

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**7-9 Wiltshire Road, Wokingham,
Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Lizzie Lewins and Danielle Milbank

Site Code: WLW 15/118

(SU 8151 6900)

**7-9 Wiltshire Road, Wokingham,
Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Renaissance Group Ltd**

by Lizzi Lewins

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WRW 15/118

May 2016

Summary

Site name: 7-9 Wiltshire Road, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8151 6900

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 14th April 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: WRW 15/118

Area of site: c.0.4ha

Summary of results: No archaeological features or finds were encountered. On the basis of these results, 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 at a suitable local museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 13.05.16 Steve Preston ✓ 13.05.16

7-9 Wiltshire Road, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Lizzi Lewins and Danielle Milbank

Report 15/118

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at 7-9 Wiltshire Road, Wokingham, Berkshire (SU 8151 6900) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Tanner of Renaissance Group Ltd, Brightwater House, Market Place, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 1AP.

Planning consent (152192) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for the demolition of existing buildings on the site followed by construction of a block of 33 sheltered apartments, with car parking and associated landscaping. The consent is subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology which requires that a programme of archaeological investigation take place, as a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the groundworks. This was to take the form, initially, of field evaluation by trial trenching, based on the results of which further fieldwork might be required.

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 Ellie Leary, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, the Borough's advisers on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank on 14th April 2016 and the site code is WRW 15/118. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a suitable local museum or repository (to be decided by the local planning authority) in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the east of Wiltshire Road, north-east of central Wokingham (Fig. 1). The site comprises a flat parcel of land occupied by two houses and gardens surrounded by more residential development (Fig. 2) and lies at a height of c.63m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay (BGS 2000) and was observed on site as an orange grey clayey sand with occasional gravel patches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been summarized in a desk-based assessment (Ford 2015a). In summary this potential stems from the site's location close to the historic core and parish church of Wokingham (Astill 1978). The place name of Wokingham has Saxon origins but no finds or deposits of Saxon date have yet been found. Wokingham is not mentioned in Domesday Book but this is probably a quirk of the administrative set up with its entry subsumed within that for Sonning as a detached portion of Wiltshire (Astill 1978). In medieval times the settlement was chosen by the bishop of Salisbury as the site for a planned town. Several post-medieval listed buildings are located in the vicinity. Much of the archaeological fieldwork that has taken place within the area surrounding the site has revealed little of interest, however there are some notable sites present not much further afield. Evaluation and excavation at Beeches Manor to the west revealed archaeological features dating from the Medieval period onwards and included evidence for a post-medieval manor house (Lewis and Preston 2013). Two phases of work to the north-east at Kentwood Farm revealed a small amount of evidence for the Late Roman period as well as post-medieval features (Taylor 2010; Taylor 2012). To the south-east, a site at Buckhurst Farm produced further evidence for Medieval activity within the area (Bray 2012). Finally, recent evaluation and excavation at Matthewsgreen Farm to the north-west produced evidence of Iron Age occupation in the form of two ring gullies with some evidence for small scale iron working taking place, as well as a Roman ditched enclosure complex (Ford 2015 and forthcoming).

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 work was to be carried out in a manner that did not compromise the integrity of any archaeological features or deposits which warranted preservation in-situ, or would be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific aims of the project were:

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

It was proposed to dig 3 trenches, each 20m long and 1.6-2m wide, with a 10m contingency in place should it be required to clarify the initial findings. The trenches were excavated using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Where archaeological features were present they were to be hand cleaned and appropriately excavated to an agreed sample fraction and recorded.

Results

Trenches 1 and 2 were dug as intended, but Trench 3 was relocated and shortened due to the presence of a greenhouse on the projected line of the trench (Fig. 3). The trenches ranged in length from 15.10m - 21.10m and depth from 0.48m - 0.55m. All the trenches were 1.60m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned SE - NW and was 20.90m long and 0.48m deep (Pl. 1). The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil overlying 0.17m subsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological features were encountered and no finds were recovered.

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

Trench 2 was aligned SW - NE and was 21.10m long and 0.55m deep (Pl. 2). The stratigraphy consisted of 0.34m of topsoil overlying 0.13m subsoil overlying natural geology (Fig. 4). The subsoil was noted to contain flecks of modern brick. No archaeological features were encountered and no finds were recovered.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3; Pl. 3)

Trench 3 was aligned SW - NE and was 15.10m long and 0.50m deep (Pl. 3). The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil overlying 0.17m subsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological features were encountered and no finds were recovered.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Conclusion

Despite the potential for archaeological remains and the survival of the archaeologically relevant level in all the trenches, no archaeological features or finds were encountered during the course of the evaluation. On the basis of these results, the site can be considered to have no archaeological potential.

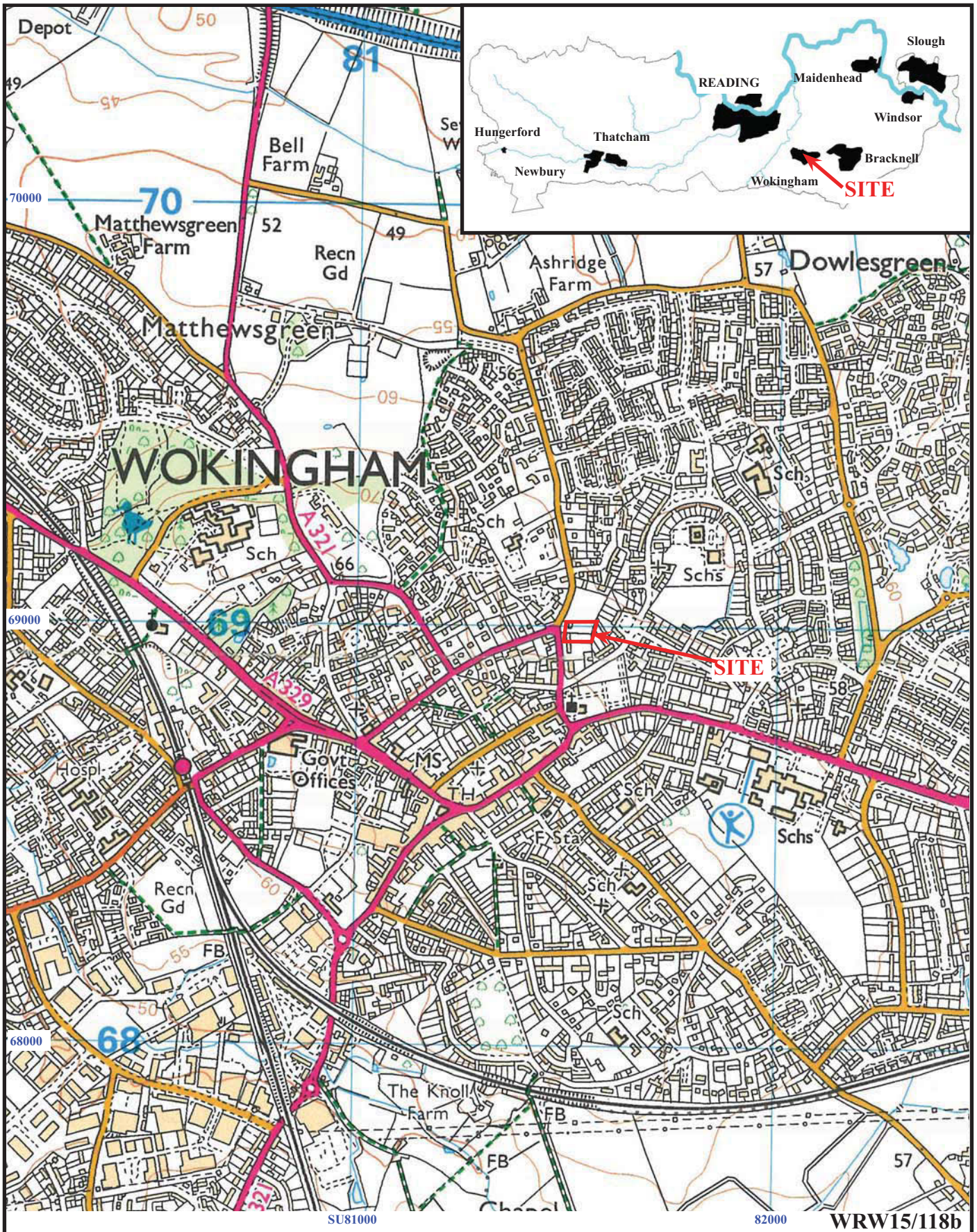
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at SE and SW ends

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	20.90	1.60	0.48	0-0.27m topsoil; 0.27m-0.44m brown grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.44m+ orange grey clayey sand natural geology with occasional gravel patches. [Pl. 1]
2	21.10	1.60	0.55	0-0.34m topsoil; 0.34m-0.47m subsoil; 0.47m+ orange grey clayey sand natural geology with occasional gravel patches. [Pl. 2]
3	15.10	1.60	0.50	0-0.31m topsoil; 0.31m-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m+ orange grey clayey sand natural geology with occasional gravel patches. [Pl. 3]

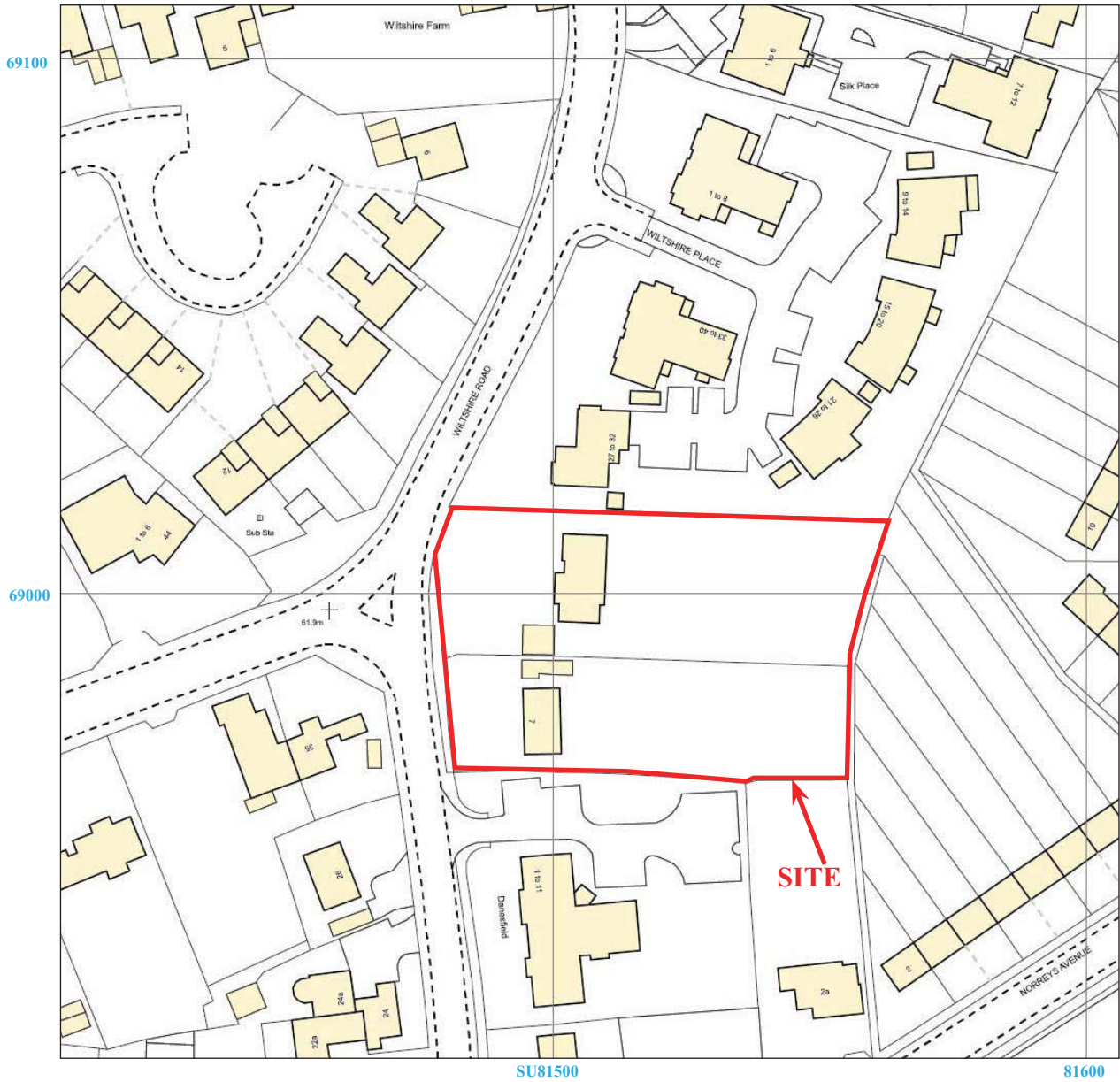


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Figure 1. Location of site within Wokingham and Berkshire.

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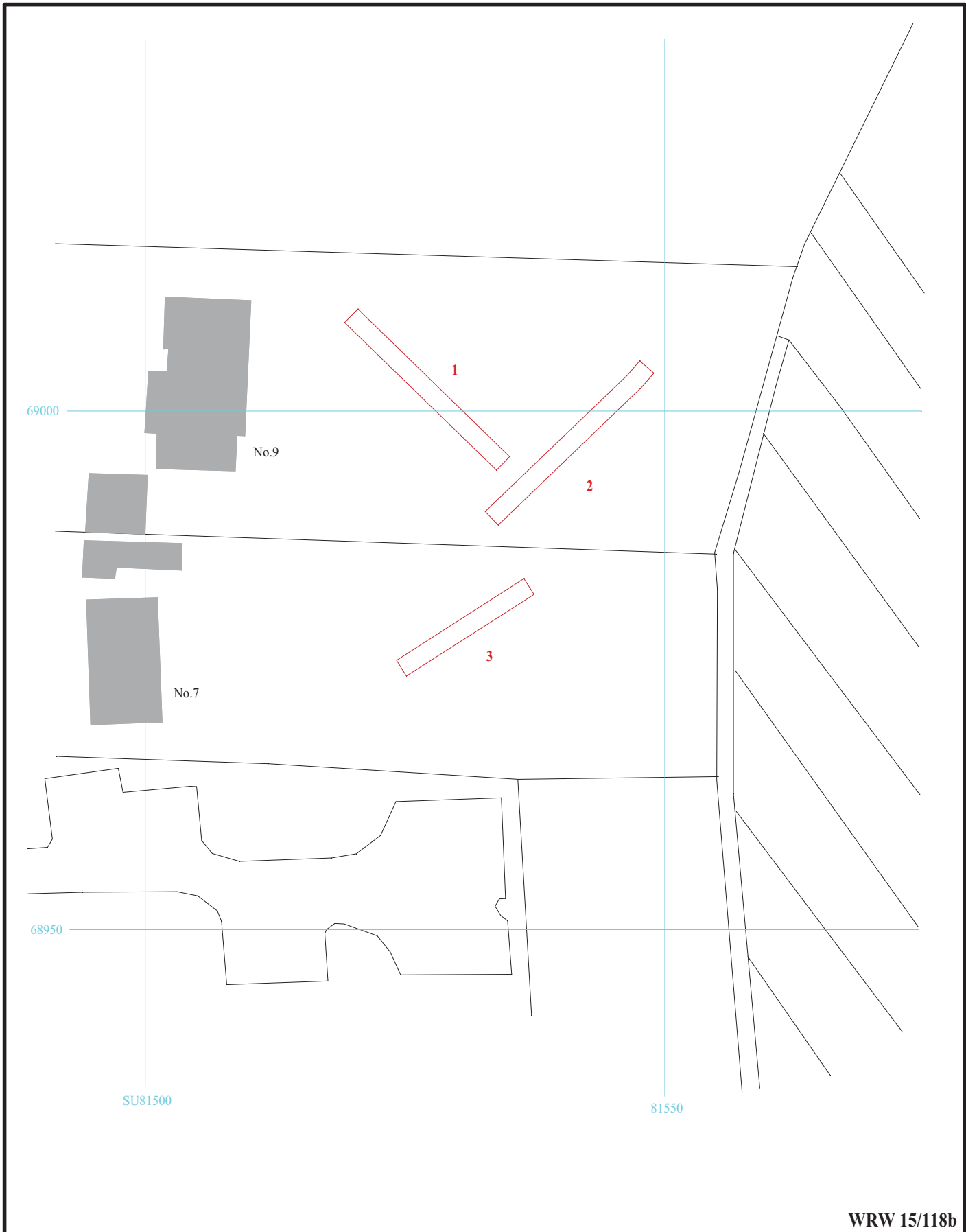


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Wiltshire Road.

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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Trench 2

NW

SE

Topsoil

Brownny grey sandy silt (subsoil)

61.65maOD

Mottled orange grey sand with flint gravel (natural geology)

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



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

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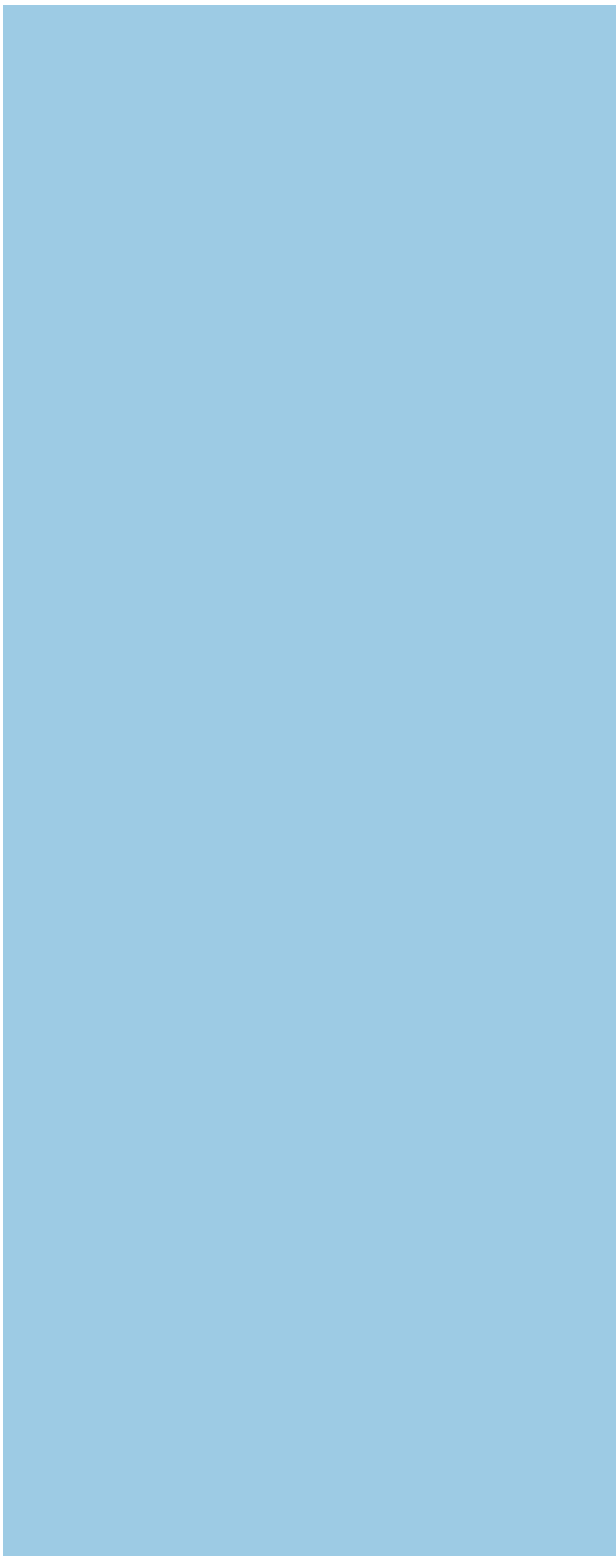
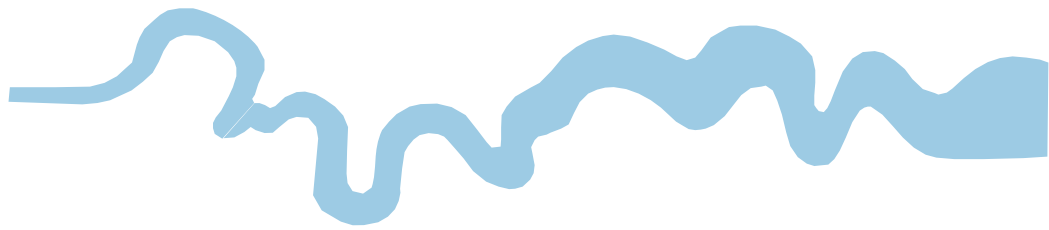
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Plates 1 - 3.**

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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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