

T H A M E S      V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Camp Road, Upper Heyford,  
Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by James McNicoll-Norbury**

**Site Code: CRU14/229**

**(SP 5194 2583)**

# **Land at Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Pye Homes Group**

by James McNicoll-Norbury  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CRU 14/229

**October 2015**



## Summary

**Site name:** Land at Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SP 5194 2583

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 7th–8th October 2015

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** James McNicoll-Norbury

**Site code:** CRU 14/229

**Area of site:** 3.1ha

**Summary of results:** No archaeological finds or deposits were identified.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 15.10.15 Steve Preston ✓ 15.10.15
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# Land at Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury

**Report 14/229c**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire (SP 5194 2583) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr Stuart Wright of Pye Homes Group, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1HZ.

Planning permission is to be sought from Cherwell District Council for the construction of new housing on the plot of land north of Camp Road at Upper Heyford. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a field evaluation has been requested in order to inform the planning process with regard to potential archaeological implications of development.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District Council's Local Plan policies. In this instance, the evaluation was to involve two phases of work, a geophysical survey followed by trenching. The initial geophysical survey has already been reported on (Bray and Dawson 2015) and this report deals with the trenching element of the project. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council and based on a brief provided by him (Oram 2015). The fieldwork was undertaken by James McNicoll-Norbury and Benedikt Tebbit between 7th and 8th October 2015 and the site code is CRU 14/229. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Services in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located to the north of Camp Road on the eastern edge of Upper Heyford, which lies to the northwest of Bicester and to the south of Banbury in Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The site is comprised of generally flat arable farmland and is bounded by a paddock to the north, fields to the east and housing to the west. The underlying geology is mapped as Great Oolite Limestone (BGS 1968) which was observed in the trenches and the site lies at 118m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment for the project (Ford 2015) and a brief prepared by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (Oram 2014). In summary there is no known archaeology on the proposal site but it lies 200m west of a major Iron Age territorial/tribal boundary (Aves Ditch). Aerial photography of surrounding areas has identified several further probable Iron Age enclosure sites, with a distinctive 'banjo' form, in the surrounding area. Roman occupation is also recorded to the north of the site. A probable Saxon cemetery adjacent to Aves Ditch has also been recorded though its location is poorly recorded being either north or south of the site. The geophysical survey revealed a few anomalies of possible archaeological interest (Bray and Dawson 2015).

## **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 are:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any deposits of Iron age or Saxon date are present;
- to determine if the unlocated Anglo-Saxon cemetery in the vicinity extends onto the site; and
- to determine if any geophysical anomalies are of archaeological origin.

Twenty one trenches, each 25m long and 1.62m wide, targeting previously identified geophysical anomalies, were to be dug using a 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Identified features were to be investigated according to an agreed sample fraction.

## **Results**

The trenches were dug as intended and ranged in length from 24.5m to 30.5m and in depth from 0.28m to 0.57m (Fig. 3). All were 1.6m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A number of possible linear features were identified during the opening of the trenches that corresponded with geophysical anomalies however upon further investigation these were all revealed to be natural geological variations.

#### Trench 1 (Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned SW - NE and was 24.5m long and 0.33m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying limestone and orange brown silt (natural geology) (Pl. 4). No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned roughly E - W and was 24.5m long and 0.35m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil and 0.11m subsoil overlying natural geology (Fig. 4). No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned SE - NW and was 24.5m long and 0.36m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.0m long and 0.36m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned SW - NE and was 26.2m long and 0.32m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned S - N and was 25.0m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 7

Trench 7 was aligned SW - NE and was 24.5m long and 0.34m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 8

Trench 8 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.5m long and 0.28m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 9

Trench 9 was aligned S - N and was 26.2m long and 0.46m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 10 (Pl. 2)

Trench 10 was aligned roughly E - W and was 26.3m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil and 0.19m subsoil overlying natural geology (Fig. 10). No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 11

Trench 11 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.0m long and 0.33m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.



#### Trench 12

Trench 12 was aligned WSW - ENE and was 30.5m long and 0.32m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 13

Trench 13 was aligned SSE - NNW and was 25.0m long and 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 14 (Pl. 3)

Trench 14 was aligned roughly E - W and was 25.0m long and 0.28m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 15

Trench 15 was aligned SW - NE and was 29.0m long and 0.33m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 16

Trench 16 was aligned SW - NE and was 27.5m long and 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 17

Trench 17 was aligned roughly E - W and was 27.5m long and 0.33m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 18

Trench 18 was aligned SW - NE and was 25.0m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 19

Trench 19 was aligned SE - NW and was 28.5m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 20

Trench 20 was aligned S - N and was 24.5m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.29m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trench 21

Trench 21 was aligned SE - NW and was 24.6m long and 0.30m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological deposits were identified.

### **Finds**

No finds were recovered from the site.

## Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed that the site contained no archaeological features from any period despite the surrounding area of archaeological potential and the geophysical survey revealing anomalies that suggested potential archaeological features. The previously identified geophysical anomalies were revealed to be natural geological changes, and the distinct lack of subsoil apart from in two trenches (which were in slight dips) suggests that the site has been heavily ploughed over the years. Based on this the archaeological potential of the site is to be considered low.

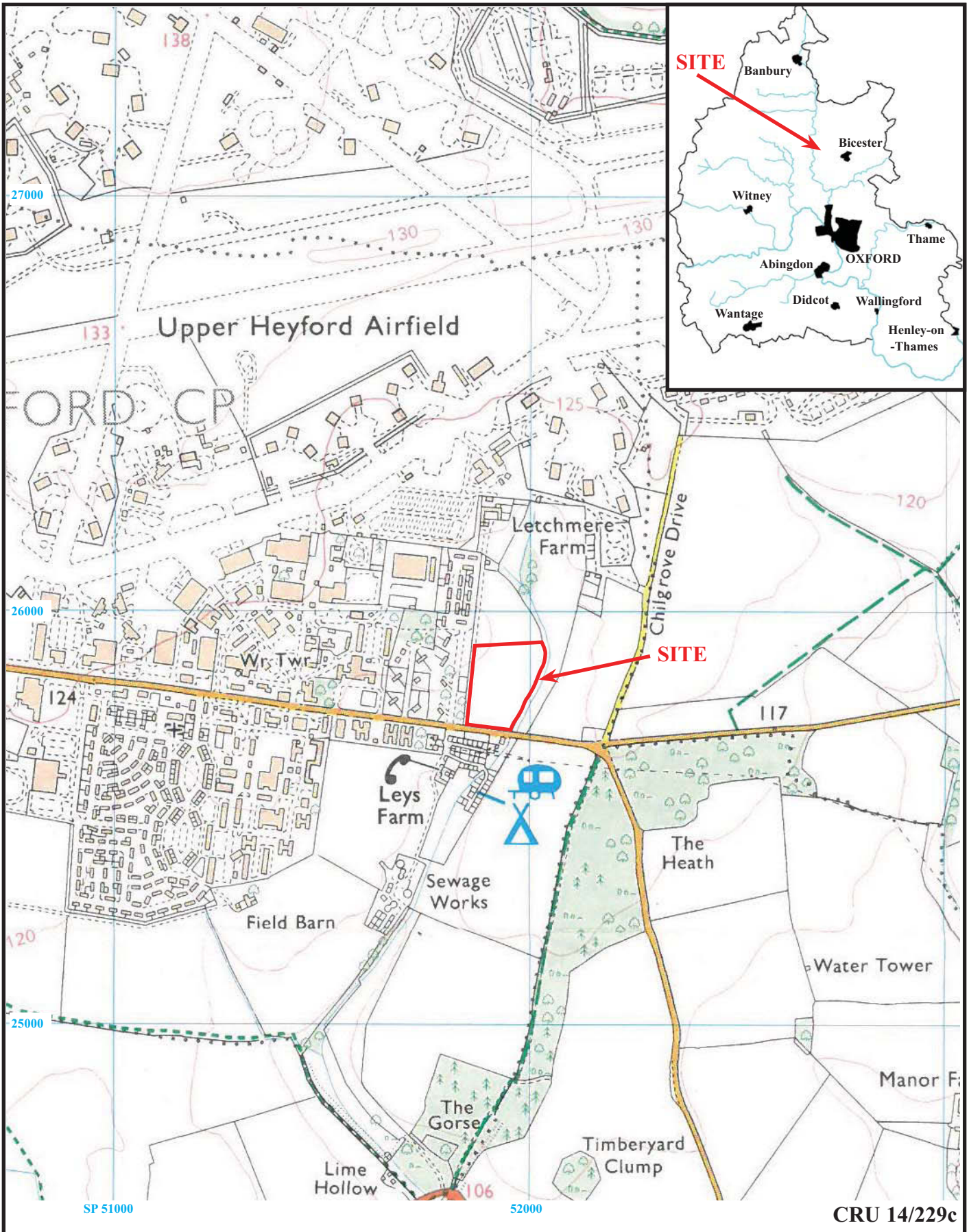
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

0m at S, SW or SE end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	24.5	1.6	0.33	0-0.30m topsoil, 0.30m+ limestone and orange brown silty clay (natural geology). No archaeology. <b>[Pls 1, 4]</b>
2	24.5	1.6	0.35	0-0.22m topsoil, 0.22-0.31m subsoil, 0.22m+ natural geology. No archaeology
3	24.5	1.6	0.36	0-0.28m topsoil, 0.28m+ natural geology. No archaeology
4	25.0	1.6	0.36	0-0.31m topsoil, 0.31m+ natural geology. No archaeology
5	26.2	1.6	0.32	0-0.25m topsoil, 0.25m+ natural geology. No archaeology
6	25.0	1.6	0.37	0-0.27m topsoil, 0.27m+ natural geology. No archaeology
7	24.5	1.6	0.34	0-0.27m topsoil, 0.27m+ natural geology. No archaeology
8	25.5	1.6	0.28	0-0.24m topsoil, 0.24m+ natural geology. No archaeology
9	26.2	1.6	0.46	0-0.32m topsoil, 0.32m+ natural geology. No archaeology
10	26.3	1.6	0.57	0-0.28m topsoil, 0.28-0.47m subsoil, 0.47m+ natural geology. No archaeology <b>[Pl. 2]</b>
11	25.0	1.6	0.33	0-0.23m topsoil, 0.23m+ natural geology. No archaeology
12	30.5	1.6	0.32	0-0.25m topsoil, 0.25m+ natural geology. No archaeology
13	25.0	1.6	0.30	0-0.23m topsoil, 0.23m+ natural geology. No archaeology
14	25.0	1.6	0.28	0-0.21m topsoil, 0.21m+ natural geology. No archaeology <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
15	29.0	1.6	0.33	0-0.27m topsoil, 0.27m+ natural geology. No archaeology
16	27.5	1.6	0.30	0-0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ natural geology. No archaeology
17	27.5	1.6	0.33	0-0.28m topsoil, 0.28m+ natural geology. No archaeology
18	25.0	1.6	0.37	0-0.26m topsoil, 0.26m+ natural geology. No archaeology
19	28.5	1.6	0.42	0-0.30m topsoil, 0.30m+ natural geology. No archaeology
20	24.5	1.6	0.37	0-0.29m topsoil, 0.29m+ natural geology. No archaeology
21	24.6	1.6	0.30	0-0.23m topsoil, 0.23m+ natural geology. No archaeology

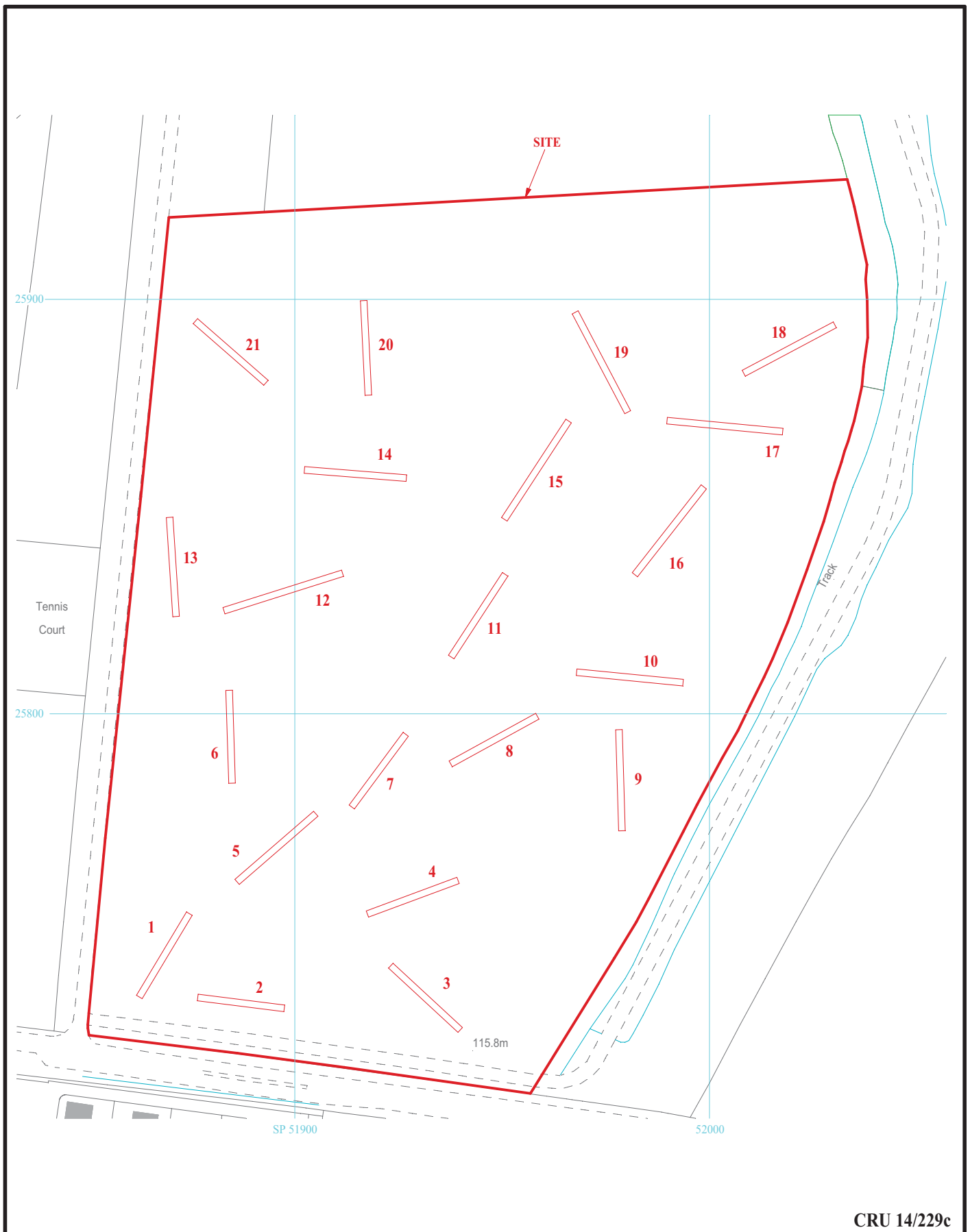


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Figure 1. Location of site within Upper Heyford and Oxfordshire

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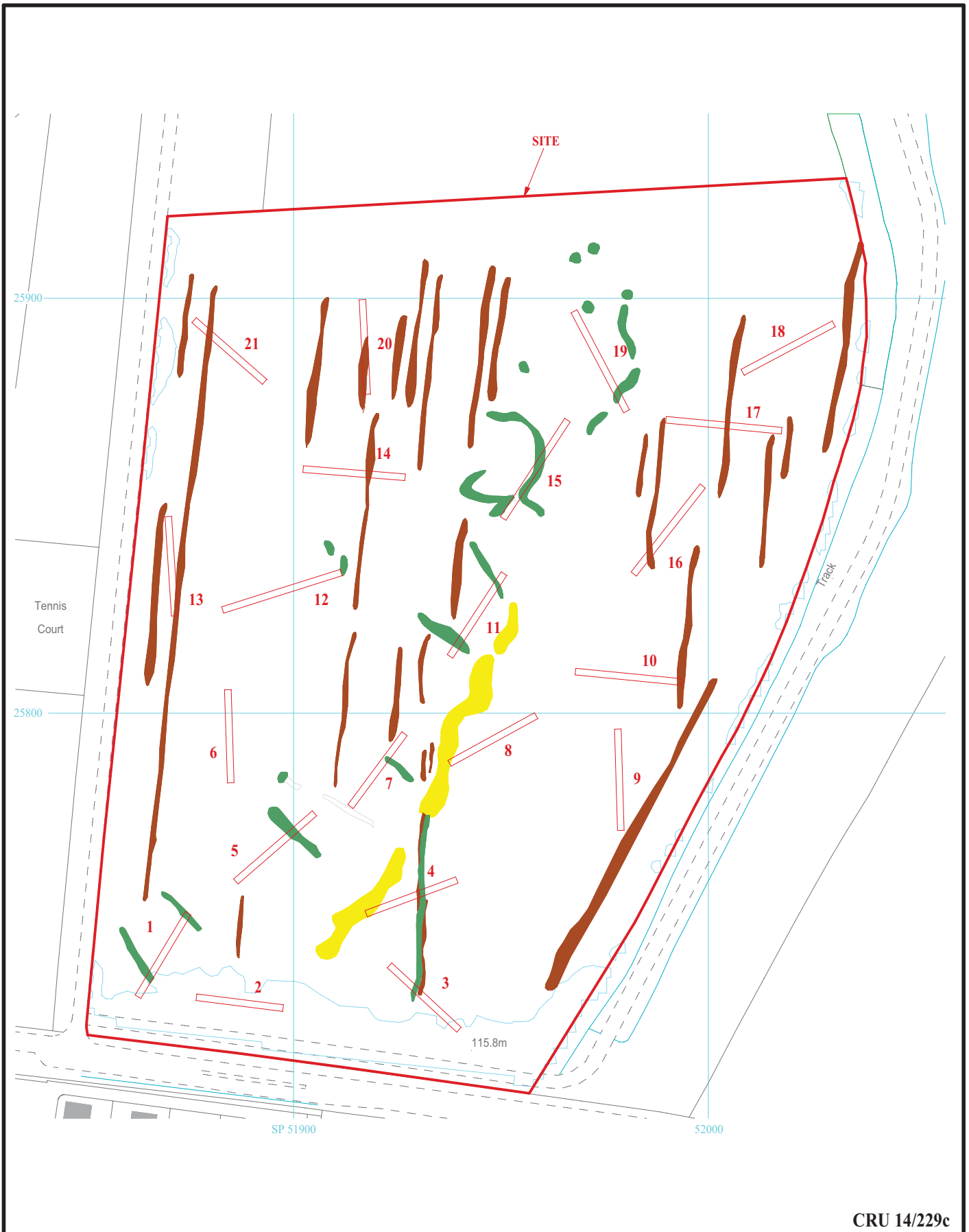
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Figure 2. Location of trenches.



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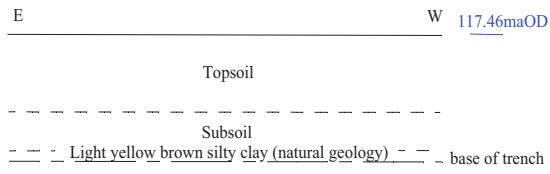
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Figure 3. Location of trenches in relation to geophysical anomalies.

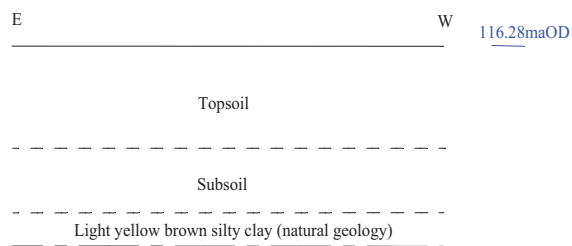


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**Trench 2**



**Trench 10**



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 10, looking west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 14, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 1 representative section, looking south east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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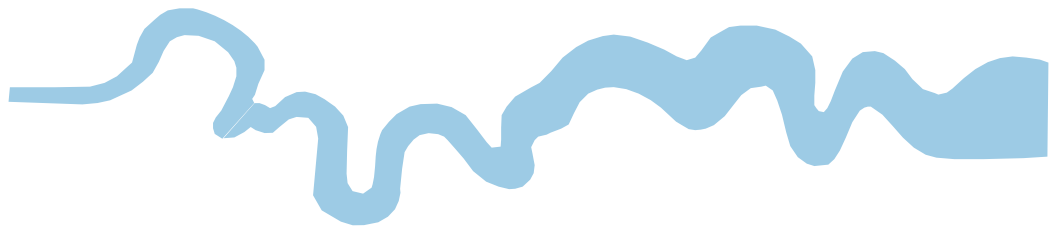
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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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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