

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Moreton Avenue,
Wallingford, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury and Jo Pine

Site Code: MAW13/127

(SU 5998 8934)

Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for David Wilson Homes South**

by James McNicoll-Norbury and Jo Pine
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MAW 13/127

December 2015

Summary

Site name: Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 5998 8934

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 8th December 2014–27th November 2015

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James McNicoll-Norbury

Site code: MAW 13/127

Area of site: c. 3.5 ha

Summary of results: The evaluation revealed that the majority of the site had been disturbed and truncated by the construction of previous buildings that once stood on the site. No deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were revealed and 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 with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course with accession code OXCMS:2015.44.

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Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by James McNicoll-Norbury and Jo Pine

Report 13/127b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford, Oxfordshire (SU 5998 8934) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr Andrew Lehmann of David Wilson Homes Southern, Norgate House, Tealgate, Charnham Park, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 0YT.

Planning permission (P13/S3451/FUL) has been sought from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of a range of residential and commercial units and a care facility, with roadways and parking. The consent includes conditions relating to archaeology. The results of a field evaluation have been requested to determine if the site has archaeological potential and if so, produce information to mitigate the impact of the proposed 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 policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, the archaeological advisers to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Genni Elliot, James McNicoll-Norbury and Jo Pine between 8th December 2014 and 27th of November 2015, with the site code MAW 13/127. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The c.3.5ha proposal site lies on the eastern side of Moreton Avenue, in the south-western suburbs of Wallingford, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). It consisted of a large warehouse structure which covered the majority of the area and which was bordered on all sides by concrete and gravel hard standing with a mound of spoil and trees in the far east (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is 1st (Northmoor) river terrace gravel deposits (BGS 1980) and the site lies at a height of approximately 47m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site area has been highlighted in a desk based assessment (Dawson 2013) and in a brief prepared by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (Oram 2014). In summary the site occupies a large parcel of land in the hinterland of the historic town of Wallingford (Keates-Rohan and Roffe 2009; Preston 2012; Christie et al 2013). While cartographic evidence shows that the site lay outside the town until the second half of the 20th century, the high volume of archaeological finds and sites recorded in the area, including Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and medieval, suggest that this location may have been a focus for early settlement. In the 1960s the site was occupied by an engineering works with structures occupying up to one third of the site area. This was replaced in the early 1980s by a large warehouse, which occupied up to half of the site area.

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 were:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any prehistoric occupation or landscape features are present on the site; and
- to determine if there are later prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval deposits present on the site.

It was proposed to excavate 28 trenches, each 25m long and 2m wide. Topsoil and any other overburden were to be removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, to expose archaeologically sensitive levels, under constant archaeological supervision. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising the integrity of any that might warrant preservation *in situ* or that might better be investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Results

Following demolition the trenches were excavated by a 360⁰-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. In the event, twenty-four trenches were excavated (Fig. 3); these measured between 9.90m and 27.60m in length, were between 2.00m and 3.00m wide and between 0.40m–1.30m deep. Trenches 1–3, 5–13, 16–21, 23–25 and 27 showed various depths of modern made ground directly

overlying the natural geology (Pls 1–4). Only two trenches (26 and 28) showed the existence of a topsoil deposit.

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

Trench 1

This was aligned E-W and was 26m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of hoggin (with bricks and concrete) 0.5m deep, which overlay the natural geology: a yellowish brown and pale yellowish brown sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 2

This was aligned SW-NE and was 19m long and 1.27m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.3m deep; above hardcore, 0.23m deep; which overlay 0.35m of redeposited gravel with brick fragments and concrete,;which overlay the natural geology: a pale brown sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 3

This was aligned N-S and was 22.5m long and 1.46m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.18m deep; above hardcore, 0.20m deep; which overlay 0.85m of made ground (comprising gravel, flints and mid-brown sandy clay); which overlay the natural geology: sands and gravels. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 5

This was aligned SW-NE and was 20.5m long and 1.10m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.27m deep; above hardcore, 0.13m deep; which overlay 0.70m of gravel; which overlay the natural geology: a yellow-brown gravelly sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 6

This was aligned E-W and was 26m long and 1.20m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.32m deep; above hardcore, 0.18m deep; which overlay 0.70m of gravel (in mid-brown sandy clay with yellowish brown sandy patches); which overlay the natural geology: a mid yellow-brown sandy gravel. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 7

This was aligned E-W and was 9.9m long, 2.7-3.6m wide and 1.80m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of hardcore, 1.24m deep; which overlay the natural geology: brownish yellow and grey shingle and sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 8

This was aligned N-S and was 25m long and 0.84m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of hardcore, 0.44m deep; which overlay the natural geology: a brownish yellow and grey shingle and sand with patchy blue/grey silty sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 9

This was aligned E-W and was 25.6m long and 1.15m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of hardcore, 1m deep, which overlay the natural geology: pale greyish brown sand and shingle. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 10

This was aligned E-W and was 18m long and 0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of made ground (including brick rubble), 0.70m deep; which overlay the natural geology: a light yellow brown silt. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 11

This was 18m long and 0.80m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of made ground, 0.80m deep; which overlay the natural geology: a light yellow brown silt with gravel. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 12

This was aligned N-S and was 19m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of made ground, 0.60m deep; which overlay the natural geology: red brown silt and gravels. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 13

This was aligned N-S and was 19m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of made ground, 0.40m deep; which overlay the natural geology: gravel in a red-brown matrix. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 16

This was aligned N-S and was 20m long and 0.7m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of made ground, 0.7m deep; which overlay the natural geology: gravels in a red-brown sand silt matrix. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 17

This was aligned NW-SE and was 19m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.56m deep; which overlay 0.72m of gravel in brownish yellow sandy clay; which overlay the natural geology. Three pits were observed at 6-8m.

Trench 18

This was aligned NE-SW and was 24.5m long and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.40m deep; which overlay 0.27m of gravel in brownish yellow sandy clay; which overlay the natural geology. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 19

This was aligned E-W and was 25m long and 0.53m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of hoggin (gravel, sand and flint), 0.39m deep; which overlay the natural geology: sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 20

This was aligned SE-NW for the first 8m and then realigned N- S for the remainder of the trench to avoid obstructions. It was 26m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of gravel, 0.57m deep; which overlay the natural geology. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 21

This was aligned E-W and was 18.8m long, 2.9m wide and 0.44m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of concrete, 0.44m deep; which overlay made ground. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 23

This was aligned N-S and was 25.6m long and 0.95m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of brick rubble, 0.45m deep; which overlay the natural geology: brownish yellow and pale greyish white sand and shingle. The trench was doglegged to avoid an obstruction. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 24

This was aligned NE-SW and was 25m long and 1.08m deep. In the NE end the stratigraphy consisted of topsoil (dark brown sandy silt and stones), 0.15m deep; which overlay 0.31m of hardcore; which overlay concrete. In the SW end the stratigraphy consisted of hardcore, 0.65m deep; which overlay the natural geology: brownish yellow and pale yellowish brown sand and gravel. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 25

This was aligned E-W and was 27.6m long and 1.3m deep. In the western end the stratigraphy consisted of hardcore, 1.25m deep, which overlay reinforced concrete. In the eastern end the stratigraphy consisted of hardcore, 1.3m deep, which overlay the natural geology: brownish yellow sand and gravel. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 26 (Fig. 4; Pl. 5)

This was aligned SE-NW and was 21m long and 1.00m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of made-ground 0.75m deep (both chalky material and a dark brown black silt with clinker, brick/tile and 20th-century transfer printed china). This overlay a mid red brown sandy silt (buried topsoil) which overlay the natural geology; a light red brown sandy silt with gravels. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 27

This was aligned NW-SE and was 25.5m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of brick rubble/hardcore, 0.45m deep, which overlay the natural geology: pale greyish white and brownish yellow sand and shingle. No archaeological features were observed.

Trench 28 (Fig. 4; Pl. 6)

This was aligned N- S and was 19m long and 0.77m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil (a dark greyish brown sandy clay overlying a subsoil (a dark yellow brown sandy silt) which overlay the natural geology; a light yellow brown sand. No archaeological features were observed.

Conclusion

The results of the evaluation show that the vast majority of the site had been truncated. This likely due to the construction of an engineering work on the site, which was then replaced in the early 1980s by a large warehouse which occupied half of the site area. No archaeological deposits were revealed and it is considered that the site has no archaeological potential.

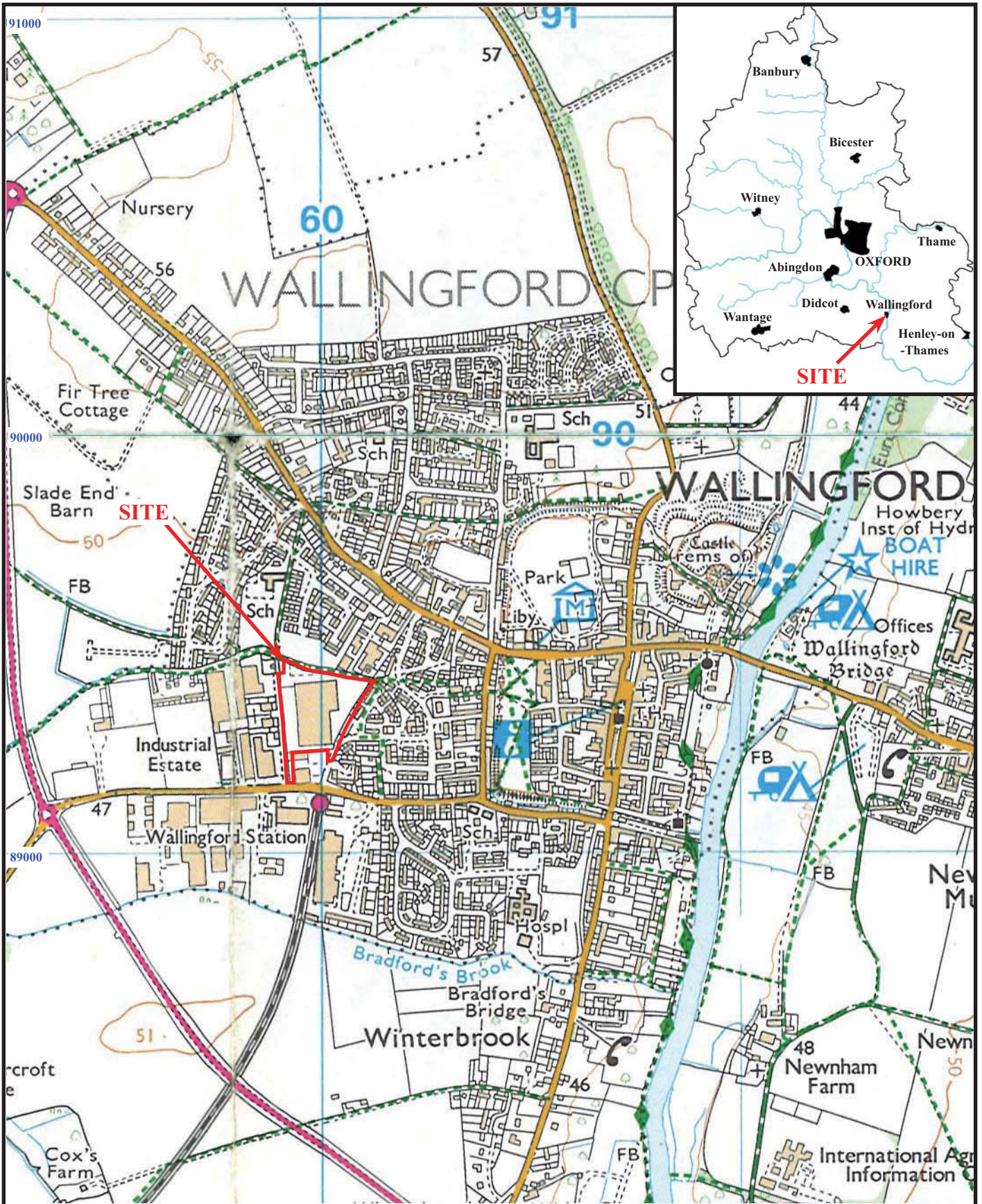
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

| <i>Trench</i> | <i>Length (m)</i> | <i>Breadth (m)</i> | <i>Depth (m)</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | 26.00 | 2.00 | 0.55 | 0-0.50m made-ground; 0.50m+ light yellow brown sandy natural geology |
| 2 | 19.00 | 2.00 | 1.27 | 0-0.88m made-ground; 0.88m+ light yellow brown sandy natural geology |
| 3 | 22.50 | 2.00 | 1.23 | 0-0.1.23m made-ground; 1.23m+ light yellow brown sandy and gravel natural geology |
| 4 | - | - | - | Not Dug |
| 5 | 20.50 | 2.00 | 1.10 | 0-1.10m made-ground; 1.10m+ mid yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology [PI. 1] |
| 6 | 26.00 | 2.00 | 1.20 | 0-1.20m made-ground; 1.20m+ mid yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 7 | 9.90 | 3.60 | 1.24 | 0-1.24m made-ground; 1.24m+ light yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 8 | 25.00 | 2.00 | 0.84 | 0-0.84m made-ground; 0.84m+ light yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 9 | 25.60 | 2.00 | 1.15 | 0-1.15m made-ground; 1.15m+ light yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 10 | 18.00 | 2.00 | 0.70 | 0-0.70m made-ground; 0.70m+ light yellow brown sandy silt natural geology |
| 11 | 18.00 | 2.00 | 0.80 | 0-0.80m made-ground; 0.80m+ light yellow brown silt with gravel natural geology |
| 12 | 19.00 | 2.00 | 0.60 | 0-0.60m made-ground; 0.60m+ light yellow brown silt with gravel natural geology |
| 13 | 15.00 | 2.00 | 0.40 | 0-0.40m made-ground; 0.40m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 14 | - | - | - | Not Dug |
| 15 | - | - | - | Not Dug |
| 16 | 20.00 | 2.00 | 0.70 | 0-0.70m made-ground; 0.70m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 17 | 19.30 | 3.00 | 1.28 | 0-1.28m made-ground; 1.28m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology [PI. 2] |
| 18 | 24.50 | 2.00 | 0.67 | 0-0.67m made-ground; 0.67m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 19 | 25.00 | 2.00 | 0.53 | 0-0.40m made-ground; 0.40m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 20 | 26.00 | 2.00 | 0.57 | 0-0.57m made-ground; 0.57m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology. The trench alignment was altered to avoid obstruction at 8m |
| 21 | 18.80 | 2.90 | 0.44 | 0-0.44m made-ground; 0.44m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 22 | - | - | - | Not Dug |
| 23 | 25.60 | 2.00 | 0.95 | 0-0.95 made-ground; 0.95m+ light red brown sandy gravel natural geology. Trench offset by 0.5m to avoid obstruction at 13m |
| 24 | 25.00 | 2.00 | 1.08 | 0-1.080m made-ground; 1.08m+ light red brown sandy gravel natural geology [PI. 3] |
| 25 | 27.60 | 2.00 | 1.30 | 0-1.30m made-ground; 1.300m+ light yellow brown sandy gravel natural geology |
| 26 | 21.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 0-0.75m made-ground; 0.75-0.95m mid reddish brown sandy silt, 0.95m+ Light red brown sandy silt with gravel natural geology [PI. 5] |
| 27 | 25.00 | 2.00 | 0.45 | 0-0.45m made-ground; 0.45m+ mid red brown sandy gravel natural geology [PI. 4] |
| 28 | 19.00 | 2.00 | 0.77 | 0-0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.54m subsoil; 0.54m+ light yellow brown sand natural geology [PI. 6] |



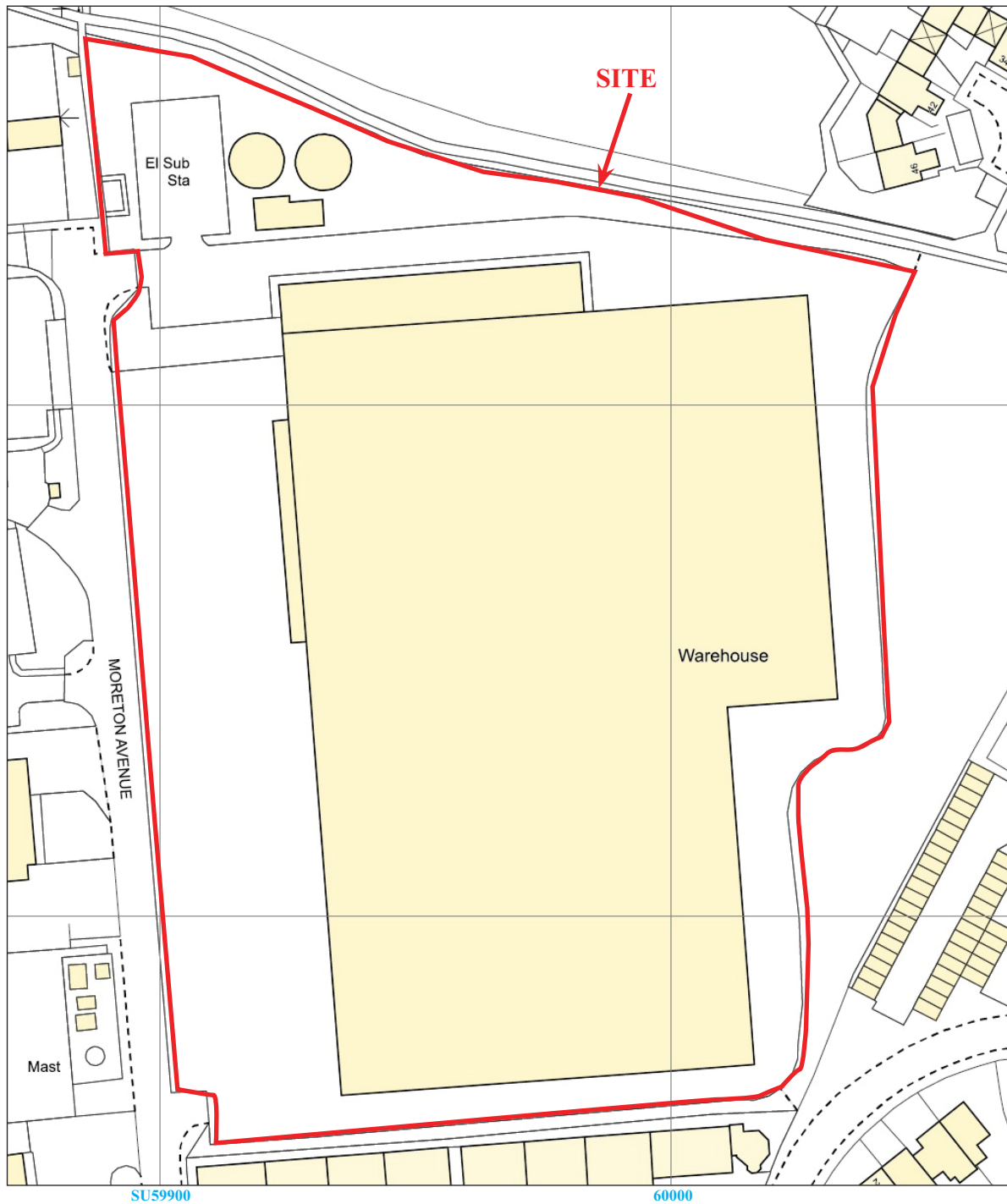
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**Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford,
Oxfordshire, 2015
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Wallingford and Oxfordshire.

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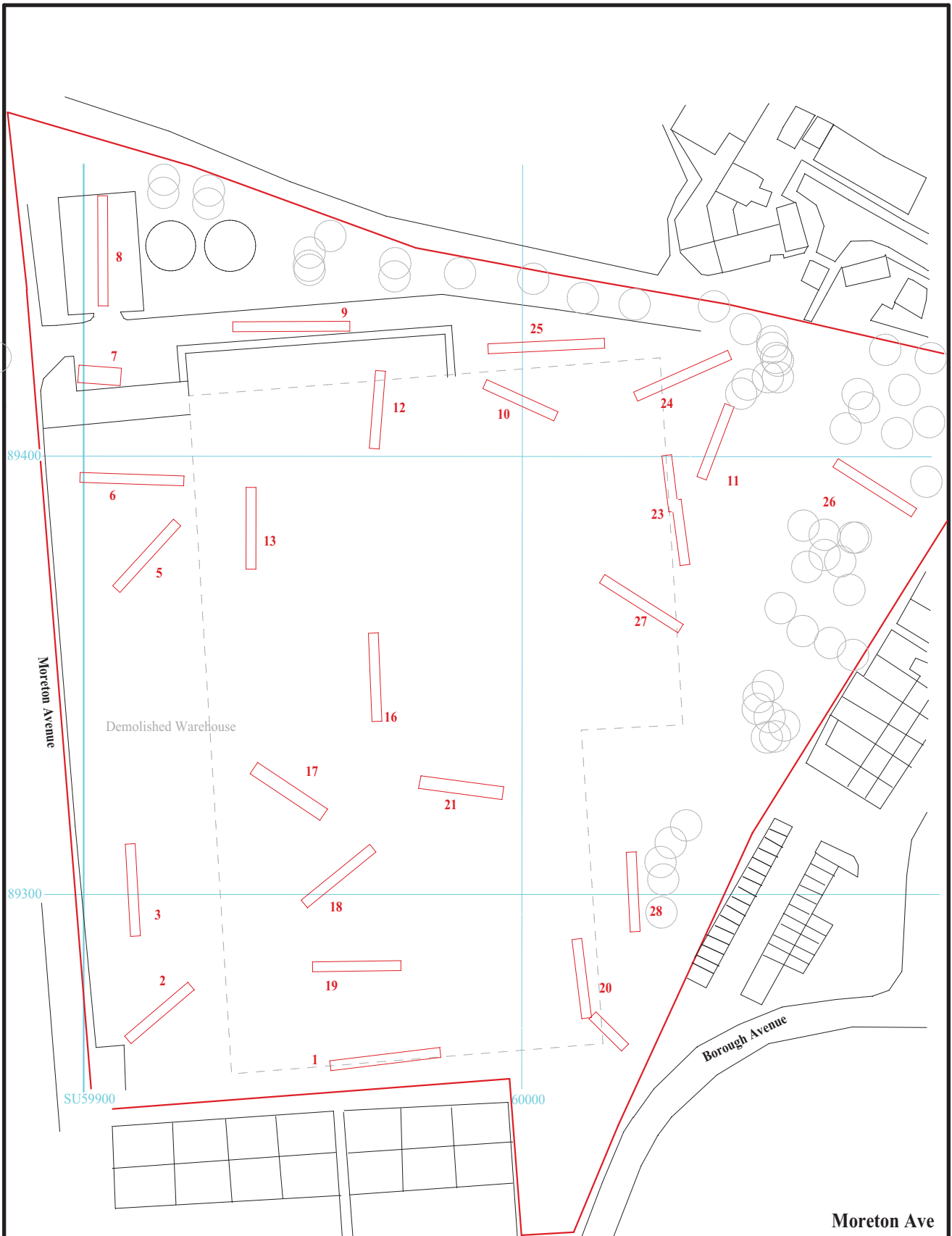


**Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford,
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Moreton Avenue.

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Moreton Ave

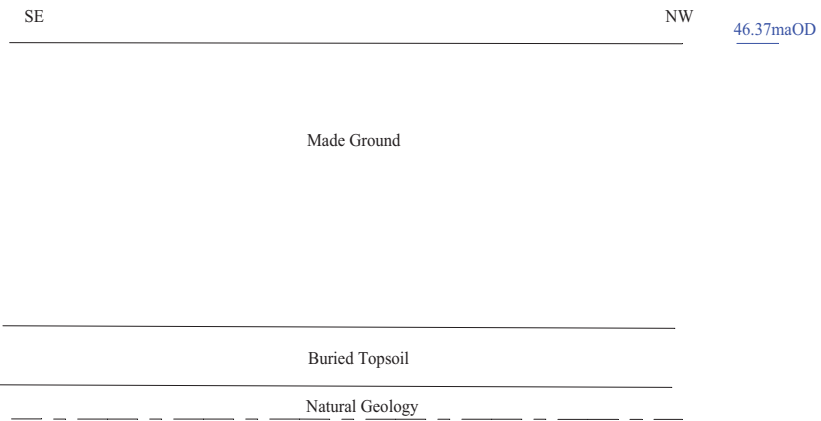
**Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford,
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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches.

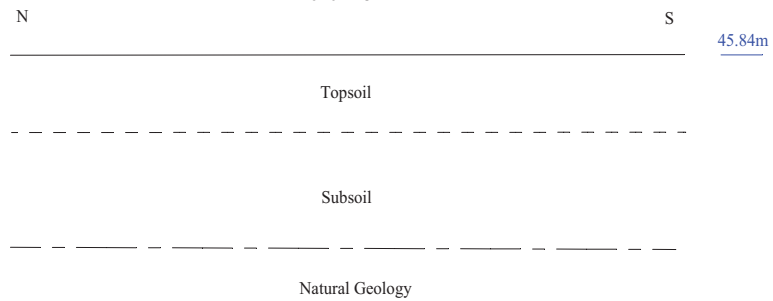


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Trench 26



Trench 28



45.84m OD

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Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 17, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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**Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford,
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 24, looking west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 27, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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**Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford,
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 26, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 28, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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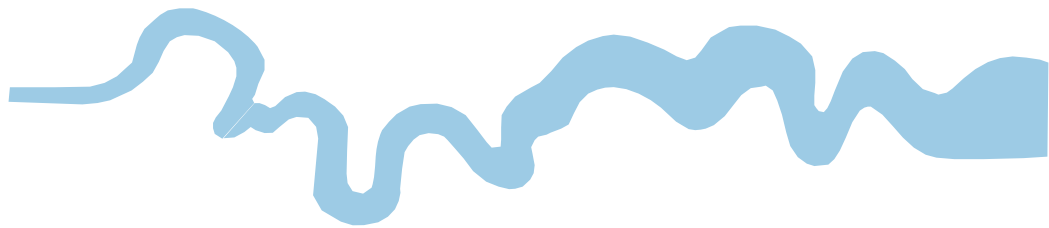
**Land at Moreton Avenue, Wallingford,
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Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 5 - 6.**

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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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