

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Beech Cottage, Altwood Close,
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Tim Dawson and Andy Taylor

Site Code: BCM12/122

(SU 8680 8015)

Land at Beech Cottage, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Poltgot Limited

by Tim Dawson and Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BCM 12/122

March 2013

Summary

Site name: Land at Beech Cottage, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8680 8015

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 4th-5th February 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Tim Dawson

Site code: BCM 12/122

Area of site: c.100 sqm

Summary of results: No deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed.

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 willing to accept material.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 12.03.13
	Steve Preston ✓ 12.03.13

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by Tim Dawson and Andy Taylor

Report 12/122

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Land at Beech Cottage, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU 8680 8015) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Daniel East of TP Architects, 33a St Luke's Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 7DN on behalf Poltgot Limited, The Wickets, Sheepcote Lane, Paley Street, Berkshire, SL6 3JU.

Planning permission (app no 12/01437) has been gained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of a detached house. The consent is subject to a condition (6) relating to archaeology which requires that a watching brief be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona MacDonald, Principal Archaeologist with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson between the 4th and 5th February 2013.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an approved local museum willing to accept material in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on a flat, rectangular, parcel of land to the north of Beech Cottage on the western side of Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is shown as Upper Chalk (BGS 1981) but was, in places overlain by sandy clay patches. The site lies at a height of *c.*40m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

In summary, the site has been identified as having archaeological potential from its position in an area of eastern Berkshire which is relatively rich in finds of prehistoric and Roman date (Ford 1987) as is reflected in the number of archaeological entries noted for this area in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record. A fragment of Roman was found at Altwood Close in 1939 and the existence of a Roman villa has been suggested in the near

vicinity at the site of County Boys School at Shoppenhanger Road to the east. Roman pottery and a Neolithic axe were found in the school grounds but the circumstances of these finds are unclear. A rectangular enclosure (and possible earthwork) was identified a short way to the west through aerial photography. At the northern end of Shoppenhanger Road (c.1km to the north-west) pits have been excavated containing Iron Age pottery and worked flint. To the south on Altwood Bailey, fieldwork has observed a posthole and ditch tentatively dated to the Saxon period (Coles 2005).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks.

Results

The watching brief was only concerned with monitoring of the new house footing trenches as pre-existing service runs were to be re-used (Fig. 3). These footings measured 0.65m wide and were dug to a depth of c. 1.10m deep. The stratigraphy revealed consisted of 0.13m of topsoil overlying 0.27m of sandy clay subsoil overlying chalk with clay patches natural geology. The southern portion of the new footings showed some truncation at the top of the stratigraphy from where a previous garage had stood. No archaeological deposits or finds were observed.

Finds

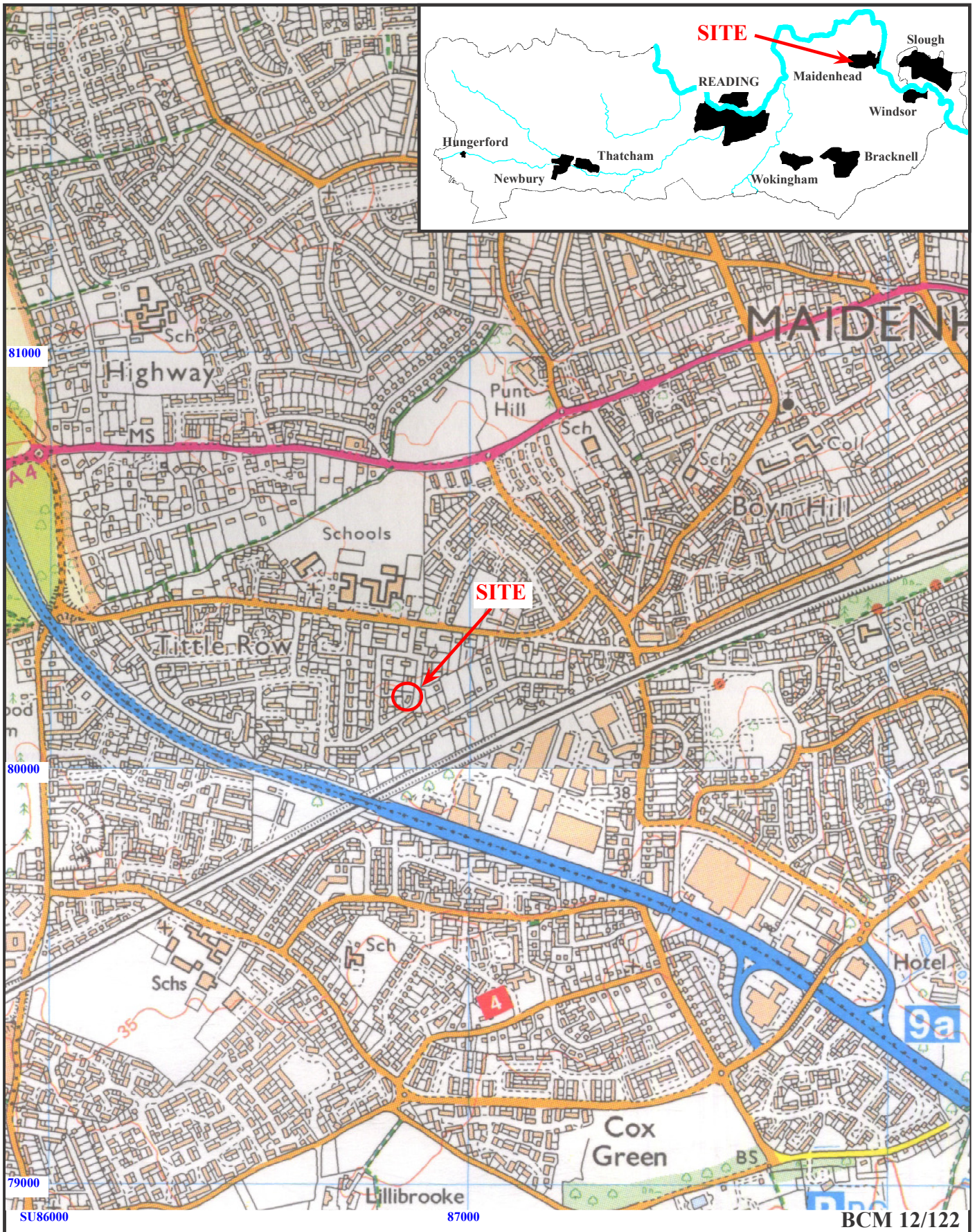
No finds of an archaeological nature were recovered.

Conclusion

Despite the potential for archaeological deposits being encountered during the watching brief, no features nor finds of archaeological interest were observed.

References

- BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 269, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
Coles, S, 2005, Glengariff, Altwood Bailey, Maidenhead, Berkshire, an archaeological watching brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 05/32, Reading
Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap 1, Reading
NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

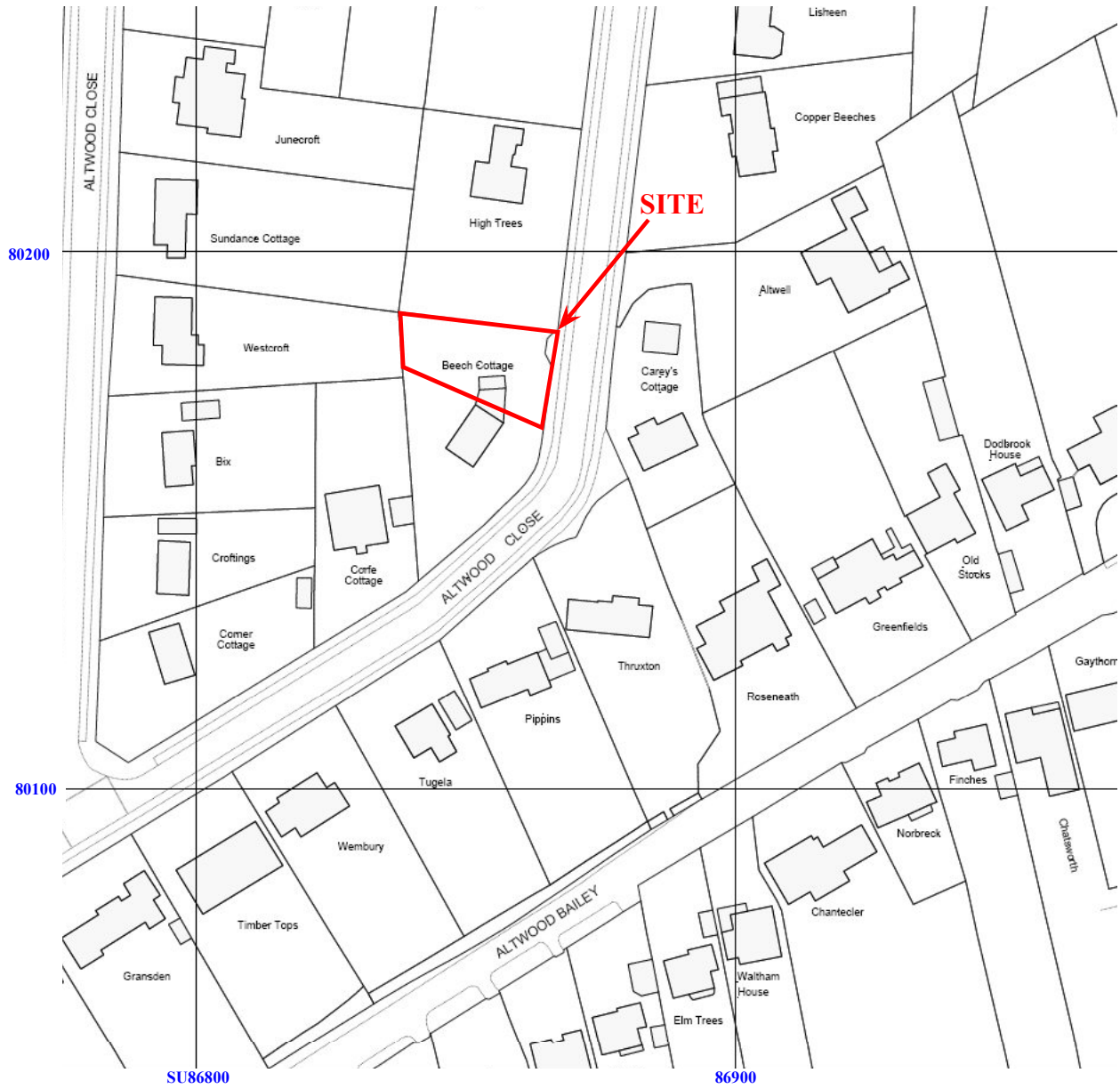


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Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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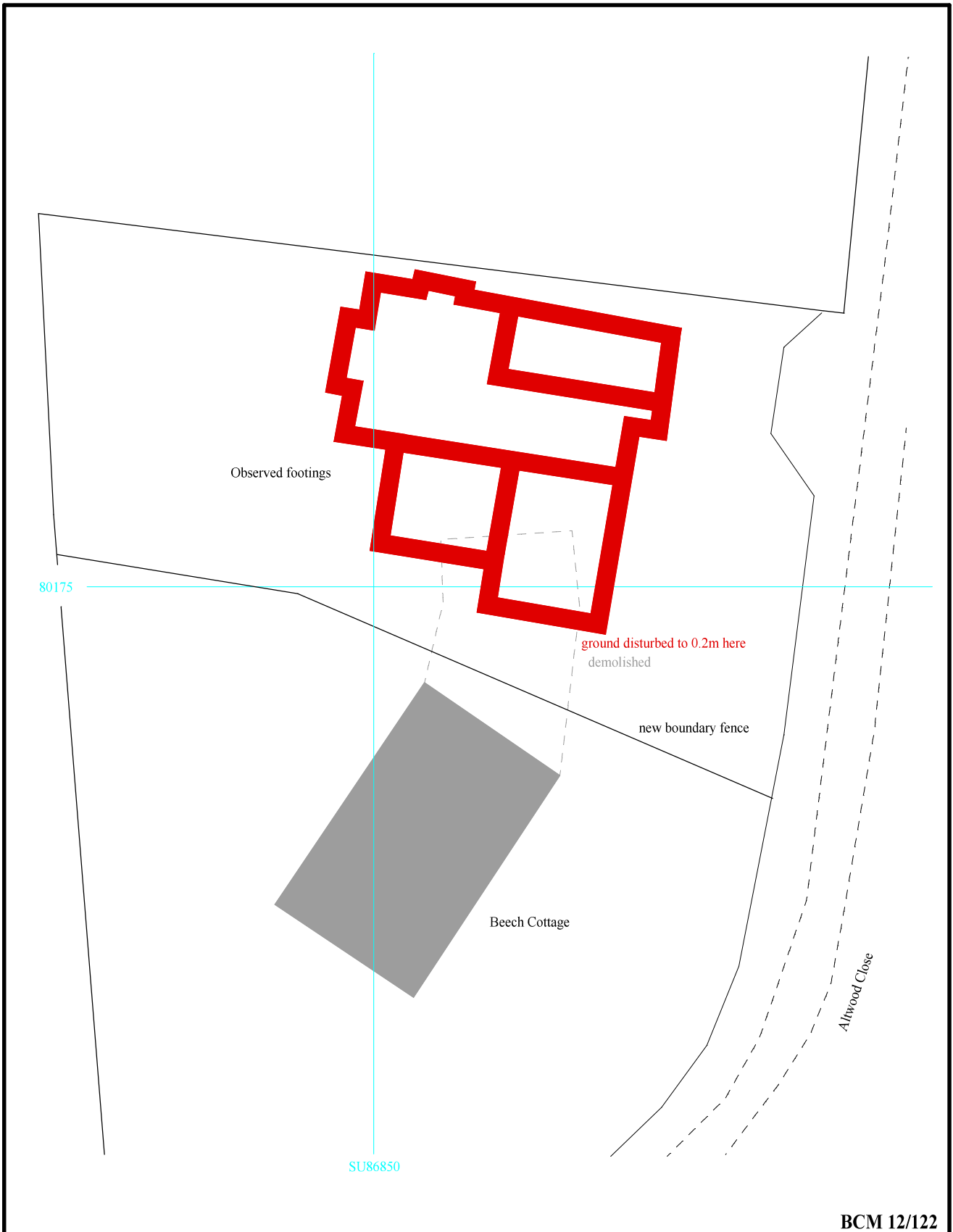
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site at Altwood Close.

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Figure 3. Location of observed area.



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Topsoil

Orange brown sandy clay (Subsoil)

Chalk (natural geology)

base of footing

base of fo

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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. New footing trenches, looking south east, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Representative section, looking east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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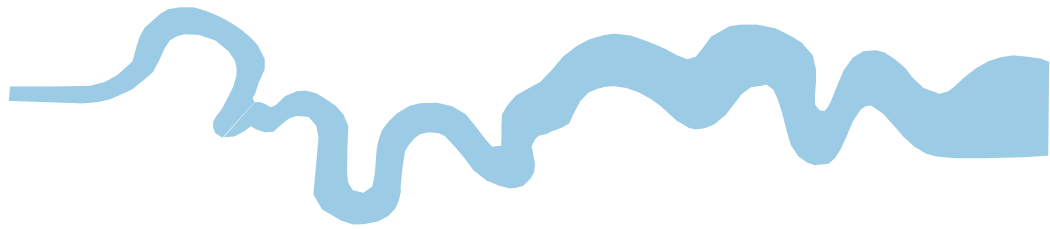
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Plates 1 and 2.

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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
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