

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**65-67 Peach Street, Wokingham,
Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Daniel Bray

Site Code: PSW15/81

(SU8148 6868)

**65-67 Peach Street,
Wokingham, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Speranza Investments**

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PSW 15/81

July 2015

Summary

Site name: 65-67 Peach Street, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU8148 6868

Site activity: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 7th April – 24th June 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Bray, Andrew MUNDIN and Daniel Strachan

Site code: PSW 15/81

Area of site: c. 450 sq m

Summary of results: An area of ground reduction and a number of test pits were observed. However, no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological significance were found.

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 in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 16.07.15 Steve Preston ✓ 16.07.15

65-67 Peach Street, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Daniel Bray

Report 15/81

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 65-67 Peach Street, Wokingham, Berkshire (SU 8148 6868) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ephraim Saffron Kifle of Speranza Investments 1-5 Offord Street, London, ND1 1DH.

Planning permission (app F/2014/0538) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for the change of use and extensions to the rear of the property. The consent is subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology which requires a watching brief during groundworks.

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 of Berkshire Archaeology although the project was overseen by Ms Kathelen Leary. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray, Andrew MUNDIN and Daniel Strachan on 7th April, and 15th and 24th June 2015 with the site code PSW 15/81. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited in an appropriate designated Museum or repository in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the centre of Wokingham, on the south side of Peach Street and opposite its junction with Cross Street (Fig. 2). The site lies at c. 68m above Ordnance Datum. The land slopes down from the southwest to the northeast. The underlying geology is recorded as being at the junction of Plateau Gravel and the Lower Bagshot Beds (BGS 1946). The natural geology recorded on site was the Bagshot Beds, described as mid-pale whiteish grey, sandy clay.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a briefing note prepared by Mr. Roland Smith of Berkshire Archaeology. In summary this potential stems from its location within the historic core of the town.

The place name of Wokingham has Saxon origins and it is considered that the zone nearest the parish church (in which the proposal site lies) is the most likely location for Saxon settlement remains, but as yet no finds or deposits of Saxon date have yet been found here or elsewhere in the town. Wokingham is not mentioned in Domesday Book but this is probably a quirk of the administrative set up with its entry subsumed within that for Sonning as a detached portion of Wiltshire (Astill 1978). In medieval times the settlement was chosen by the Bishop of Salisbury as the site for a planned town. The most notable fieldwork within the town took place on Cross Street just to the north west of the proposal site which revealed a succession of medieval and post-medieval buildings (Morris and Jones 1990). Several post-medieval listed buildings are located in the vicinity of the site allowing for the possibility of earlier, medieval deposits to be present.

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. Archaeological deposits that were threatened by groundworks were to be excavated and recorded.

Results (Figs. 3 and 4)

The groundworks of archaeological interest consisted of the digging of four test pits dug across the site and an area of ground reduction carried out to the rear of the building.

Test pits

Test Pit 1 (Pl. 1)

Test pit 1 was located at the south eastern end of the site and measured 1m x 0.75m x 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of concrete above 0.25m of brick rubble made ground above 0.15m of dark brown/black sandy clay made ground above the natural Bagshot Beds geology. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Test Pit 2

Test pit 2 was located in the centre of the site, towards the eastern boundary and measured 1m x 1m x 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of concrete above 0.25m of brick rubble made ground above 0.2m of

dark brown/black sandy clay made ground above the natural Bagshot Beds geology. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Test Pit 3

Test pit 3 was located at the north eastern end of the site, within the existing building and measured 1m x 1m x 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.70m of brick foundation. Natural deposits were not exposed.

Test Pit 4

Test pit 4 was located in the centre of the site, towards the western boundary and measured 1m x 1m x 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of concrete above 0.25m of brick rubble made ground above 0.25m of dark brown/black sandy clay made ground above the natural Bagshot Beds geology. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Ground reduction (Pls 2 and 3)

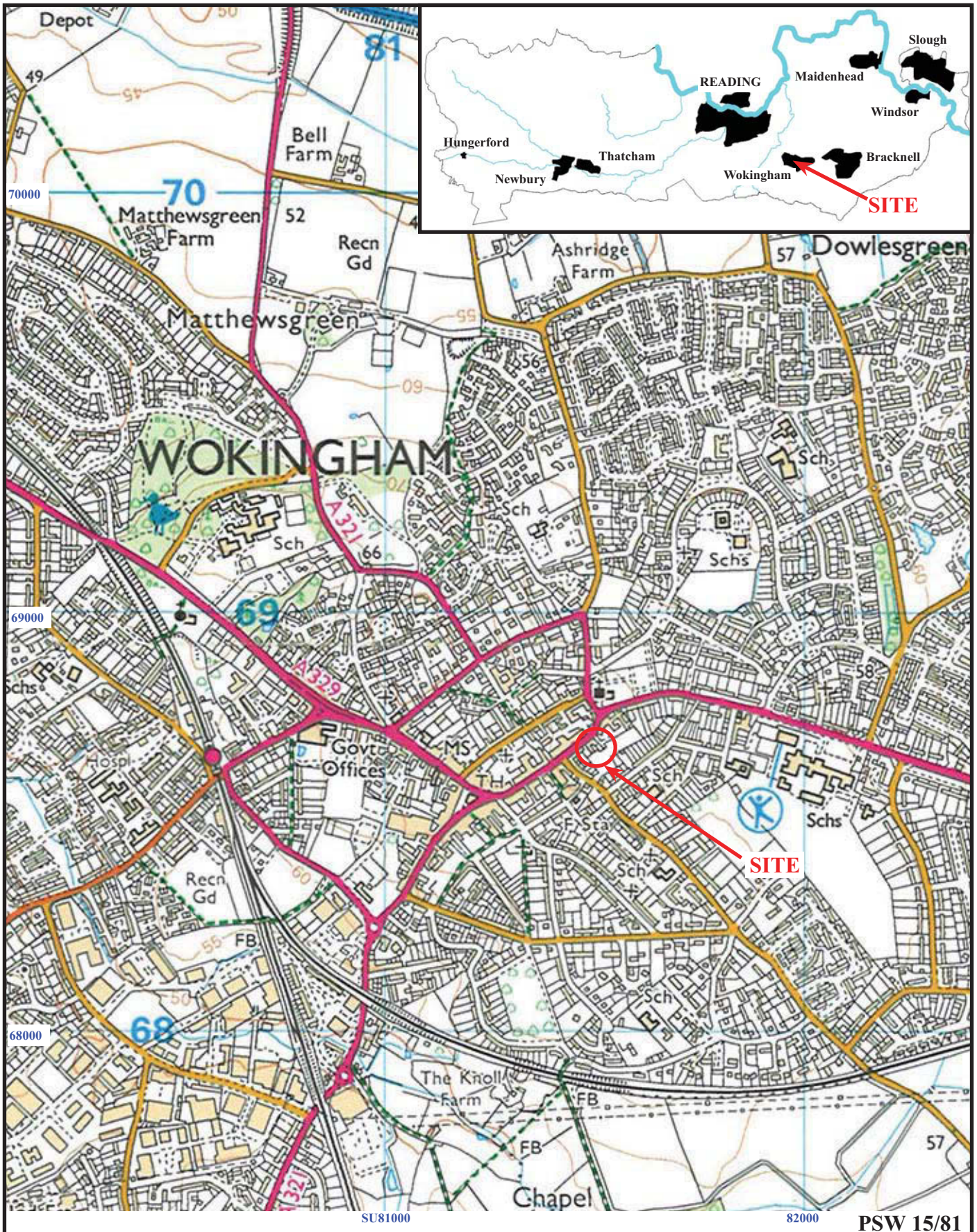
Ground reduction up to 0.82m deep took place to the rear of the building, in an area approximately 10m long by 6m wide. The ground reduction took place using a machine fitted with a toothless bucket. The stratigraphy revealed typically consisted of 0.1m of concrete above 0.1m of rubble make up deposit above 0.62m of dark brown/black clayey sand made ground. This overlay the natural Bagshot Beds geology. Natural geology was not found within the south east corner. Towards the northern end of the area a sewer pipe was aligned north east–south west across the area with an area of modern disturbance. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Conclusion

Natural deposits were exposed across the majority of trenches and test pits yet no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological significance were recorded.

References

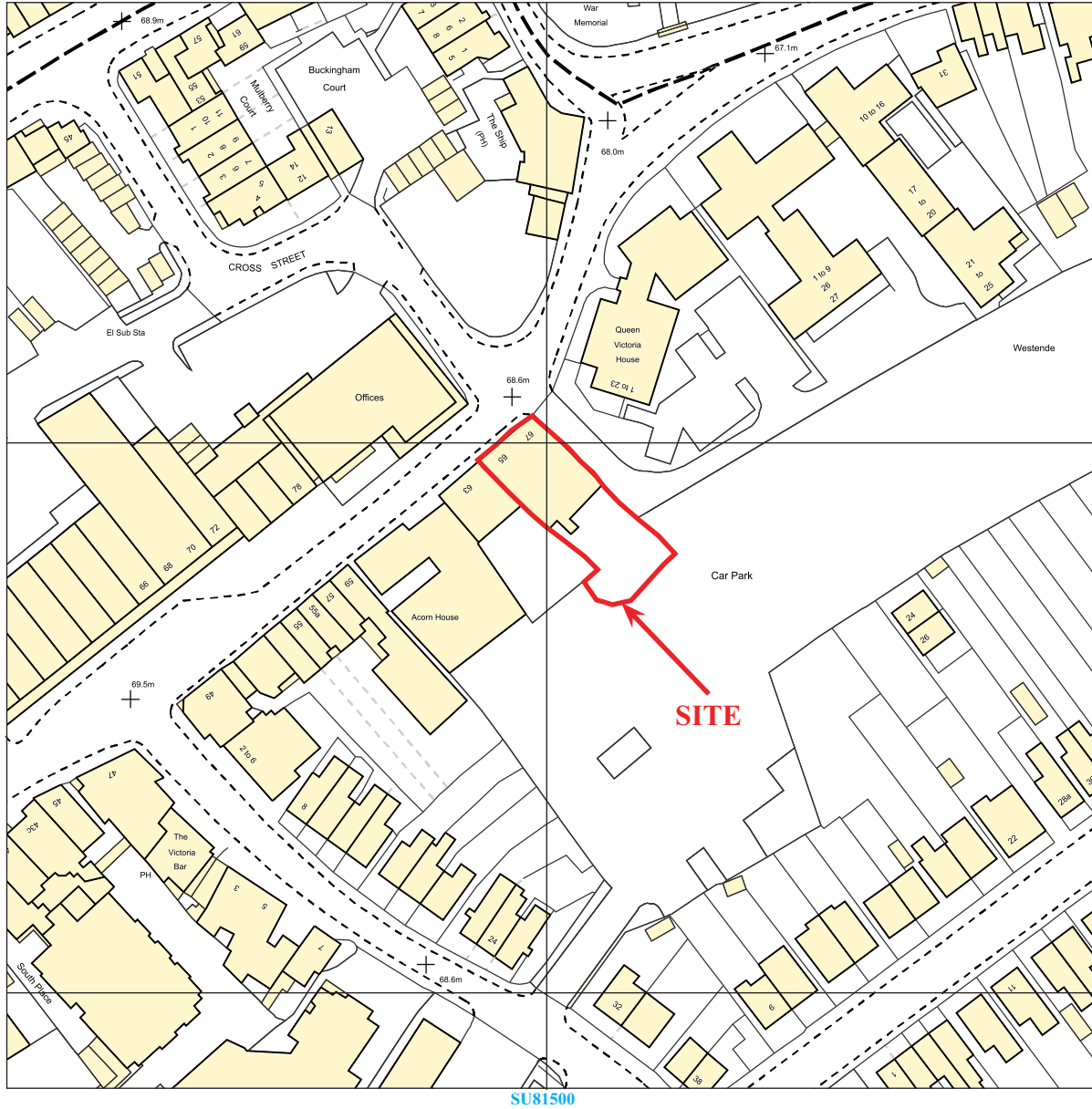
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BGS, 1946, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
Morris, E and Jones, N, 1990, 'Excavations at Cross Street, Wokingham, 1974-5', *Berkshire Archaeol. J.*, 73, (for 1986–90), 104–15
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London



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Figure 1. Location of site within Wokingham and Berkshire.

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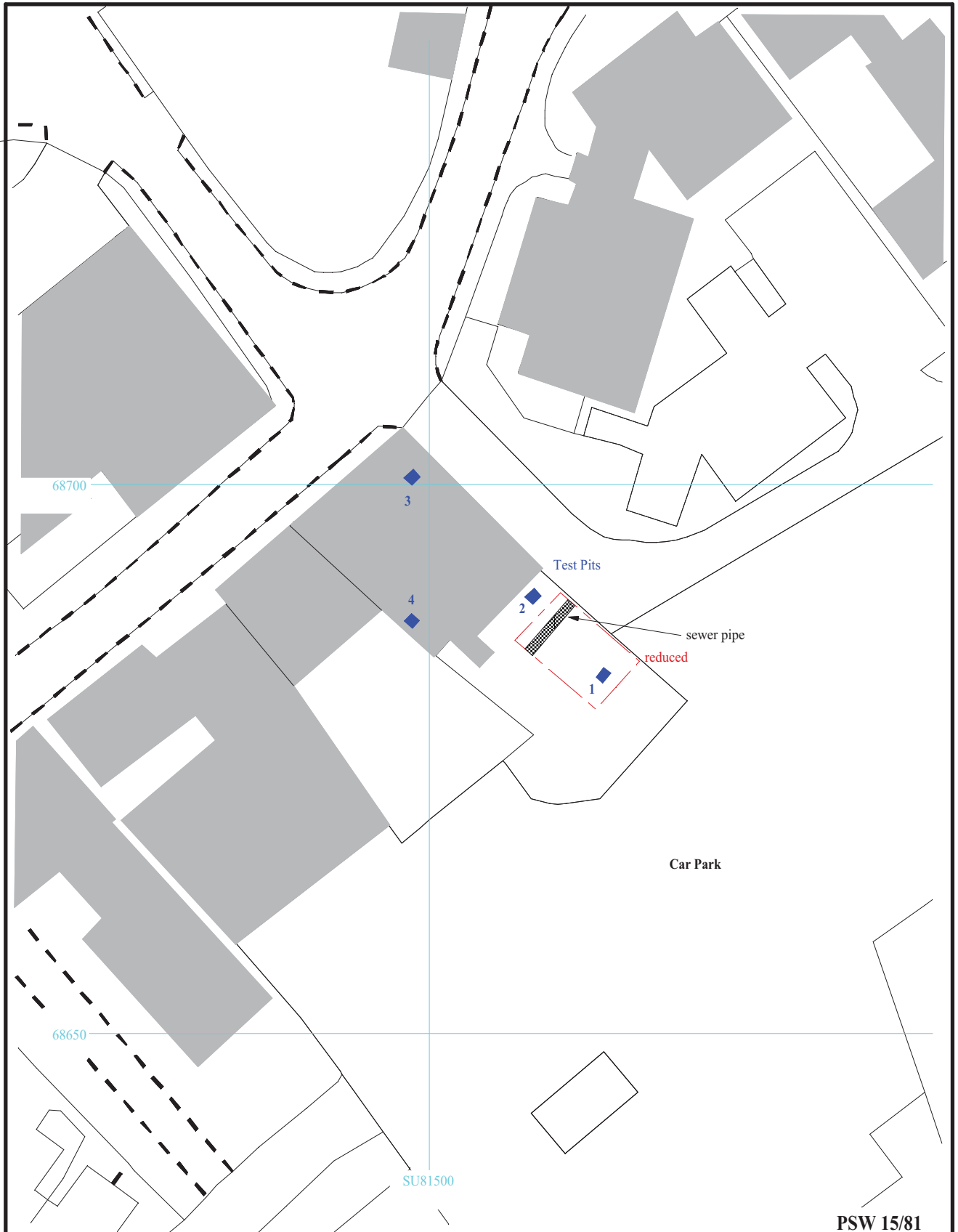
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Peach Street.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas



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SW

NE

68.05maOD

Concrete

Made Ground (Modern)

base of reduction

Browny yellow-grey silty clay (natural geology)

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Figure 4. Representative section.



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Plate 1. Test Pit 1, looking north west, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Section of reduced area, looking south west, Scale: 1m.



Plate 3. Reduced area, looking south east, Scale: 1m.

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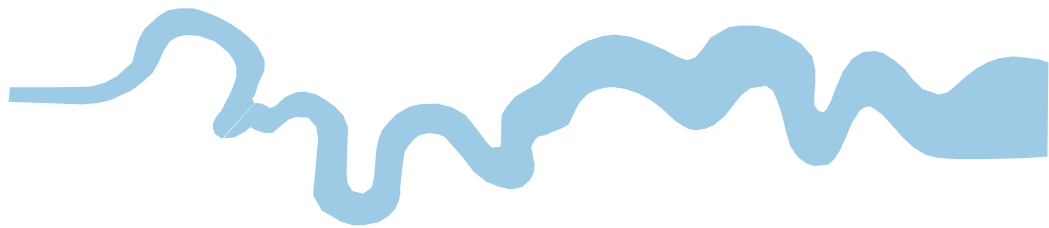
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Plates 1 - 3.

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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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