

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



S E R V I C E S

**Henry Street Garden Centre, Swallowfield Road,
Arborfield, Wokingham, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Danielle Milbank and Andy Taylor

Site Code: HGA16/192

(SU 7566 6693)

**Henry Street Garden Centre, Swallowfield Road,
Arborfield, Wokingham, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Henry Street Garden Centre**

by Danielle Milbank and Andy Taylor
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code HGA 16/192

October 2016

Summary

Site name: Henry Street Garden Centre, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7566 6693

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 7th October 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: HGA 16/192

Area of site: c.1 ha

Summary of results: No deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were recorded. 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 a local museum willing to accept archive material in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 27.10.16

Henry Street Garden Centre, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 16/192

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Henry Street Garden Centre, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, Berkshire (SU 7566 6693) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Kathryn Farden of Pleydell Smithyman Limited, 20a The Wharfage, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7NH on behalf of Henry Street Garden Centre, Swallowfield Road, Arborfield, Reading RG2 9JY.

Planning consent (F2014/2013) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for the extension of the existing garden centre buildings including a new car park. The consent is subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology. It is the new car park area which is the consideration of this document.

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 Tim Dawson, Danielle Milbank and Ellen McManus-Fry on the 7th October 2016 and the site code is HGA 16/192. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a local museum willing to accept archive material..

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern side of the garden centre which lies on the southern margins of Arborfield (Fig. 1). The site was an existing overflow car park comprising grassed areas, gravel and rubber matting divided by wooden fences (Fig. 2; Pl. 6). The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay (BGS 2000), though patches of gravel and sand were also observed across the trenches. The site lies at a height of c.55m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the valley of the River Loddon, a topographic zone relatively rich in archaeological deposits. Field survey in the valley to the west has revealed prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval deposits (Ford 1994-7) with other sites recorded from the air (Gates 1975). Excavations in advance of mineral extraction well to the north have examined Mesolithic and Iron Age occupation sites (Harding and Richards 1993); Barnes and Hawkes 1991; Manning and Moore 2011) with excavation to the south revealing more Iron Age deposits and areas of iron production (Lobb and Morris 1993; Pine 2003; Hammond 2011). Closer to the site, two Bronze Age urns have been found c.200m to the south and various undated cropmarks are present to the north and north west. A listed building (Yew Tree Cottage) lies on the eastern boundary of the site.

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 further Iron Age and Roman deposits are present as previously recorded to the north west.
- To determine if additional ironworking sites are present in the proposal area.
- To provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig ten trenches 10m long and between 1.6 and 2m wide. These were to be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

Results

The ten trenches were dug as close as possible to their intended locations, although some repositioning was required due to the presence of fences. The trenches all measured 1.60m wide between 6.20m and 9.30m long and between 0.45m and 0.60m deep.

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 and 4; Pl. 1)

This trench was aligned NE-SW and measured 9m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.25m of subsoil. This overlay 0.15m of clinker overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 8.80m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3; Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 8.70m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.35m of subsoil overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 4 (Fig. 3)

This trench was aligned E-W and measured 8m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.35m of subsoil overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 5 (Fig. 3)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 8.50m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.25m of subsoil. This overlay 0.15m of a yellow brown silty clay overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 6 (Fig. 3)

This trench was aligned NE-SW and measured 6.20m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.35m of subsoil overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 7 (Figs. 3 and 4; Pl. 3)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 7.70m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of topsoil overlying 0.25m of subsoil. This overlay 0.10m of a yellow brown clayey sandy silt overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 8 (Fig. 3)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 8.30m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of topsoil overlying 0.40m of subsoil overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 9 (Fig. 3: Pl. 4)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 9.30m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.35m of subsoil overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Trench 10 (Fig. 3: Pl. 5)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 7.50m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of topsoil overlying 0.20m of subsoil. This overlay 0.25m of a yellow brown clayey sandy silt overlying clay and gravel natural geology.

Finds

No finds of an archaeological nature were recovered during the evaluation.

Conclusion

Despite the sites potential for archaeology being present, no deposits or finds of an archaeological were observed during the evaluation. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

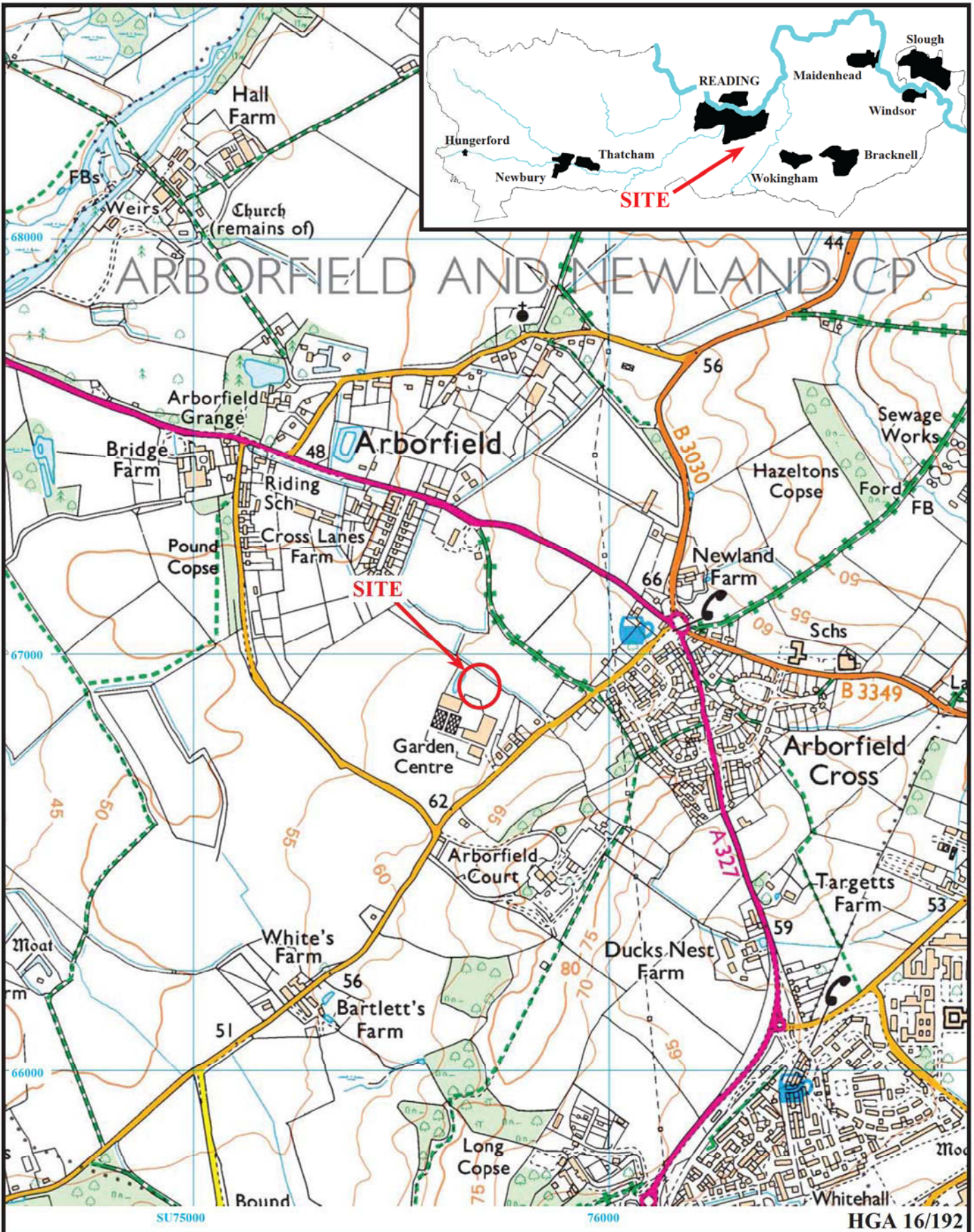
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

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	9.00	1.60	0.60	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.40m subsoil; 0.40m-0.55m clinker; 0.55m-0.60m+ clay and gravel natural geology. [Pl. 1]
2	8.80	1.60	0.50	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ clay and gravel natural geology
3	8.70	1.60	0.50	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ clay and gravel natural geology [Pl. 2]
4	8.00	1.60	0.50	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ clay and gravel natural geology
5	8.50	1.60	0.55	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.40m subsoil; 0.40m-0.55m yellow brown silty clay; 0.55m+ clay and gravel natural geology
6	6.20	1.60	0.50	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ clay and gravel natural geology
7	7.70	1.60	0.45	0-0.10m topsoil; 0.10m-0.35m subsoil; 0.35m-0.45m yellow brown clayey sand natural geology; 0.45m+ clay and gravel natural geology. [Pl. 3]
8	8.30	1.60	0.50	0-0.10m topsoil; 0.10m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ clay and gravel natural geology
9	9.30	1.60	0.50	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ clay and gravel natural geology. [Pl. 4]
10	7.50	1.60	0.60	0-0.15m topsoil; 0.15m-0.35m subsoil; 0.35m-0.60m yellow brown clayey sandy silt natural geology. 0.60m+ clay and gravel natural geology. [Pl. 5]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Arborfield and Berkshire.

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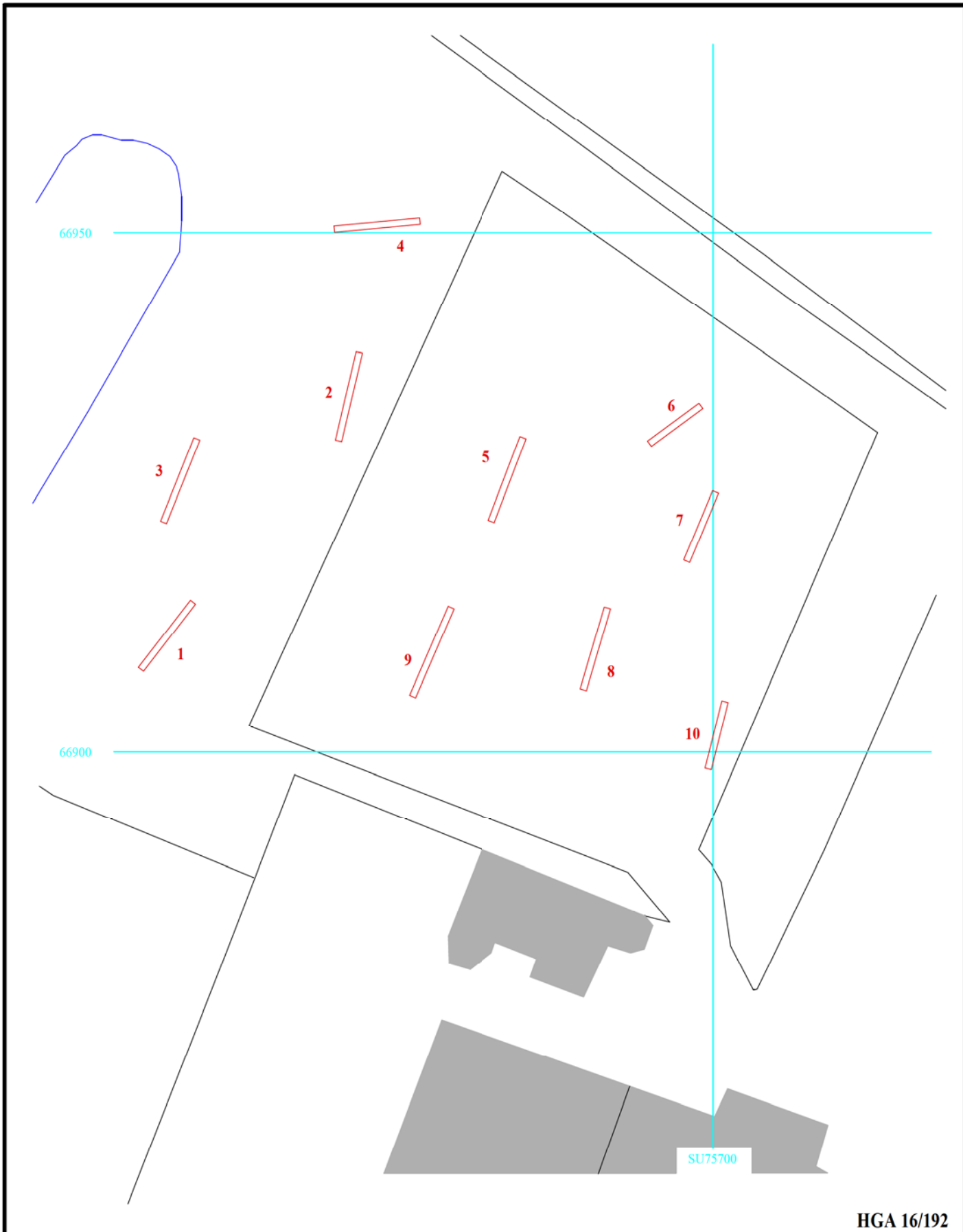


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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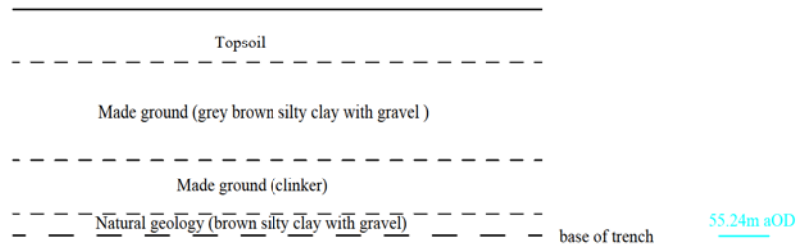
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

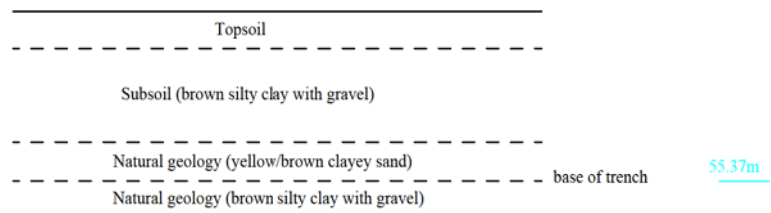


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Trench 1



Trench 7



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Figure 4. Representative sections



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



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

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Plates 1 - 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 7, looking south-west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 9, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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Plates 3 - 4.

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Plate 5. Trench 10, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 6. General view of site, looking north east.

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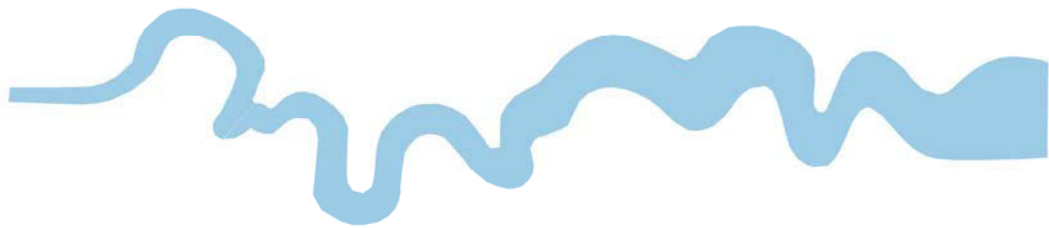
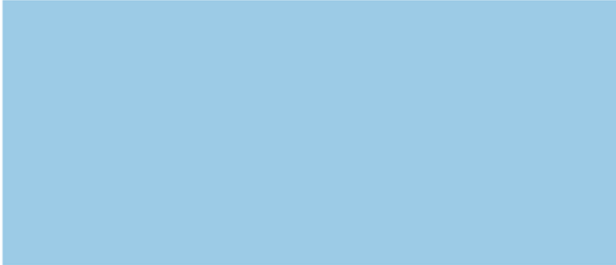
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Plates 5 - 6.

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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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