

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Murrell Cottage, Murrell Hill Lane,
Binfield, Bracknell, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock

Site Code: MCB15/271

(SU 8430 7009)

**Murrell Cottage, Murrell Hill Lane, Binfield
Bracknell, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Rectory Homes Ltd**

by Kyle Beaverstock

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MCB15/271

February 2016

Summary

Site name: Murrell Cottage, Murrell Hill Lane, Binfield, Bracknell, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8430 7009

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 15th - 16th February 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Kyle Beaverstock

Site code: MCB15/271

Area of site: c. 0.5ha

Summary of results: No finds or deposits of archaeological significance were observed over the course of the evaluation. The site can be 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 a local museum or repository (to be decided by the local authority) in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 19.02.16 Steve Preston ✓ 18.02.16

Murrell Cottage, Murrell Hill Lane, Binfield, Bracknell, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Kyle Beaverstock

Report 15/271

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Murrell Cottage, Murrell Hill Lane, Binfield, Bracknell, Berkshire (SU 84301 70089) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr George Bethell on behalf of Rectory Homes Ltd, Rectory House, Thame Road, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire HP17 8DA.

Planning consent (app 15/00209/FUL) has been granted by Bracknell Forest Borough Council for the erection of five, five-bedroom houses with associated garages, parking, and bin store. The consent is subject to a condition (30) relating to archaeology.

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, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Mr Kyle Beaverstock and Mr Joan Garibo between the 15th and 16th of February 2016 and the site code is MCB15/271. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with a local museum or repository (to be decided by the local authority) in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located approximately 0.5km south of central Binfield and 3km north-west of Bracknell just to the north of Popes Meadow (Fig. 1). The site sits at the rear of Murrell Cottage to the west, fields to the south and east, and a new housing development to the north. This former garden has a slight slope running from 78.3m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the east to 72.5m (aOD) in the west. The geology as mapped is London Clay (BGS 1981) which was observed in the trenches as a yellow brown silty clay.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within a region of East Berkshire, where the range of archaeological sites and finds is relatively well known, following earlier field survey and subsequent development-led investigations. To the north-east components of Medieval Binfield may have been revealed by fieldwalking (Ford 1987). To the north-east and east a Mesolithic site has been excavated along with an Iron Age into Roman site (Roberts 1995). Further afield to the south additional Mesolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age deposits have been excavated at Jennetts Park (Simmonds *et al.* 2009) and Middle Iron Age occupation at Fairclough Farm, Warfield to the east (Torrance and Durden 2003).

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

It was proposed to dig 7 trenches, each 1.6m wide and 25m long targeting the footprints of the new buildings and access road. The trenches were to be dug using a 360⁰-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Any archaeological deposits encountered were to be cleaned and excavated using the appropriate hand tools.

Results

Most of the 7 trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 3), however, Trench 1 was moved to the east due to its proximity to an open swimming pool and others were shifted slightly in order to avoid a tree protection zone. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 3, 4 and Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned SE - NW and was 25m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.4m of topsoil and 0.17m of greyish brown silty clay subsoil overlying light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology.

No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned W - E and was 25.4m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.4m of topsoil and 0.12m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench 3 (Figs 3, 4 and Pl. 2)

Trench 3 was aligned SE - NW and was 24m long and 0.47m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.27m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench 4 (Figs 3 and Pl. 3)

Trench 4 was aligned SW - NE and was 25m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.25m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench 5 (Fig. 3)

Trench 5 was aligned SE - NW and was 25m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.17m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench 6 (Fig. 3)

Trench 6 was aligned S - N and was 23.5m long and 0.35m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.15m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Trench 7 (Fig. 3 and Pl. 4)

Trench 7 was aligned W - E and was 25.4m long and 0.5m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil and 0.25m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation was successful in proving that the site is relatively undisturbed and that any surviving archaeology would be present. However, no finds or deposits of archaeological significance was encountered over the course of the evaluation. The site therefore is considered to have low archaeological potential.

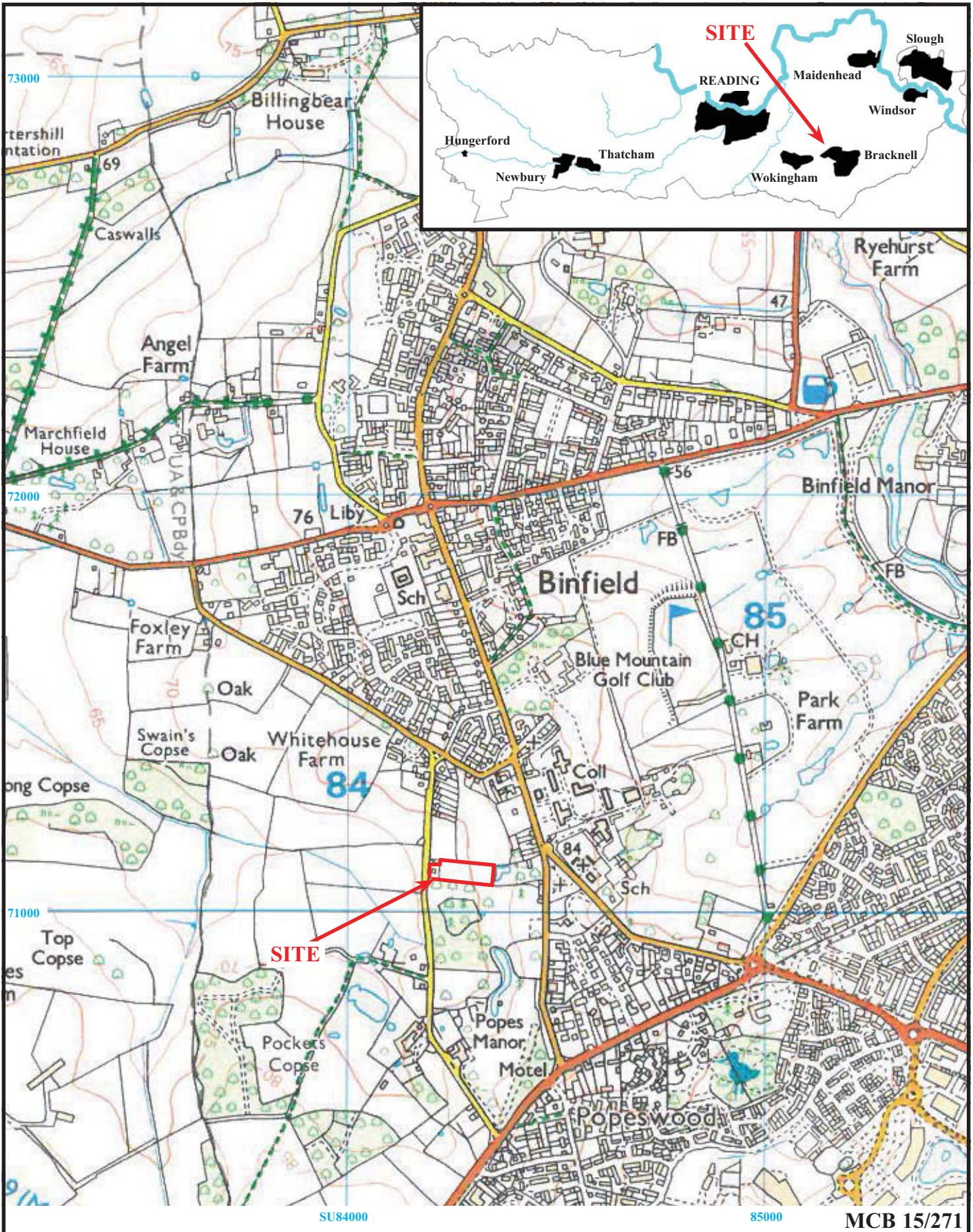
References

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- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap **1**, Reading
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- Simmonds, A, Cook, S, Biddulph, E and Score, D, 2009, *Archaeology in the Park: Excavations at Jennett's Park, Bracknell, Berkshire*, Oxford Archaeol Occas Pap **18**, Oxford
- Torrance, L and Durden, T, 2003, 'A middle Iron Age settlement at Fairclough Farm, Bracknell, 1994' in S Preston (ed), *Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon sites in Eastern Berkshire*, TVAS Monograph 2, Reading, 98–107.

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at southern and western ends

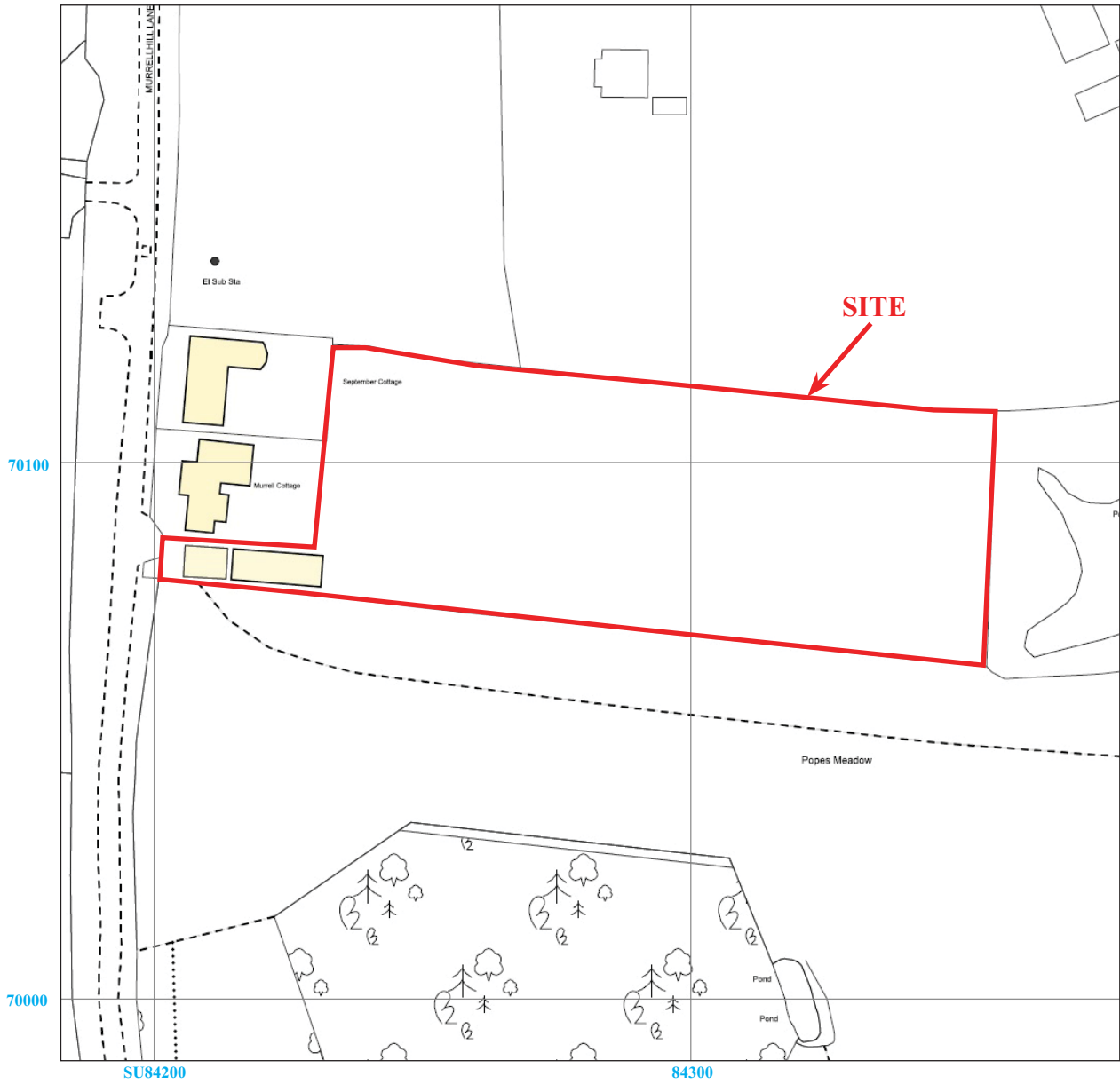
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	25	1.6	0.57	0-0.4m of topsoil; 0.4-0.57m of greyish brown silty clay subsoil; 0.57m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology. [Pl. 1]
2	25.4	1.6	0.52	0-0.4m of topsoil; 0.4-0.52m of greyish brown silty clay subsoil; 0.52m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology.
3	24	1.6	0.47	0-0.2m of topsoil; 0.2-0.47m of greyish brown silty clay subsoil; 0.47m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology. [Pl. 2]
4	25	1.6	0.45	0-0.2m of topsoil; 0.2-0.45m of greyish brown silty clay subsoil; 0.45m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology. [Pl. 3]
5	23.5	1.6	0.37	0-0.2m of topsoil; 0.2-0.37m of greyish brown silty clay subsoil; 0.37m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology.
6	26	1.6	0.35	0-0.2m of topsoil; 0.2-0.35m of greyish brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.35m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology.
7	25.4	1.6	0.5	0-0.25m of topsoil; 0.25-0.35m of greyish brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.35m+ of light greyish yellow silty clay natural geology. [Pl. 4]



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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Binfield and within Berkshire.

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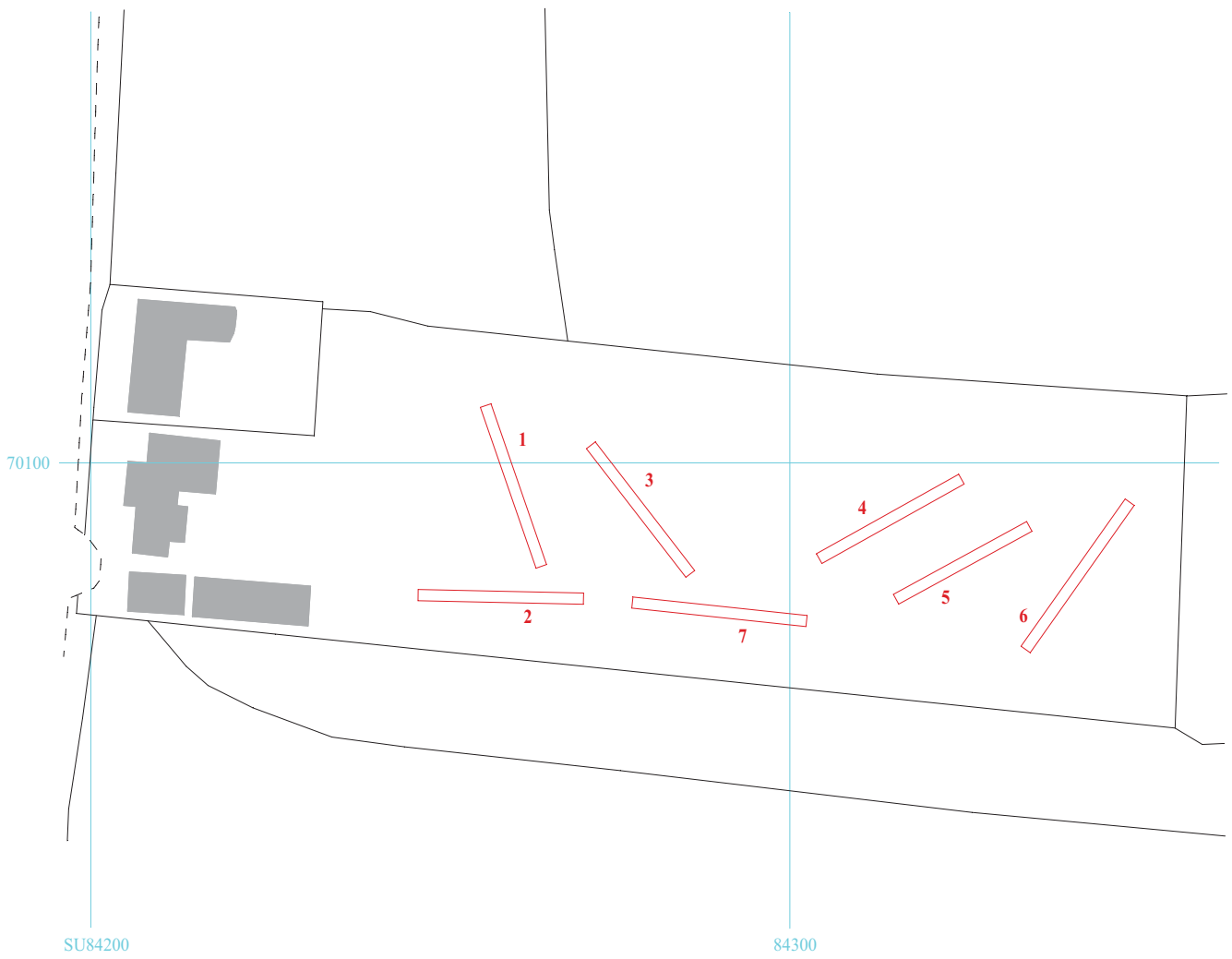
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Murrell Hill Lane.

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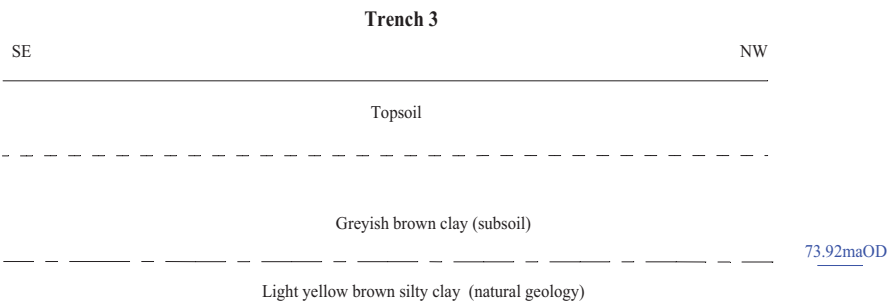
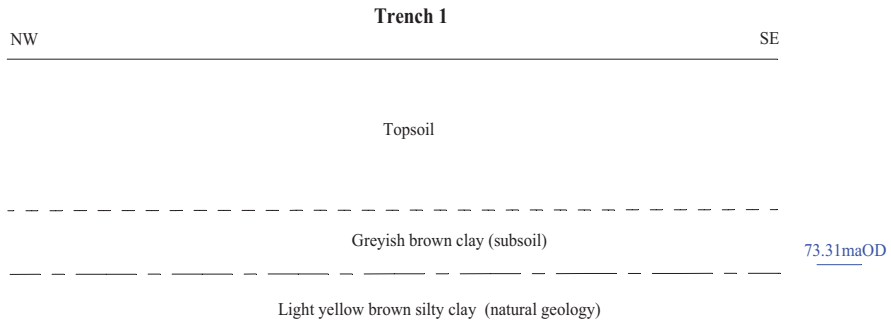
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Figure 4. Representative sections.





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



Plate 2. Trench 3, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 4, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 2. Trench 7, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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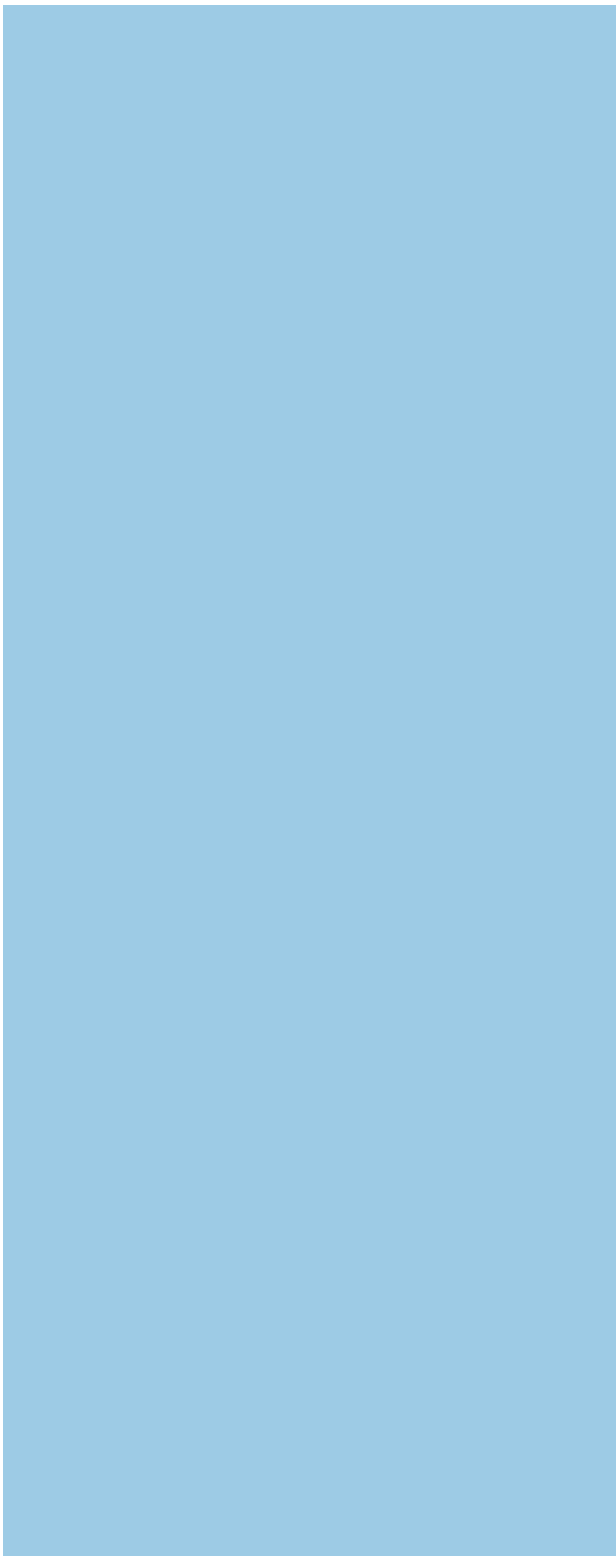
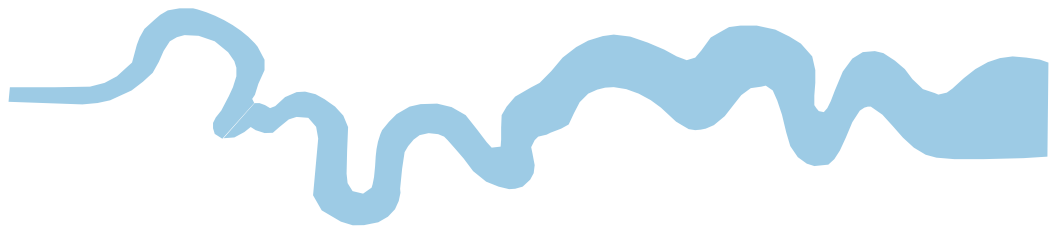
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Plates 3 - 4.**

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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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