

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Land at High Trees, Altwood Close,  
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: HTM13/169**

**(SU 8686 8020)**

# **Land at High Trees, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
For Bristow Construction Limited**

by James McNicoll-Norbury  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HTM 13/169

**November 2013**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land at High Trees, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 8686 8020

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site code:** HTM 13/169

**Summary of results:** No archaeological deposits or artefacts of archaeological interest 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 in due course.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 20.12.13
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# Land at High Trees, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by James McNicoll-Norbury

Report 13/169

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at land between Beech Cottage and High Trees, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU8686 8020) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sharon Noctor of Bristow Construction Limited, Unit 3, Denmark Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 7BN.

Planning permission (app no 12/02690) has been gained on appeal (APP/T0355/A/12/2188619) from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of a detached house. The consent includes a condition (3) 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 Mr Paul Falcini, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury between 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 and the site code is HTM 13/169.

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 on Altwood Close which lies off Altwood Road between the properties of High Trees, to the north, and Beech Cottage to the south and consists of a rectangular plot of land (Fig. 2). The site was previously used as a garden and is generally flat. The site lies at a height of c. 40m above ordnance datum and the natural geology consists of Upper Chalk with some clayey patches (BGS 1981).

## Archaeological background

In summary, this 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. Various

Roman finds including pottery and an oven have been found during construction work at Altwood Close in 1939 and three undated human burials were found during construction of a tennis court c. 50m to the west of the site in 1936 (Underhill 1937, 37). 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 (some 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 a ditch tentatively dated to the Saxon period (Coles 2005). However, a watching brief carried out on a new house to the south just north of Beech Cottage did not reveal any archaeological deposits (Dawson and Taylor 2013).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve the archaeological monitoring of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular any topsoil/overburden stripping prior to ground reduction, and the digging of foundation trenches and service runs as necessary.

## **Results**

An area 14m by 15m was stripped using a ditching bucket which saw the removal of between 0.2-0.3m topsoil below which lay above an orange/brown silty clay subsoil deposit (Pl. 1). The foundation trenches were then dug into this deposit down to and through natural chalk geology (Fig. 3). The footings were dug to a total depth of 0.90m in depth with widths up to 0.7m. The stratigraphy consisted of up to 0.3m topsoil and 0.35m orange brown silty clay subsoil overlaying white chalk (Fig. 4). No archaeological deposits were identified during the opening of these footings.

## **Finds**

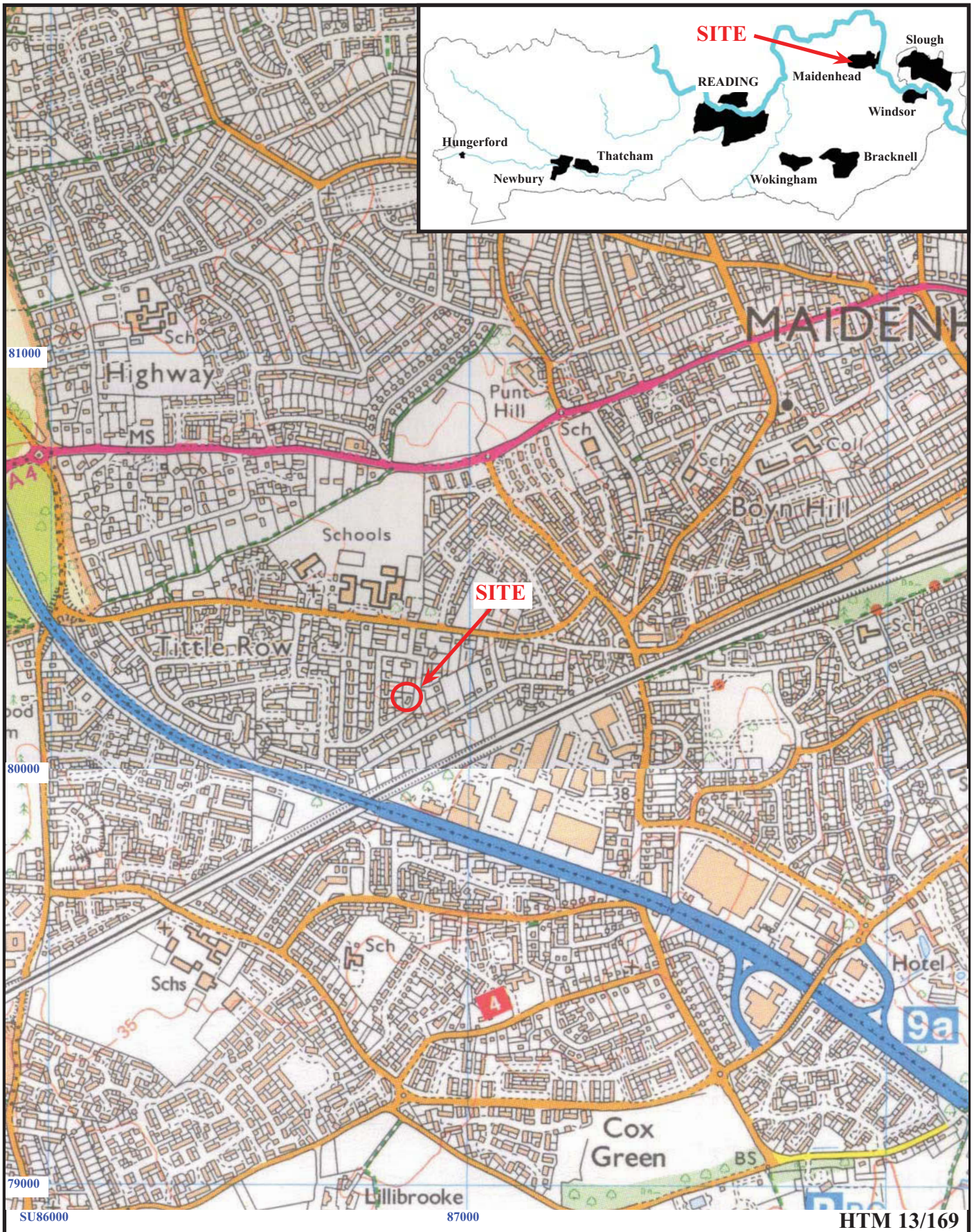
No finds of an archaeological interest were recovered

## **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
- Dawson, T and Taylor, A, 2013, Land at Beech Cottage, Altwood Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire, An archaeological watching brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report 12/122, 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
- Underhill, F M 1937, Notes on recent discoveries in Berkshire, *Berkshire Archaeol J*, 41,33- 41



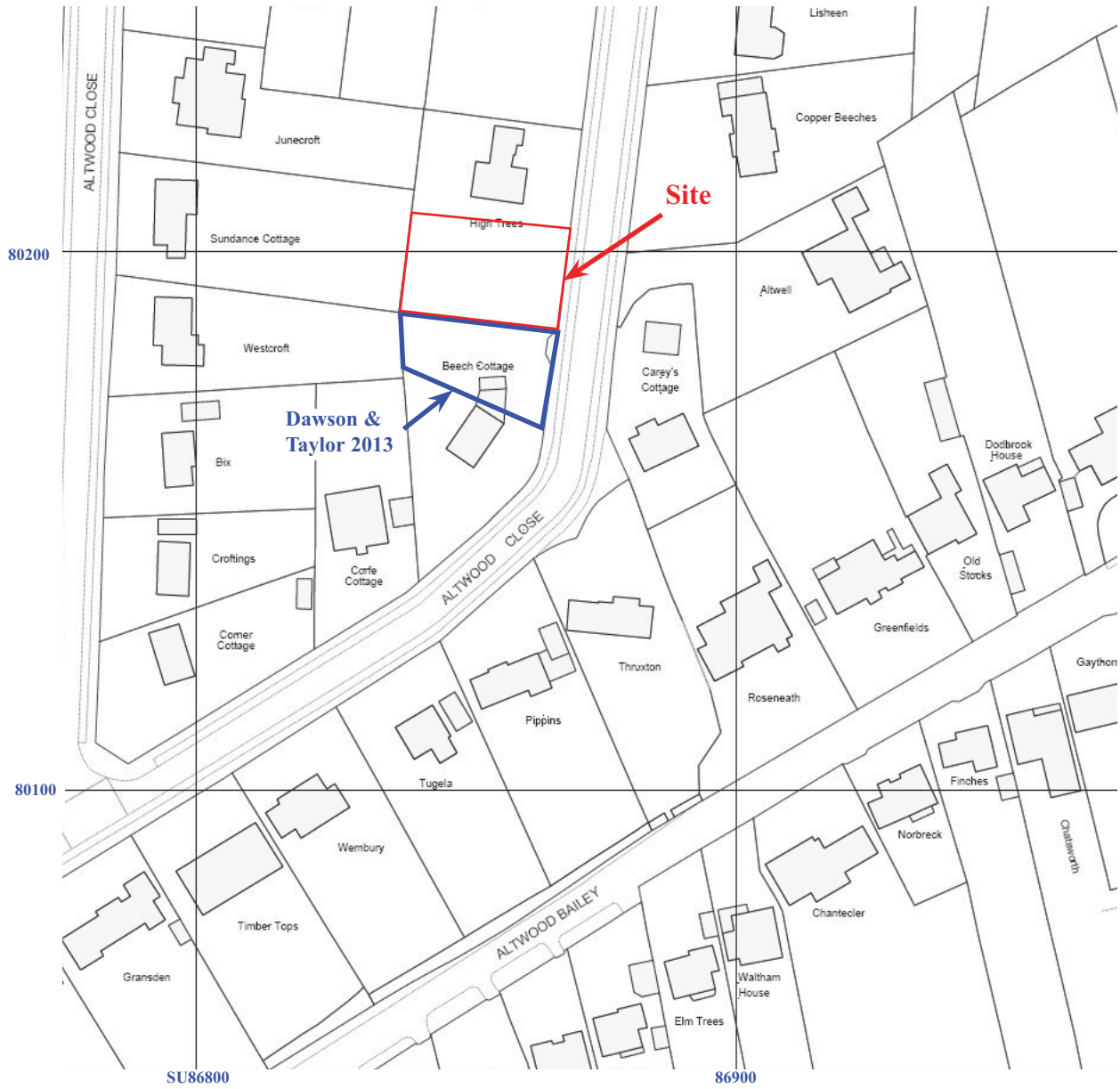
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**Archaeological watching brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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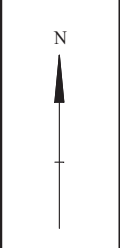
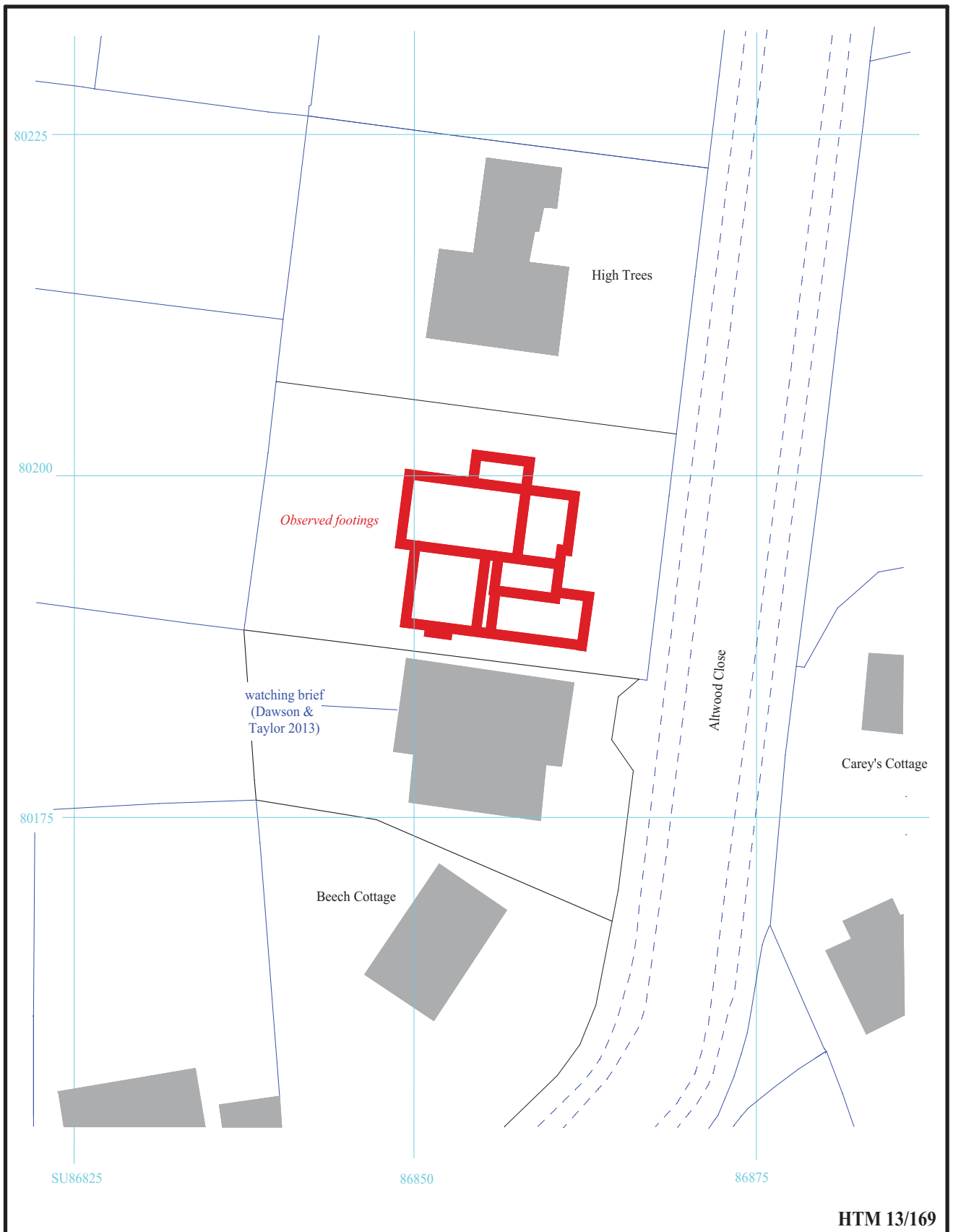
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site at Altwood Close.

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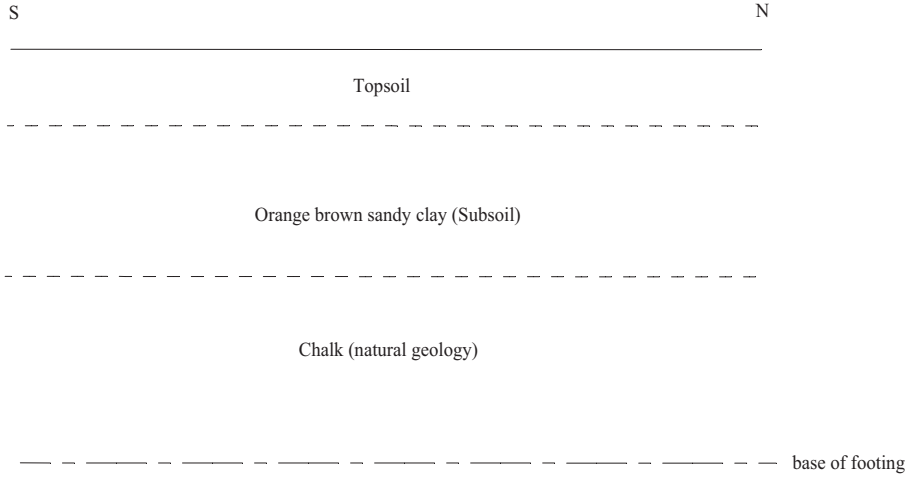




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Figure 3. Location of observed area.





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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Overburden stripping in progress, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. View of footing trenches, looking south, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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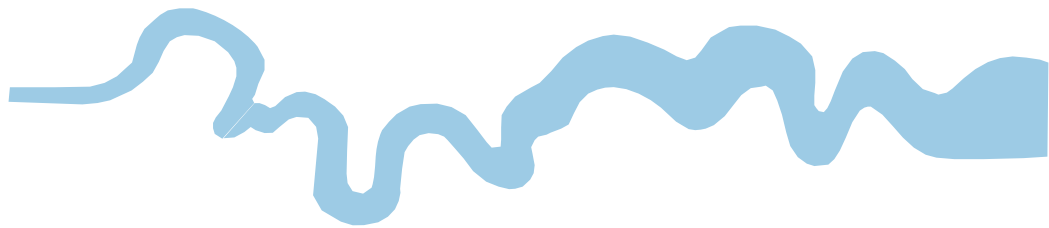
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Plates 1 and 2.

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## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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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