THAMES VALLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

SERVICES

Woolley Hall, Westacott Way, Woolley Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire

Archaeological Evaluation

by Tim Dawson

Site Code: WHL13/86

(SU 8480 8010)

Woolley Hall, Westacott Way, Woolley Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Millgate Homes

by Tim Dawson

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WHL13/86

April 2014

Summary

Site name: Woolley Hall, Westacott Way, Woolley Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8480 8010

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 7th – 10th April 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Tim Dawson

Site code: WHL 13/86

Area of site: 14.1ha

Summary of results: All of the 25 proposed trenches were excavated although the locations and orientations of several had to be altered due to obstructions and known services. Several features were investigated but all were found to be of late post-medieval or modern date. The remainder of the area was devoid of any other finds or features of archaeological significance and 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 in an appropriate designated museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority).

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 30.04.14
	Steve Preston✓ 30.04.14

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Woolley Hall, Westacott Way, Woolley Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire
An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 13/86b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Woolley Hall, Westacott Way, Woolley Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU 8480 8010) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Jon Furneaux, Land Manager for Millgate Homes, Millgate House, Ruscombe Lane, Ruscombe, Twyford, Berkshire RG10 9JT.

Planning permission (app. no. 13/01890) has been sought from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the restoration of the original house, demolition of other buildings and the erection of new dwellings set in landscaped grounds. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site, a field evaluation has been requested by Berkshire Archaeology as detailed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012 para. 128) and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead policies on archaeology. A single component of work is proposed a field evaluation by means of machine-dug trenching. Further fieldwork may have been required if significant archaeological deposits are encountered. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeological Officer for Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Tim Dawson, Kyle Beaverstock and Tom Stewart between the 7th and 10th of April 2014 and the site code is MHL13/86. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited in an appropriate designated museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority).

Location, topography and geology

The site is located 3.5km west of Maidenhead town centre and 6.5km south of Marlow. The site occupies an irregular parcel of land bordered to the north by the Bath Road (A4), to the west by Westacott Way and to the east by the Shire Horse Centre (Fig. 1). The site is *c*.46m above Ordnance Datum and is the location of Woolley Hall and grounds, most recently the headquarters of an electricity supplier. The underlying geology is upper chalk (BGS, 1981) and this was observed in the south-western trenches and as patches in the others as a light

yellow-brown degraded chalk with frequent fragments of chalk. This was overlain across the majority of the site by a layer of natural light red-brown silty clay with some localised colour variations.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Dawson and Elliott 2013). In summary this potential stems from its location in the archaeologically rich Thames Valley. The archaeology of the area is relatively well known from a variety of sources of information (e.g. Ford 1987). For example, many sites have been recorded from the air (Gates 1975) and numerous finds from both prehistoric and later periods represented by tools and weapons of flint, bronze and iron dredged from the Thames (e.g. Chappell 1987). Many finds have also come to light during both casual, and, more recently, systematic examination of large areas of mineral extraction (Barnes and Cleal 1991) and of fieldwork carried out as a part of the planning process (Foreman et al., 2002; Preston 2003). Further archaeological sites are recorded for the area in general with a middle Iron Age linear earthwork, a late Iron Age enclosure (Robin Hood's Arbour) and prehistoric flint scatters on Maidenhead Thicket to the north east (Bowden et al. 1983; Cotton 1961; Boismier 1995) and a burnt mound at Burchet's Green to the north (Ford 1987).

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 had survived on this site.
To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
To determine if any archaeologically significant deposits were present so as to inform the development of a mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig 25 trenches 25m long and 2m wide. The trenches were located to target areas of proposed new build within the general area of the main new block of residences at the north end of the site but excluding areas beneath the extant building complex and a bund at the north of the site. The trenches included an area of landscaping where new lakes are to be created. Individual trenches were located for smaller areas of new build elsewhere on the site. The trenches were located as close as possible to the positions shown on Figure 2. However, the northern trenches targeting the main block of housing to the south of the existing building were located in areas containing dense scrub/trees and the trenches were repositioned or shortened depending on the

amount of space available. Similarly, site services and other restrictions required the repositioning and shortening elsewhere. Wherever possible trenches were lengthened to make up for the area lost due to the shortening of others.

Results

All trenches were dug although the majority were altered in some way from the original trench plan, either being shortened or, where possible, lengthened or by moving or re-orientating. They ranged in length from 10.20m to 33.00m and in depth from 0.33m to 1.20m.

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 north-south and was 25.5m long and 0.5m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.11m of Tarmac, 0.25m of made ground, terramesh and 0.14m of red-green clay overlying natural geology. No archaeological features were noted nor finds recovered.

Trench 2 (Figs. 3 and 4, Pls. 1 and 3)

Trench 2 was aligned southwest-northeast and was 25.2m long and 0.71m deep. The stratigraphy at the south-western end consisted of 0.07m of Tarmac, 0.28m sandy gravel, terramesh, 0.29m compact grey-green silty clay and 0.07m light grey-brown silty clay overlying natural geology. At the north-eastern end the stratigraphy consisted of 0.07m Tarmac, 0.30m brick rubble made ground and 0.30m of mid red-brown silty clay over the natural geology. A shallow pit (1) was recorded which was 0.61m wide and 0.15m deep and filled with a firm dark red-brown silty clay (54) (Fig. 3). A single sherd of late post-medieval pottery was recovered from the fill.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned south-north and was 25.0m long and 0.64m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.09m of Tarmac, 0.39m of brick rubble and 0.12m of dark brown-grey silty clay overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned south-north and was 16.9m long, due to the presence of several known services, and 0.59m deep. The stratigraphy at the southern end consisted of 0.05m of Tarmac, 0.12m of sandy gravel, 0.14m of redeposited chalk and 0.28m of dark grey-brown silty clay (53) overlying natural geology (patchy clay and

chalk). No features were identified but several sherds of late post-medieval pottery (eg transfer printed 'china') were recovered from layer 53.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 18.0m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil and 0.24m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features were recorded.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned southeast-northwest, having been moved in order to avoid a stand of trees, and was 26.0m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.12m of topsoil, 0.19m of made ground (dark grey-brown silty clay with modern brick and tile) and 0.19m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features were identified.

Trench 7 (Pl. 5)

Trench 7 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 26.3m long and 0.39m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of topsoil and 0.23m subsoil overlying natural geology. Several modern services were recorded crossing the trench but no finds or features or archaeological interest were identified.

Trench 8

Trench 8 was aligned west-east and was 25.2m long and 0.33m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil and 0.11m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered and the ground was heavily disturbed by tree roots.

Trench 9

Trench 9 was aligned southwest-northeast and was 25.2m long and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.18m of topsoil and 0.35m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered while several potential features were found on closer inspection to be modern in date.

Trench 10 (Pl 6)

Trench 10 was aligned southwest-northeast and was 24.0m long and 0.72m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.53m subsoil overlying natural geology. A modern pipe cut across the trench and no finds were recovered.

Trench 11

Trench 11 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 24.6m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil and 0.14m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered.

Trench 12 (Pl. 7)

Trench 12 was aligned southwest-northeast and was 26m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.22m subsoil overlying natural geology. The ground in this area had been subject to extensive root disturbance. No finds were recovered.

Trench 13

Trench 13 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 10.2m long due to local tree density, and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.12m of topsoil, 0.10m modern made ground (dark grey-brown silty clay with chalk inclusions) and 0.15m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features were identified.

Trench 14 (Figs. 3 and 4, Pls. 2 and 4)

Trench 14 was aligned west-east and was 11.2m long and 0.47m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil and 0.16m subsoil overlying natural geology. Two possible linear features were investigated, one of which was recorded (2) (Fig. 3), but both were found to be early modern in date. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Trench 15 (Pl. 8)

Trench 15 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 29.0m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil and 0.27m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features were identified.

Trench 16

Trench 16 was aligned south-north and was 27.0m long and 0.46m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil and 0.24m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered.

Trench 17

Trench 17 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 30.7m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil and 0.21m subsoil overlying natural geology. Several possible features were noted although on closer inspection these were found to be modern or natural in origin. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Trench 18

Trench 18 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 31.0m long and 0.39m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.20m subsoil overlying natural geology. Several modern services were found to cross the trench but no finds or features of archaeological significance were identified.

Trench 19

Trench 19 was aligned south-north and was 33.0m long and 0.34m deep with a 1.30m deep test pit at the northern end. The stratigraphy at the northern end consisted of 0.30m of topsoil, 0.62m of natural light red-yellow clay with occasional flint overlying natural patchy red/yellow-grey clay with patches of chalk. At the southern end the stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m topsoil overlying the natural clay geology. A possible feature was identified but this proved to be natural disturbance. No finds were recovered.

Trench 20

Trench 20 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 29.8m long and 0.86m deep. At the trench's north-western end the stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m topsoil and 0.50m of light red-brown clay overlying the natural clayey chalk geology. The stratigraphy at the south-eastern end of the trench consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.25m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered.

Trench 21

Trench 21 was aligned southeast-northwest and was 30.2m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil, 0.22m subsoil and 0.24m degraded chalk overlying natural chalk geology. No finds were recovered.

Trench 22

Trench 22 was aligned west-east and was 27.7m long and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of Tarmac, 0.24m red-brown sandy gravel made ground, 0.09m of dark blue-grey silty clay and 0.19m natural silty clay overlying silty clay with chalk patches natural geology. Two possible circular features were identified but these later proved to be natural depressions. No finds were recovered.

Trench 23 (PL. 9)

Trench 23 was aligned southwest-northeast and was 15.8m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.04m of Tarmac, 0.23m red-brown sandy gravel made ground, 0.20m of dark blue-grey silty clay and 0.23m of dark brown-grey silty clay overlying natural geology. A concrete-encased modern service ran along the north-western edge of the trench on top of the natural geology. No finds were recovered.

Trench 24 (Pl. 10)

Trench 24 was aligned southwest-northeast and was 27.8m long and 0.48m deep with a 1.20m deep test pit at teh south-western end. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.12m of topsoil and 0.13m subsoil overlying light-mid brown-red clayey sand natural geology. Two modern concrete pads and an area of modern disturbance were noted at the north-eastern end. No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Trench 25

Trench 25 was aligned west-east and was 26.4m long, 2.2m wide and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of Tarmac, 0.41m of light brown-pink gravel made ground and 0.05m dark blue-grey sandy clay overlying a mid yellow-red sandy clay with flint gravel natural geology. Two modern features and a modern pipe were noted but no finds or features of archaeological interest were identified.

Conclusion

All of the proposed trenches were excavated although approximately half had to be moved or shortened in order to fit them in around existing landscape features such as trees and buildings. A very varied natural geology was encountered across the site and, in most cases, it appeared undisturbed except in the formerly wooded areas where root disturbance was widespread. A single possible archaeological feature, was recorded at the northern end of the site but dated to the late post-medieval period by a single sherd of pottery. Other deposits cutting the natural geology were of more recent date containing fragments of plastic, coal, coke and modern rubble. The trenches around Woolley Grange in the north encountered several modern services which, in most cases, had been dug into the natural geology. The results of the trial trenching therefore suggest that the site has a low archaeological potential.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details 0m at South, SW, SE or West end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	25.50	1.6	0.50	0–0.11m Tarmac, 0.11-0.36m red grey clay and gravel, 0.36-0.50m greenish red clay (natural geology?); 0.50m+ brown silty clay natural geology.
2	24.20	1.6	0.71	0-0.07m Tarmac, 0.07-0.35m gravel and sand, 0.35-0.64m grey green silty clay, 0.64-0.71m light grey brown clay, 0.71m+ chalk natural geology. **[Pls 1 and 3]**
3	25.00	1.6	0.64	0-0.09m Tarmac, 0.09-0.39m demolition layer, 0.39-0.51m dark brown grey silty clay, 0.51-0.64m light red brown silty clay, 0.64m+ red brown silty clay natural geology.
4	16.90	1.6	0.59	0-0.05m Tarmac, 0.05-0.17m gravel and sand, 0.17-0.31m degraded chalk, 0.31-0.59m dark grey brown silty clay, 0.59m+ chalk brown silty clay natural geology.
5	18.00	1.6	0.42	0-0.18m topsoil, 0.18-0.42m subsoil, 0.42m+ brown silty clay natural geology
6	26.00	1.6	0.50	0-0.12m topsoil, 0.12-0.31m dark grey brown silty clay made ground, 0.31-0.50m subsoil, 0.50m+ brown silty clay natural geology.
7	26.30	1.6	0.39	0-0.16m topsoil, 0.16-0.39m Subsoil, 0.39m+ brown silty clay natural geology. **[Pl. 5]**
8	25.20	1.6	0.33	0-0.22m topsoil, 0.22-0.33m subsoil, 0.33m+ brown silty clay natural geology
9	25.20	1.6	0.53	0-0.18m topsoil, 0.18-0.53m subsoil, 0.53m+ red brown silty clay natural geology
10	24.00	1.6	0.72	0-0.19m topsoil, 0.19-0.72m subsoil, 0.72m+natural light red brown silty clay and chalk geology. **[Pl. 6]**
11	24.60	1.6	0.42	0-0.28m topsoil, 0.28-0.42m subsoil, 0.42m+ brown silty clay natural geology
12	26.00	1.6	0.42	0-0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.42m subsoil, 0.42m+ brown silty clay natural geology. **[Pl. 7]**
13	10.20	1.6	0.37	0-0.12m topsoil, 0.12-0.22m dark grey brown clay silt made ground, 0.22-0.37m subsoil, 0.37m+ brown silty clay natural geology
14	11.20	1.6	0.47	0-0.31m topsoil, 0.31-0.47m subsoil, 0.47m+ red/brown silty clay with some flint natural geology **[Pls 2 and 4]**
15	29.00	1.6	0.50	0-0.15m topsoil, 0.15-0.42m subsoil, 0.42-0.50m+ brown silty clay natural geology. **[Pl. 8]**
16	27.00	1.6	0.46	0-0.22m topsoil, 0.22-0.46m subsoil, 0.46m+ brown silty clay natural geology
17	30.70	1.6	0.52	0-0.31m topsoil, 0.31-0.52m subsoil, 0.52m+ brown silty clay natural geology
18	31.00	1.6	0.39	0-0.19m topsoil, 0.19-0.39m subsoil, 0.39m+ brown silty clay natural geology
19	33.00	1.6	0.34	South: 0-0.30m topsoil, 0.30-0.34m+ brown silty clay natural geology; North (test pit): 0-0.30m topsoil, 0.30-0.92m natural light red-yellow clay, 0.92-1.30m+ patchy red/yellow-grey clay with chalk natural geology
20	29.80	1.6	0.86	NW: 0-0.31m topsoil, 0.31-0.81m natural light red-brown clay, 0.81m+ light yellow clayey chalk natural geology SE: 0-0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.45m subsoil, 0.45m+ chalk natural geology
21	30.20	1.6	0.70	0-0.20m topsoil, 0.20-0.42m subsoil, 0.42-0.66m degraded chalk interface, 0.66m+ chalk natural geology
22	27.70	1.6	0.67	0-0.15m Tarmac, 0.15-0.39m red-brown sandy gravel bedding, 0.39-0.48m dark blue-grey silty-clay, 0.48-0.67m silty clay, 0.67m+ brown silty clay with chalk patches natural geology
23	15.80	1.6	0.70	NW: 0-0.04m Tarmac, 0.04-0.27m red-brown sandy gravel bedding, 0.27-0.60m concrete-covered service, 0.60m+ chalk natural geology; SE: 0-0.04m Tarmac, 0.04-0.27m red-brown sandy gravel bedding, 0.27-0.49m dark blue-grey silty clay, 0.49-0.70m dark brown-grey silty clay, 0.70m+ chalk natural geology. **[Pl. 9]**
24	27.80	1.6	0.48-1.2	NE: 0-0.14m topsoil, 0.14-0.22m subsoil, 0.22m+ light-mid brown-red clayey sand natural geology with occasional flint SW: 0-0.12m topsoil, 0.12-0.25m subsoil, 0.25m+ natural geology (as above). **[Pl. 10]**
25	26.40	2.2	0.52	0-0.10m Tarmac, 0.10-0.41m light brown-red gravel bedding, 0.41-0.46m dark blue-grey silty clay, 0.46m+ mid yellow-red silty clay with flint gravel natural geology

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
2	1	54	Possible pit	Late Post-medieval	Pottery
14	2	55	Possible gully	Undated	

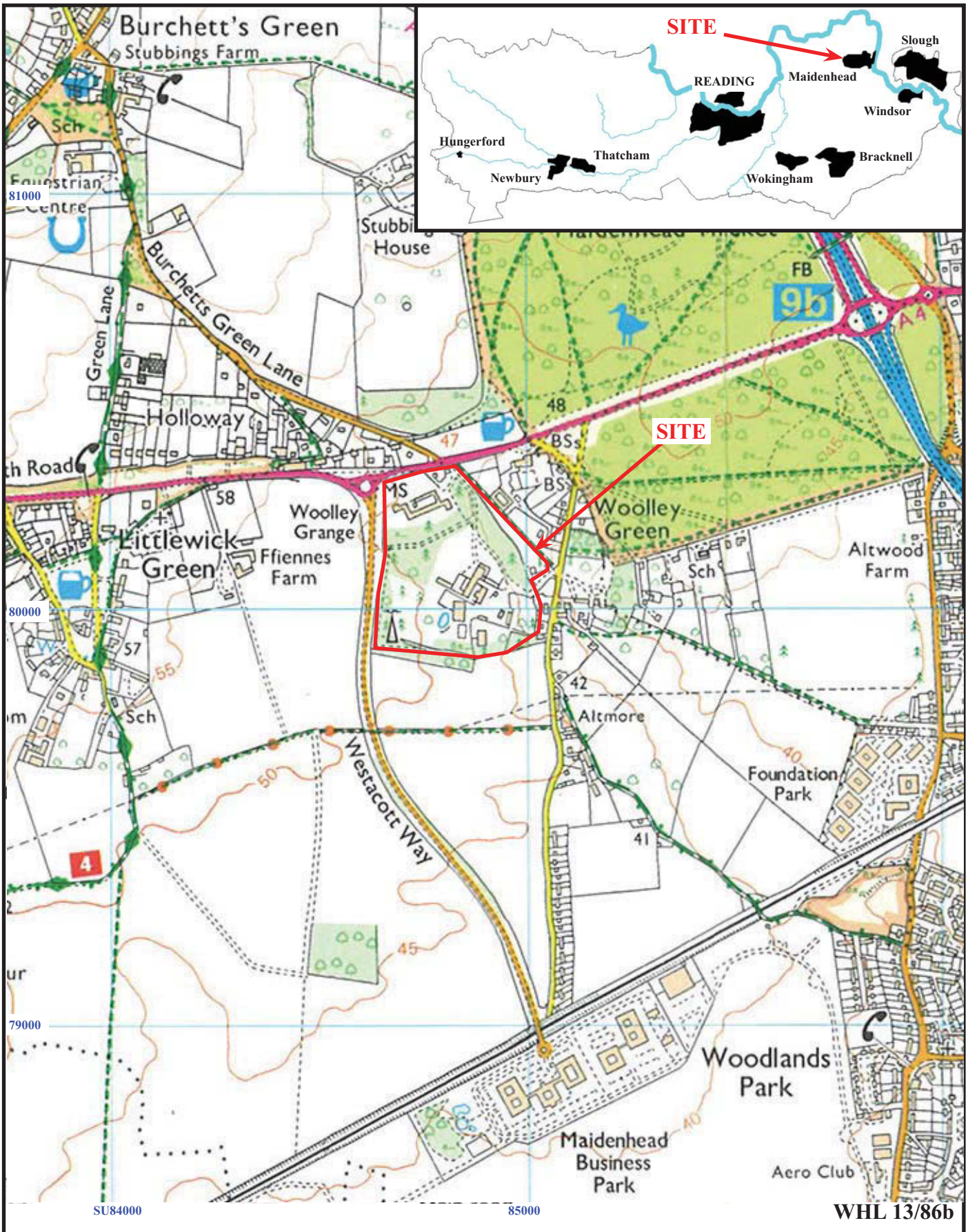

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Figure 1. Location of site within Woolley Green and in relation to Maidenhead, Berkshire.

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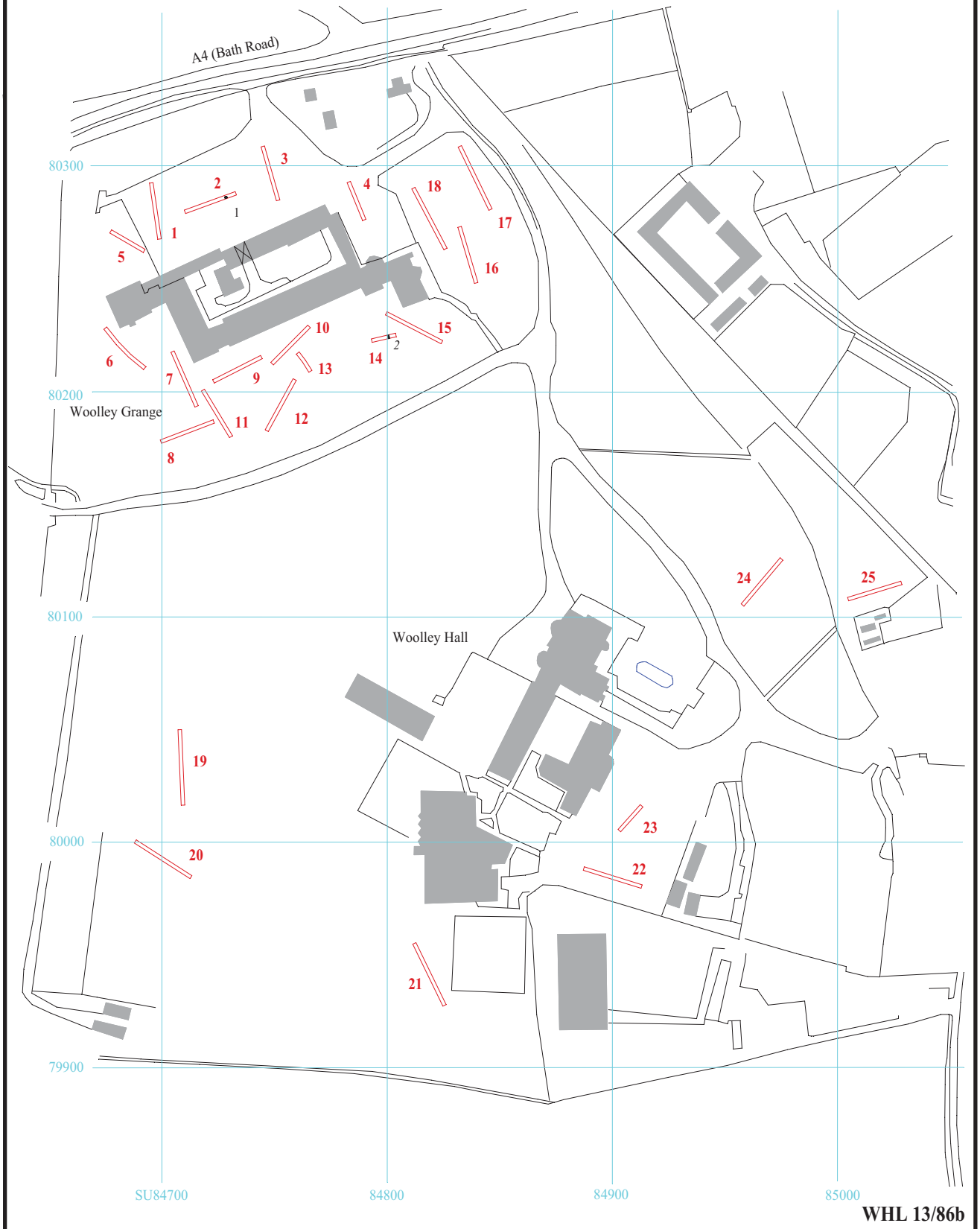

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Figure 2. Location of trenches.

0 125m

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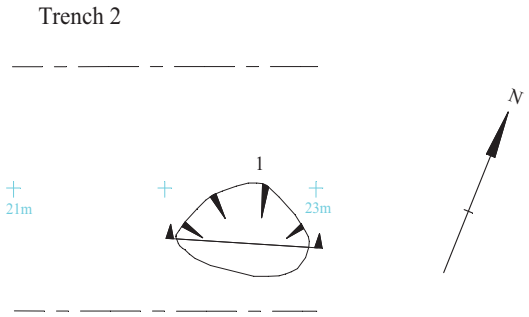

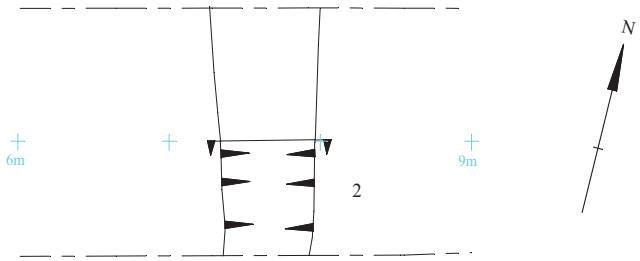

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Figure 3. Plans of Late post-medieval pit and early modern gully.

0 5m

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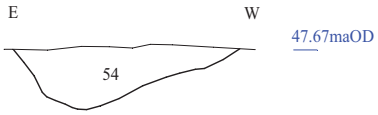
Trench 2



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Trench 14

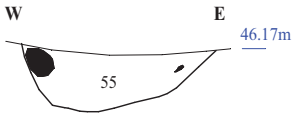

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Figure 4. Sections.

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Plate 1. Trench 2, looking east north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

Plate 2. Trench 14, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 2, pit 1, looking south, Scales: 0.5m and 0.05m.

Plate 4. Trench 14, linear slot 2, looking north, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.

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Plates 3 - 4.

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

Plate 6. Trench 10, looking east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

Plate 7. Trench 12, looking north east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

Plate 8. Trench 15, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.

Plate 5. Trench 23, looking north, Scales: 2m,1m and 0.3m.

Plate 10. Trench 24,looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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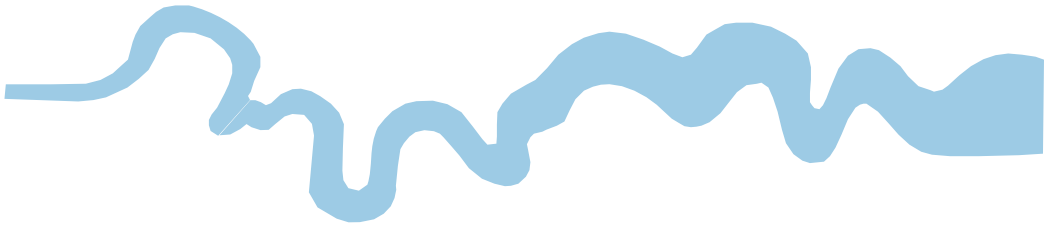
Archaeological Evaluation

Plates 5 - 10.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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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