

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**Unit 62, Suttons Park Avenue,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Andy Taylor**

**Site Code: SPA15/278**

**(SU 7365 7375)**

**Unit 62, Suttons Park Avenue,  
Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Standard Life Assurance Limited**

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SPA 15/278

**December 2015**

## Summary

**Site name:** Unit 62, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7365 7375

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 2nd December 2015

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andy Taylor

**Site code:** SPA 15/278

**Area of site:** c.2 hectares

**Summary of results:** No archaeological deposits were observed nor artefacts of archaeological interest recovered. Much of the archaeologically relevant level on the site appears to have been truncated by previous development. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

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

*This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. All TVAS unpublished fieldwork reports are available on our website:  
[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.12.15 Steve Preston ✓ 04.12.15
---

# Unit 62, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

Report 15/278

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Unit 62, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire (SU 7365 7375) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Lee Sherrington of Christopher Smith Associates LLP, Chartered Quantity Surveyors, Riverside, 8 Lower Teddington Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 4EZ on behalf of Standard Life Assurance Limited, 1 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2LL.

Planning consent (152354) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of a new warehousing unit following demolition of existing structures. The consent is subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology, requiring a programme of archaeological investigation in advance of development. In this instance it was determined that this would take the form, initially, of a field evaluation, based on the results of which, further work may be required to mitigate the impact of the development.

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 Ms Kathelen Leary, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor and Tom Stewart on the 2nd December 2015 and the site code is SPA 15/278. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a local museum willing to accept archive material in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on a rectangular plot of land on the eastern side of Suttons Park Avenue and lies on the eastern margins of Reading but within the Borough of Wokingham (Fig. 1). It is bounded by further industrial units to the south and west, the A329(M) to the east and the main Reading-London Paddington railway line to the north (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is mapped as Thatcham Gravel (BGS 2000) and the site lies at a height of c.43m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded for the area in general (Ford 1987; Gates 1975). Excavations on the site of the former Earley Power Station to the north-east examined a Late Iron Age/Roman enclosure complex and both Early Bronze Age (Beaker) burial and Mesolithic flintwork were also recovered (Barnes *et al.* 1997). Construction of the Great Western Railway in the 19th century and the digging of a nearby hole for ballast led to the discovery of an Early Saxon inhumation cemetery. Other finds nearby include a Roman coin and Mesolithic flint tools dredged from the Thames. Evaluation to the south-east, however, found only modern disturbance (Lewis 2011; Dawson and Ford 2011).

## **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.

Specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any Saxon occupation or burials are present on the site; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

Six trenches were to be dug targeting the proposed new structures. These were to measure 20m long and between 1.60m and 2m wide. They were dug using a JCB type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Sufficient of any archaeological deposits revealed would be investigated and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

## **Results**

The six trenches were dug as close as possible to their intended positions (Fig. 3). These measured between 20m and 21.50m long and between 0.6m and 1.40m deep.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

#### Trench 1 (Fig. 4)

This trench was aligned East-West and measured 20m long and 0.94m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.40m of gravel overlying 0.27m of loose dark brown grey soil and gravel made ground. This overlay a dark red brown clay overlying gravel natural geology.

#### Trench 2 (Pl. 1)

This trench was aligned North East-South West and measured 20.10m long and 0.97m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.60m of loose light red brown sand and gravel made ground overlying 0.37m of light brown grey sand and gravel made ground overlying natural sand geology.

#### Trench 3

This trench was aligned North-South and measured 21m long and 1m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.60m of light red brown sand and gravel made ground overlying 0.40m of light brown grey sand and gravel made ground, containing brick fragments. This overlay natural sand geology.

#### Trench 4 (Fig. 4; Pl. 3)

This trench was aligned approximately North West-South East and measured 21m long and 1.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.50m of loose dark brown grey sand and gravel made ground containing brick and concrete fragments. This overlay a light brown grey sand and gravel made ground containing brick fragments overlying sand and gravel natural geology.

#### Trench 5 (Pl. 4)

This trench was aligned approximately North-South and measured 21.50m long and 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of sand overlying 0.55m of loose light brown grey gravel made ground containing brick fragments overlying sand and gravel natural.

#### Trench 6 (Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned East-West and measured 20.20m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.60m of loose sand and gravel made ground containing brick fragments overlying sand and gravel natural geology.

## **Finds**

No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the potential for archaeology to be present, no deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed during the evaluation. For most of the trenches modern made ground was observed to directly overlie clean (gravel/sand) natural geology with no subsoil or brickearth cap present suggesting that some truncation of the archaeologically relevant horizons had taken place. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

## **References**

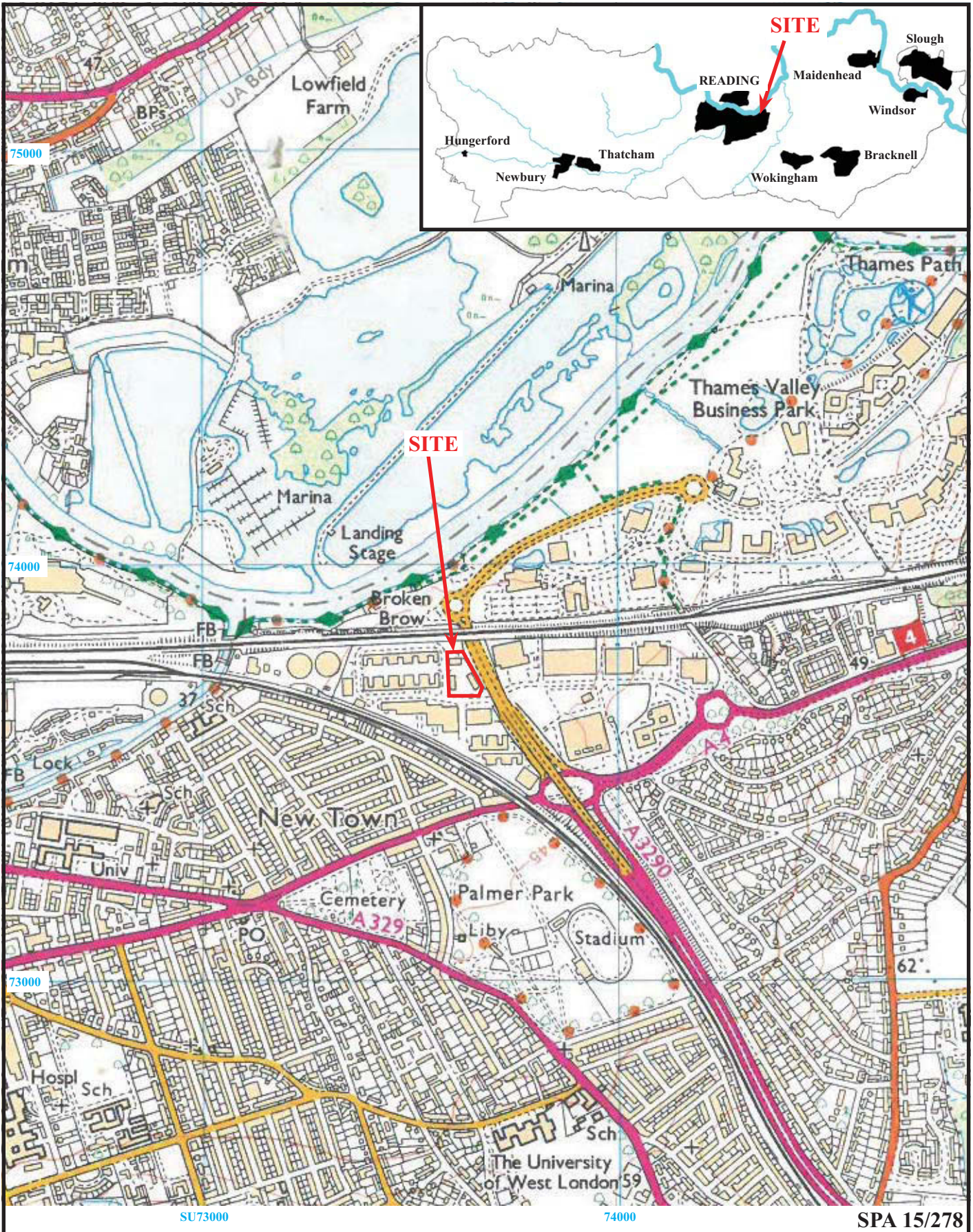
- Barnes, I, Butterworth, C A, Hawkes, J W and Smith, L, 1997, *Excavations at Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire, 1986–88*, Wessex Archaeol Rep **14**, Salisbury
- BGS, 2000, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 268, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Dawson, T and Ford, S, 2011, 'Unit 24 Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading, Berkshire, Archaeological evaluation supplementary report', Thames Valley Archaeological Services rep **11/58b**, Reading
- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap **1**, Reading
- Gates, T, 1975, *The Thames Valley, An archaeological Survey of the River Gravels*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ 1, Reading
- Hey, G and Hind, J, 2014, *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessments and Research Agendas*, Oxford Wessex Monogr **6**, Oxford
- Lewis, J, 2011, 'Unit 24 Suttons Business Park, London Road, Reading, Berkshire, Archaeological evaluation', Thames Valley Archaeological Services rep **11/58**, Reading
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	20.00	1.60	0.94	0-0.40m light grey gravel; 0.40m-0.67m dark brown grey soil and gravel made ground; 0.67m-0.94m dark red brown clay; 0.94m+ gravel natural geology.
2	20.10	1.60	0.97	0-0.60m light red brown sand and gravel made ground; 0.60m-0.97m light brown grey sand and gravel made ground; 0.97m+ sand and gravel natural geology. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
3	21.00	1.60	1.00	0-0.60m light red brown sand and gravel made ground; 0.60m-1.00m light brown grey sand and gravel made ground; 1.00m+ sand and gravel natural geology.
4	21.00	1.60	1.40	0-0.50m dark brown grey sand and gravel made ground; 0.50m-1.40m light brown grey sand and gravel made ground; 1.40m+ sand and gravel natural geology. <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
5	21.50	1.60	0.75	0-0.20m light red brown sand; 0.20m-0.75m light brown grey gravel made ground; 0.75m+ sand and gravel natural geology. <b>[Pl. 4]</b>
6	20.20	1.60	0.60	0-0.60m mid red brown sand and gravel made ground; 0.60m+ sand and gravel natural geology. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>



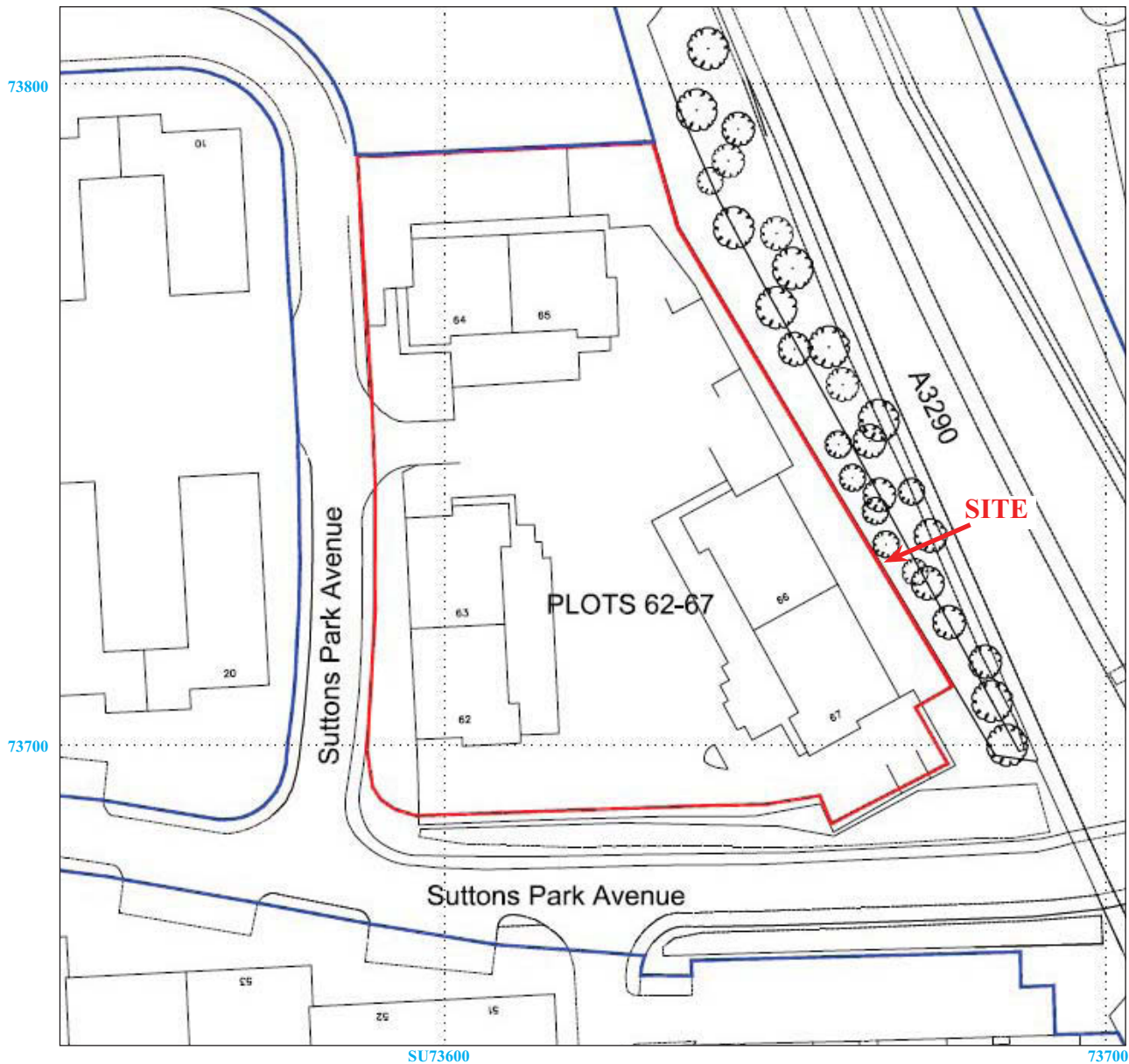


**Unit 62 Suttons Park Avenue, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2015  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 159 at 1:12500  
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES



SPA 15/278

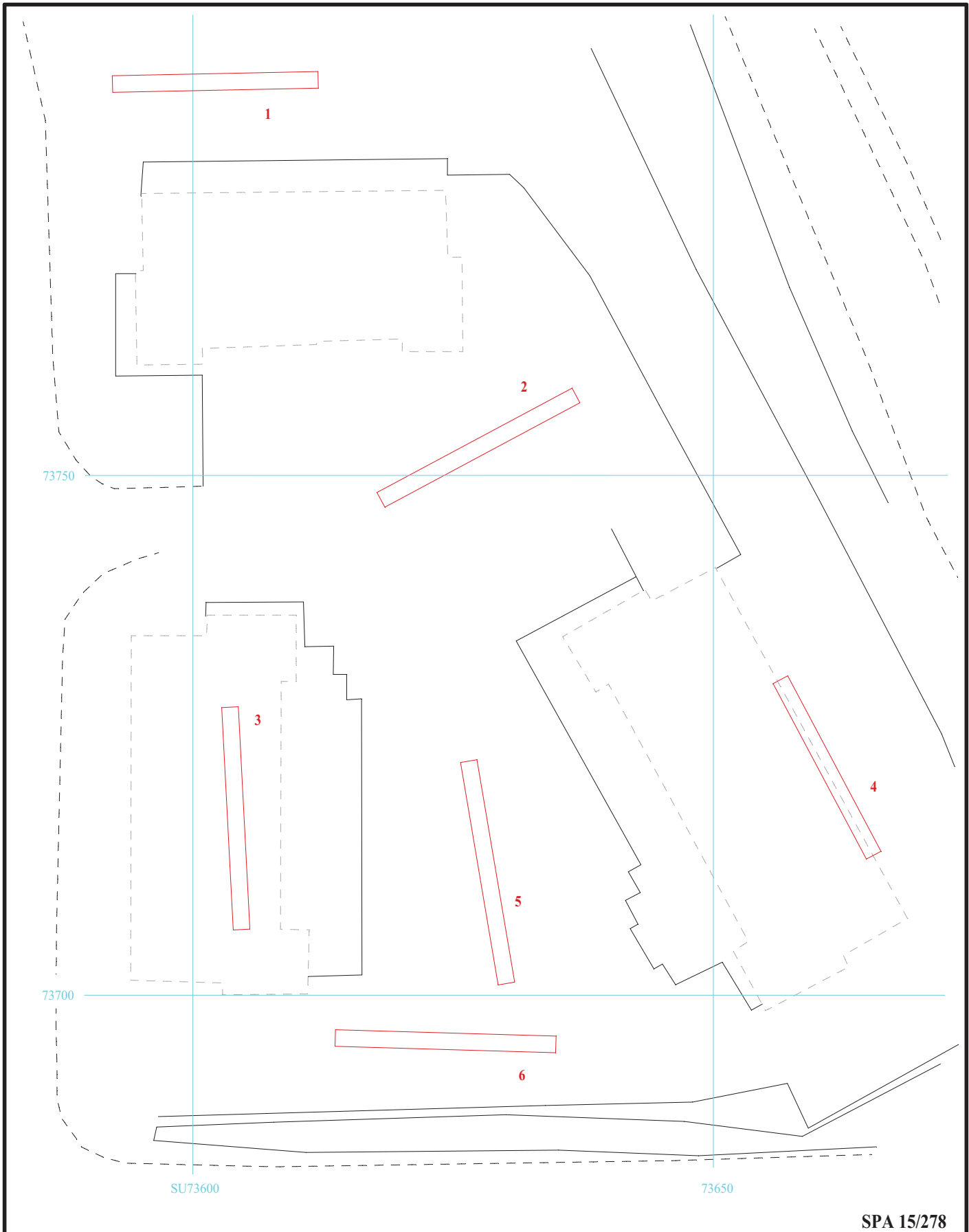


**Unit 62 Suttons Park Avenue, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2015  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Suttons Park Avenue,  
showing now demolished plots.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping under licence.  
Crown copyright reserved. Scale 1:1000

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES



SPA 15/278

**Unit 62 Suttons Park Avenue, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2015  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches.



THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES

**Trench 1**

W E 43.86maOD

---

Light grey gravel



Dark brown grey made ground



Dark red brown clay (subsoil or natural geology)



Light red brown gravel

**Trench 4**

W E

---

Light grey sand and gravel (made ground)



Light grey brown sand and gravel (made ground)



Brown sand and gravel natural geology

SPA 15/278

**Unit 62 Suttons Park Avenue, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2015  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 6, looking west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

SPA 15/278

**Unit 62 Suttons Park Avenue, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2015  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 1 - 2.**

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES



Plate 3. Trench 4, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 5, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

SPA 15/278

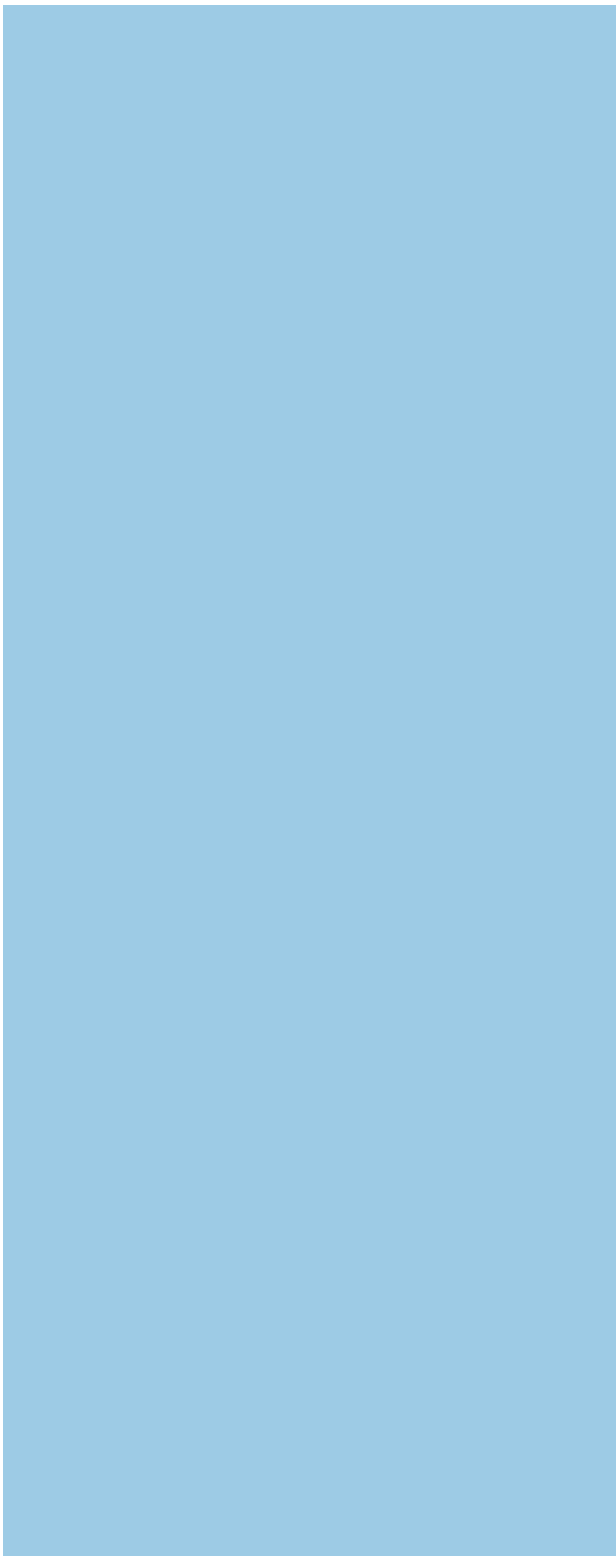
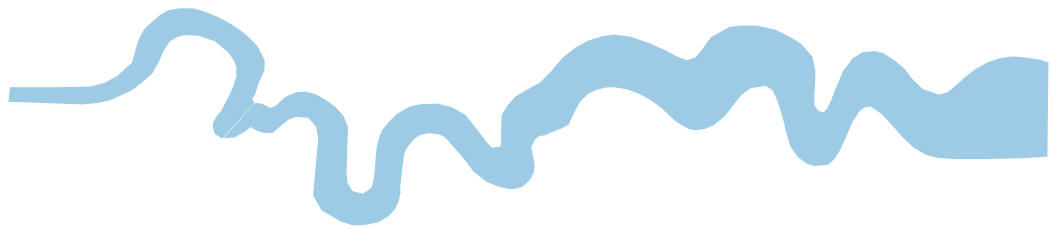
**Unit 62 Suttons Park Avenue, Reading,  
Berkshire, 2015  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 3 - 4.**

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES

## TIME CHART

	<b>Calendar Years</b>
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





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,  
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,  
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552  
Fax: 0118 9260553  
Email: [tvas@tvas.co.uk](mailto:tvas@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk](http://www.tvas.co.uk)**