

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Slough Trading Estate,
Slough, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

Site Code: STR14/41

SU 9555 8136

SU 9605 8145

SU 9650 8080

Slough Trading Estate, Slough, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for CgMs Consulting**

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code STR 14/41

April 2014

Summary

Site name: Slough Trading Estate, Slough, Berkshire

Grid reference: Three locations: SU 9555 8136; SU 9605 8145; SU 9650 8080.

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 5th March-9th April 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andy Taylor

Site code: STR 14/41

Area of site: c. 3.3ha total

Summary of results: Much of the site had been extremely truncated by foundations and concrete slabs. However, one area of archaeological deposits was located which consisted of features of early medieval date. A single sherd of Roman date was also recorded

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

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 29.04.14 Steve Preston ✓ 29.04.14

Slough Trading Estate, Slough, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

Report 14/41

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at three sites within the Slough Trading Estate, Slough Berkshire (overall centre at SU 960 814) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sally Dicks of CgMs Consulting Limited, 140 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5DN on behalf of SEGRO plc, 234 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 4EE.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor and Dan Bray between 5th March and 9th April 2014 and the site code is STR 14/41. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at with an appropriate museum willing to accept archives in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The study area is located on the Slough Trading Estate which lies on the north-western side of central Slough (Fig. 1). The areas covered in this report all lie north of the railway line, but spread across a distance of around 0.8km from west to east. The underlying geology is mapped as Langley Silt, sandy clay and silt brickearth (BGS 2005), which along with gravels were observed across the areas. The sites generally lie at a height of between 31m and 32m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

In general the site lies within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley although little archaeological work had been carried out in the environs of Slough until the 1990s. Recent excavations in advance of development and quarrying have revealed evidence from the Neolithic through to medieval times. A number of excavations in Cippenham, to the south-west, revealed Neolithic features, a Bronze Age cremation cemetery, Bronze Age ring ditches and other associated deposits. Iron Age and Roman enclosures and medieval activity were also identified (Entwistle *et al.* 2003, Taylor 2012a, Taylor 2012b). Roman deposits have been identified to the south-east

(Howell and Durden 2003) with multi-period remains further to the west (Foreman *et al.* 2002). Recent fieldwork to the west at Taplow has revealed a probable Iron Age occupation site (Bray 2012). Previous work in the trading estate area (Bray and McNicoll-Norbury 2013) and at the site of a new cultural centre and library (Platt and Dawson 2013) had revealed only extensive modern truncation.

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.

Specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if any deposits of archaeological interest have survived;
- to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and the degree of archaeological survival;
- to provide information on past land use and development; and
- to provide sufficient information for an appropriate mitigation strategy if required.

It was proposed to dig 17 trenches 25m in length and 1.80m wide across four separate areas. However, of the seven trenches due to be dug on the Liverpool Road site only two were opened to confirm the extensive truncation. The remainder were abandoned due to the high levels of truncation. The trenches were excavated using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, after the breaking of concrete. This was done under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Results

Nine trenches were dug as near as possible to their intended locations (Figs 2 and 3) on the Perth Avenue and Whiby Road sites, although the presence of piles of crushed concrete and foundations resulted in some slight repositioning, this was in consultation with Mr. Roland Smith, of Berkshire Archaeology the monitor. The trenches measured 1.80m wide and between 10.20m and 27m in length and between 0.52m and 1.30m deep.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A complete list of features excavated forms Appendix 2.

Liverpool Road site

Trench 1 (Pl. 5)

This trench was aligned approximately NW-SE and measured 16.60m in length and 1.17m deep. It was highly truncated by concrete foundations and a backfilled cellar with only two small areas of natural geology observed. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of Tarmac overlying 0.42m of reinforced concrete. This overlay 0.28m of redeposited brickearth overlying 0.20m of light grey brown clayey brickearth containing brick fragments, china and clinker. This overlay brickearth natural geology.

Trench 9 (Fig. 3; Pl. 10)

This trench was aligned North-South and measured 10.40m in length and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.42m of reinforced concrete overlying 0.18m of a brickearth, gravel and concrete mix overlying brickearth natural geology. The majority of this trench was truncated by a concrete slab and other foundations.

Whitby Road site

Trench 2

This trench was aligned approximately North-South and measured 24.90m in length and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.43m of crushed concrete rubble made ground overlying 0.07m of gravelly clay with brick fragments overlying gravelly clay natural geology. Much of this trench was truncated from foundations previously removed.

Trench 3 (Pl. 6)

This trench was aligned approximately East-West and measured 25.20m in length and 0.66m deep. It consisted of 0.50m of crushed concrete rubble made ground overlying 0.12m of dirty brickearth with brick fragments overlying brickearth natural geology. Again large areas of this trench showed evidence of truncation.

Trench 4 (Figs. 3 and 4; Pls 1-4)

This trench was aligned NNE-SSW and measured 25.10m in length and 1.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.70m of crushed concrete rubble made ground overlying 0.15m of dark grey black silty clay with brick fragments. This overlay 0.41m of a light grey silty clay, which may be a buried subsoil layer overlying brickearth natural geology. Several features were observed along the length of this trench. From the southern end up to 5m into the trench was a large feature excavation of part of which showed two pits. Pit 1 which cut pit 2, measured 0.30m deep and had two fills: upper fill 52 was a mid grey brown silty clay and contained two

sherds of pottery, one Roman the other early medieval while lower fill 53 was a light brown grey silty sandy clay which did not produce any finds. Pit 2 measured 0.20m deep and its light grey brown sandy silty clay fill (54) did not produce any finds. These features may be part of a larger area of inter-cutting pits.

A shallow posthole (3) was located at 6.30m from the southern end of the trench, measuring 0.50m in diameter and 0.06m deep. Its light grey brown sandy silty clay fill (55) produced a sherd of medieval pottery. A gully (4) located at 9m was partially truncated by a grubbed out foundation. A slot was dug into it measuring 0.54m wide and 0.15m deep. Its mid grey brown silty clay fill (56) produced a sherd of medieval pottery. At 17.50m a feature that may be either a pit or possible hearth was identified. A slot (5) was excavated into it measuring 1.22m in length, 0.40m wide and 0.21m deep. It showed three fills (57-59) with 57, its tertiary fill of mid brown red sandy silt, producing a sherd of medieval pottery and a piece of struck flint. Fill 58 was a light creamy brown sandy silt with no finds and 59 was a mid red brown black and appeared to be a scorched fill forming a lining around the edge of the feature; it contained 90 pieces of fired clay.

Perth Avenue site

Trench 5 (Pl. 7)

This trench was aligned approximately East-West and measured 26.00m in length and 0.53m deep. It consisted of 0.24m of either crushed rubble made ground (at the west end) or concrete (at the east end) overlying 0.26m of redeposited brickearth and gravel with brick and concrete, this overlay brickearth natural geology. Services and foundations were evident along the length of this trench.

Trench 6

This trench was aligned approximately North-South and measured 21.00m in length and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of reinforced concrete overlying 0.43m of a mix of brickearth, brick rubble and gravel overlying brickearth natural geology. Services and foundations were evident at either end of the trench.

Trench 7 (Pl 8)

This trench was aligned NE-SW and measured 27.00m in length and 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.17m of concrete overlying 0.13m of reinforced concrete. This overlay 0.30m of brick rubble and gravel made ground overlying brickearth natural geology. Much of the length of this trench was truncated by foundations.

Trench 8 (Pl. 9)

This trench was aligned approximately NW–SE and measured 25.40m in length and 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of reinforced concrete overlying 0.23m of bitumen and rubble made ground. This overlay 0.26m of light yellow grey silty clay with brick fragments overlying brickearth natural geology. The majority of this trench was truncated by a possible in-filled cellar along with other truncation containing asbestos.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 7 sherds with a total weight of 105g (Appendix 3). It was all of early medieval date, other than a single sherd of residual Roman greyware. The following fabric types were noted.

Roman: Roman Greyware, 1st–4th Century. 1 sherd, 3g.

MSW: Medieval Sandy ware, Late 11th-14th Century? Dense sub-rounded white, grey and clear quartz up to 0.5mm. Early medieval pottery types similar to this are found along a considerable length of the middle Thames Valley and its hinterland, and the problem of differentiating between the numerous different wares has been noted in the past (Mellor 1994, 84). 4 sherds, 23g.

ASH: Ashampstead ware, 12th–14th century (Mephram and Heaton 1995). Sandy wares produced at a manufactory c. 15km to the west of Reading, the main products being jars and highly decorated glazed jugs, the latter often having painted geometric slip designs. 2 sherds, 79g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 3. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region for the late 11th–12th century. The absence of fairly common 13th–14th century wares such as Surrey Whiteware (Pearce and Vince 1988) might indicate that pottery had ceased arriving on the site before the middle of the 13th century but this cannot necessarily be inferred from such a small assemblage.

The entire assemblage comprised bodysherds other than the piece of Ashampstead Ware from context 55, a rim and handle from a glazed jug. It is typical of the tradition.

Struck Flint by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recovered from pit 5 (57) in Trench 4 (Appendix 4). It was a spall (a piece less than 20mm across). It is not known if it is of prehistoric date or is an accidental by-product of damage to natural gravel pieces, such as during ditch digging, in a later period.

Fired Clay by Andy Taylor

A total of 90 pieces of fired clay were recovered from fill 59 of pit/hearth 5 in Trench 4 and weighed a total of 128g (Appendix 5). These may form part of the lining of a hearth or may be a by-product of the scorching of the natural that has occurred from the heating process.

Conclusion

The evaluation has shown that the majority of the areas investigated have been highly truncated by the various phases of development that have taken place in modern times with numerous foundations, backfilled cellars and other modern intrusions. On the easternmost parcel of land a small number of archaeological deposits of early medieval date were identified comprising pits, posthole, gully and possible hearth. These were sealed by a buried subsoil, accounting for their survival, which was only present in Trench 4. Other than this one area the sites are considered to have no archaeological potential.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	16.60	1.80	1.17	0.00-0.10m Tarmac; 0.10-0.52m reinforced concrete; 0.52-0.80m redeposited brickearth; 0.80-1.00m light grey brown clayey brickearth; 1m+ brickearth natural geology. [PI. 5]
2	24.90	1.80	0.52	0.00-0.43m crushed concrete rubble made ground; 0.43-0.50m gravelly clay with brick fragments; 0.50m+ gravelly clay natural geology.
3	25.20	1.80	0.66	0.00-0.50m crushed concrete made ground made ground; 0.50-0.62m brickearth with brick fragments; 0.62m+ brickearth natural geology. PI. 6]
4	25.10	1.80	1.30	0.00-0.70m crushed concrete rubble made ground; 0.70-0.85m dark grey black silty clay; 0.85-1.26m light grey silty clay; 1.26m+ brickearth natural geology. Pits 1, 2 and 5; Posthole 3; Gully 4. [PIs 1-4]
5	26.00	1.80	0.53	0.00-0.24m crushed rubble or concrete; 0.24-0.50m redeposited brickearth and gravel with brick and concrete; 0.5m+ brickearth natural geology. PI. 7]
6	21.00	1.80	0.67	0.00-0.20m reinforced concrete; 0.20-0.63m brickearth, gravel and rubble mix; 0.63m+ brickearth natural geology.
7	27.00	1.80	0.65	0.00-0.17m concrete; 0.17-0.30m reinforced concrete; 0.30-0.60m rubble and gravel made ground; 0.60m+ brickearth natural geology. PI. 8]
8	25.40	1.80	0.75	0.00-0.20m reinforced concrete; 0.20-0.43m bitumen and rubble; 0.43-0.69m light yellow grey silty clay with brick fragments; 0.69m+ brickearth natural geology. PI. 9]
9	10.40	1.80	0.62	0.00-0.42m reinforced concrete; 0.42-0.60m brickearth, gravel, brick rubble mix; 0.60m+ brickearth natural geology. PI. 10]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
4	1	52, 53	Pit	Medieval	Pottery
4	2	54	Pit		None
4	3	55	Posthole	Medieval	Pottery
4	4	56	Gully	Medieval	Pottery
4	5	57, 58, 59	Pit/Hearth	Medieval	Pottery

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of Pottery per context by sherd number and weight (in g).

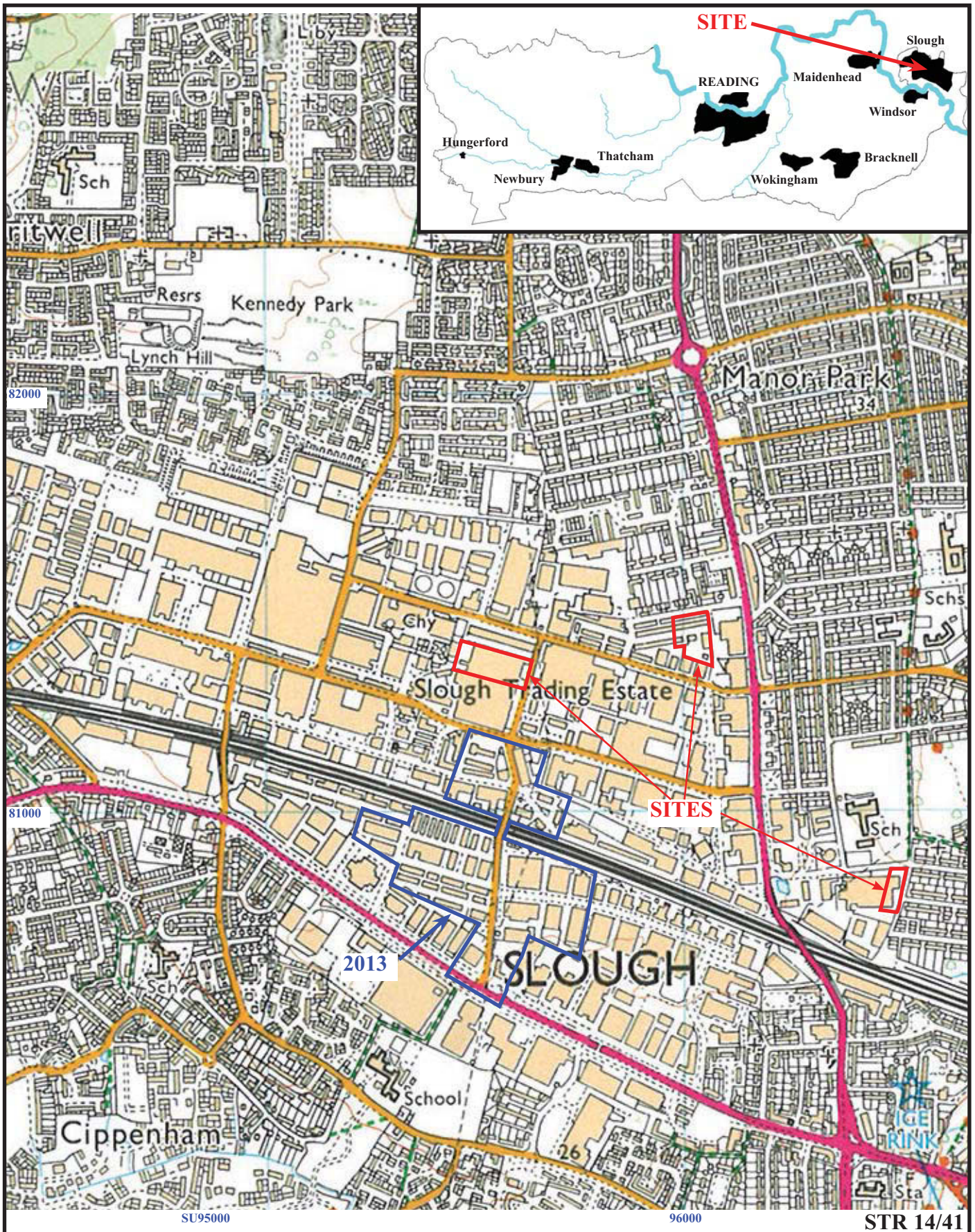
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Roman</i>		<i>MSW</i>		<i>ASH</i>	
			<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>
4	1	52	1	3	1	1		
4	3	55			1	1	1	3
4	4	56			1	14	1	76
4	5	57			1	7		
		Total	1	3	4	23	2	79

APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of Struck Flint

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>
5	57	1	1

APPENDIX 5: Catalogue of Fired Clay

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Sample no</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Weight</i>
5	59	Pit/Hearth	Tr 4	1	90	128

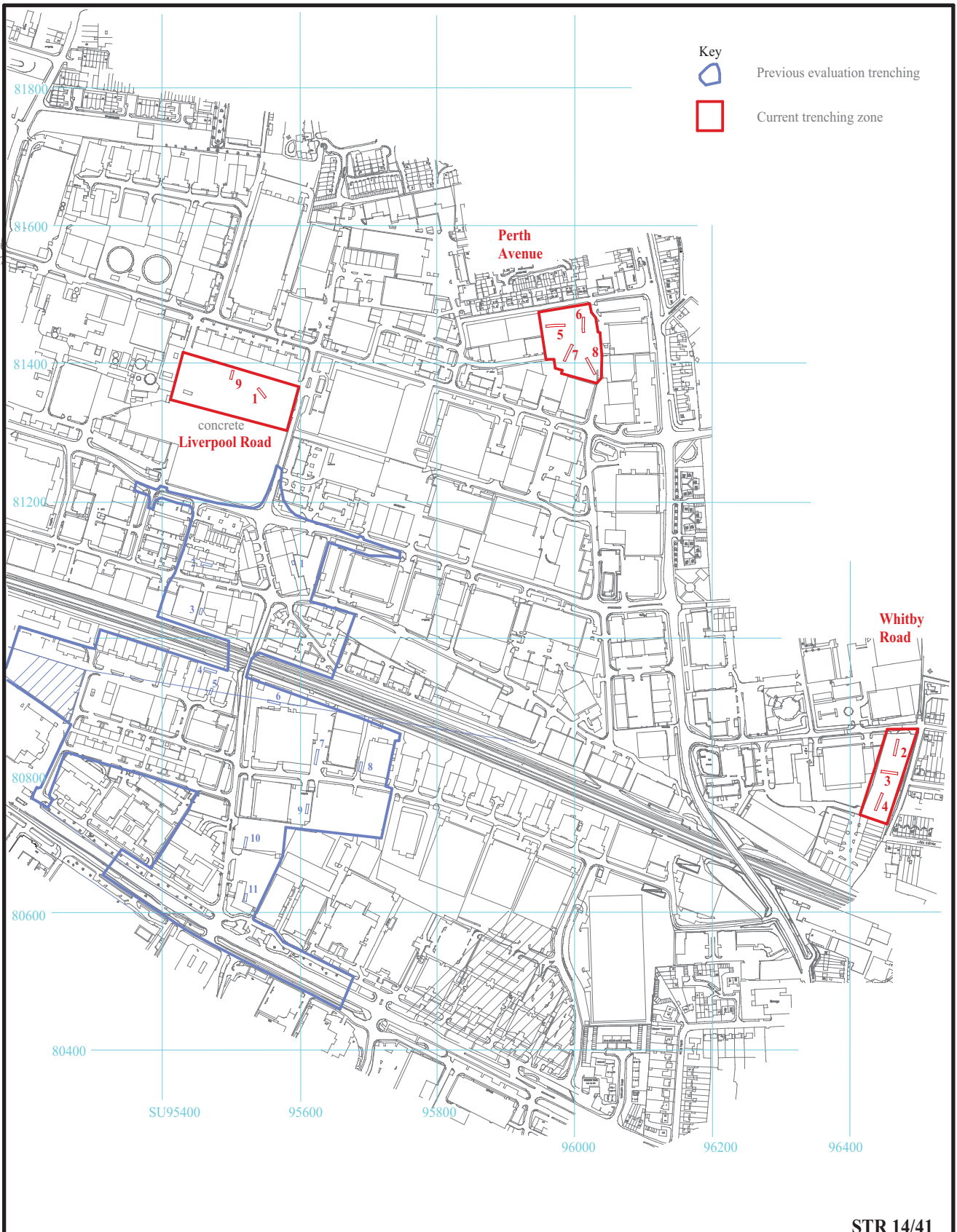


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Figure 1. Location of site within Slough and Berkshire.

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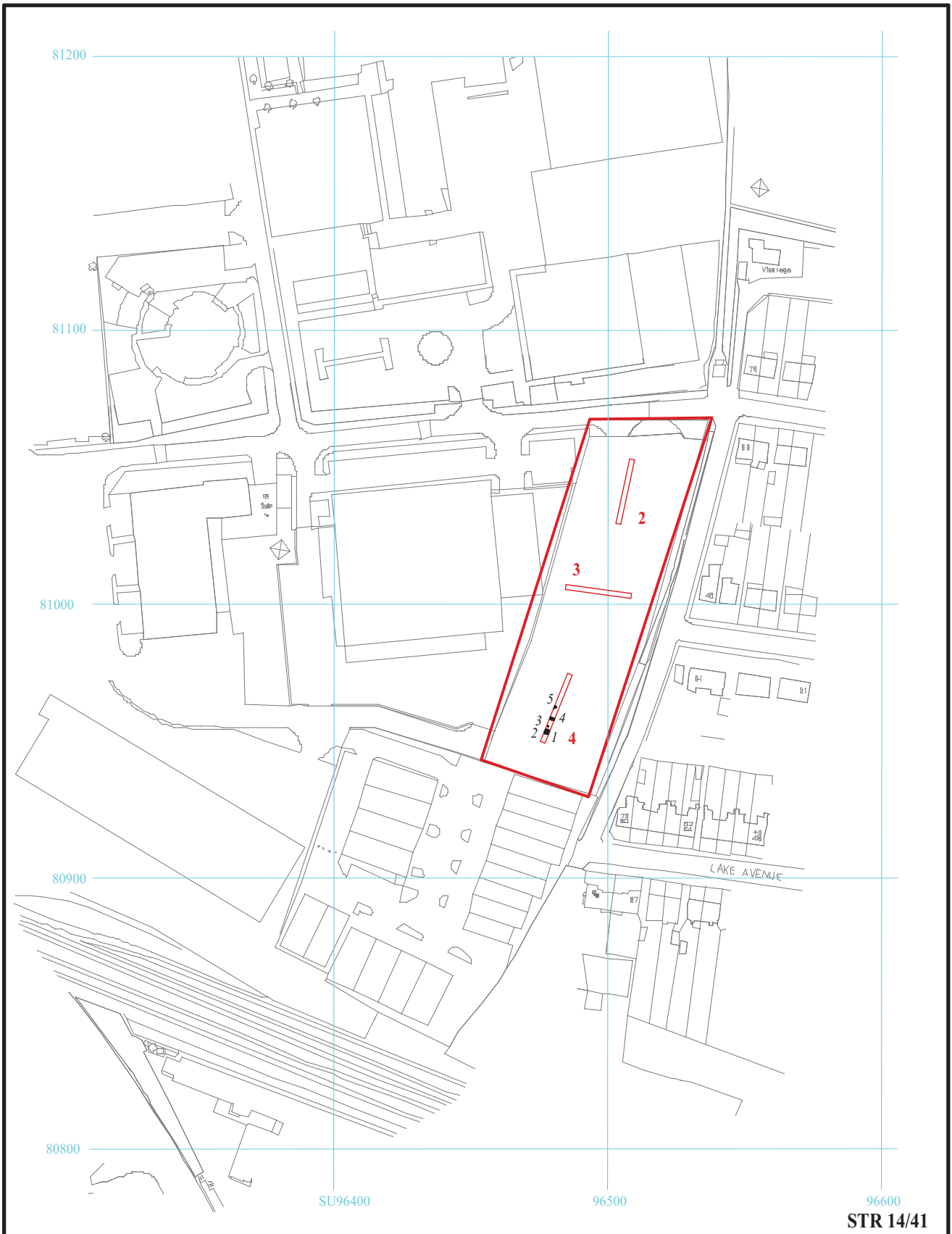


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Figure 2. Location of trenches overall and area of previous evaluation.





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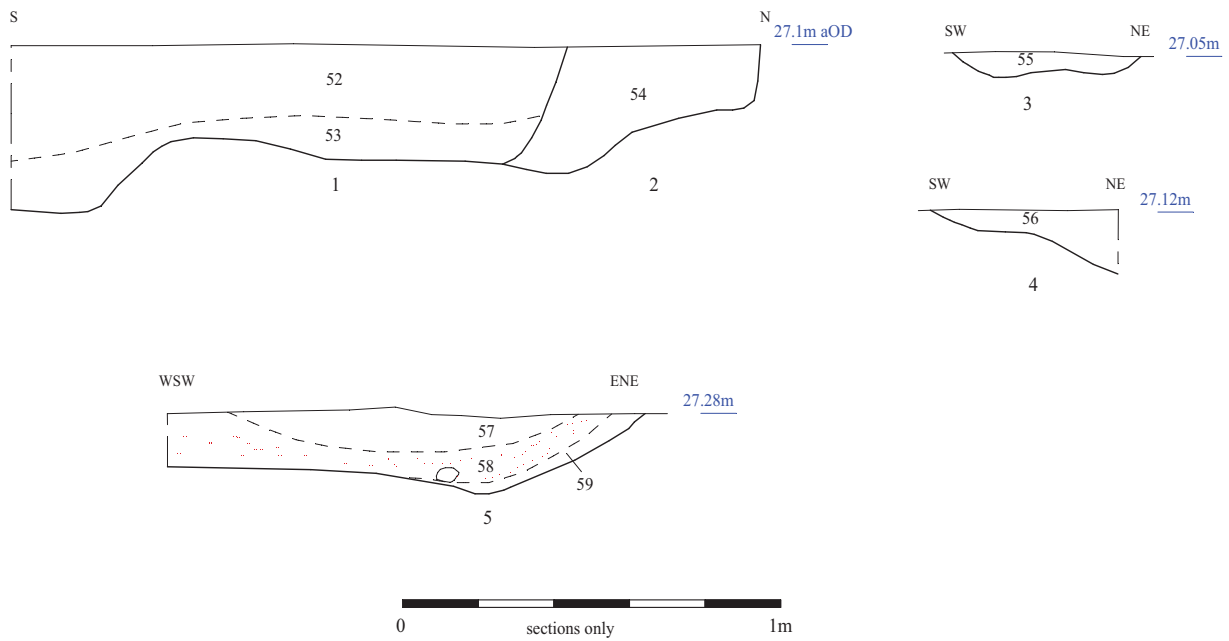
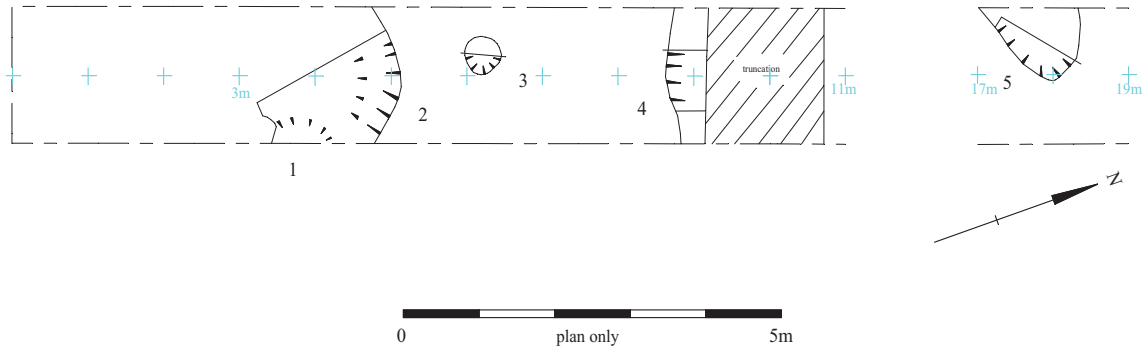
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Figure 3. Detailed location of trenches 2-4 and archaeological features.



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Trench 4



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Figure 4. Detail of Trench 4.



Plate 1. Trench 4, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Pit 5, looking north west, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 4, Feature 3 looking north west, Scale: 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 4, Pits 1 and 2, looking south west, Scales: 1m, 0.3m and 0.1m.

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Plates 3 - 4.

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Plate 5. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 3, looking east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 5 - 6.

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Plate 7. Trench 5, looking east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 8. Trench 7, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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Plates 7 - 8.



Plate 9. Trench 8, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 10. Trench 9, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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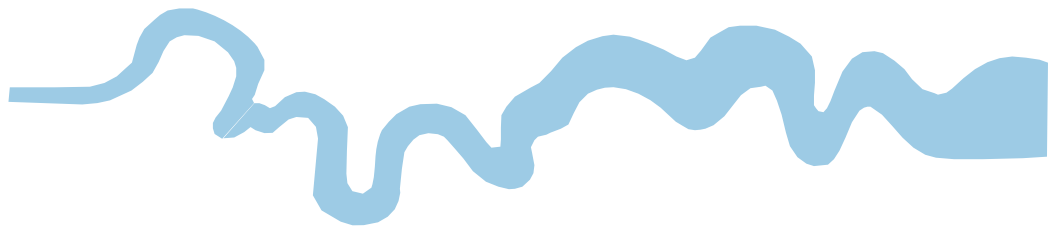
Plates 9 - 10.

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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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