

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Planning Application Site B, Suttons Park Avenue,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor and Luis Esteves

Site Code: SPA16/236

(SU 7418 7374)

Planning Application Site B, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Standard Life Assurance Limited**

by Andy Taylor and Luis Esteves
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SPB 16/237

February 2017

Summary

Site name: Planning Application Site B, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7418 7374

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 12th December 2016-14th February 2017

Project manager: Danielle Milbank

Site supervisor: Luis Esteves and Andy Taylor

Site code: SPB 16/237

Area of site: c. 0.80ha

Summary of results: The evaluation revealed that the previous development on the site had variously disturbed or truncated the archaeologically relevant horizon across much of the site but that in places an intact subsoil was recorded indicating zones of less disturbance. However, despite this no deposits or finds of any archaeological interest were observed 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 a local museum willing to accept archive material in due course.

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

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 24.02.17 Steve Preston✓ 24.02.17

Planning Application Site B, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor and Luis Esteves

Report 16/237

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Suttons Business Park, Suttons Park Avenue, Reading, Berkshire (SU7417 7378) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Lee Sherrington of Christopher Smith Associates LLP, Riverside, 8 Lower Teddington Road, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 4EZ on behalf of Standard Life Assurance Limited, 1 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2LL.

Planning consent has been obtained from Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of new warehousing following the demolition of existing structures. This assessment has been prepared and submitted to address the requirements of Condition 4 on planning permission 161666. This assessment will accompany the application in order to inform the planning process with regard to potential archaeological and heritage implications.

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 Luis Esteves and Andy Taylor with Cecilia Galleano between the 15th December 2016 and 24th February 2017 and the site code is SPB 16/237. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with a local museum willing to accept archive material.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on two irregular plots of land on either side of Suttons Park Avenue, on the eastern margins of Reading but within the Borough of Wokingham (Fig. 1). It is bounded by further industrial units to the west and north with the A4 to the south, a residential area to the east and the main Reading to London Paddington railway line to the north (Fig. 2). The underlying geology is mapped as Thatcham Gravel (BGS 2000) and the site lies at a height of c.43m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded for the area in general (Ford 1987; Gates 1975). Excavations on the site of the former Earley Power Station to the north-east examined a Late Iron Age/Roman enclosure complex and both Early Bronze Age (Beaker) burial and Mesolithic flintwork were also recovered (Barnes *et al.* 1997). Construction of the Great Western Railway in the 19th century and the digging of a nearby hole for ballast led to the discovery of an Early Saxon inhumation cemetery. Other finds nearby include a Roman coin and Mesolithic flint tools dredged from the Thames. Evaluation to the south-east, however, found only modern disturbance (Lewis 2011; Dawson and Ford 2011; Taylor 2015) as was the case on the site immediately to the south (Taylor and Esteves 2017).

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 any Saxon occupation or burials are present on the site; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

Eight trenches were to be dug targeting the proposed new structures. These were to measure 20m long and between 1.60m and 2.0m wide. They were dug using a JCB type machines fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Sufficiency of any archaeological deposits revealed would be investigated to satisfy the aims outlined above, and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Results

Seven trenches were dug as close as possible to their intended positions (Fig. 2), although the presence of a high voltage electricity cable resulted in one trench in the northern portion of the site being written off. The trenches measured between 12.30m and 21.30m long and between 0.55m and 1.00m deep and all 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 (Fig. 3: Pls. 1 and 2)

This trench was aligned N-S and measured 18.00m long and 1.00m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.90m of made ground comprising gravels and soil bands containing brick fragments. This overlay gravel natural geology. Several modern services were noted in this trench as well as what was thought to be a possible pit (1). Upon investigation this was found to measure 0.68m deep and contained a sterile mid brown silty sand fill (52) but did not produce any finds. Similar to other pockets in the natural observed, this most likely represents a treebole or natural silt patch.

Trench 2

This trench was aligned N-S and measured 17m long and 1.00m deep. It consisted of 0.55m of redeposited gravel made ground overlying 0.25m of buried topsoil. This overlay 0.10m of subsoil overlying gravel natural geology.

Trench 3 (Pl. 3)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 19m long and 0.60m deep. It consisted of 0.60m of topsoil directly overlying gravel natural geology.

Trench 4 (Pl. 4)

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 12.30m long and 0.90m deep. It consisted of 0.80m of concrete, rubble and gravel made ground overlying gravel natural geology.

Trench 5

This trench was aligned N-S and measured 15m long and 0.60m deep. It consisted of 0.50m of concrete, rubble and gravel made ground overlying gravel natural geology. A concrete foundation was observed in this trench.

Trench 6

This trench was aligned NW-SE and measured 21.30m long and 0.55m deep. It consisted of 0.50m of redeposited gravel made ground overlying gravel natural geology. Between 6m and 14m a large area of truncation was observed.

Trench 7

This trench was aligned N-S and measured 20.50m long and 0.72m deep. It consisted of 0.68m of redeposited gravel made ground overlying gravel natural geology. An area of truncation was observed at the northern end of the trench.

Finds

No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered.

Conclusion

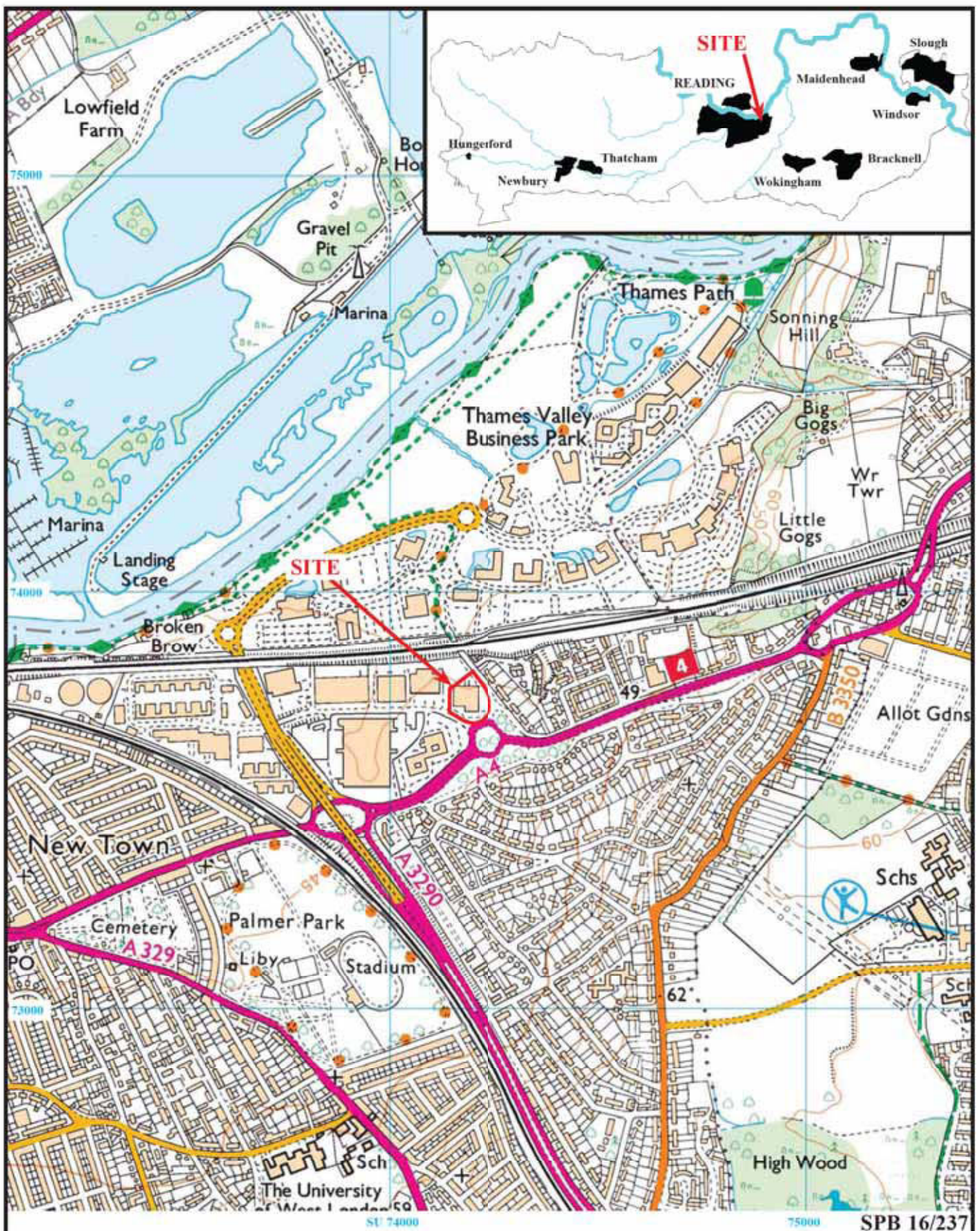
Despite the site's potential for the presence of archaeology, no deposits or finds of any archaeological interest were observed. Although large areas of truncation from foundations and services were observed, undisturbed natural geology was encountered below subsoil suggesting that if archaeology were present it would have survived in places. On the basis of these results, the site can be considered to have little or no archaeological potential.

References

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	18.00	1.60	1.00	0-0.90m redeposited gravel made ground; 0.90m-1.00m+ gravel natural. Pit/Treebole 1. [Pls. 1 and 2]
2	17.00	1.60	1.00	0-0.55m redeposited gravel made ground; 0.55m-0.80m topsoil; 0.80m-0.90m subsoil; 0.90m-1.00m+ gravel natural.
3	19.00	1.60	0.60	0-0.60m topsoil; 0.60m+ gravel natural. [Pl. 3]
4	12.30	1.60	0.90	0-0.80m concrete, rubble and gravel made ground; 0.80m-0.90m+ gravel natural. [Pl. 4]
5	15.00	1.60	0.60	0-0.50m concrete, rubble and gravel made ground; 0.50m-0.60m+ gravel natural.
6	21.30	1.60	0.55	0-0.50m redeposited gravel made ground; 0.50m-0.55m+ gravel natural.
7	20.50	1.60	0.72	0-0.68m redeposited gravel made ground; 0.68m-0.72m+ gravel natural.

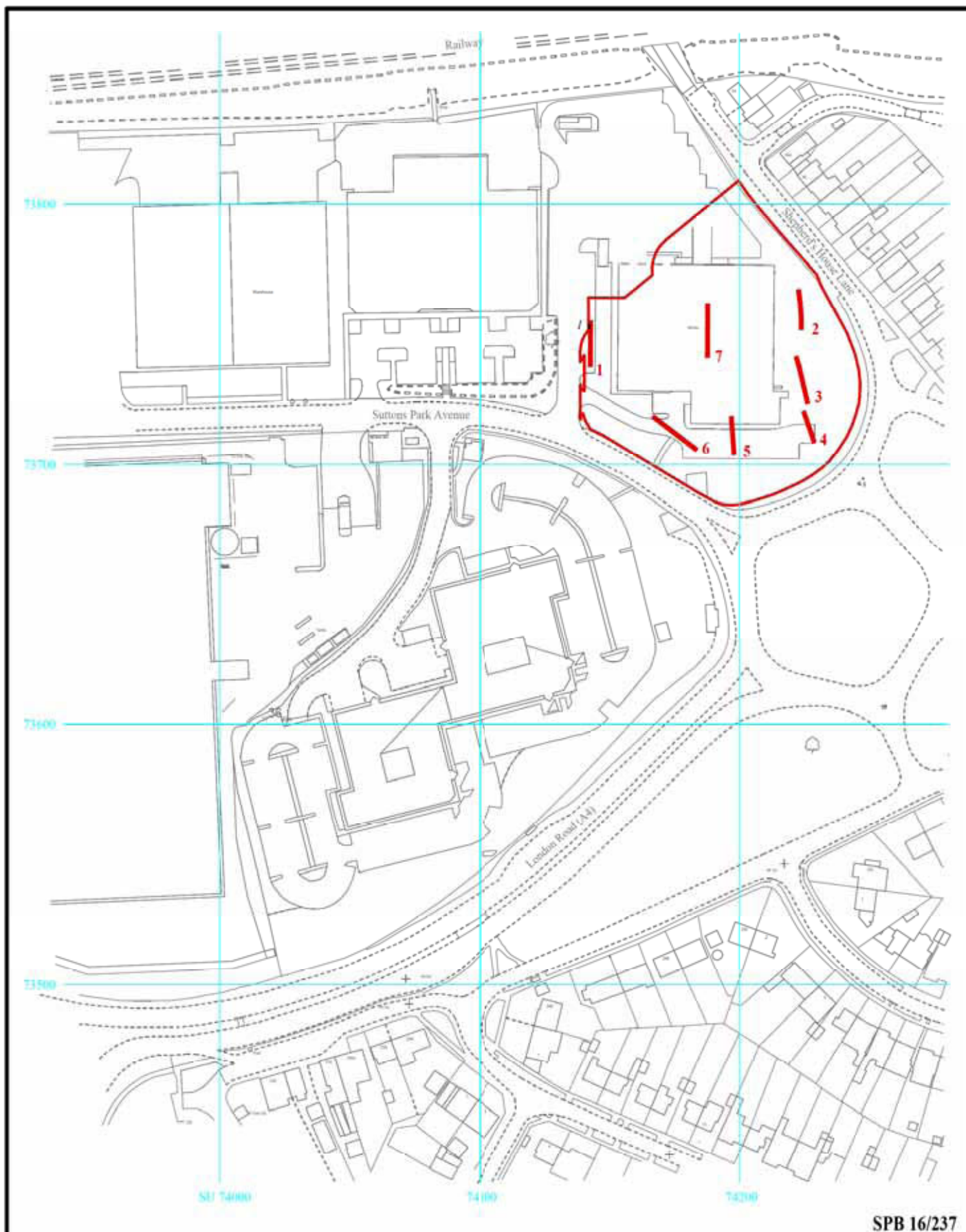


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Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Digital mapping at 1:12500

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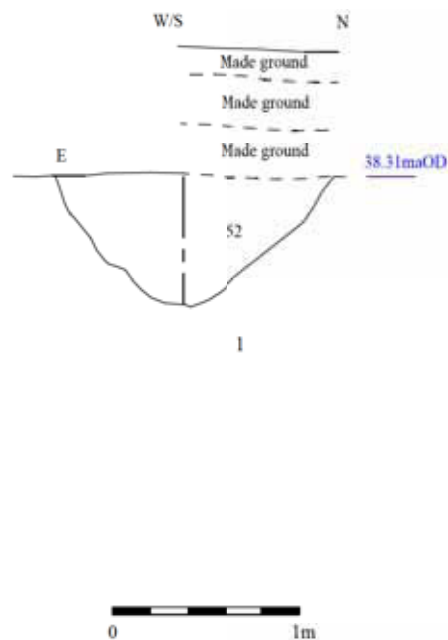
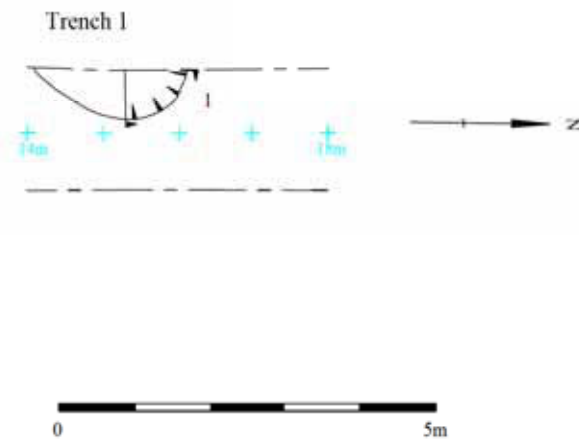


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Figure 2. Location of trenches.

0 100m

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Figure 3. Plan and section of feature 1.

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



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

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**Planning Application Site B, Suttons Park Avenue,
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Plates 1 - 2.**

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



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

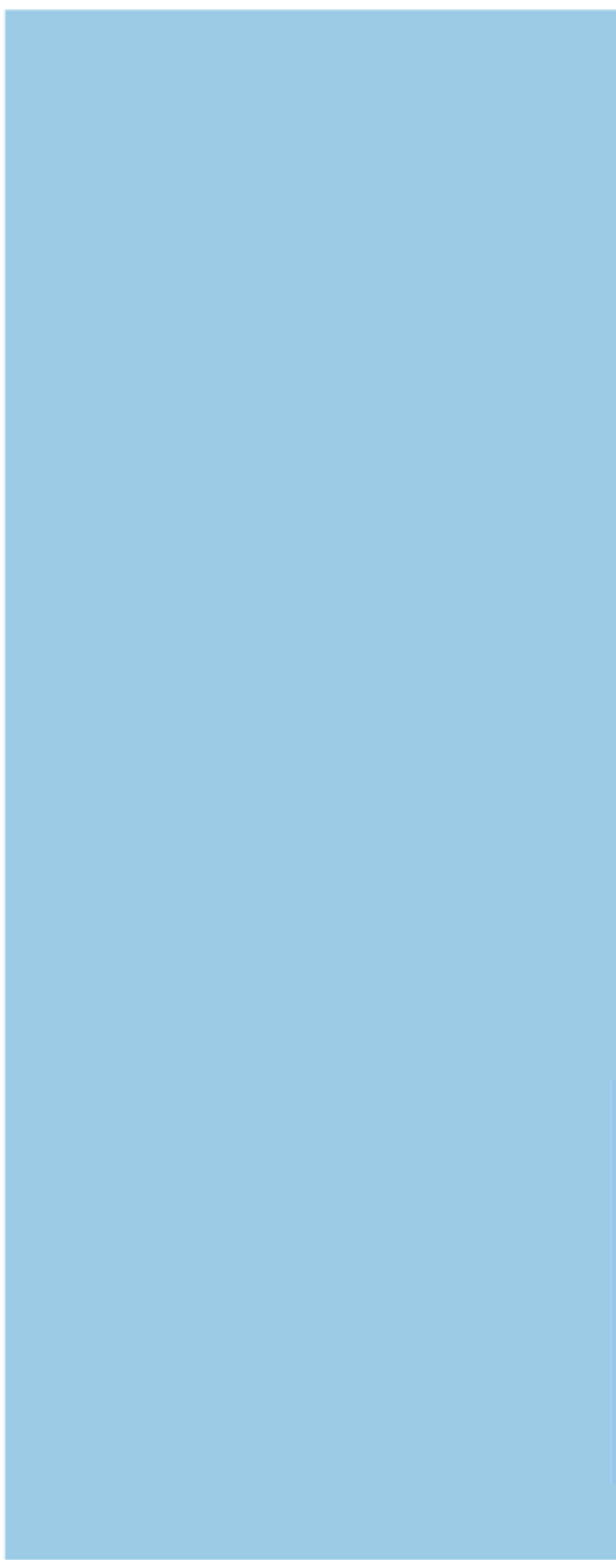
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Plates 3 - 4.

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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	 3300 BC
Neolithic: Early 4300 BC	4300 BC
 Mesolithic: Late 6000 BC	 6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early 10000 BC	10000 BC
 Palaeolithic: Upper 30000 BC	 30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle 70000 BC	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower 2,000,000 BC	2,000,000 BC
↓	↓



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