

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Stafferton Way Link Road,
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Taylor and Daniel Strachan

Site Code: SWM15/35

(SU 8960 8090)

Stafferton Way Link Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For CgMs Consulting

by Andy Taylor and Daniel Strachan

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

SWM 15/35

August 2015

Summary

Site name: Stafferton Way Link Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8960 8090

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 11th February – 18th May 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Daniel Strachan

Site code: SWM 15/35

Area of site: c 1km long

Summary of results: No deposits or finds of archaeological interest were observed. A 19th / 20th century wall and waterbottle (well) were the only features of any note observed.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 18.08.15 Steve Preston✓ 18.08.15

Stafferton Way Link Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report 15/35

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the Stafferton Way Link Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU 8960 8090) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sally Dicks of CgMs Consulting on behalf of The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Peter Brett Associates LLP.

Planning permission has been granted (14/00165) by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of a new bridge and roundabout as part of the Stafferton Way Link Road development. This includes a condition (19) relating to archaeology requiring a watching brief during the works.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeological Officer with Berkshire Archaeology advisers to the Royal Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Strachan and James McNicoll-Norbury between 11th February and 18th May 2015 and the site code is SWM15/35.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with a local museum willing to accept archive material in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the eastern side of Maidenhead, extending between Stafferton Way at its southern end to Bridge Road at its northern end, linking up through the Bray Road/Oldfield Road intersection and crossing the West Country-London Paddington railway line (Figs 1 and 2). Much of the site passes through residential areas as well as a small stream (The Moorcut). The site lies at a height of between 22.50m and 23.50m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying geology is mapped as Shepperton Gravel (BGS 2005), which was sporadically observed across the site.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site was highlighted in a desk-based assessment (CgMs 2008). In summary, the site lies within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley on the margins of the historic (Medieval) core of Maidenhead. Numerous Neolithic and Bronze Age artefacts have been dredged from the River Thames from a number of locations close to the site and it is anticipated that contemporary settlement is to be found in adjacent areas. A Saxon spearhead was found near Maidenhead railway station. The majority of the site probably lay within agricultural land throughout the Post-Medieval period. A section of the 18th century Cookham to Bray Canal crossed the site in the vicinity of the Forlease Road/Oldfield Road junction. Therefore, the in-filled remains of the 18th century navigable water course may survive within the site.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was, so far as safely possible, to record and excavate any features encountered during the course of ground reduction and determine the character, quality and date of these features.

Specific objectives of the watching brief were:

- to determine the presence of any palaeochannels and/or deposits of palaeoenvironmental interest;
- to establish the presence of the former 18th century Cookham to Bray canal;
- to establish the presence of evidence for medieval or post-medieval land reclamation;
- to establish the presence of archaeological remains for all periods; and
- to establish the likely impact of past land use and development.

Areas of ground reduction were observed across the site, which were reduced using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Results

Area 1 (Bridging point, Figs 2 and 3, Pl. 1)

The observations in this area were restricted due to excessive depth which did not allow for continual monitoring for health and safety reasons. That which was seen was all clearly modern made ground, possibly from reclamation.

Area 2 (Figs 2 and 3; Pls 3-4)

This area to the west of Oldfield Road and bisected by Green Lane was a relatively wide area (8m wide) stripped of turf, made ground and into the subsoil layer with cable trenches dug into this. The stratigraphy

consisted of 0.10m of turf overlying 0.20m of soil and rubble made ground overlying subsoil. No natural geology was exposed.

The area for the proposed new roundabout east of Oldfield Road was also stripped of overburden and revealed a similar stratigraphy as had been observed to the west, namely 0.10m of turf overlying 0.20m of soil and rubble made ground overlying subsoil with no underlying natural geology exposed.

A cable trench was dug along the eastern side of area 2 aligned roughly north-south, At the southern end the trench was dug through pavement and the stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of Tarmac and hoggin overlying 0.40m of rubble made ground, with modern services and drains throughout. This overlay a clinker layer overlying subsoil. This section was 0.6m wide and 0.8m deep. Further north the pipe trench was 1m deep and the stratigraphy exposed comprised 0.10m of turf overlying 0.25m of soil and rubble made ground overlying a brown clayey silt, either subsoil or alluvium. No underlying gravel natural geology was exposed and no archaeological deposits were observed.

Area 3 (Figs. 2 and 3; Pls 2, 5 and 6)

Area 3 comprised a short segment of pipe trench located beneath and adjacent to a railway bridge. The trench was 0.6m wide and 1m deep. The stratigraphy exposed comprised 0.20m of turf/topsoil overlying 0.25m of soil and rubble made ground overlying a brown clayey silt, either subsoil or alluvium. No underlying gravel natural geology was exposed and no archaeological deposits were observed.

An 1890 boundary stone at the corner of Chantry Road (Pl. 2) was not affected by the works.

Area 4 (Fig. 2; Pls 7 and 8)

This area comprised widening of about 70m of the carriageway by approximately 5m on the western side of the road close to the Bridge Street junction. A depth of c 0.5m of overburden was removed only revealing made ground and a number of services. To the west, however, The foundations of a wall were observed more or less parallel to the road and made with a double thickness of machine produce bricks with 'modern' dimensions. The bricks were roughly mortared and stood to at least 5 courses high. About 30m of foundation was exposed and as the wall appears to be contiguous, it seems that it is likely to represent the presence of a former factory or industrial unit of 19th century or early 20th century date.

To the east of the the wall a water bottle (well) was partly exposed beneath the carriage way (Pl. 8) This was circular and brick built with part of it's domed cover still in place possibly along with its extraction pipe also present. The dome had been roughly mortared The top of the dome had been removed presumably when the

road was originally constructed, and the well backfilled with modern debris. The bricks used were again of modern dimensions and of similar fabric to the nearby wall.

On the western side of the stripped area a new pipe trench had been dug – again c. 0.6m wide and 1m deep. The stratigraphy revealed was mostly only that of made ground but possibly with some subsoil/alluvium present in places.

Finds

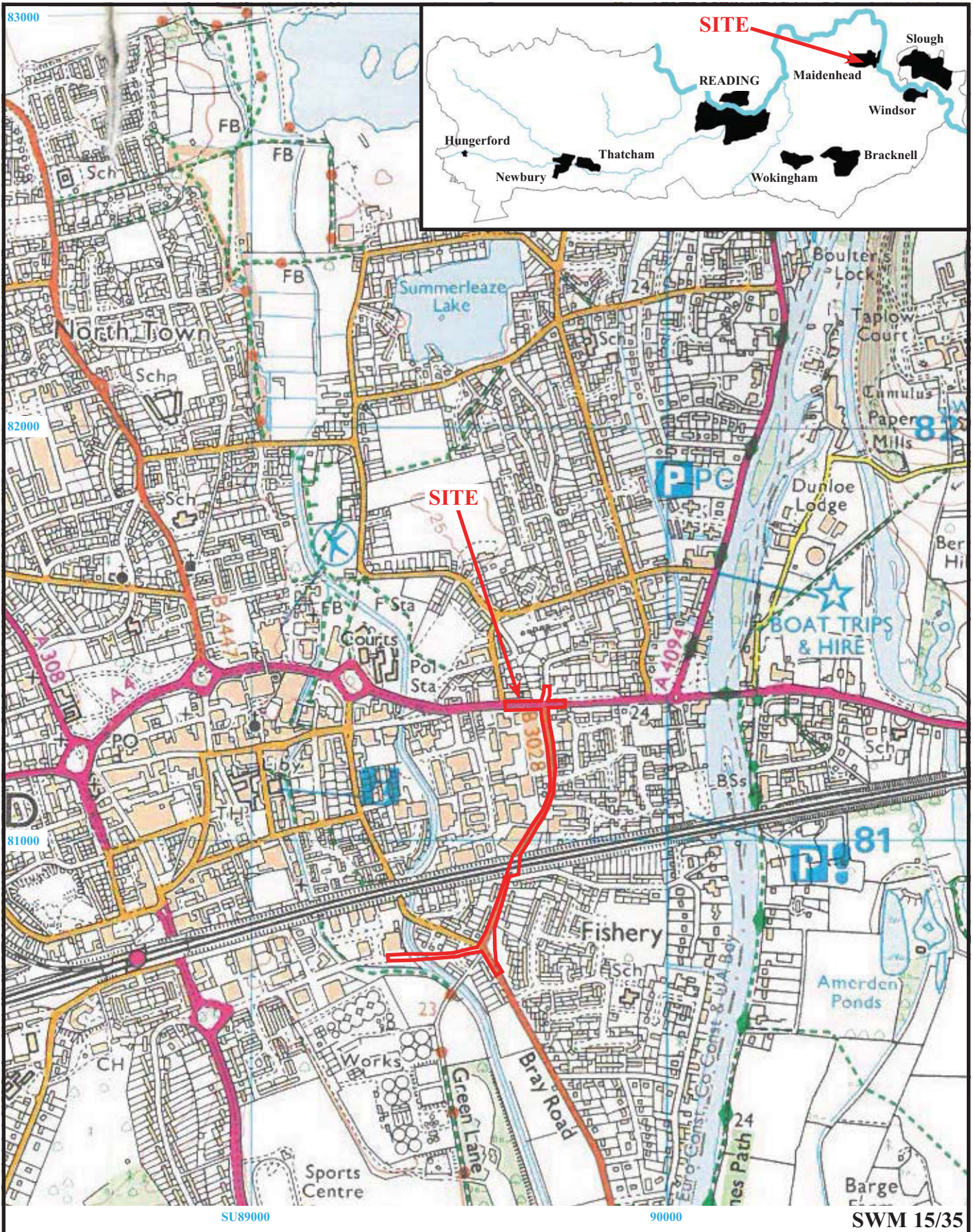
No finds of an archaeological nature were recovered during the watching brief.

Conclusion

Despite the potential for the presence of archaeology on the site, no deposits or finds were recorded during the course of the watching brief.

References

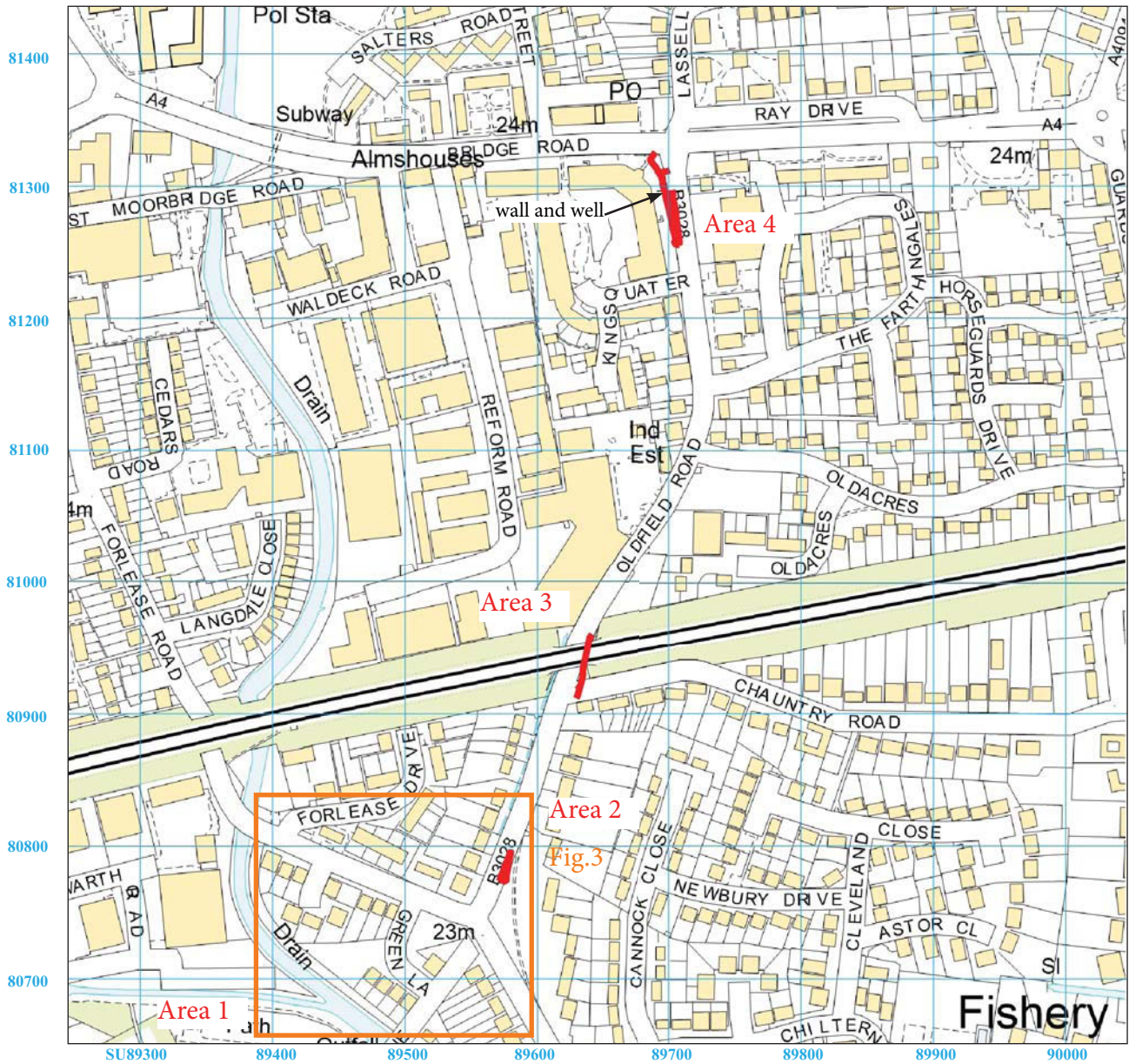
- BGS, 2005, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 255, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
CgMs, 2008, 'Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment Stafferton Way Link Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire',
CgMs Consulting unpubl rep, London
NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London



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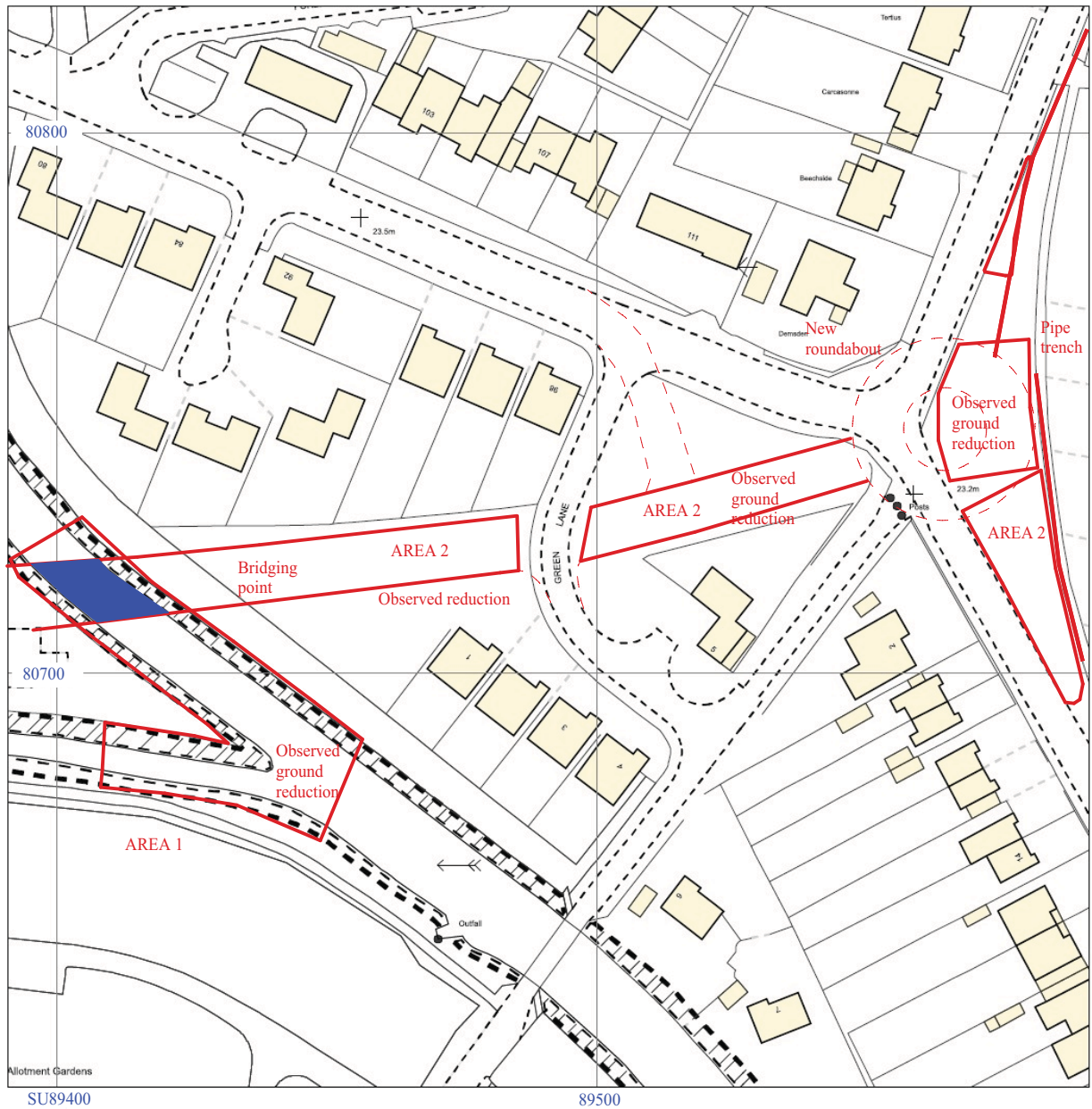
Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site of observed areas.

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Figure 3. Detail of Link Road, Area 1 and Area 2.



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Plate 1. Bridging point, looking north west.



Plate 2. Milestone at Chantry Road, looking east.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Area 2 strip, looking north west.



Plate 4. Area 2 strip, looking north south, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Location of Area 3 beneath railway bridge looking north.



Plate 6. Area 3 pipe trench, looking east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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Plates 5 - 6.

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Plate 7. Area 4 pipe trench, looking north west, Scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 8. Area 4 pipe trench, well or soakaway looking east, Scale: 2m.

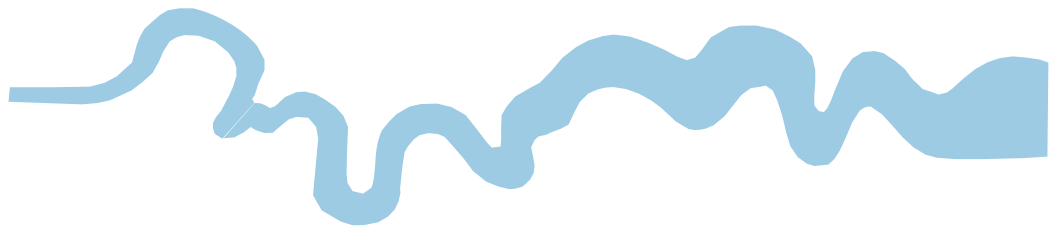
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Plates 7 - 8.

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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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