

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**9 Thornton Mews and 37 Gordon Place,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Aidan Colyer

**Site Code: TMR17/55
(SU 6939 7401)**

**Land adjoining 9 Thornton Mews and
37 Gordon Place, Reading, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Mrs Saood

by Aidan Colyer

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code TMR 17/55

April 2017

Summary

Site name: 9 Thornton Mews and 37 Gordon place, Reading.

Grid reference: SU 69386 74011

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 25th April 2017

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Aidan Colyer

Site code: TMR 17/55

Area of site: 400 sq m

Summary of results: The trenches revealed very deep deposits of modern made ground overlying disturbed peat and alluvial deposits No archaeologically relevant deposits nor finds were uncovered 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 at Reading Museum in due course.

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

Report edited/checked by: Danielle Milbank✓ 27.04.17
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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 27.04.17
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Land adjoining 9 Thornton Mews and 37 Gordon Place, Reading An Archaeological Evaluation

by Aidan Colyer

Report 17/55

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Land adjoining 9 Thornton Mews and 37 Gordon Place, Reading, RG30 1LA (SU 6938 7401) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by The Keen partnership, The Courtyard, Edinburgh Road, Reading, RG30 2UA on behalf of Mrs Saood of 11 Kettington Close, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7DF.

Planning permission (Application number 150412/FUL) has been gained from Reading Borough Council for the construction of 2 new houses on the site. The consent is subject to an archaeological condition (10) 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 Kathelen Leary, Archaeological Officer, Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Mr Aidan Colyer on the 25th April 2017 and the site code is TMR17/55. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the west of central Reading and lies north of Oxford Road (Fig. 1). The site comprises a thin, approximately rectangular plot with terraced houses to the south and public space to the north (Figure 2).

The land to the north has been built up creating a flat platform for a park area to the south of Portman Road. The site is fairly flat overall, with a slope from the north down to the south along the southern boundary. The underlying geology is mapped as a narrow band of alluvium, with Taplow gravel to the south and Langley silt to the north (BGS 2000). The geology observed during the evaluation consisted of alluvial deposits with peat.

Archaeological background

The site is positioned within the Thames Valley which has been categorised as archaeologically rich (Dils and Yates 2013; Lambrick and Robinson 2009). Within the area surrounding the site, there have been a range of finds from various dates. These include a (potentially Neolithic) flint axe; Bronze Age pottery, and an inhumation burial though to be of late Iron Age date, with which one Iron Age and one Roman brooch were associated. At the nearby site of the former Battle Hospital, a single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered. The hospital site also revealed an Anglo-Saxon inhumation burial with grave goods of a shield and a spear.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the following aims and objectives:

- a) To determine if archaeologically relevant layers have survived on this site.
- b) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
- c) To collect information with which to prepare a mitigation statement if necessary.

To fulfil these aims, two trenches were to be excavated, one targeting each of the proposed footprints of the development. These trenches were to be 10m long and 1.6m wide.

The trenches were to be excavated with a JCB with a ditching bucket of minimum 1.6m to expose any relevant archaeological layers. If features are uncovered their archaeological potential will be assessed by cleaning the area and excavating using hand tools. A sufficient number of any deposits found were to be cleaned and hand-excavated and recorded to satisfy the aims laid out above. Any archaeologically relevant artefacts were to be retained although where large quantities of certain materials (eg. building materials) are recovered these were to be discarded and only a representative sample retained.

Results

Both trenches were excavated as intended (Fig. 3), with trench 2 subdivided due to the presence of a modern bore hole and space constraints. With the approval of the Berkshire Archaeological officer, the trench was divided into two portions, one 7.8m long and one 3m long.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Plates 1 and 2, Fig. 4)

Trench 1 was aligned W - E and was 1.6m wide, 10.8m long and 1.6m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.8m of made ground and 0.7m of buried redeposited topsoil overlying disturbed natural geology(alluvium/peat). The disturbed natural geology was not removed further due to the information gained from the test pit at the north west end of trench 2. No archaeological features were uncovered and no finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pls. 3 and 4)

Trench 2 was 1.6m wide and was divided into two parts due to the presence of a borehole. Part 1 was aligned SE - NW and was 7.8m long, and part 2 was excavated on a W - E alignment and was 3m long. The trench was a total of 10.1m long and 1.6m deep overall, with a test pit 2m long to a depth of 2.45m.

The stratigraphy here consisted of 0.6m of made ground (this varied to a maximum of 0.8m in places). This overlay a buried redeposited topsoil layer which was 0.9m thick and which contained significant amounts of modern rubble. This overlaid the natural alluvium and peat geology which had been disturbed as indicated by the presence of modern material within. The test pit in this trench extended a further 0.95m into the peat layer, which showed evidence of modern disturbance to the base of the test pit at a depth of 2.45m. No archaeological features or finds were encountered.

Finds

No finds of archaeological significance were recovered.

Conclusion

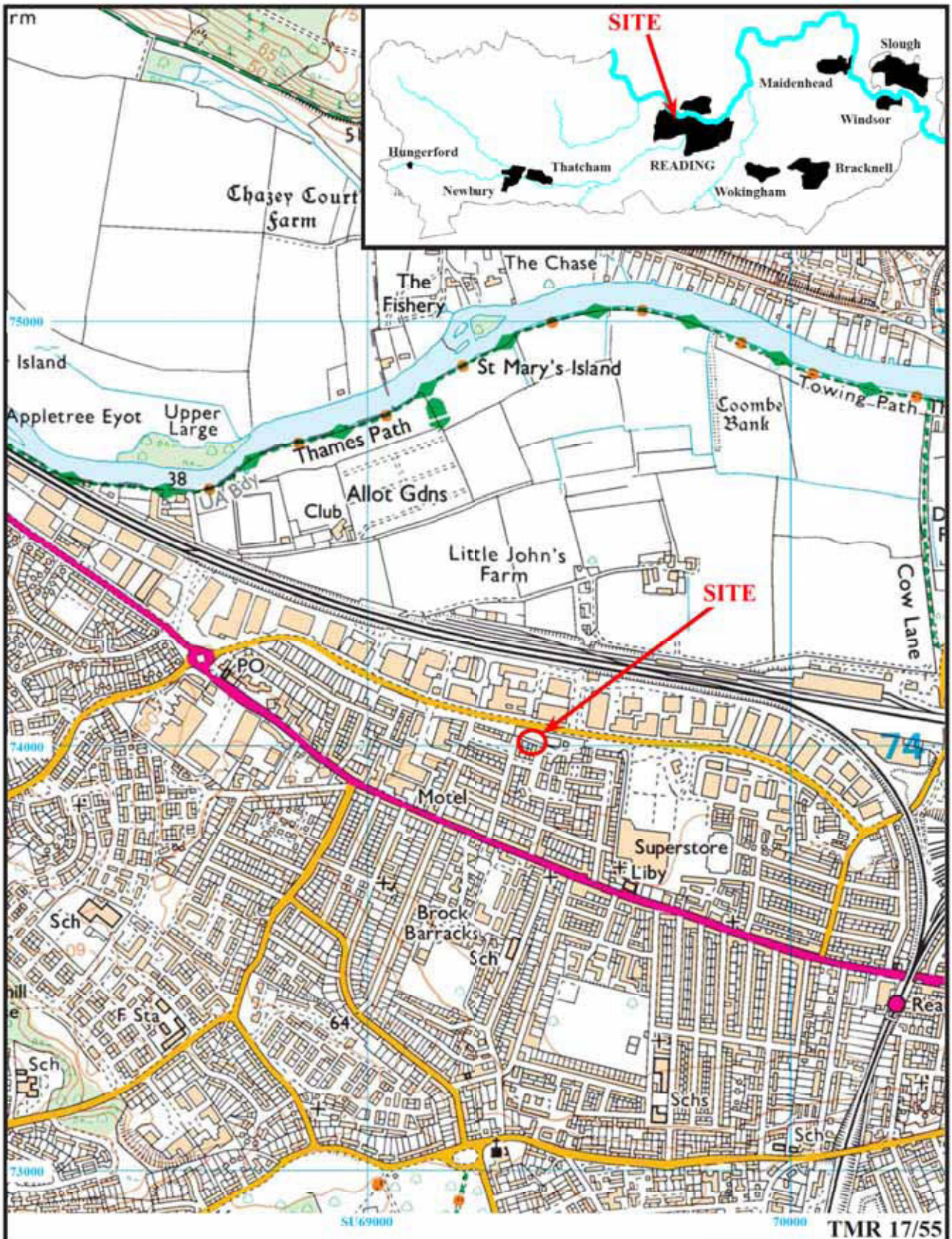
Despite the archaeological potential of the site, nothing of archaeological interest was identified. The site has been built up as part of levelling in the 20th century with deep made ground present overlying disturbed alluvium and peat. The site can be said to have no archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 2000, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 268, 2000 Edition, Keyworth
Dils, J and Yates, M, 2013, *An Historical Atlas of Berkshire*, Berkshire Record Society, Eynsham
Lambrick, G, Robinson, M and Allen, T, 2009, *The Thames through Time: The Archaeology of the Gravel Terraces of the Upper and Middle Thames: The Thames Valley in Later Prehistory: 1500BC-AD50*, Oxford Archaeol. Thames Valley Landscapes Monogr. 29, Oxford
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details
 0m at SE and SW end

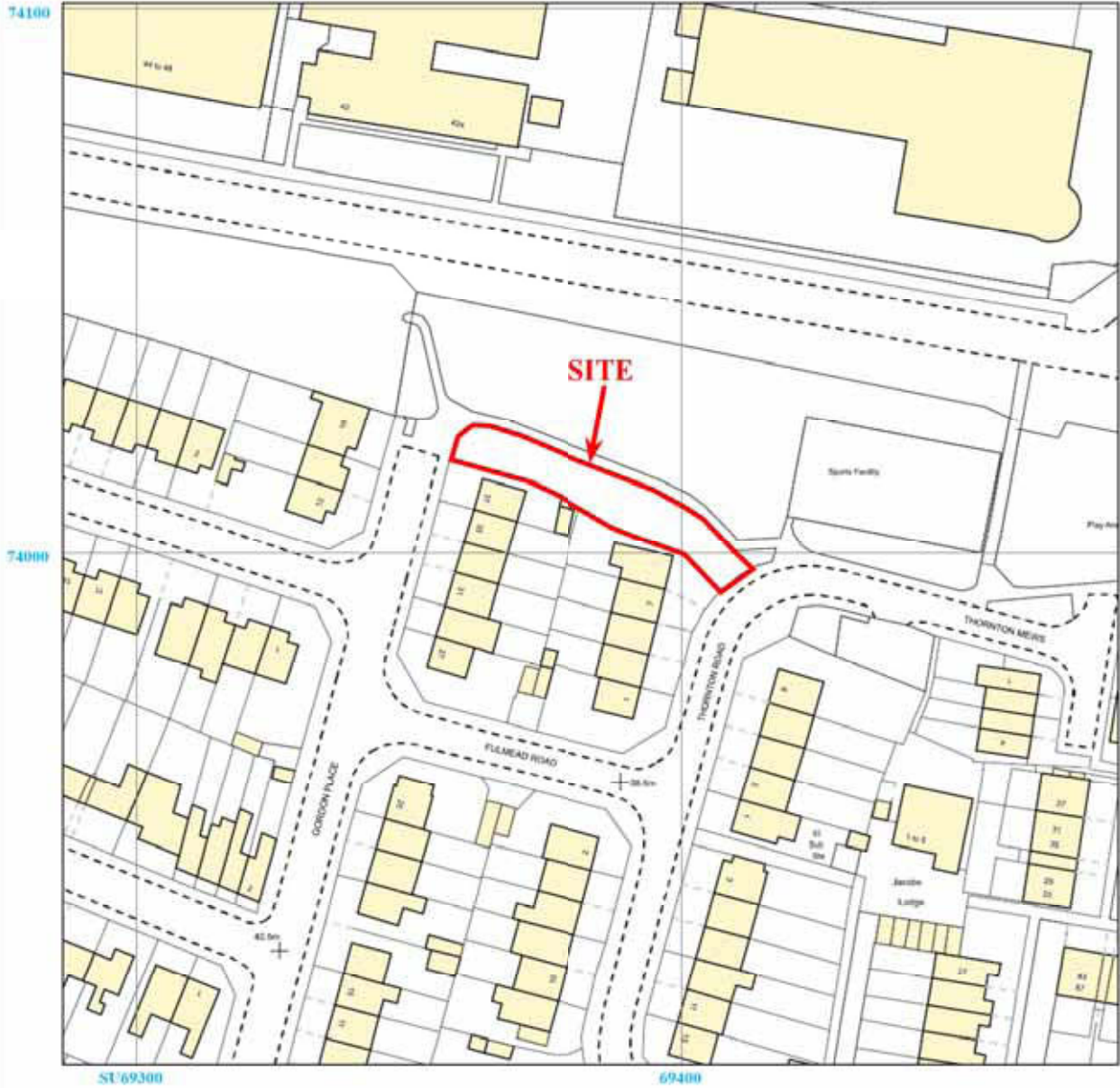
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.1	1.6	1.6	0-0.8m modern made ground, 0.8m-1.5m redeposited modern topsoil, 1.5m-1.6m+ redeposited and disturbed alluvium and peat. [Pls 1 and 2]
2	10.8	1.6	1.6-2.45	0-0.6m modern made ground, 0.6m-1.5m redeposited modern topsoil, 1.5m-1.6m+ redeposited and disturbed alluvium and peat; test pit at NW end revealed 0-0.6m modern made ground, 0.6m-1.5m redeposited modern topsoil, 1.5m-2.45m+ redeposited and disturbed alluvial and peat. [Pls 3 and 4]



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 Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

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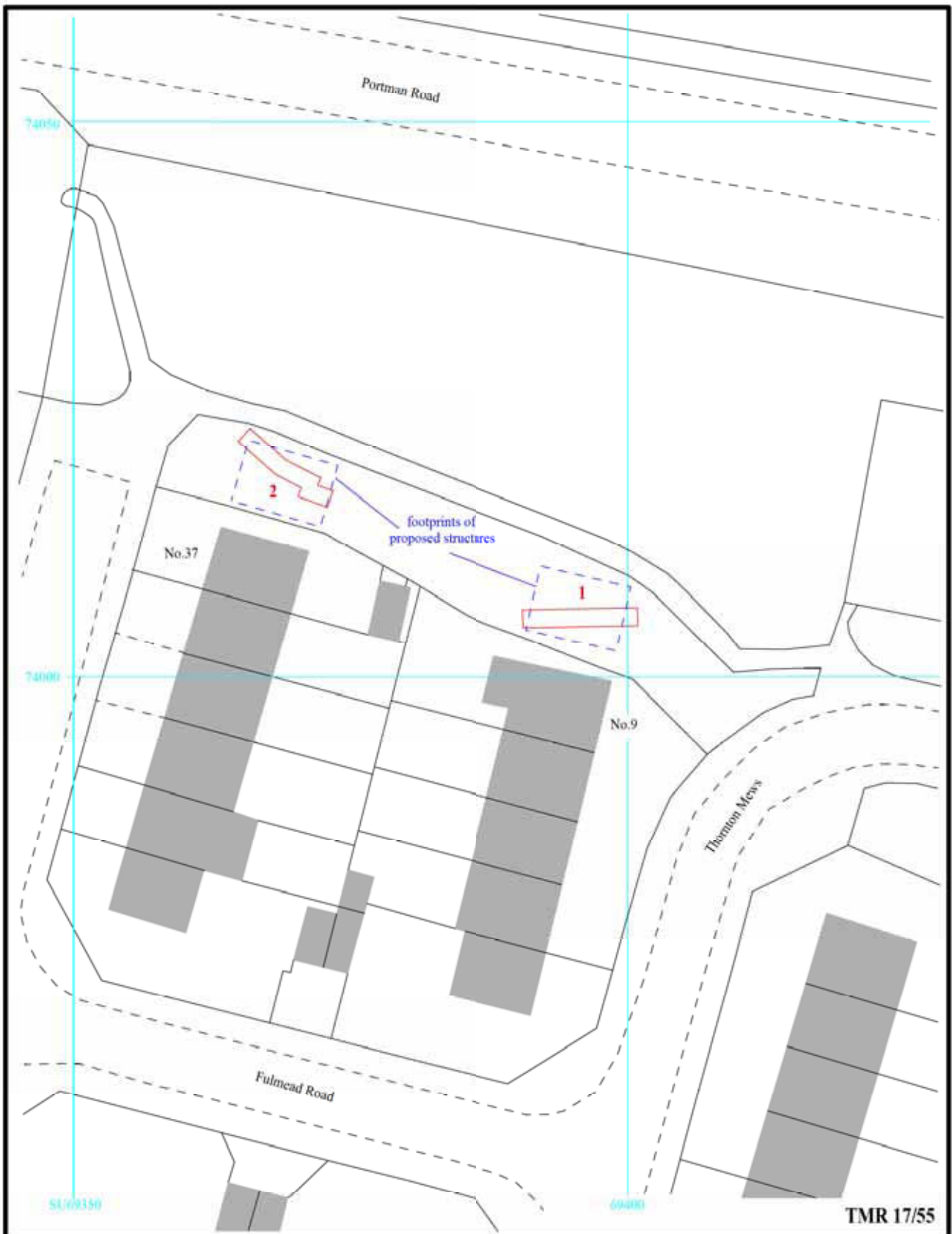
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Gordon Place.

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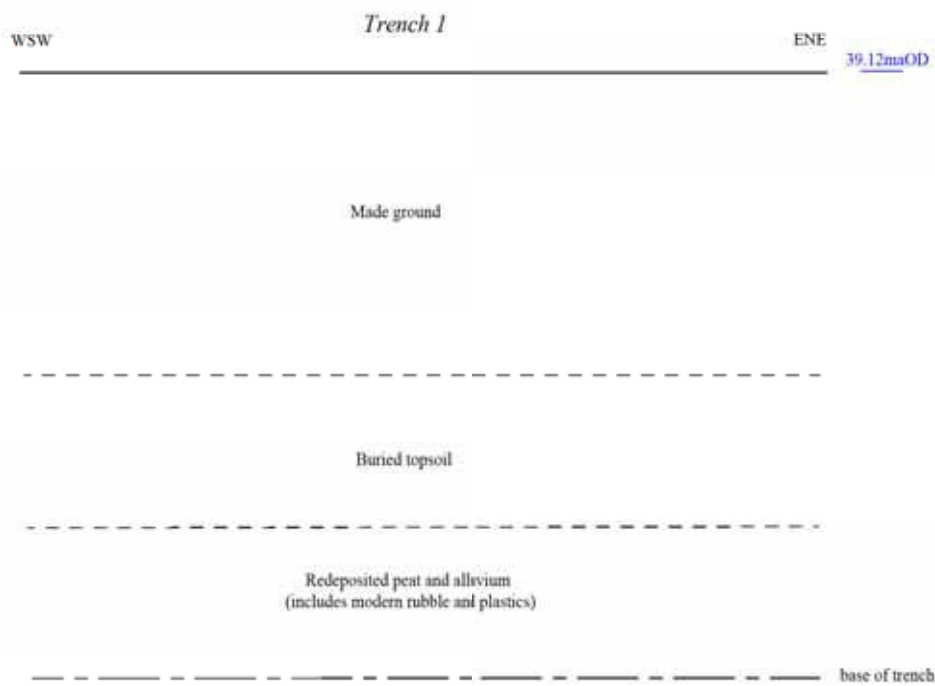
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Figure 3. Location of trenches





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Figure 4. Representative section.



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



Plate 2. Test pit at the north west end of the trench, Scales: horizontal 2m and vertical 1m.

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9 Thornton Mews and 37 Gordon Place,
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Plates 1 and 2.

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



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

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9 Thornton Mews and 37 Gordon Place,
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Plates 3 and 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 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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 RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**

*Offices in:
Brighton, Taunton, Stoke-on-Trent and Ennis (Ireland)*