

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Churchend Primary School, Tilehurst,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Site Code: CES14/153

(SU 6755 7295)

**Churchend Primary School, Tilehurst,
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Reading Borough Council**

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CES 14/153

February 2015

Summary

Site name: Churchend Primary School, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 6755 7295

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 17th February 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Bray

Site code: CES 14/153

Area of site: 825 sq m (footprint of one proposed new building)

Summary of results: Despite the archaeological potential of the site no features of archaeological interest were revealed. It is not considered that the proposed development will have any archaeological impact.

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

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 19.02.15 Steve Preston ✓ 19.02.15

Churchend Primary School, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Report 14/153

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Churchend Primary School, Tilehurst, Reading Berkshire (SU 6755 7295) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Helen Daymond of Hampshire County Council on behalf of Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7AE.

Planning consent is to be sought from Reading Borough Council to construct new facilities at the school. It is possible that the development area may contain archaeological deposits and in order to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site so as to mitigate the effects of the development, a field evaluation has been requested

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 Roland Smith, Archaeological Officer at Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough Council on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray, Natasha Bennett and Becky Constable on 17th February 2015 with the site code CES 14/153. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the grounds of Church End Primary School to the north of Usk Road (Fig. 2). The proposed development occupies areas to the south-east and north-west of the main building. The site lies at 90m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology is mapped as Plateau Gravel (BGS 1946) which was observed in the trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location on the higher gravel terraces of the archaeologically rich Thames Valley where prolific numbers of Palaeolithic worked flints have been recorded,

especially to the east at the former Grovelands Pit (Wymer 1968). Less is known for the Palaeolithic for the higher terrace on which the site lies. There are a modest range of sites and finds of other periods from this area of Tilehurst with various stray finds and reports of occupation and burial sites of prehistoric and Roman date. Again at Grovelands Pit, for example both, Bronze Age and Roman deposits were encountered. A few Roman coins are recorded for an area to the west of the site and evaluation also to the west recorded some Early Bronze Age pottery (Milbank 2010). The site lies relatively near to the historic (medieval) centre of Tilehurst, assuming that the latter lay close to the parish church of St Michael. Most of the fabric of the church is of 19th century date but the earliest part (Lady Chapel) dates from c. 1300. However, recent evaluation/excavations in the area (e.g. Taylor 2006; Taylor 2010) along with several watching briefs have found no trace of any Medieval occupation.

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 aims of the project were to:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to determine if archaeological deposits relating to Medieval Tilehurst are present in the area.

It was proposed to dig 3 trenches at 10m long, all 1.60m wide and positioned to target the footprint of the new structures. The trenches were to be excavated using a JCB type machine equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and supervised at all times by an archaeologist, with the spoil removed being monitored for any finds. All potential archaeological deposits were to be hand cleaned and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

Results

The two trenches to the north-west of the main building were excavated as intended (Pl. 1) but the trench to the southeast was abandoned, in consultation with Berkshire Archaeology, due to the presence of several large, live services. The trenches were 9.00m and 10.80m long and 0.44m and 0.50m deep respectively. Both were 1.60m wide. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the trenches.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned NW - SE and was 10.80m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.12m of topsoil and 0.24m of subsoil overlying natural grey sand and gravel geology. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3; Pl. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned NE - SW and was 9.00m long and 0.44m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.06m of topsoil and 0.28m of subsoil overlying natural grey sand and gravel geology. Natural geology was only revealed for 5m of the eastern end of the trench due to the presence of a water pipe at the western end. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

Conclusion

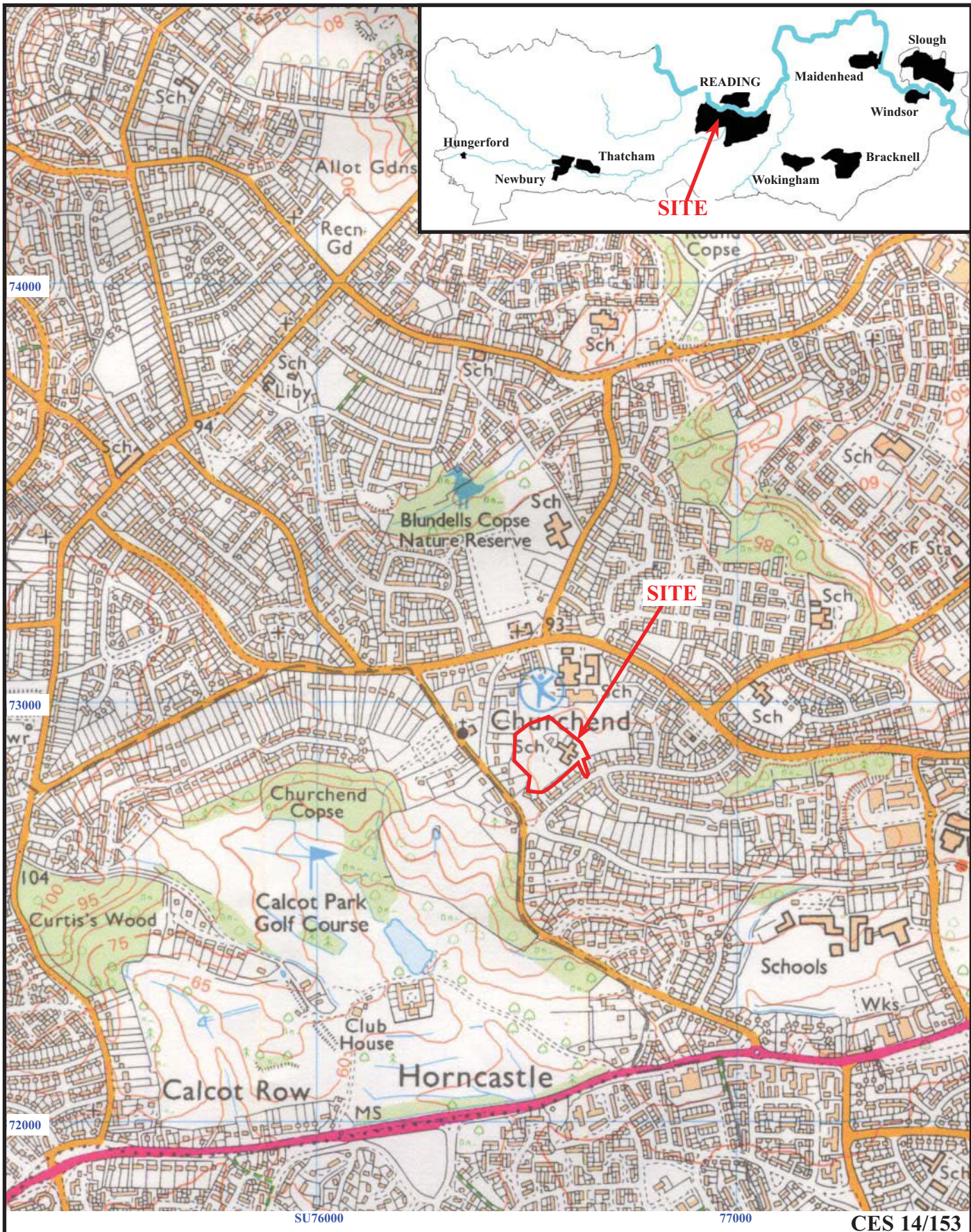
Despite the archaeological potential of the site, no archaeological deposits or finds were revealed. The site does not appear to have been truncated and the archaeological horizon does survive. It is not considered that the proposed development will have any archaeological impact.

References

- BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
Milbank, D, 2010, 'Iris Court, Tilehurst, Reading Berkshire, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report **10/14**, Reading
Taylor, A, 2006, 'Meadway School, The Meadway, Tilehurst, Reading Berkshire, an archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report **06/63**, Reading
Taylor, A 2010b, 'Iris Court, Tilehurst, Reading Berkshire, an archaeological excavation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services report **10/14b**, Reading
Wymer, J, 1968, *Lower Palaeolithic Archaeology in Britain*, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2	10.80	1.60	0.50	0–0.12m topsoil; 0.12m-0.36m subsoil; 0.36m+ natural sand and gravel geology [Pl. 2]
3	9.00	1.60	0.44	0-0.06m topsoil; 0.06m-0.34m subsoil; 0.34m+ natural sand and gravel geology [Pl. 3]



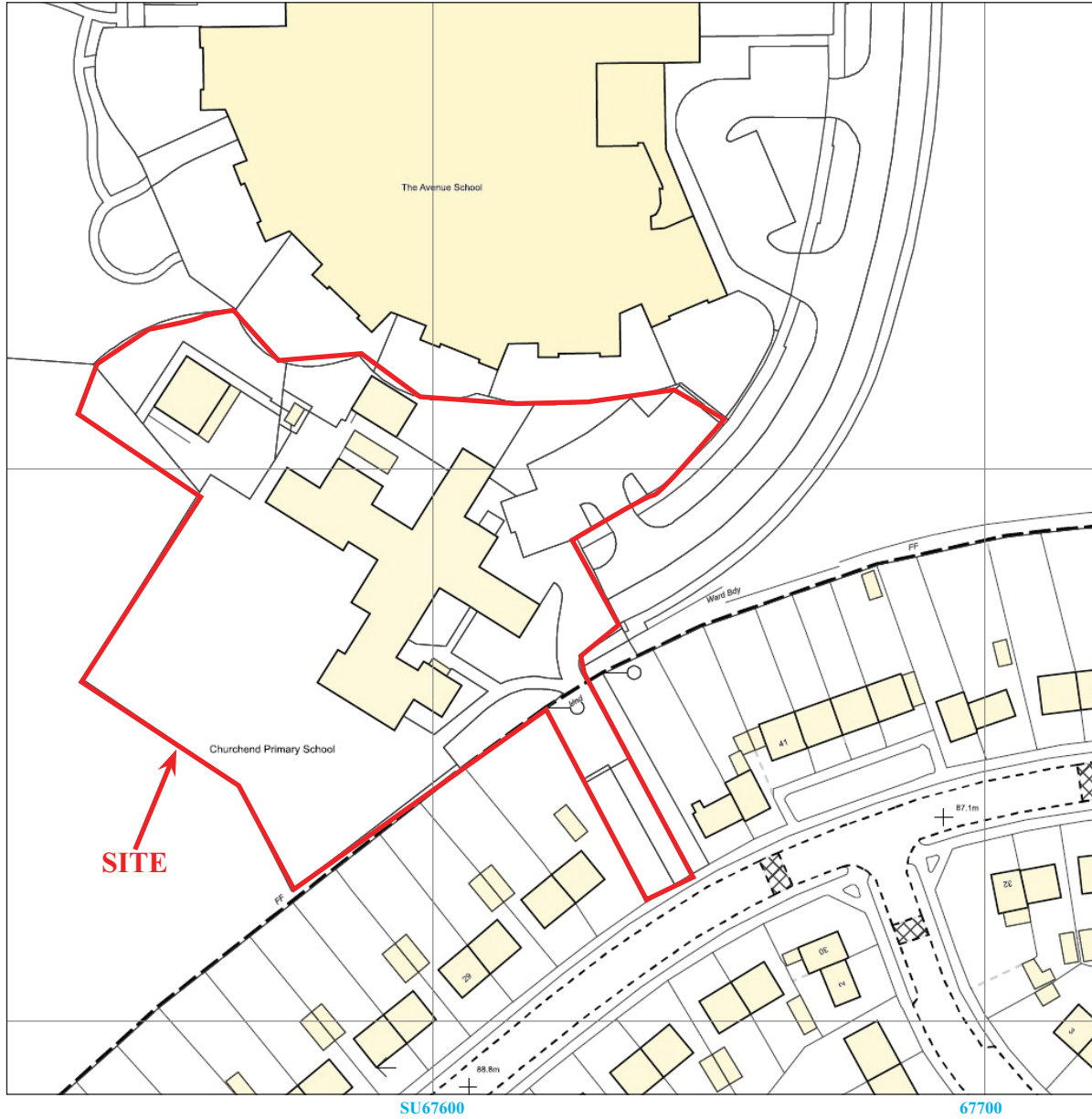
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Figure 1. Location of site within Tilehurst, Reading and Berkshire.

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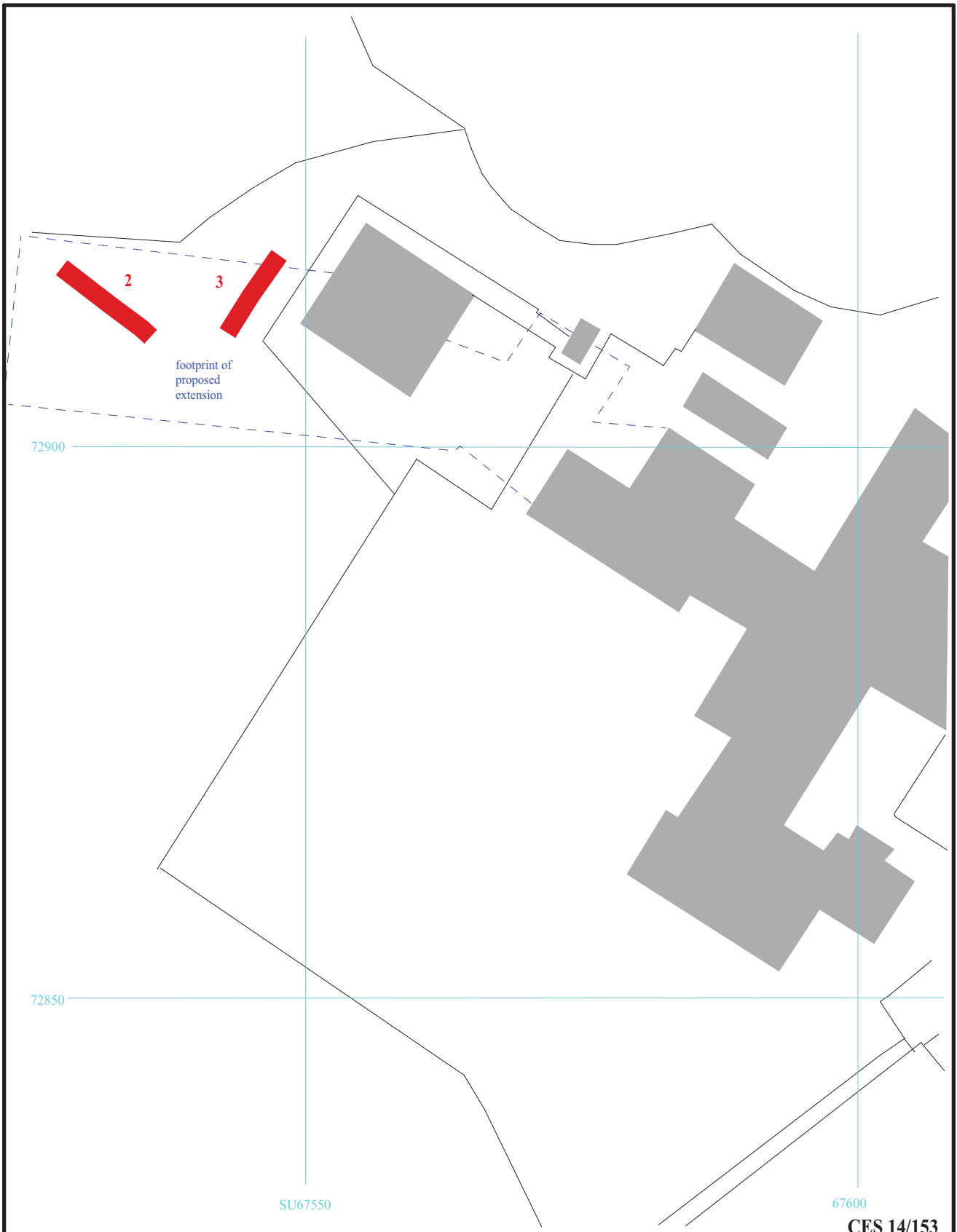


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Usk Road.

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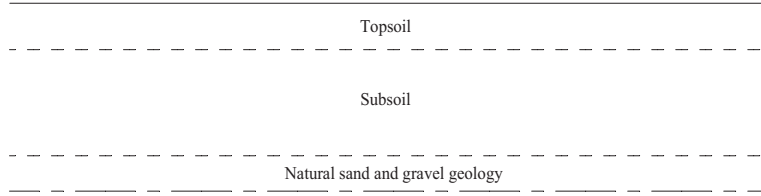
Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Trench 2

89.70maOD



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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Location of trenches, looking south-west.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking south-east,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 3. Trench 3, looking south-west,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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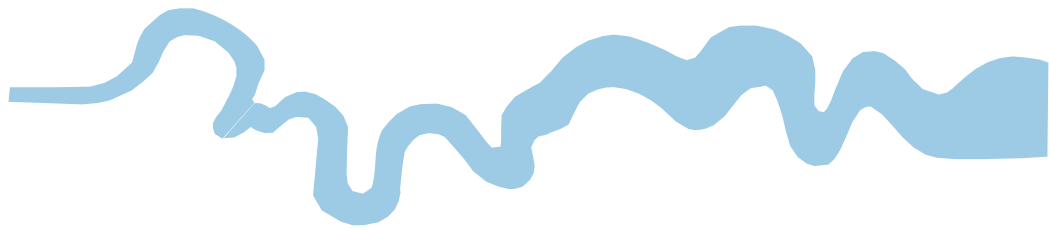
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Plates 1 - 3.**

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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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