

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**70 Meadow Close, Thatcham,  
West Berkshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Daniel Bray and Kyle Beaverstock**

**Site Code: MCT15/82**

**(SU 5157 6721)**

# **70 Meadow Close, Thatcham, West Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
for Mr G. Gomez**

by Daniel Bray and Kyle Beaverstock  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MCT 15/82

**May 2015**

## Summary

**Site name:** 70 Meadow Close, Thatcham, West Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 5157 6721

**Site activity:** Archaeological Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Daniel Bray

**Site code:** MCT 15/82

**Area of site:** 45sq m

**Summary of results:** The foundations of the new extension were observed during the watching brief. No features of archaeological significance were observed and no finds recovered.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at West Berkshire 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✓ 08.05.15 Steve Preston✓ 08.05.15
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# **70 Meadow Close, Thatcham, West Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief**

by Daniel Bray and Kyle Beaverstock

**Report 15/82**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 70 Meadow Close, Thatcham, West Berkshire, RG19 (SU 5157 6721) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Geoff Gomez of 70 Meadow Close.

Planning consent (app 14/00975/HOUSE) has been gained from West Berkshire Council for an extension to the existing house. The planning consent includes a condition (4) relating to archaeology, which requires a watching brief to 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 Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Alex Godden, Archaeological Officer at West Berkshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray on 22nd April 2015 and the site code is MCT15/82. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at West Berkshire Museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located near the centre of Thatcham (Fig. 1), and is bounded by St Mary's Church to the east, Lower Way to the south and Meadow Close to the north (Fig. 2). The project was an extension to an existing house in the garden area. The underlying geology is mapped as River and Valley Gravels (BGS 1971) however the base of the footings observed were within a dark grey silty clay, possibly an alluvial deposit containing an increased amount of gravel towards the base of the footing.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing note prepared by Mr Alex Godden, West Berkshire Archaeological Officer. In summary, the proposed development is within the historic settlement area of Thatcham and adjacent to the churchyard of the medieval St Mary's Church. Previous archaeological

work at Church Gate to the east revealed significant evidence for Saxon and Medieval activity, implying that the settlement at the time was centred on the church. There is also documentary evidence that refers to the presence of a Minster church at Thatcham (Astill 1978; Pine 2010).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The aims of the project were to excavate and record any archaeological deposits or finds affected by the new construction work. In general the watching brief was to involve examination of any areas of ground reduction, the digging of foundation trenches for the new structure and of any deep trenches for services as necessary. Archaeological deposits which were threatened by groundworks were to be excavated and recorded.

## **Results**

The excavation of footings for the new extension was observed (Fig. 3, Pls 1 and 2). The northern footing was 3.4m long, 0.6m wide and approx. 1.5m deep, the eastern footing was 6m long, 0.6m wide and approx 1.5m deep and the southern footing was 4.1m long, 1.5m wide and approx. 1.5m deep. The stratigraphy of the footings consisted of 0.3m of topsoil, above 0.5m of subsoil/made ground and 0.7m of dark silty clay (Fig. 4). No archaeological features were observed in the footings although two modern pipes were noted in the southern footing.

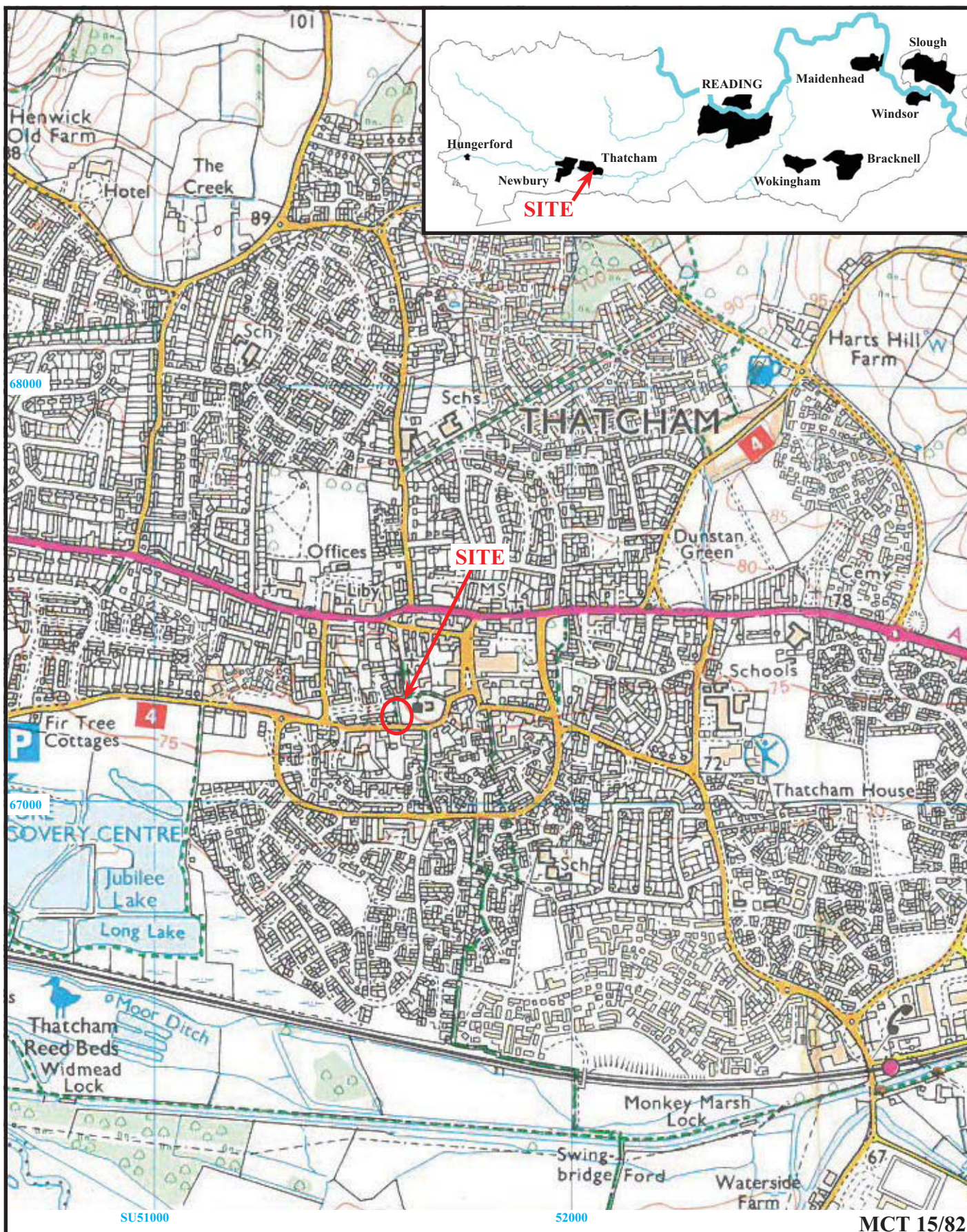
## **Conclusion**

The watching brief at 70 Meadow Close successfully examined those parts of the site which were to be most effected by the construction of the new extension. No archaeological features were recorded although this may be in part due to the disturbance caused by modern pipes in the southern footing as well as the pipe to the east of the eastern footing.

## **References**

- Astill, G G, 1978, *Historic towns in Berkshire; an archaeological appraisal*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ **2** Reading  
BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 267, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London  
Pine, J, 2010, 'Medieval deposits at 12–14 Church Gate, Thatcham, 2007', in J Pine, *Archaeological investigations along the line of Ermin Street, in West Berkshire, 1992-2008, Exploring Prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement*, TVAS Monogr **12**, Reading, 35–44





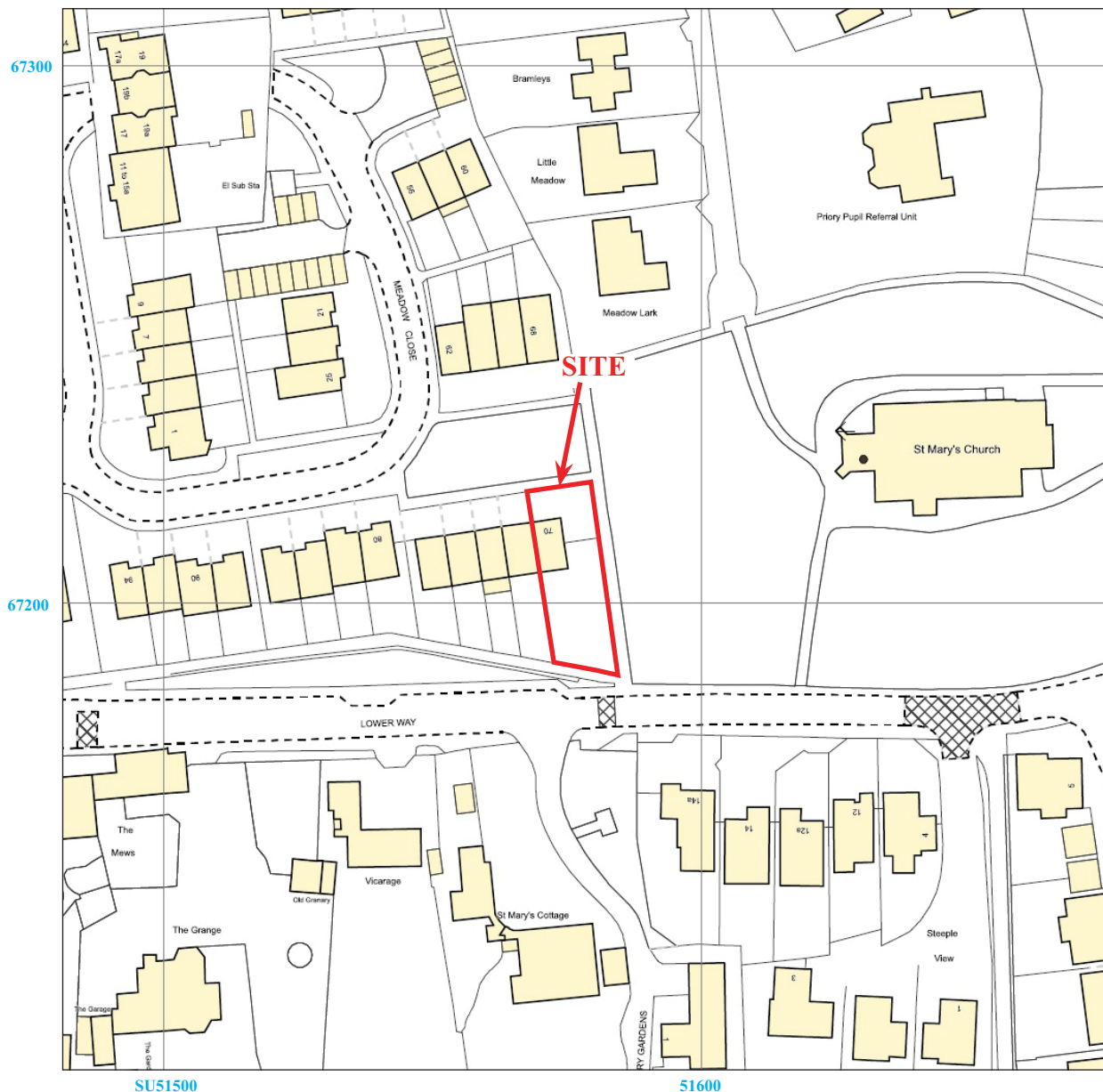
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Figure 1. Location of site within Thatcham and  
West Berkshire.

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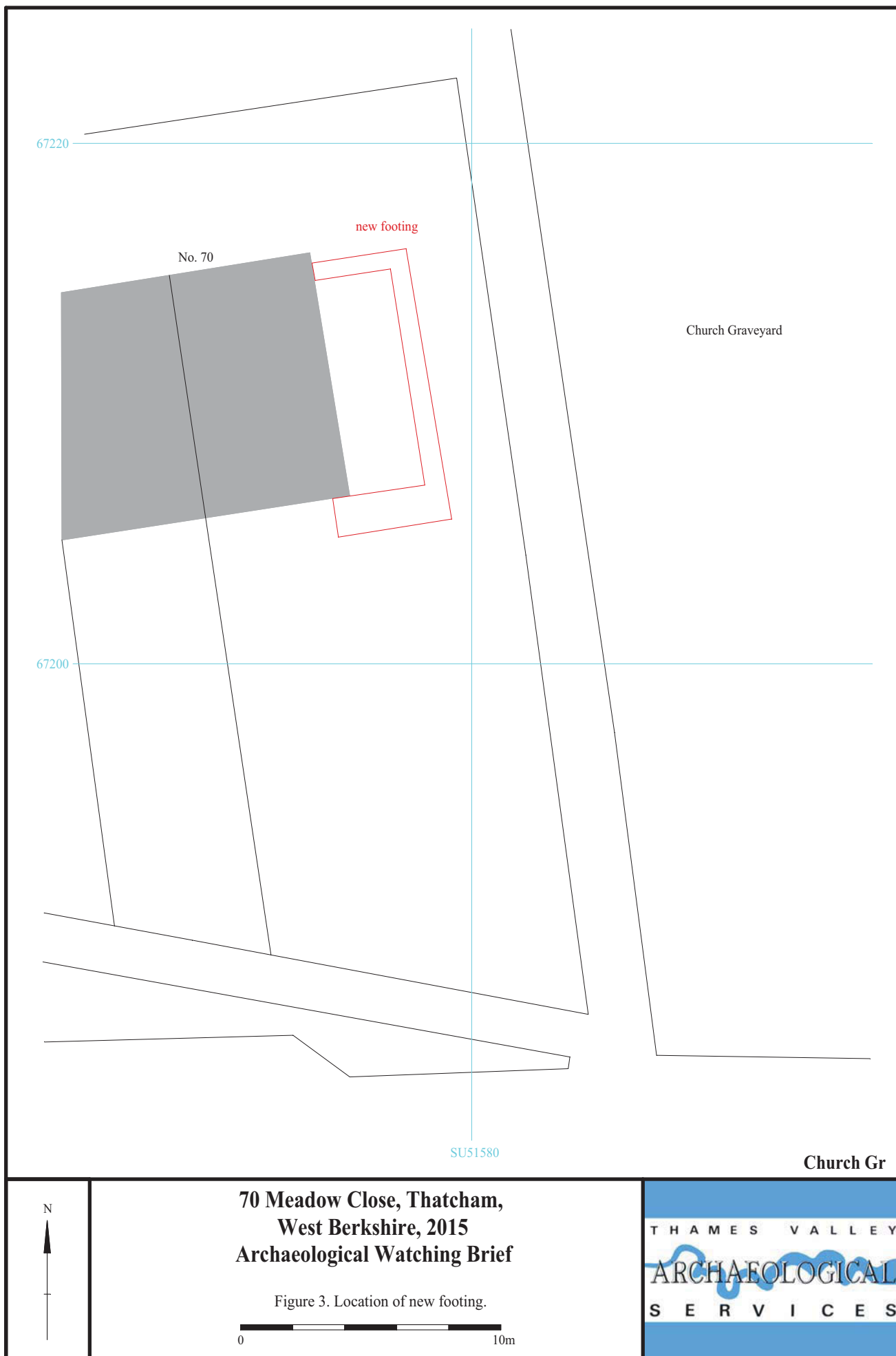


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Meadow Close.

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NNW

SSE

Topsoil

Subsoil

Dark grey silty clay (Alluvium?)

base of trench

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Figure 4. Representative section.

0 1m

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Plate 1. Footing trench, looking south, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Footing trench section, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.

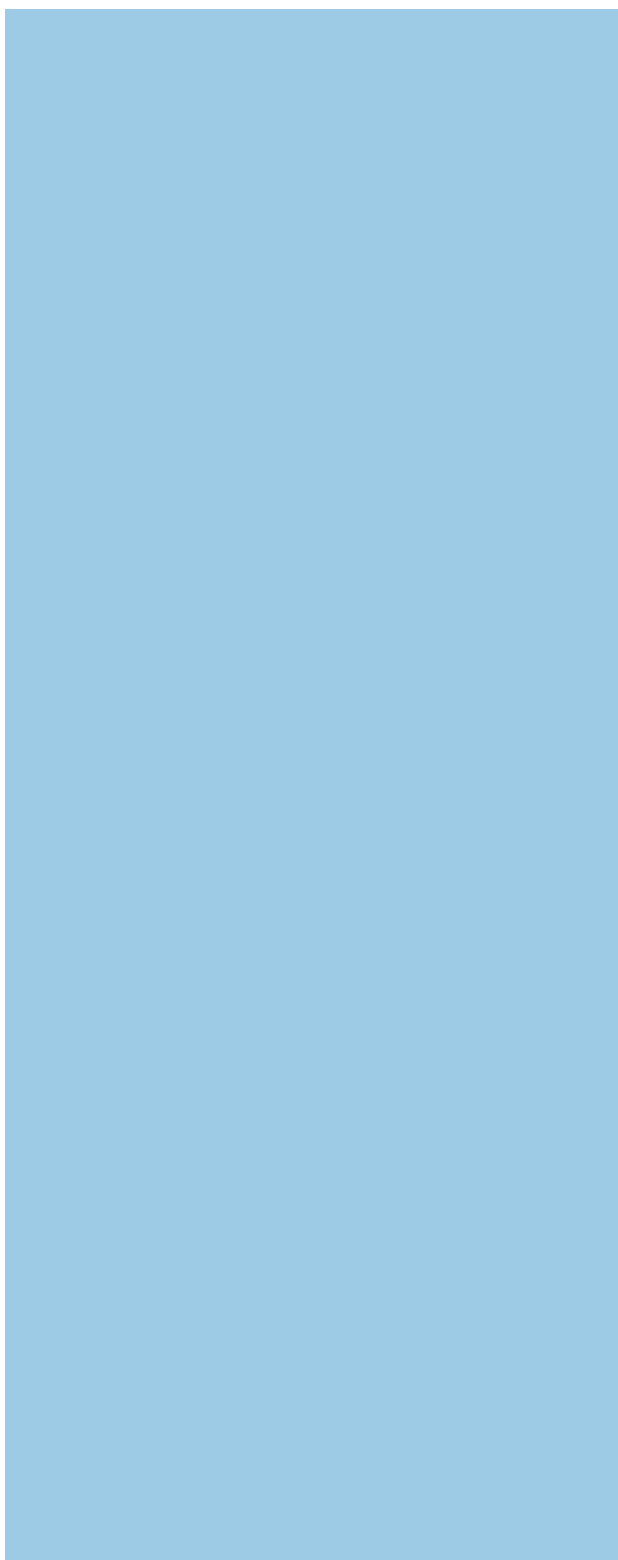
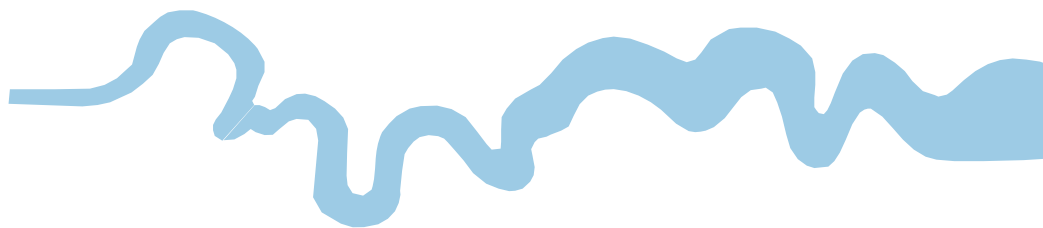
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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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