

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Eton College Sports Pavilion, Slough Road,
Eton, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

Site Code: SRE17/51

(SU 9699 7874)

**Eton College Sports Pavilion, Slough Road,
Eton, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Eton College**

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SRE 17/51

May 2017

Summary

Site name: Eton College Sports Pavilion, Slough Road, Eton, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 9699 7874

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 20th-21st April and 18th-22nd May 2017

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andy Taylor

Site code: SRE 17/51

Area of site: c.2.5 hectares

Summary of results: The evaluation revealed a moderate volume of deposits of certain and probable archaeological interest. These comprised two undated ditches or gullies, a ditch of Bronze Age date and a posthole of possible Iron Age date were recorded in the north-western and eastern areas of the site. A single struck flint of Mesolithic date was also recovered as a subsoil find.

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 ✓ 31.05.17

Eton College Sports Pavilion, Slough Road, Eton, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andy Taylor

Report 17/51

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Eton College Sports Pavilion, Slough Road, Eton, Berkshire (SU 9699 7874) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Duncan Sparks, Architect with Lewandowski Architects, First Floor, Rafts Court, Brocas Street, Eton, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 6RF. This was on behalf of Eton College, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 6DU.

Planning consent has been sought from Slough Borough Council to construct a new tennis complex on the site. Field evaluation has been requested to assess the archaeological potential in order to inform a mitigation strategy if necessary.

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 Mr Roland Smith, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor, Kyle Beaverstock, Luis Esteves, Maisie Foster, Will Attard and Cosmo Bacon between the 20th and 21st April and 18th and 22nd May 2017 and the site code is SRE 17/51. 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.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the northern margins of Eton and is bounded to the east by the Slough Road (B2022), to the north the A322, residential housing along the lane 'Willowbrook' to the south and the Eton College Golf course to the west (Fig. 2). The site consisted of mostly scrubland with trees across the eastern part of the site. The underlying geology is mapped as Flood Plain Gravel (BGS 1981), although a sandy silt was actually observed. It lies at a height of *c.*21m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (OA 2017). In summary this potential stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record for the general area during archaeological fieldwork, aerial photography, mineral extraction and dredging of the River Thames (Ford 1987, Ford et al 2003; Foreman et al 2002; Gates 1975; Platt 2016; Taylor 2012). The site also lies adjacent to Agar's Plough where an extensive Iron Age site has been recorded by evaluation (Ford 1991, fig 16).

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 are;

- To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site.
- To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

Twenty trenches were proposed to be dug measuring 25m long and between 1.60m 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

Eighteen trenches were eventually dug measuring between 24.0m and 27.2m long and between 0.18m and 0.90m deep (Fig. 3). Two trenches proposed in a thickly wooded area at the southern tip of the site were too inaccessible for excavation. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 4 and 5; Pls. 1 and 2)

This trench was aligned approximately E-W and measured 27.20m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of topsoil overlying 0.34m of subsoil overlying a light red brown sandy silty clay natural geology. A ditch was recorded between 15.30m and 17.40m into which a slot (1) was dug. This measured 1.25m wide, 0.45m deep had two fills (52 and 53). Deposit 52 was a light brown grey silty clay that produced 15 sherds of Bronze Age pottery. This overlay deposit 53, which was a light yellow brown silty clay containing 24g of burnt flint.

Trench 2

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 25.10m long and 0.82m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil overlying 0.45m of subsoil and a light red brown sandy silty clay natural geology.

Trench 3

This trench was aligned approximately SE-NW and measured 25.20m long and 0.61m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil overlying 0.26m of subsoil and a mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.

Trench 4

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 25.00m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of topsoil overlying 0.23m of subsoil and a mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.

Trench 5 (Pl. 5)

This trench was aligned approximately ESE-WNW and measured 26.00m long and 0.49m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of topsoil overlying 0.19m of subsoil and a mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.

Trench 6

This trench was aligned approximately E-W and measured 25.20m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil overlying 0.25m of subsoil and a mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.

Trench 7

This trench was aligned approximately SE-NW and measured 25.80m long, 0.58m deep at the SE end and 0.18m deep at the NW end. It consisted of 0.25m of topsoil overlying 0.20m of subsoil and a mid brown orange silty clay natural in the SE and 0.17m topsoil overlying mixed alluvium and gravel natural in the NW.

Trench 8

This trench was aligned approximately NNE-SSW and measured 25.00m long and 0.28m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil overlying 0.08m of and mid brown orange silty clay with gravel natural geology.

Trench 9

This trench was aligned approximately NE-SW and measured 24.60m long and 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying 0.60m of subsoil and a light red brown sandy silty clay natural geology.

Trench 10 (Figs. 4 and 5; Pls. 3 and 4)

This trench was aligned approximately NNW-SSE and measured 25.00m long and 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying 0.57m of subsoil overlying sandy clayey silt natural geology. A posthole (2) was noted at the northern end of the trench which measured 0.36m wide and 0.16. Its light brown grey sandy silt fill (54) produced two sherds of pottery, one Bronze Age in date and the other possible Iron Age, a prehistoric flint and a piece of burnt flint.

Trench 11 (Pl. 6)

This trench was aligned approximately ESE-WNW and measured 24.00m long and 0.78m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying 0.48m of subsoil and a mid brown orange sandy silt natural with pale brown grey sandy patches.

Trench 12 (Pl. 7)

This trench was aligned approximately SE-NW and measured 25.00m long and 0.78m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil overlying 0.37m of subsoil, 0.18m of root-disturbed natural and a mid brown orange sandy silt natural with patches of gravel.

Trench 13 (Figs. 4 and 5; Pls. 8 and 9)

This trench was aligned approximately E-W and measured 25.20m long and 0.63m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.35m of topsoil overlying 0.28m of subsoil and a mid brown orange clayey silt with gravel natural geology. A ditch was recorded between 9.30m and 10.92m into which a slot (3) was dug. This measured 1.10m wide and 0.10m deep and had one fill (55). Deposit 55 was a loose light brown clayey silt that produced no finds. A second feature, the terminal end of a gully, was recorded between 12.00m and 15.10m into which a slot (4) was dug. This measured 0.60m in width and 0.35m in depth and had one fill (56). Deposit 56 was a firm dark brown silty clay that contained no finds.

Trench 14

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 24.30m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil overlying 0.22m of subsoil and a sandy silt natural geology.

Trench 15

This trench was aligned approximately E-W and measured 25.71m long and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil overlying 0.35m of subsoil and a mid brown orange clayey silt natural geology. While no features were recorded in the trench a single retouched flint was recovered from the subsoil (see below). Its vertical orientation suggests that was not in situ.

Trench 16

This trench was aligned approximately N-S and measured 24.90m long and 0.58m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil overlying 0.24m of subsoil and a sandy silt natural geology.

Trench 17

This trench was aligned approximately SE-NW and measured 25.10m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of topsoil overlying 0.29m of subsoil and a sandy clayey silt natural geology.

Trench 18 (Pl. 10)

This trench was aligned approximately NE-SW and measured 24.00m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of topsoil overlying 0.18m of subsoil and a mid brown orange sandy clayey silt natural geology.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 16 sherds with a total weight of 137g. It is all prehistoric. The following fabric types were noted:

F1: Fine Flint. Moderate to dense angular white flint up to 2mm. 4 sherds, 75g

F2: Coarse Flint. Sparse to moderate angular flint up to 4mm. 11 sherds, 60g.

F3: Fine Sandy. Slightly sandy matrix, few visible inclusions. 1 sherd, 2g.

Most of the sherds of F1 and F2 occurred in ditch 1 (52), other than one sherd of F1 (weight = 1g) which occurred in posthole 2 (54), as did the single fragment of F3. The entire assemblage consisted of undecorated bodysherds, apart from a small fragment of a flat base in fabric F2. Most of the flint-tempered sherds are fairly large, and appear reliably stratified.

The flint fabrics are typical of the Bronze Age tradition in the region (eg. Brown 2009, table 2), with the lack of decoration on any of the assemblage suggesting that it is most likely of late Bronze Age date. The sherd

of F3 is somewhat difficult to accurately date given the fact that it is both small and slightly abraded. It appears to be hand-built, suggesting that it is probably of middle Iron Age date (ibid.), but this identification must be regarded as tentative.

Worked flint by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recovered from the subsoil in trench 15. It was an end scraper made on a broken narrow flake (blade) and had received much plough damage. It is likely to be of Mesolithic date.

Conclusion

The majority of the evaluation trenching was completed successfully, with only two trenches remaining unexcavated due to limited access. Those that were opened showed a varying but undisturbed stratigraphy across the site which was conducive to the preservation of archaeological deposits. These were recorded in Trenches 1 and 10 in the site's north-western corner and Trench 13 on the south-eastern boundary and consisted of a ditch containing Bronze Age pottery, a posthole with Bronze Age and possibly Iron Age pottery and two undated linear features. It is unclear whether these are isolated features or part of a larger area of activity.

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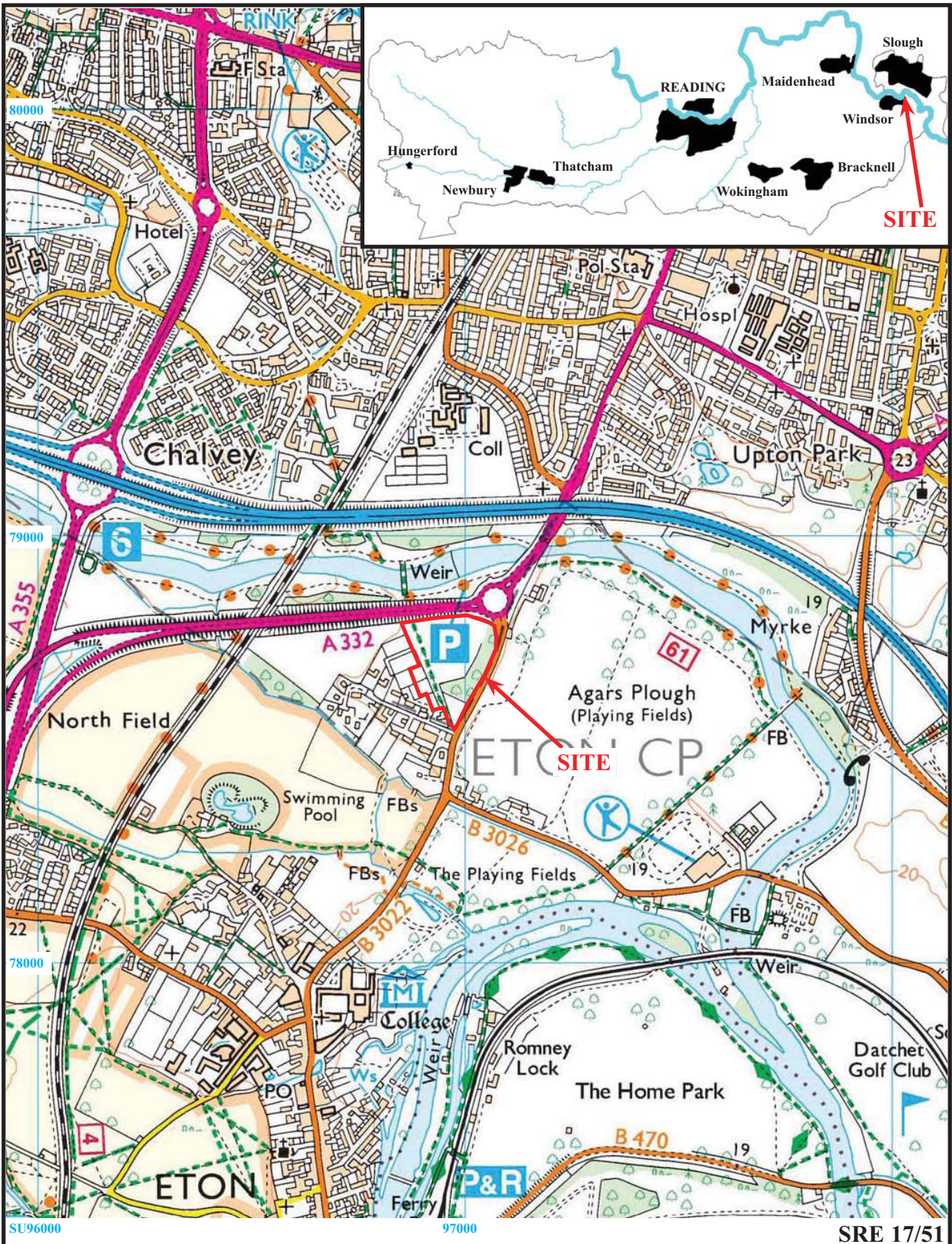
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

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	27.20	1.60	0.55	0-0.16m topsoil; 0.16m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m-0.55m+ light red brown silty clay natural geology. Ditch [1]. [Pls 1 and 2]
2	25.10	1.60	0.82	0-0.26m topsoil; 0.26m-0.71m subsoil; 0.71m-0.82m+ light red brown silty clay natural geology.
3	25.20	1.60	0.61	0-0.31m topsoil; 0.31m-0.57m subsoil; 0.57m-0.61m+ mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.
4	25.00	1.60	0.48	0-0.22m topsoil; 0.22m-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m-0.48m+ mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.
5	26.00	1.60	0.49	0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.44m subsoil; 0.44m-0.49m+ mid brown orange silty clay natural geology. [Pl. 5]
6	25.20	1.60	0.55	0-0.23m topsoil; 0.23m-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m-0.55m+ mid brown orange silty clay natural geology.
7	25.80	1.60	0.58 (SE) 0.18 (NW)	SE: 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m-0.58m+ mid brown orange silty clay natural geology. NW: 0-0.17m topsoil; 0.17m-0.18m+ alluvium and gravel natural geology.
8	25.00	1.60	0.28	0-0.20m topsoil; 0.20m-0.28m subsoil; 0.28m+ mid brown orange silty clay with gravel natural geology.
9	24.60	1.60	0.90	0-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.90m subsoil; 0.90m+ sandy clayey silt natural geology.
10	25.00	1.60	0.90	0-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.87m subsoil; 0.87m-0.90m+ sandy clayey silt natural geology. Posthole [2]. [Pls 3 and 4]
11	24.00	1.60	0.78	0-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.78m subsoil; 0.78m+ mid brown orange sandy silt with sandy patches natural geology. [Pl. 6]
12	25.00	1.60	0.78	0-0.28m topsoil; 0.28m-0.65m subsoil; 0.65m-0.78m+ mid brown orange sandy silt with gravel patches natural geology. [Pl. 7]
13	25.20	1.60	0.63	0-0.35m topsoil; 0.35m-0.63m subsoil; 0.63m+ mid brown orange sandy silt with gravel patches natural geology. [Pls 6 and 9]
14	24.30	1.60	0.52	0-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.52m subsoil; 0.52m+ sandy silt natural geology.
15	25.71	1.60	0.67	0-0.32m topsoil; 0.32m-0.67m subsoil; 0.67m+ mid brown orange sandy silt natural geology.
16	24.90	1.60	0.58	0-0.31m topsoil; 0.31m-0.58m+ sandy silt natural geology.
17	25.10	1.60	0.62	0-0.31m topsoil; 0.31m-0.60m subsoil; 0.60m-0.62m+ sandy clayey silt natural geology.
18	24.00	1.60	0.50	0-0.32m topsoil; 0.32m-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ sandy clayey silt natural geology. [Pl. 10]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	1	52, 53	Ditch	Bronze Age	Pottery
10	2	54	Posthole	Iron Age (?)	Pottery
13	3	55	Ditch	Undated	
13	4	56	Gully terminal	Undated	

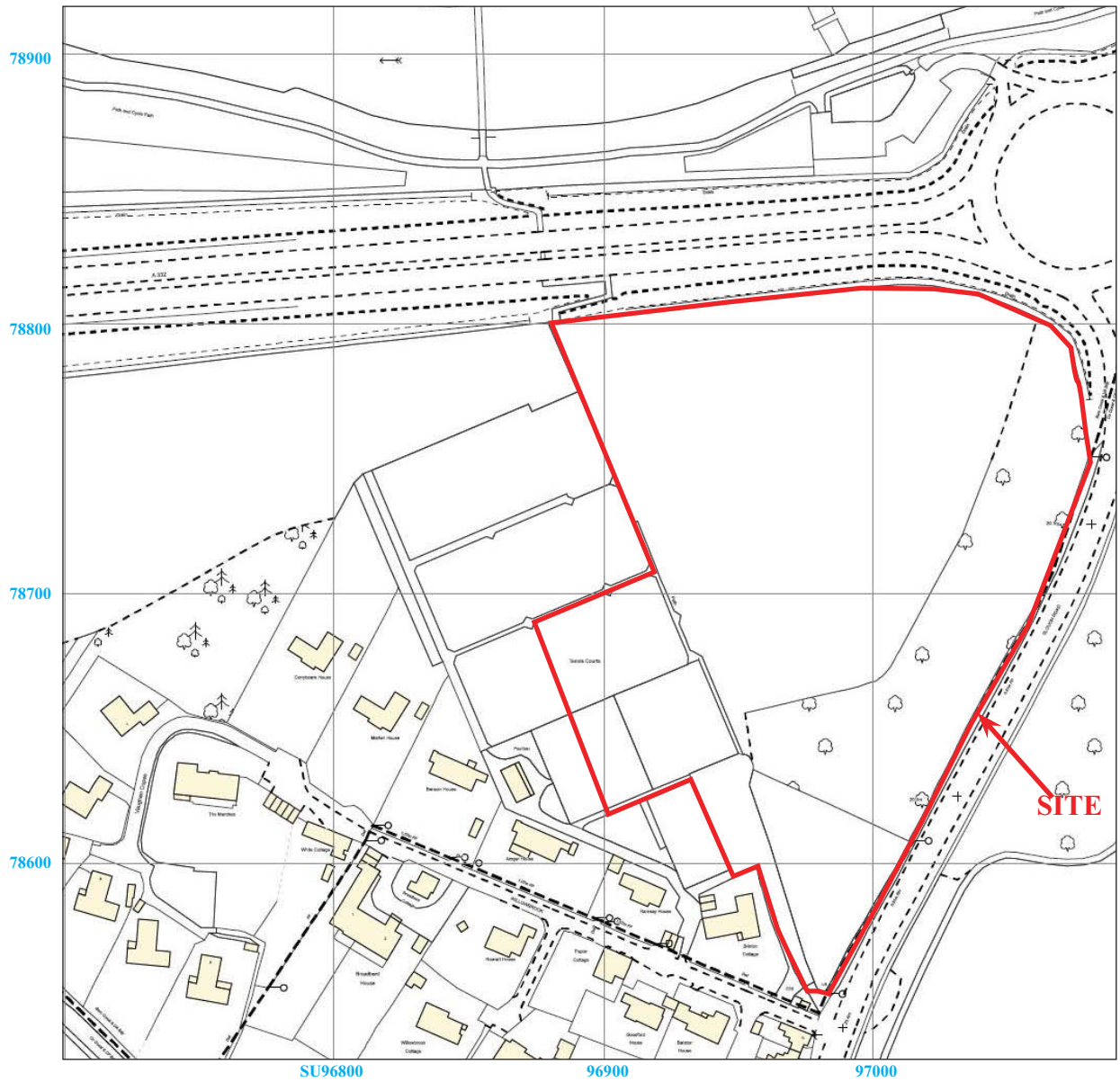


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Figure 1. Location of site within Eton and Berkshire.

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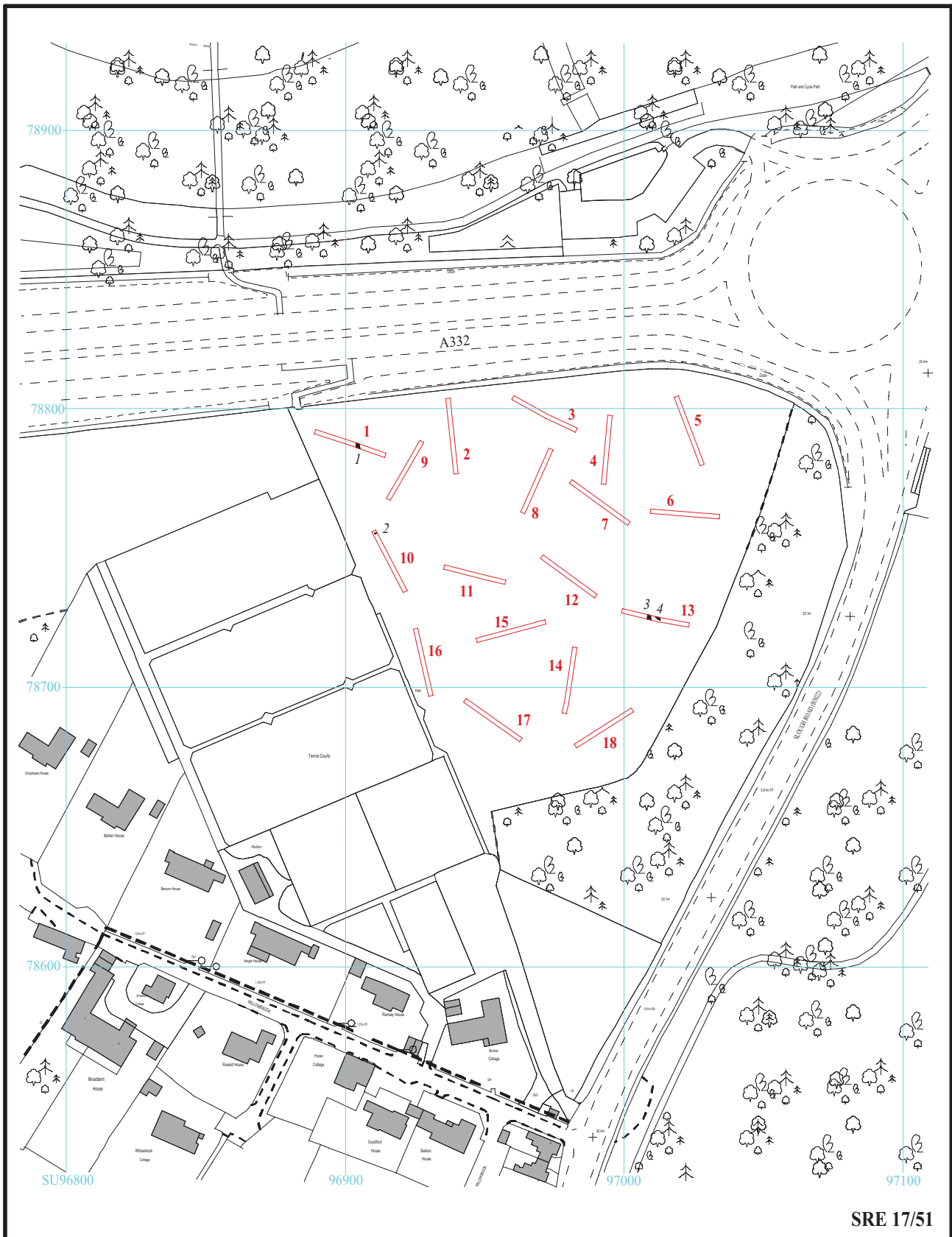
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Slough Road.

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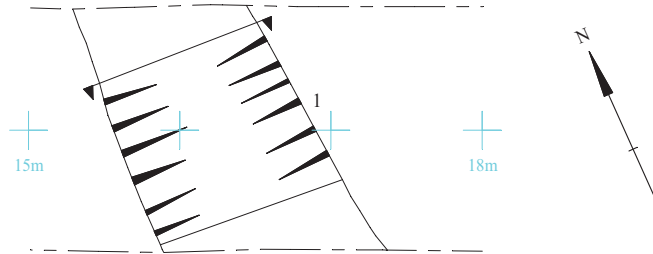


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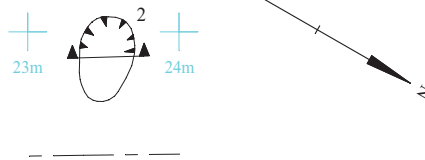
Figure 3. Location of trenches and features.



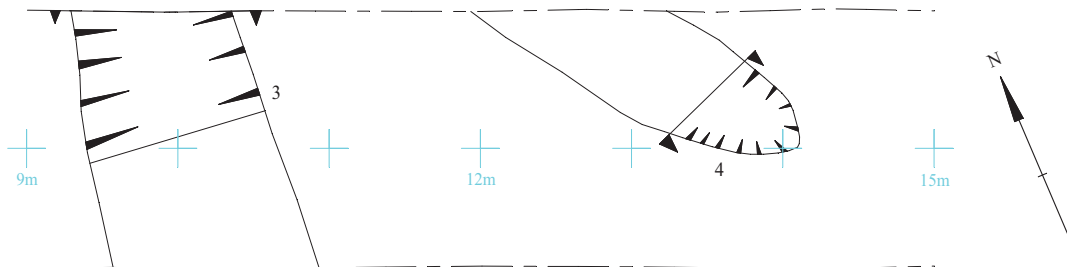
Trench 1



Trench 10



Trench 13



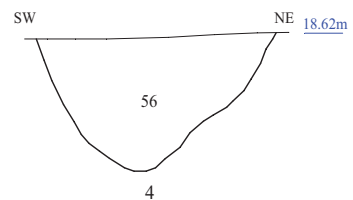
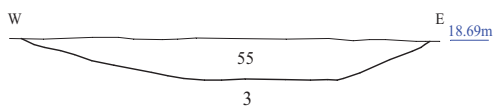
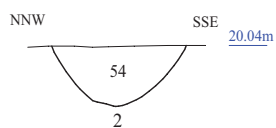
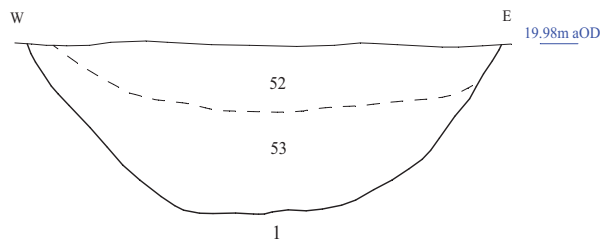
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Figure 4. Trench plans.



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Figure 5. Sections.



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

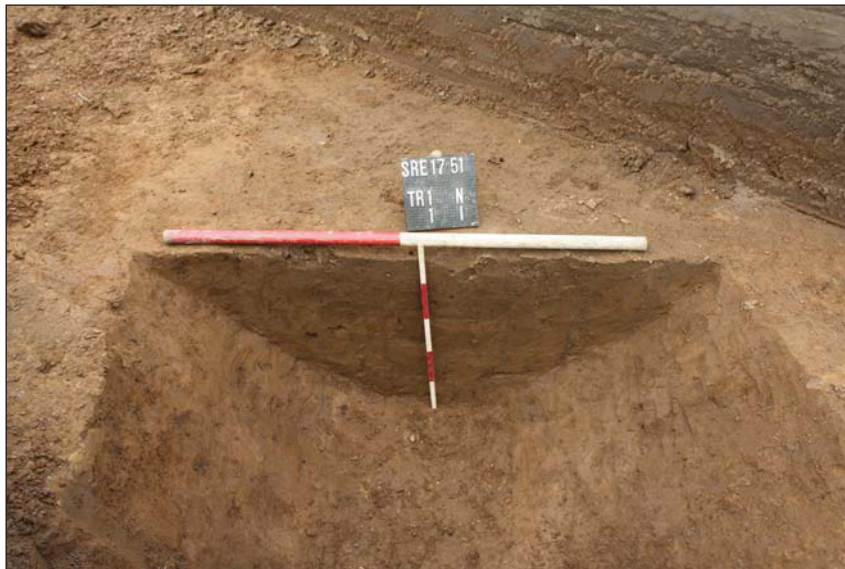


Plate 2. Trench 1, ditch 1, looking north, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 10, looking south, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 10, posthole 2, looking East, Scales: horizontal 0.3m, vertical 0.1m.

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Plates 3 and 4.**

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



Plate 6. Trench 11, looking north west,
Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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Plates 5 and 6.**

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Plate 7. Trench 12, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m



Plate 8. Trench 13, ditch slot 3, looking North, Scales: horizontal 0.3m.

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**Eton College Sports Pavilion, Slough Road,
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Plates 7 and 8.**

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Plate 9. Trench 13, posthole 4, looking East, Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 0.3m.



Plate 10. Trench 18, looking north east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m.

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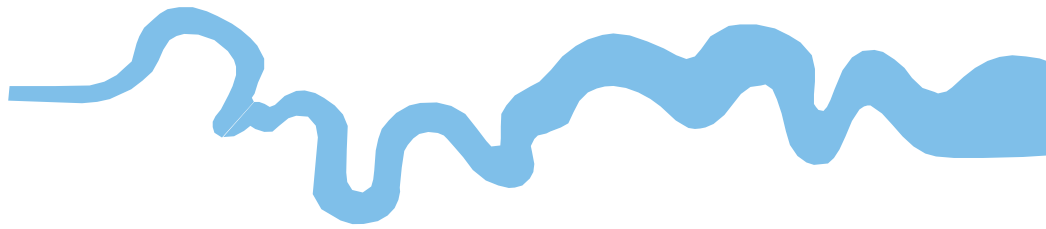
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Plates 9 and 10.**

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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





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