

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Land at Rose Cottage, Croft Road, Spencers Wood,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Ellen McManus-Fry and Genni Elliot

Site Code: CRSW17/06

(SU 7236 6683)

**Land at Rose Cottage, Croft Road, Spencer's Wood,
Reading, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

For Westbuild Homes Ltd

by Ellen McManus-Fry and Genni Elliott
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CRSW 17/06

January 2017

Summary

Site name: Land at Rose Cottage, Croft Road, Spencer's Wood, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7236 6683

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 27th January 2017

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Ellen McManus-Fry

Site code: CRSW 17/06

Area of site: c. 1000sq m

Summary of results: Several possible features were investigated but all were revealed to be areas of modern or natural disturbance. No artefacts nor deposits 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 the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 03.02.17
	Steve Preston ✓ 03.02.17

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Report 17/06

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land at Rose Cottage, Croft Road, Spencer's Wood, Reading, Berkshire (SU 7236 6683) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Matthew Brook of Westbuild Homes Ltd, Hunters Lodge, Rectory Road, Padworth Common, Reading, RG7 4JB.

Planning consent (162332) has been granted from Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of two detached dwellings with modifications to the existing site access and access to Rose Cottage. The consent includes a condition 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 Ms Ellie Leary, Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology, the archaeological advisers to the Borough.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Ellen McManus-Fry and Jesse Coxey on 27th January 2017 and the site code is CRSW 17/06. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site comprises a roughly rectangular parcel of land on the south side of Croft Road, on the eastern margins of Spencer's Wood, Wokingham, Berkshire (SU 7236 6683). The parcel of land is *c.*1000 sq m (Figs 1 and 2) and lies at a height of *c.*50m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is recorded as third River terrace gravel deposits (BGS 2000) and was observed on site as a sandy clay with gravel inclusions..

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from various fieldwork projects in the area comprising evaluation and follow-up excavation (Taylor 2012; Platt 2015; Taylor and Dawson 2015, Dawson and Colyer 2016). Fieldwork to the north identified Iron Age to post-medieval deposits which comprised an Iron Age pit, two ditches containing Roman material, four Saxon linear features and a number of post-medieval field boundaries

(Taylor 2012), with fieldwork to the north-west revealing Middle Iron Age occupation and field system (Platt 2015; Taylor and Dawson 2015). In general, the archaeological potential of the site stems from its location in an area with a range of archaeological deposits. Field survey (Ford 1997) and aerial photography (Gates 1975) had previously recorded several sites with recent excavated site having shown an emphasis on deposits of Iron Age and Roman date such as at Grazeley Road and Mere oak Lane to the west (Ford *et al.* 2011; Milbank 2010) and Iron Age to the south west (ASE 2004a, 2004b).

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 archaeologically relevant levels had survived on this site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- to determine if Iron Age, Roman or Saxon deposits were present; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy

Two trenches were to be dug, 15m long and 1.6-2m wide, located as close as possible to the areas affected by the proposed buildings. These were to be dug using an excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision and all spoil heaps were monitored for finds.

Where potential archaeological features were likely to be present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project without compromising the integrity of deposits that might be better investigated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Results

Both trenches were dug as intended but had to be moved southwards to avoid a zone containing an in-use access to Rose Cottage and an area containing live services. The trenches ranged in length from 15.14m to 15.50m and in depth from 0.51m to 0.55m. They were 1.6m wide. 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)

Trench 1 was aligned SW - NE and was 15.14m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.35m subsoil overlying natural geology of light yellow brown sandy clay with moderate gravel patches. No archaeological features or finds were encountered.

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

Trench 2 was aligned S - N and was 15.50m long and 0.51m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.17m of topsoil and 0.34m subsoil overlying natural geology of dark yellow brown sandy clay with moderate gravel inclusions. A single very shallow modern linear feature containing brick fragments was investigated in the southern end of the trench. Two tree holes and another area of modern disturbance were also investigated. No features of archaeological interest were encountered.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Conclusion

The evaluation revealed no features of archaeological interest. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

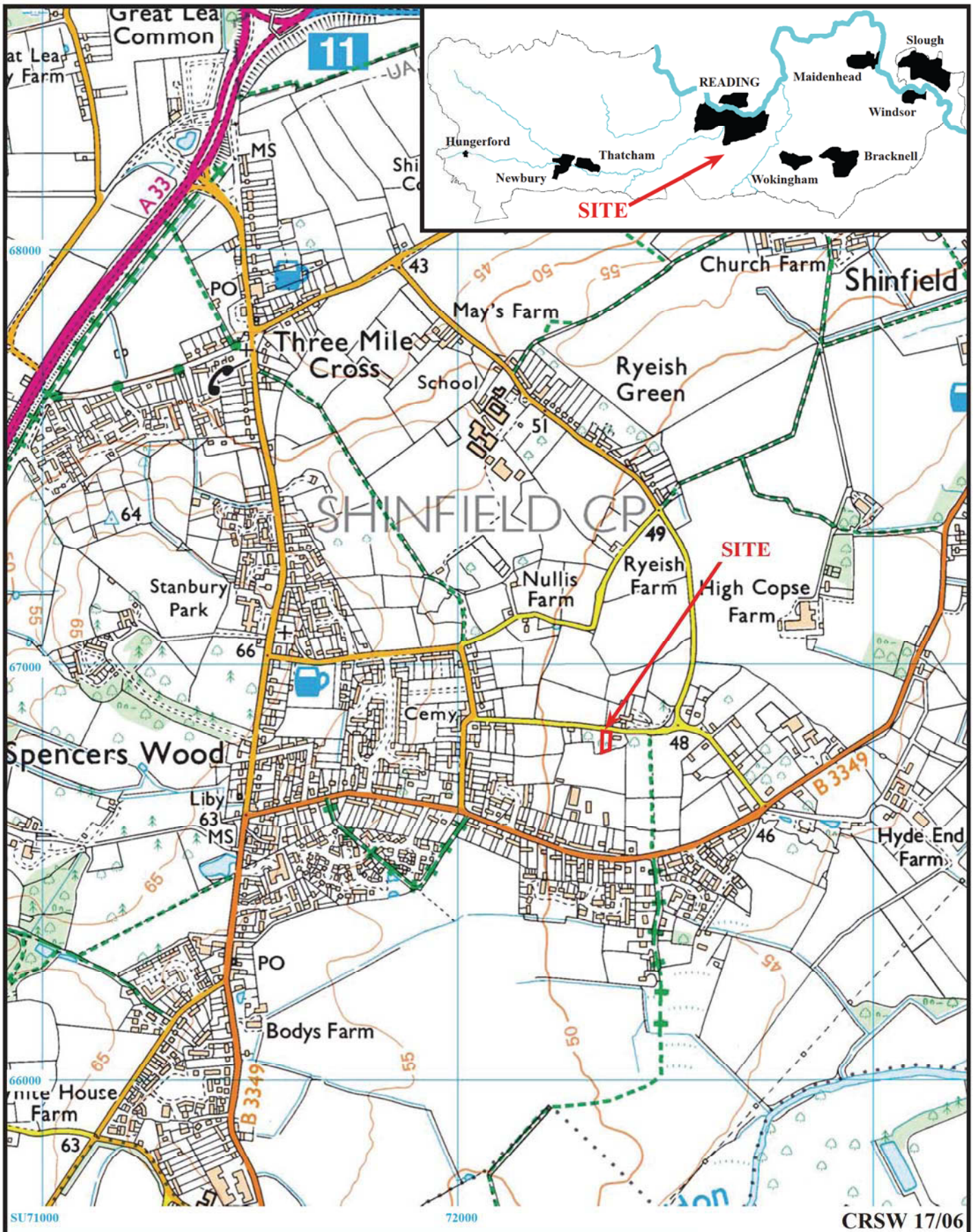
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S end

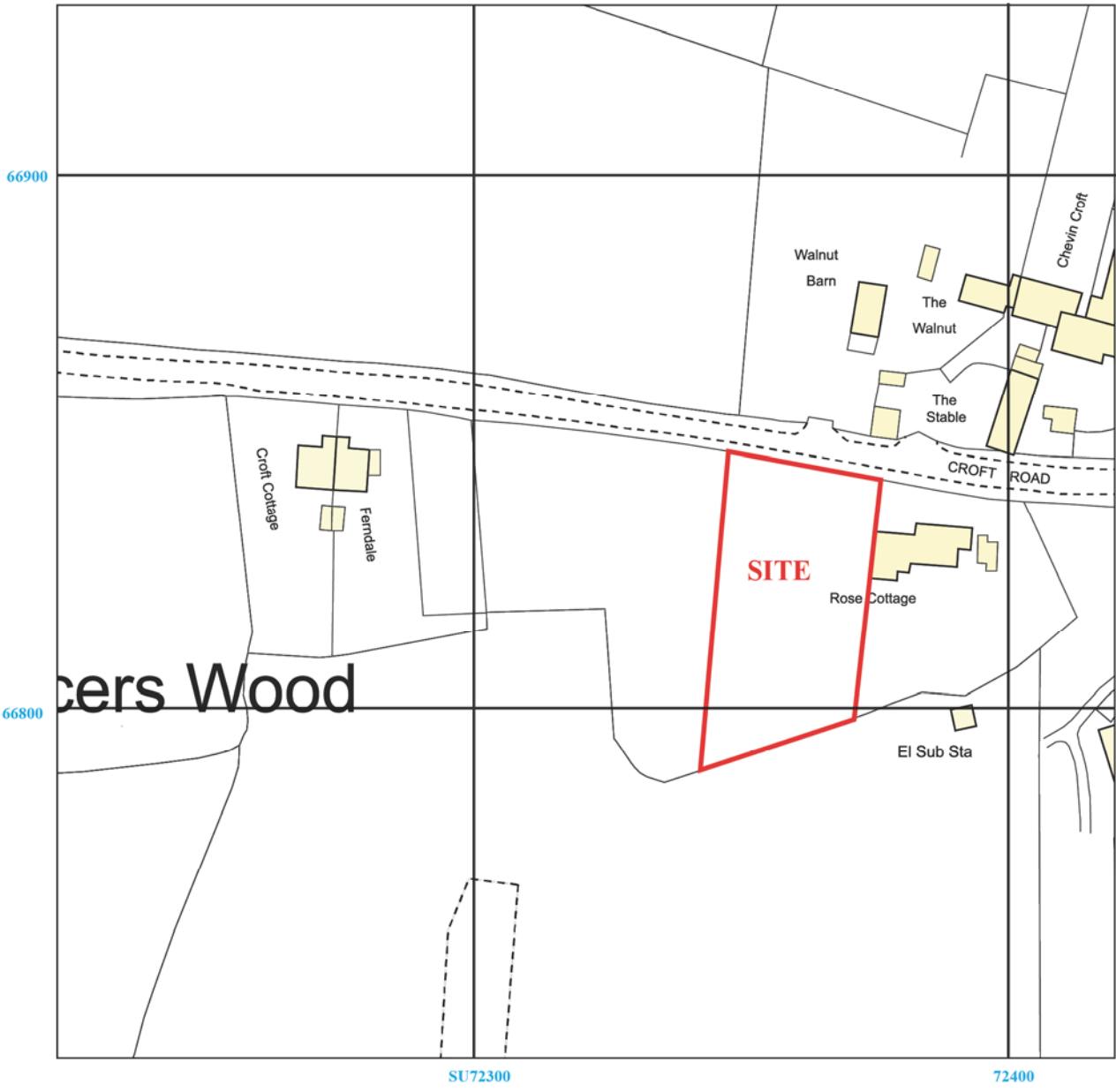
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	15.14	1.6	0.55	0-0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.55m subsoil; 0.52m+ light yellow brown sandy clay natural geology with moderate gravel inclusions. [PI. 1]
2	15.50	1.6	0.51	0-0.174m topsoil; 0.17-0.51m subsoil; 0.51m+ dark yellow brown sandy clay natural geology with moderate gravel inclusions. Two tree root holes and two areas of modern disturbance investigated [PI. 2]



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Figure 1. Location of site within Spencers Wood and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer digital mapping at 1:12500



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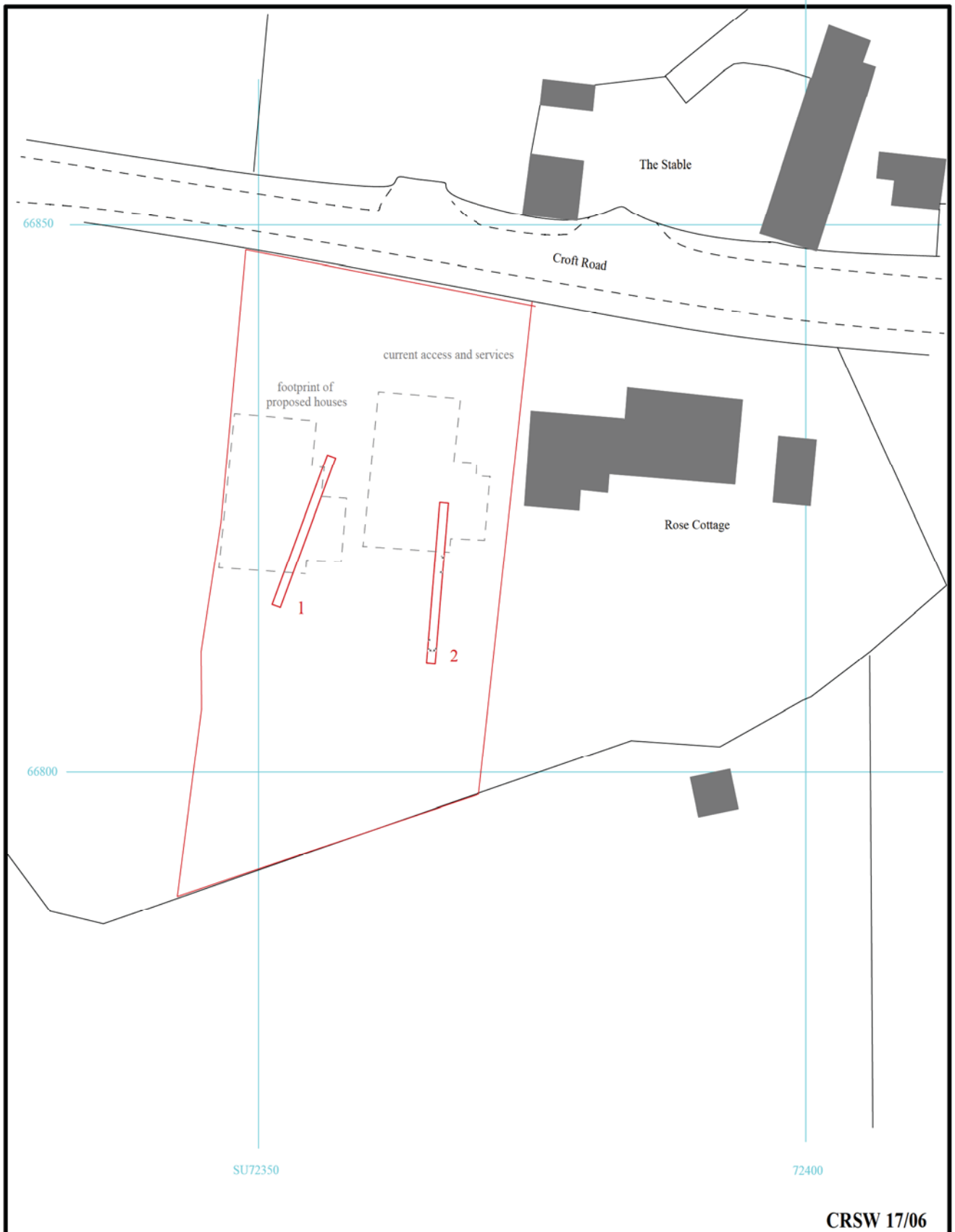


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Croft Road.

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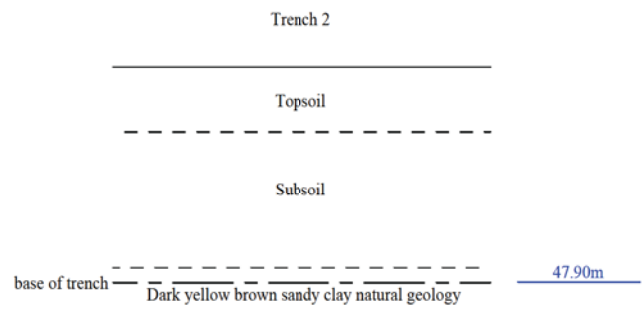
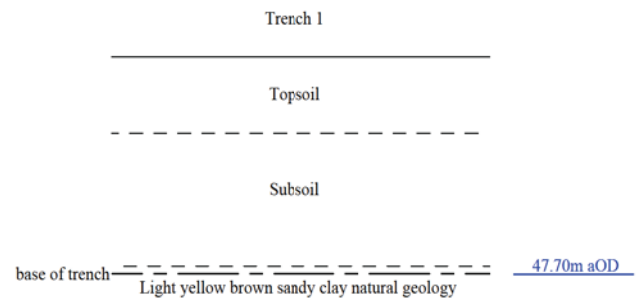


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Figure 3. Plan of trenches





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Figure 4. Representative sections





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking northeast, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.

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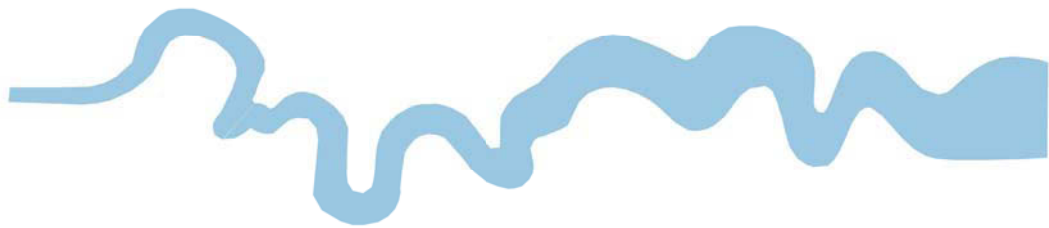
**Land at Rose Cottage, Croft Road, Spencers Wood,
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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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





**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
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**