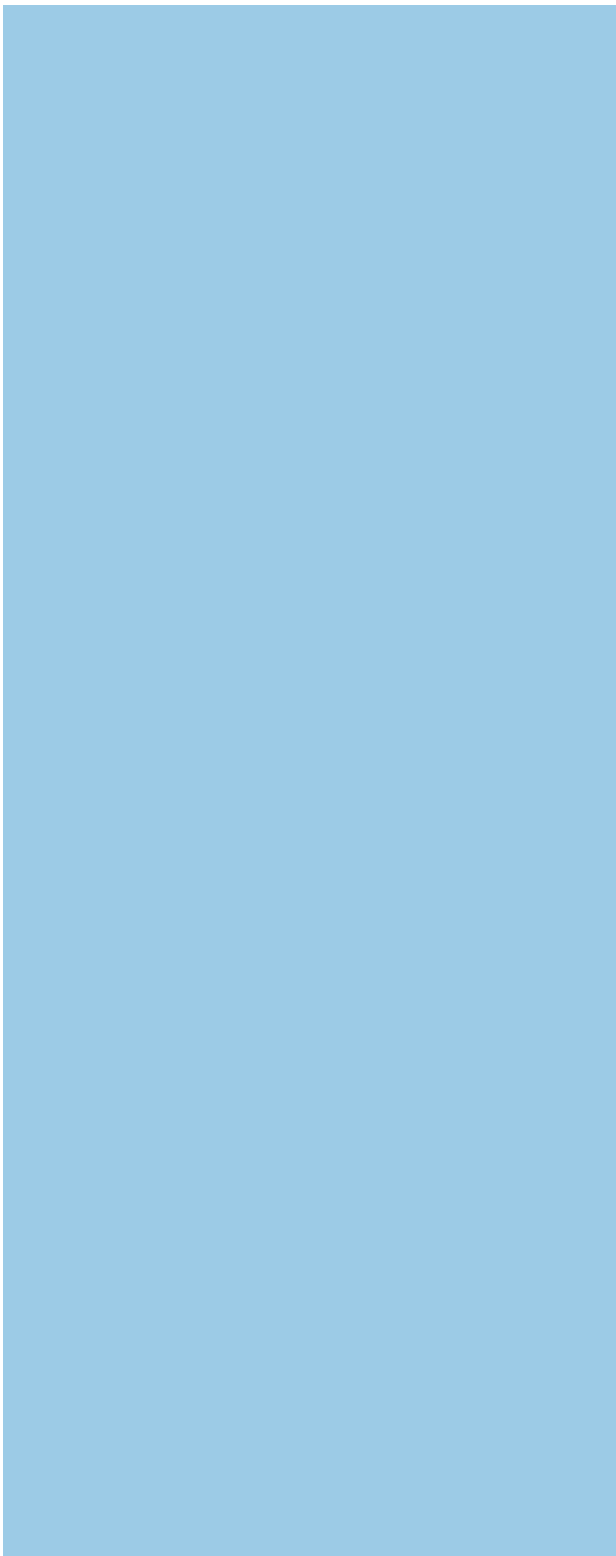
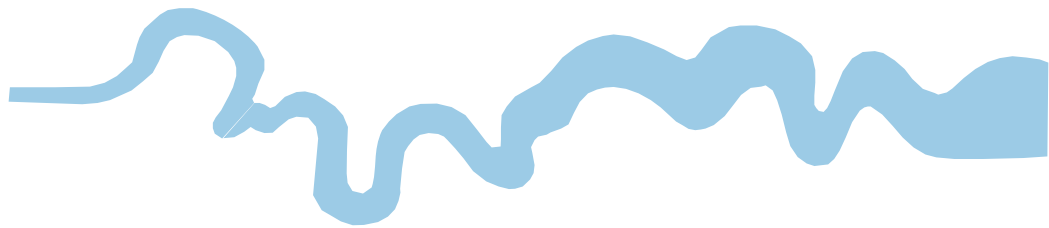
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Plates 1 and 2.

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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