

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Proposed Primary School, East Park Farm, Park Lane,
Charvil, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by David Platt

Site Code: EFC13/36

(SU 7770 7535)

Proposed Primary School, East Park Farm, Park Lane, Charvil, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Wokingham Borough Council**

by David Platt
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
Ltd

Site Code EFC13/36

March 2013

Summary

Site name: Proposed Primary School, East Park Farm, Park Lane, Charvil, Berkshire.

Grid reference: SU 7770 7535

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 28th February 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: EFC13/36

Area of site: 0.58ha

Summary of results: No finds or features of archaeological interest were encountered.

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

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 11.03.13 Steve Preston✓ 05.03.13
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Proposed Primary School, East Park Farm, Park Lane, Charvil, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by David Platt

Report 13/36

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at East Park Farm, Park Lane, Charvil (SU 7770 7535) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Arnab Mukherjee on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1BN.

Planning consent (app F/2013/0016) has been sought from Wokingham Borough Council to construct a primary school with associated car parking and landscaping. As a part of the application the results of field evaluation have been requested in order to draw up a strategy to mitigate the effects of development on any archaeological deposits if present. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Ben Jervis Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough Council on matter relating to archaeology.

The fieldwork was undertaken by David Platt on the 28th February 2013 and the site code is EFC13/36. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at an approved local museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located at the southern extent of Charvil, 1km west of Twyford, 2km east of Woodley and 1km to the west of the River Loddon just before its confluence with the Thames (Fig. 1). The underlying geology is mapped as valley gravel (BGS 1946) and this was observed in the trenches as a reddish brown sand with frequent gravel inclusions. The height of the site was 37.5m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Berkshire Archaeology (BA 2013). In summary this potential stems from its location within the archaeologically rich

Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded for the area in general (Ford 1987; Gates 1975; Slade 1964). Archaeological evaluation on the site in 1996, as part of a wider evaluation, demonstrated evidence of Prehistoric activity (Lovell and Mepham 2003). In the area to the north of the school further work was undertaken in advance of a housing development. Evidence of Neolithic settlement, as well as Mesolithic, Bronze Age, Roman and Medieval activity was identified, with the focus of activity relating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

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.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

Three trenches each 30m long and 1.6m wide were to be dug targeting the area most likely to be affected by the proposed development. A contingency of 10m of trench was included should this be required to clarify findings made in the initial trenching. The trenches were to be dug by using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and under constant archaeological supervision, either down to the natural geology or until archaeological features were encountered. All archaeological deposits were to be hand cleaned, excavated and recorded, except where such remains might warrant preservation *in situ* or might better be investigated under the conditions appertaining to full excavation. All spoil heaps were to be monitored for artefacts.

Results

Trenches 1 and 3 were dug as intended but Trench 2 was moved slightly in order to avoid a footpath and a collection of small trees (Fig. 3). In Trench 1 a previous archaeological evaluation trench was encountered between 19m and 23.7m and therefore the trench was extended to 36m to compensate for this. Trenches 2 and 3 were both 30m long, all trenches were 1.6m wide and ranged in depth from 0.55m to 0.62m. 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 N - S and was 36.0m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.10m grey brown sandy silt subsoil overlying natural geology which was a red/brown sandy gravel (Fig. 4). No features of archaeological interest were uncovered and no finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned approximately N - S and was 30.0m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.12m subsoil overlying natural geology. A modern feature was investigated at 9m. No features of archaeological interest were uncovered and no finds were recovered.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned NW - SE and was 30.20m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.14m subsoil overlying natural geology. A single ditch of modern date was encountered at 8m and extended NW-SE along the remainder of the trench, several pieces of Tarmac and modern brick were recovered but not retained. No features of archaeological interest were uncovered and no finds were recovered.

Conclusion

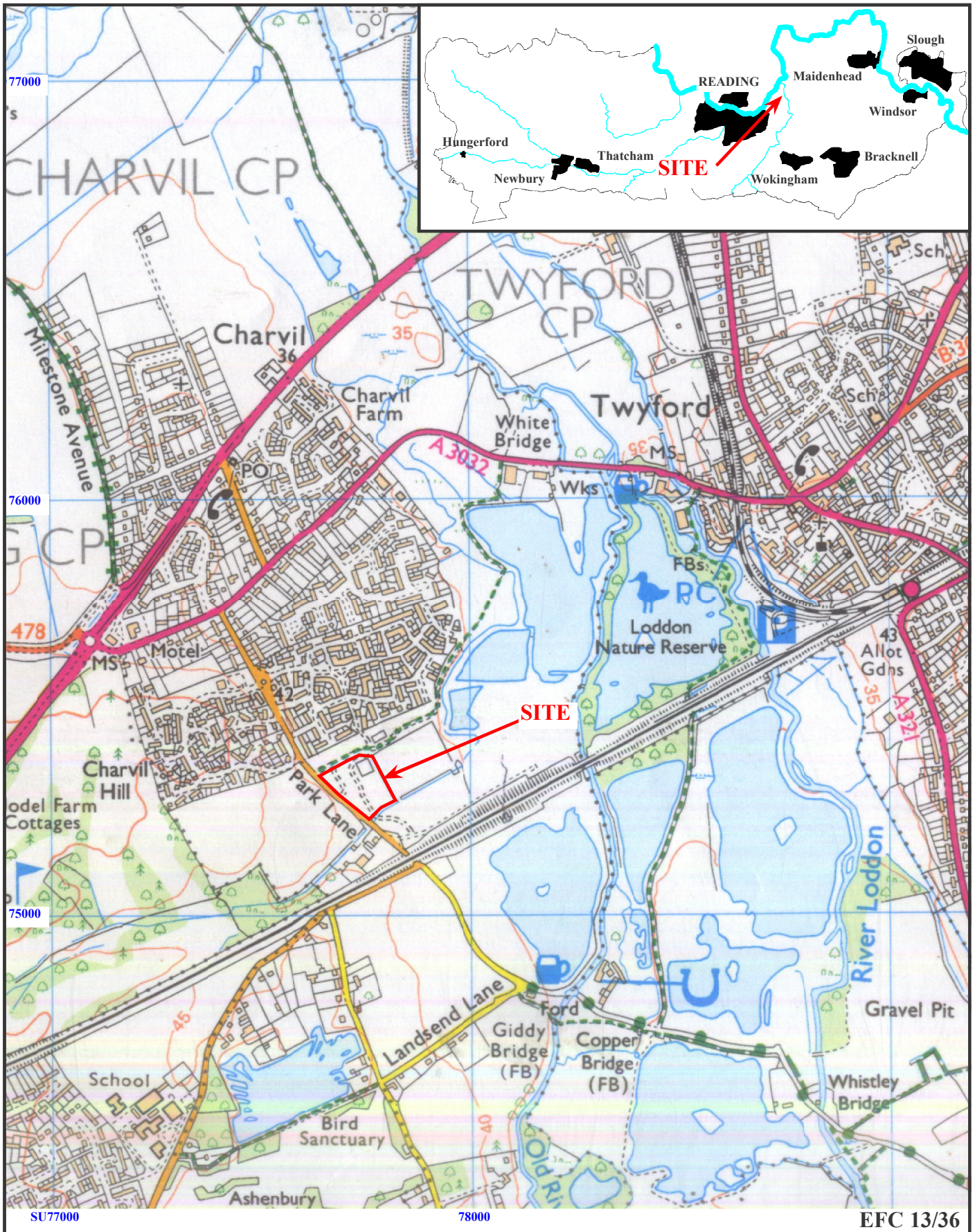
No features of archaeological interest were observed during this archaeological evaluation. The stratigraphy of the soil was, in the main, undisturbed and little modern truncation had occurred. Because of the lack of evidence of archaeological activity on this site it therefore has a low archaeological potential.

References

- BA, 2013, 'Proposed Primary School, East Park Farm, Park Lane, Charvil, Brief For An Archaeological Evaluation', Berkshire Archaeology, Reading
- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap 1, Reading
- Gates, T, 1975, *The Thames Valley; an archaeological survey of the River Gravels*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ 1, Reading
- Lovell, J and Mepham, L, 2003, 'Excavations at East Park Farm, Charvil, Berkshire: Evidence for Prehistoric and Romano-British activity on the Thames floodplain', *Berkshire Archaeol J* 76, (for 1998–2003), 17–36
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London (TSO)
- Slade, C F, 1964, 'A late Neolithic site at Sonning, Berkshire', *Berkshire Archaeol J* 61, 4–19

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

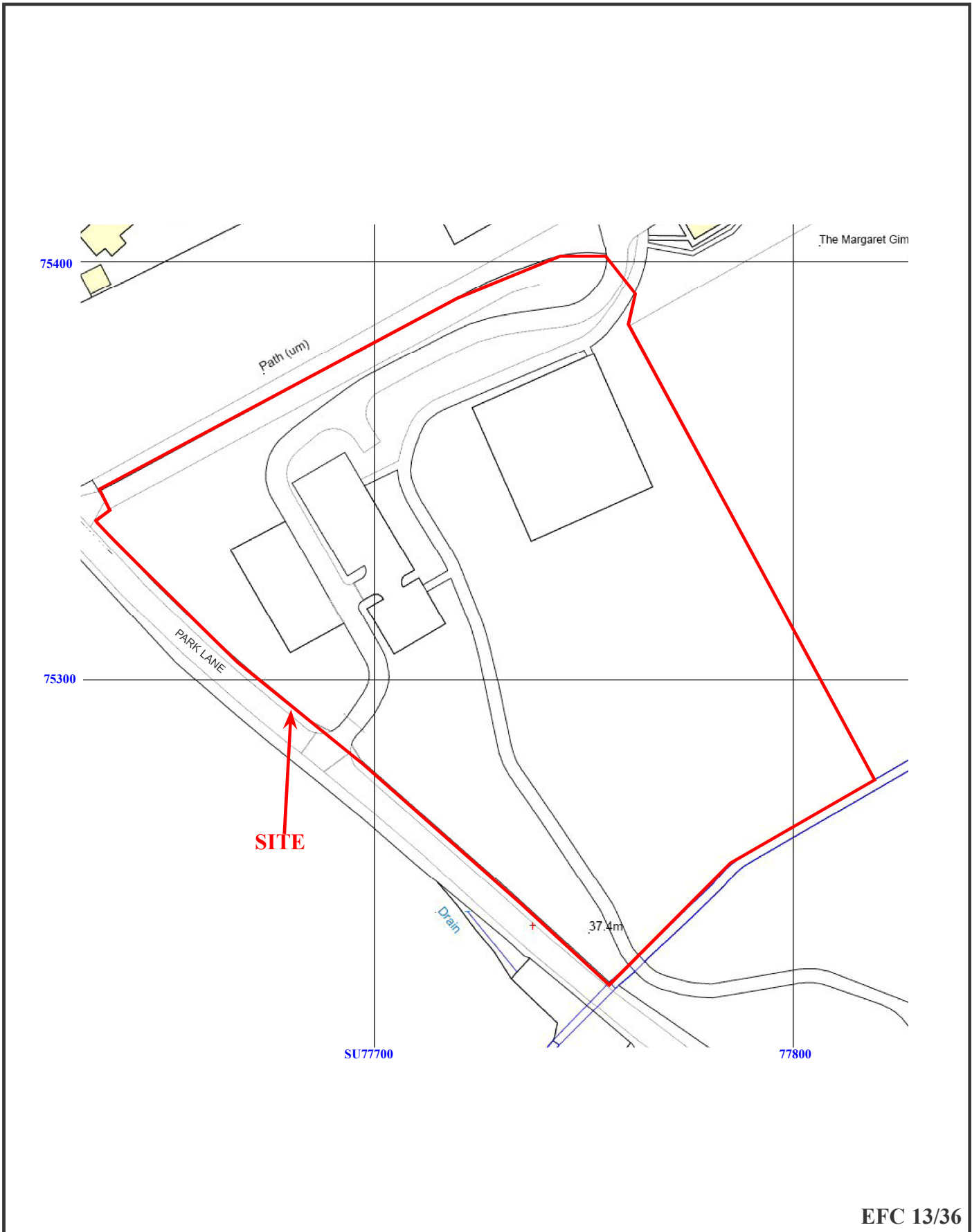
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	36.0	1.6	0.62	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.35m mid brownish grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.35m+ reddish brown sand and gravel natural geology. [Pl. 1]
2	30.0	1.6	0.55	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.42m mid brownish grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.42m+ reddish brown sand and gravel natural geology. [Pl. 2] . Modern disturbance at 9m
3	30.2	1.6	0.55	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.44m mid brownish grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.44m+ reddish brown sand and gravel natural geology. Modern ditch at 8-30m



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Figure 1. Location of site within Charvil and Berkshire.

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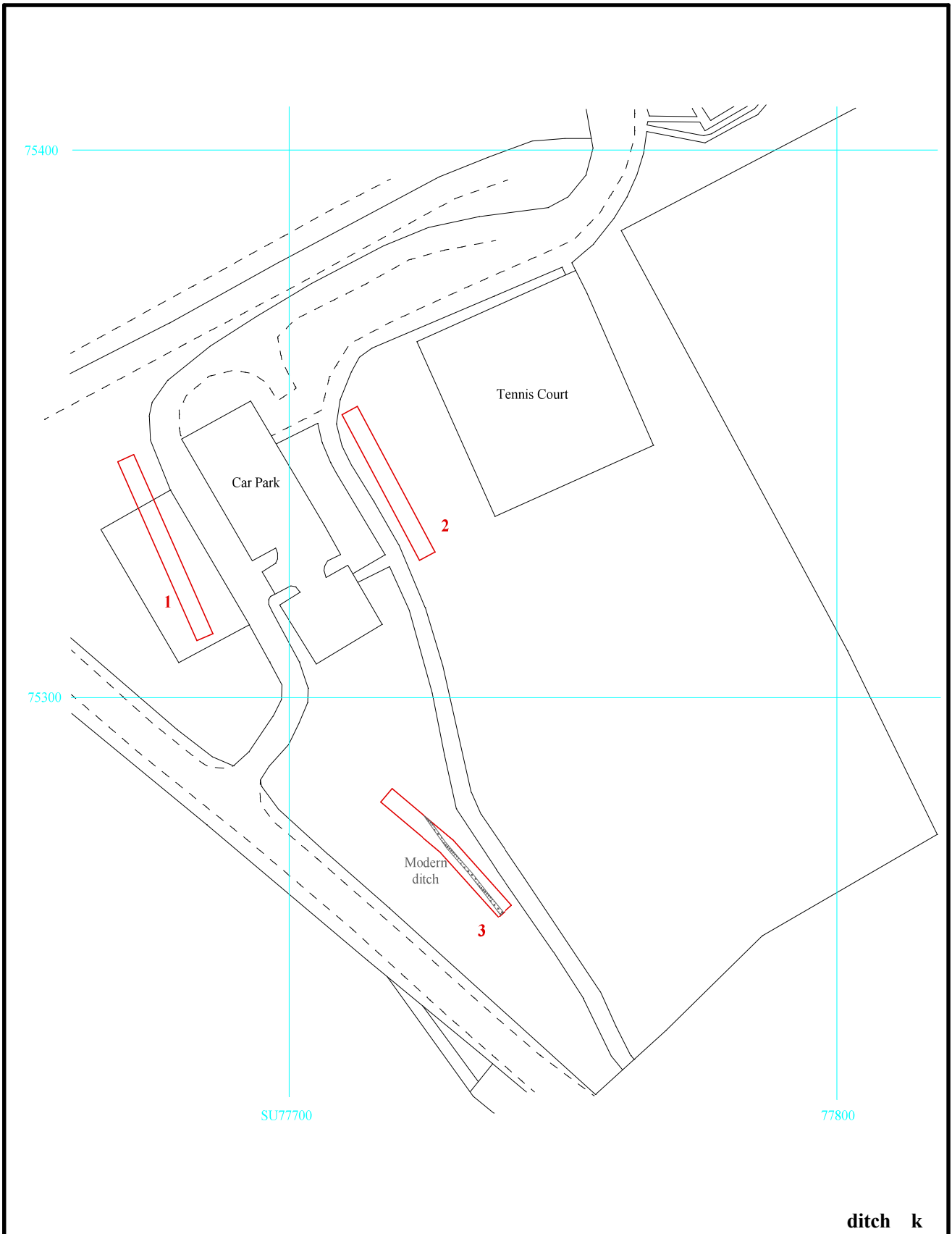


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Park Lane.

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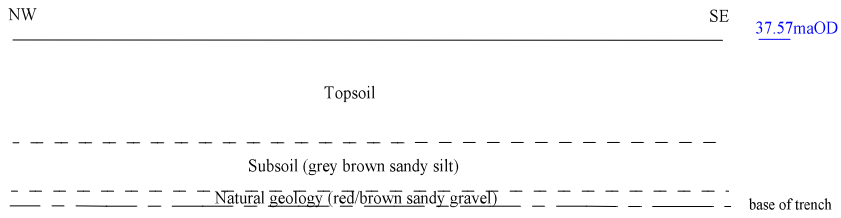


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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Figure 4. Representative section.



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



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

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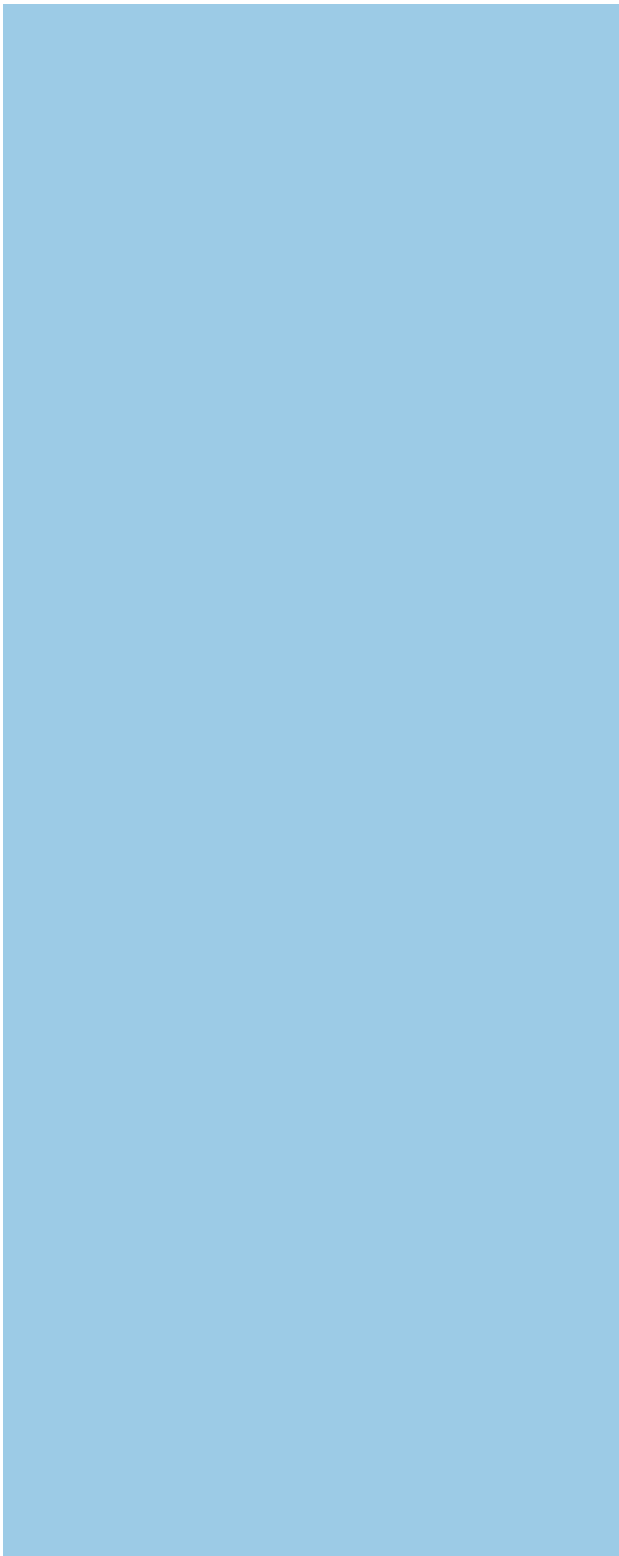
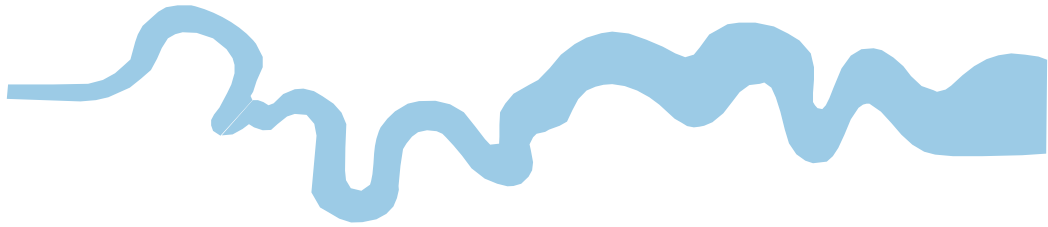
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Plates 1 and 2.

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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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