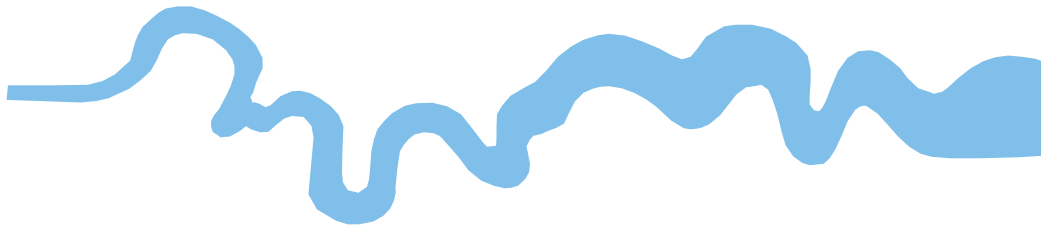


**T V A S**



**SOUTH**

**Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road,  
Egham, Surrey**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Sean Wallis and Teresa Vieira**

**Site Code: ELC17/76**

**(TQ 0166 7101)**

**Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road,  
Egham, Surrey**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for CgMs Consulting**

by Sean Wallis and Teresa Vieira  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code  
ELC 17/76

**June 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road, Egham, Surrey

**Grid reference:** TQ 0166 7101

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 24th to 30th May 2017

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Teresa Vieira

**Site code:** ELC 17/76

**Area of site:** c. 1.34 ha

**Summary of results:** The evaluation has revealed a modest number of archaeological features, comprising linear features of probable Roman date along with a Bronze Age cremation burial.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with an approved local museum in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓	12.06.17
	Steve Preston✓	12.06.17

# **Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road, Egham, Surrey An Archaeological Evaluation**

by Sean Wallis and Teresa Vieira

**Report 17/76**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road, Egham, Surrey (TQ 0166 7101) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Manca Petric of CgMs Consulting Ltd, 140 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5DN.

Planning permission (RU/17/0488) has been sought from Runnymede Borough Council for the redevelopment of Egham Leisure Centre. A programme of archaeological work is required to inform the planning process on potential archaeological implications and produce a strategy for mitigation 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 Nick Truckle of Surrey County Council, who advises Runnymede Borough Council on archaeological matters. The fieldwork was undertaken by Teresa Vieira and Jim Webster between 24th and 30th May 2017, and the site code is ELC 17/76. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading, and will be deposited with an approved local museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

Egham Leisure Centre is located immediately to the east of the M25 Ring Road, about 600m south-west of the historic core of the town (Fig. 1). The site is bounded to the east by Vicarage Road, to the south by woodland, and to the north by modern developments (Fig. 2). The evaluation was carried out in the grassed area to the east, south-east and south of the main leisure centre building. This part of the site is relatively flat and lies at a height of approximately 15m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of Shepperton Gravel (BGS 1999). The natural geology recorded in the evaluation trenches generally consisted of light orange brown sandy clay, with varying amounts of flinty gravel inclusions.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been considered in a desk-based assessment (Petric 2017). In summary, the site lies within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley, with a wide range of archaeological sites and find spots recorded in the local area. Egham saw extensive archaeological investigation in the 1970s (including in advance of the construction of the M25) but more recent work has mainly been outside the town centre (Preston 2012, 1–2). For example, Egham is notable for the presence of a rich Neolithic and Bronze Age water-front site at Runnymede Bridge (Longley 1980). Another rich Bronze Age enclosure complex was excavated at Petters Sports Field (O'Connell 1986), just to the north. A Bronze Age site also lies at Thorpe Lea Nurseries to the south (Hayman and Poulton 2012). Extensive evaluation at Whitehall Lane revealed a wide range of sites and finds of prehistoric and later date (Taylor 2004). In the town centre, prehistoric, Roman and medieval evidence occasionally comes to light (Preston *et al.* 2012, Saunders 2012).

## **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 proposed 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; and
- to determine if there is any evidence of prehistoric, Roman or medieval occupation present.

Eleven trenches were to be dug, each measuring 30m in length and 2m in width. The trenches were largely positioned to target those parts of the site which would be most affected by the proposed development. The trenches were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds. Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and the features excavated to an agreed sampling fraction dependent on feature type, without compromising the integrity of any deposits that might warrant preservation *in situ* or might be better investigated under the conditions pertaining to full excavation.

## Results

The trenches were dug close to their intended positions, although trenches 1 and 2 had to be moved slightly to avoid a gas main. An additional trench (12) was excavated in the south-east corner of the site, due to the shortening of trench 6. The trenches measured between 23.50m and 35.60m in length, and between 0.53m and 0.74m in depth. A complete list of the trenches, giving lengths, breadths, depths, and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 summarizes the features investigated.

### Trench 1 (Figs 3- 5; Pl. 5)

Trench 1 was orientated W-E, and was 23.60m long and up to 0.54m deep. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.23m of topsoil (50) and 0.25m of subsoil (51). Gully 1 was investigated between 9.70m and 12.50m from the west end of the trench, and was up to 0.31m wide and 0.11m deep. It had a single fill of mid brown clayey silt (52), which contained a small fragment of undated (but Roman or later) tile and a struck flint.

### Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

This trench was 31.10m long and up to 0.62m deep, and was orientated W-E. The natural geology was encountered beneath 0.22m of topsoil (50), 0.15m of modern made ground, and 0.15m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

### Trench 3 (Figs 3 and 5; Pl. 2)

Trench 3 was 35.60m long and up to 0.55m deep, and was orientated approximately W-E. The natural geology was observed beneath 0.22m of topsoil (50) and 0.26m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

### Trench 4 (Figs 3- 5)

This trench was 32.50m long and up to 0.53m deep, and was orientated approximately N-S. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.22m of topsoil (50) and 0.22m of subsoil (51). Gully 2 was observed between 10.40m and 20m, and a slot was excavated through it by hand. The feature was at least 0.94m wide and 0.10m, with a single fill of mid greyish brown clayey silt (53). A single sherd of Roman pottery and a small fragment of burnt flint were recovered from this deposit.

### Trench 5 (Figs 3-5; Pl. 5)

Trench 5 was 30.00m long and up to 0.53m deep, and was orientated W-E. The natural geology was encountered beneath 0.23m of topsoil (50) and 0.22m of subsoil (51). The terminus of a probable gully (3) was partially exposed between 17.80m and 18.70m. The feature was seen to be at least 0.80m wide and 0.15m deep, with a single fill of mid greyish brown clayey silt (54), which contained one small fragment of unworked, burnt flint.

#### Trench 6 (Fig. 3; Pl. 4)

This trench was 23.50m long and up to 0.53m deep, and was orientated approximately NW-SE. The trench was shorter than originally planned, due to the close proximity of trees along the site boundary. The natural geology was observed beneath 0.28m of topsoil (50) and 0.18m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

#### Trench 7 (Fig. 3)

This trench was 32.20m long and up to 0.57m deep, and was orientated W-E. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.25m of topsoil (50) and 0.19m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

#### Trench 8 (Figs 3-5; Pl. 8)

Trench 8 was 30.00m long and up to 0.70m deep, and was orientated approximately N-S. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.22m of topsoil (50) and 0.22m of subsoil (51). Gully 5 was observed between 13m and 23.60m, and a slot was excavated across the feature by hand. The gully was at least 0.74m wide and 0.31m deep, with a single fill of light grey silty clay (56). Five sherds of Roman pottery were recovered along with some fragments of tile and a piece of Roman brick.

#### Trench 9 (Figs 3 and 5)

This trench was 33.00m long and up to 0.74m deep, and was orientated approximately W-E. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.26m of topsoil (50) and 0.28m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were observed in the trench.

#### Trench 10 (Fig. 3)

This trench was 31.00m long and up to 0.66m deep, and was orientated N-S. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.25m of topsoil (50) and 0.21m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the trench.

#### Trench 11 (Figs 3-5; Pl. 7)

Trench 11 was 29.00m long and up to 0.65m deep, and was orientated approximately W-E. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.25m of topsoil (50) and 0.23m of subsoil (51). A small pit (4) containing a cremation burial was observed at the eastern end of the trench. The feature was initially half-sectioned as the cremated bone was not seen on the surface. It was fully excavated following recording. The pit measured 0.40m in diameter and was up to 0.22m deep. Four sherds of Bronze Age pottery were recovered from its fill of dark greyish brown clayey silt (55), along with cremated bone of an adult, possible male. Charcoal was noted within this deposit, particularly around the edges of the pit. The cremated bone fragments were generally associated with the areas where the charcoal was recorded. Following discussions with the consultant and the Surrey County Council

Archaeological Officer, it was decided to strip an area around the cremation pit (Fig. 3). No further features were observed.

#### Trench 12 (Fig. 3; Pl. 4)

This trench was 15.60m long and up to 0.54m deep, and was orientated N-S. It was an extra trench excavated due to the short length of trench 6. The natural geology was recorded beneath 0.25m of topsoil (50) and 0.22m of subsoil (51). No archaeological finds or features were recorded in this trench.

## **Finds**

### *Prehistoric Pottery* by Richard Tabor

A total of four sherds of pottery weighing 42g were recovered from the fill of pit 4 (55). All are likely to derive from the base and lower wall of a single vessel. The base radius is between 35mm and 45mm, suggesting that the vessel was small. The wall thickness was 10mm. The exterior base angle varied from 80° from horizontal in the lower 9mm forming a slight foot above which it turned outwards at an angle of 60°. One sherd shows slight outward expansion at the base.

The moderately soft grey fabric has very pale pink exterior and dark grey interior surfaces. It includes sparse to patchily common medium (<2mm) and rare to sparse coarse (<5mm) reddish brown, sub-rounded grog and sparse to patchily moderate medium (<2mm) and rare coarse (<5mm) angular burnt flint. Rare 1mm wide, up to 7mm long linear striated grooves on the surface may be voids left by organic material such as straw. The vessel was poorly fired.

The base form is of a type which might be present in assemblages in the region throughout the Bronze Age. However, although flint and grog tempering combined was used in the Middle to Late Bronze Age in the lower Thames Valley, by the Middle Bronze Age flint inclusions had become dominant in the region further to the west, largely to the exclusion of grog which featured in mixtures with flint in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (Leivers 2010, 23). The mixture, combined with the poor firing renders an earlier Bronze Age date most likely.

### *Roman Pottery* by Paul Blinkhorn

The Roman pottery assemblage comprised six sherds with a total weight of 44g. It is all sandy grey wares. The sherds are all somewhat degraded, and while their poor condition makes exact identification difficult, they are probably of Alice Holt type, fabric ALH RE (Tomber and Dore 1994). Such pottery was produced throughout



the Roman period from about AD50/60 onwards. Their poor condition seems as likely to be due to burial conditions rather than re-deposition. Five sherds weighing 43g occurred in gully 5 (56), with the other sherd, weighing 1g, in gully 2 (53).

### *Cremated human remains* by Ceri Falys

A single human cremation burial was recovered from pit 4 (trench 11). A total of 371g of bone is present for analysis. This deposit of bone was whole-earth recovered, subsequently floated and wet-sieved to a 1mm mesh size, with all burnt bone and other associated residues separated for further analysis. Overall the surface preservation of the bone is good, with a fairly large post-excavation fragment size.

The bone was sorted using a sieve stack of 10mm, 5mm, and 2mm mesh sizes and weighed. The weights from each of the sieves were recorded, along with information regarding the colour(s) of the burnt bone for each deposit, and the maximum fragment size. The total weight of bone present in each sieve are: 246g (66.3%) in the 10mm fraction, 91g (24.5%) measured between 10mm and 5mm in size, and 34g (9.2%) of bone has fragment sizes smaller than 5mm. A maximum cranial fragment size of 46.1mm (piece of parietal bone) and a post-cranial maximum fragment size of 67.7mm (anterior tibial shaft fragment) have been recorded.

The bone is not uniform in colour, but rather displays colours from charred black to hues of blue-grey and buff-white. Variations in colour of burnt bone reflects the degree of oxidation of the organic components within the bone, which relies on factors such as the quantity of fuel used to build the pyre, the temperate attained in various parts of the pyre, length of time over which the cremation was undertaken and the oxidising/reducing conditions in various parts of the pyre (McKinley 2004, 11). Holden *et al.* (1995a; 1995b) suggest that temperatures above 600° Celsius are required to fully oxidize the organic components and produce white bone. Temperatures of around 300°C are required to char bone, and hues of blue and grey indicate the bone has been incompletely oxidized, requiring temperatures up to *c.* 600°C. An observable pattern of colour and specific element has not been identified, with the exception of the cranial vault being uniformly grey in colour.

### Osteological Analysis

All bone was subjected to osteological analysis following the procedures suggested by McKinley (2000) and Brickley and McKinley (2004). The most frequently preserved fragments are pieces of cranial vault, tooth fragments (roots and crown fragments of adult dentition, including incisors, premolars, molars), and long bone shaft fragments (humerus, radius, ulna, femur, and tibia). The lack of element duplication or differing skeletal developmental stages suggests the presence of only one individual within the assemblage.

Age can only be estimated as "adult" (i.e. 20+ years old) based on the presence of a maxillary third molar with a fully completed root (van Beek 2002). No other indicators of age are observable that could narrow down an age-at-death. In the absence of the necessary portions of the skull and pelvis, the sex of the individual is suggested to be possibly male, based on the overall robust nature of the cranial vault and long bone shaft fragments. No pathological alterations were observed, and no further information can be recovered from this cremation burial.

### *Struck Flint* by Steve Ford

A single struck flint (a spall- that is a piece less than 20x20mm) was recovered from gully 1 (52) in trench 1. It is not closely datable but probably of Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

### *Burnt Flint* by Sean Wallis

Just two small fragments of burnt flint were recovered during the evaluation. One fragment, weighing 20g, was found within the fill of gully 3 (54) in trench 5. A much smaller fragment was recovered from gully 2 (53) in trench 4. Neither piece had been worked.

### *Fired clay* by Danielle Milbank

A total of 378g of fired clay was recovered from pit 4 (55), including 348g recovered from a sieved soil sample. This comprised small fragments of a fairly fine grey brown friable clay fabric. One fragment with a wattle impressions was present, and the fabric overall is typical of daub. No other fired clay objects (such as loomweights) were identified.

### *Ceramic Building Materials* by Danielle Milbank

Gully 5 (56) contained 949g of ceramic building material (12 fragments). These comprise 10 fragments of a soft orange fired clay with sparse fine sand inclusions, representing tile with a typical thickness of 23mm. A further tile fragment is a hard, evenly fired fine clay tile with a thickness of 20mm and an orange red colour with a thin lens of dark grey at the surface, indicating reducing conditions during firing.

A piece of brick of likely Roman date was also recovered from this context, which is 52mm thick, with a fairly even form and a sandy base, with slight drag marks on the upper surface showing the method of

manufacture. The fabric is a fine clay with very sparse flint inclusions and a dark brown orange colour with grey (reduced) core. No fragments typical of specific Roman tile forms (such as *tegula* or *imbrex*) were identified, and the pieces are not closely dateable but given the context, presumably Roman.

### *Macrobotanical plant material and charcoal* by Danielle Milbank

Four bulk soil samples were processed from deposits encountered during the evaluation (deposits 55, 56, 57, 59). The flots were wet sieved to 0.25mm and air dried, and were examined under a low-power binocular microscope at magnifications between x10 and x40. No charcoal nor plant seeds or other remains could be identified. Charcoal was present in deposit 55 but was too comminuted for identification.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the re-development proposal and established the archaeological potential of the site. A modest number of archaeological features, mostly linear in nature, were recorded across the site, along with a Bronze Age cremation burial. Although the linear features were quite poorly dated, one certainly seems to date from the Roman period, and it is not implausible that they may all be contemporary with one another.

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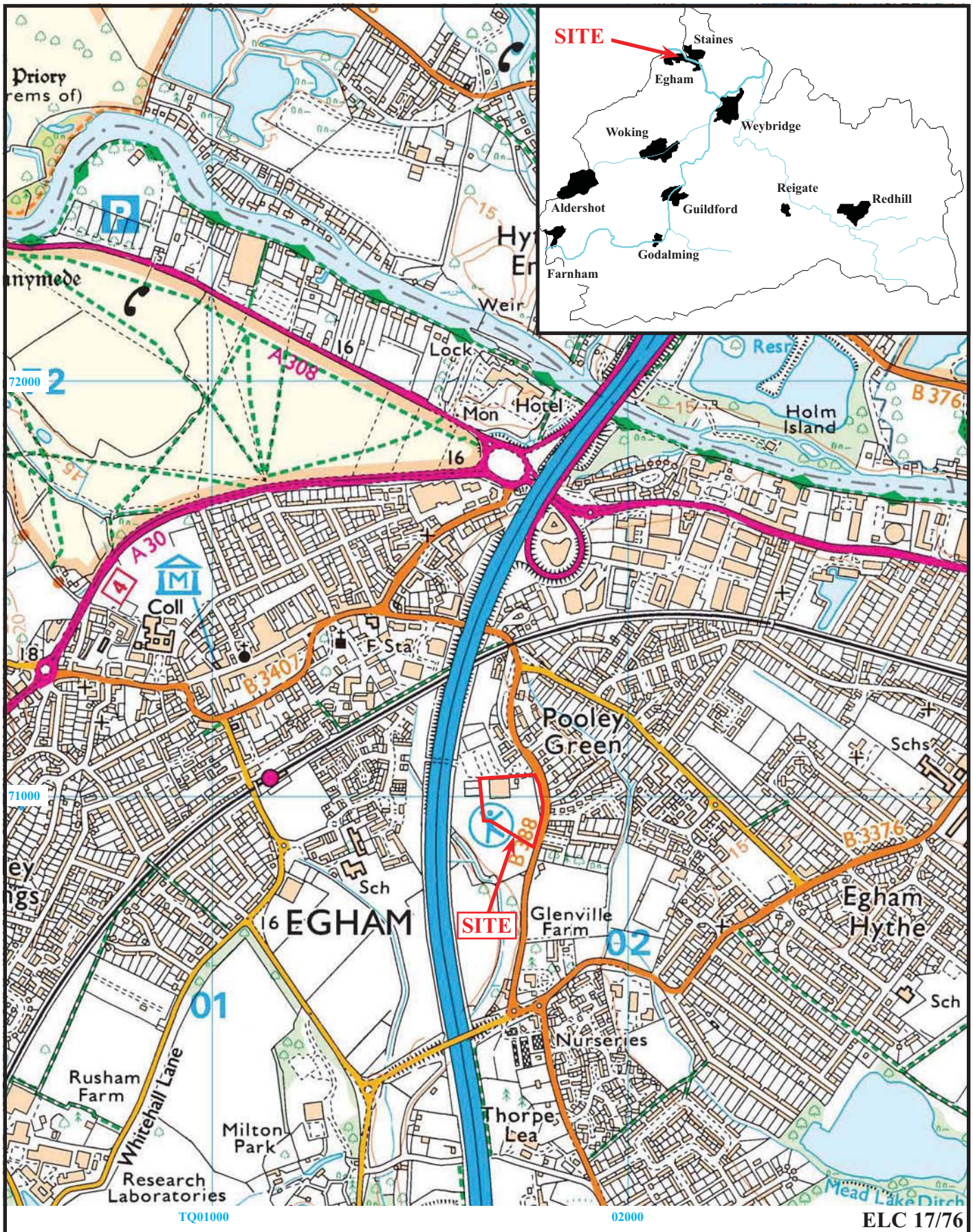
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## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	23.60	2.00	0.54	0-0.23m topsoil (50); 0.23-0.48m subsoil (51); 0.48-0.54m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.22m aOD. Gully 1. <b>[Pl. 5]</b>
2	31.10	2.00	0.62	0-0.22m topsoil (50); 0.22-0.37m made ground; 0.37-0.52m subsoil (51); 0.52-0.62m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 15.01m aOD. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
3	35.60	2.00	0.55	0-0.22m topsoil (50); 0.22-0.46m subsoil (51); 0.46-0.55m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.87m aOD. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>
4	32.50	2.00	0.53	0-0.22m topsoil (50); 0.22-0.44m subsoil (51); 0.44-0.53m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.19m aOD. Gully 2.
5	30.00	2.00	0.53	0-0.23m topsoil (50); 0.23-0.45m subsoil (51); 0.45-0.53m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.49m aOD. Gully 3. <b>[Pl. 6]</b>
6	23.50	2.00	0.53	0-0.28m topsoil (50); 0.28-0.46m subsoil (51); 0.46-0.53m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.33m aOD. <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
7	32.20	2.00	0.57	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.44m subsoil (51); 0.44-0.57m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.38m aOD.
8	30.00	2.00	0.70	0-0.24m topsoil (50); 0.24-0.52m subsoil (51); 0.52-0.70m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.18m aOD. Gully 5. <b>[Pl. 8]</b>
9	33.00	2.00	0.74	0-0.26m topsoil (50); 0.26-0.54m subsoil (51); 0.54-0.74m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.02m aOD.
10	31.00	2.00	0.66	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.46m subsoil (51); 0.46-0.66m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.05m aOD.
11	29.00	2.00	0.65	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.48m subsoil (51); 0.48-0.65m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench at 14.22m aOD. Cremation pit 4. <b>[Pl. 7]</b>
12	15.60	2.00	0.54	0-0.25m topsoil (50); 0.25-0.47m subsoil (51); 0.47-0.54m+ light orange brown sandy clay (natural geology). Base of trench 14.30m aOD. <b>[Pl. 4]</b>

## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

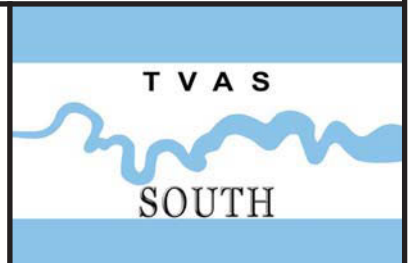
Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating evidence
1	1	52	Gully	Roman ?	Tile
4	2	53	Gully	Roman	Pottery
5	3	54	Gully	Undated	
11	4	55	Pit / Cremation burial	Bronze Age	Pottery
8	5	56	Gully	Roman	Pottery, brick, tile

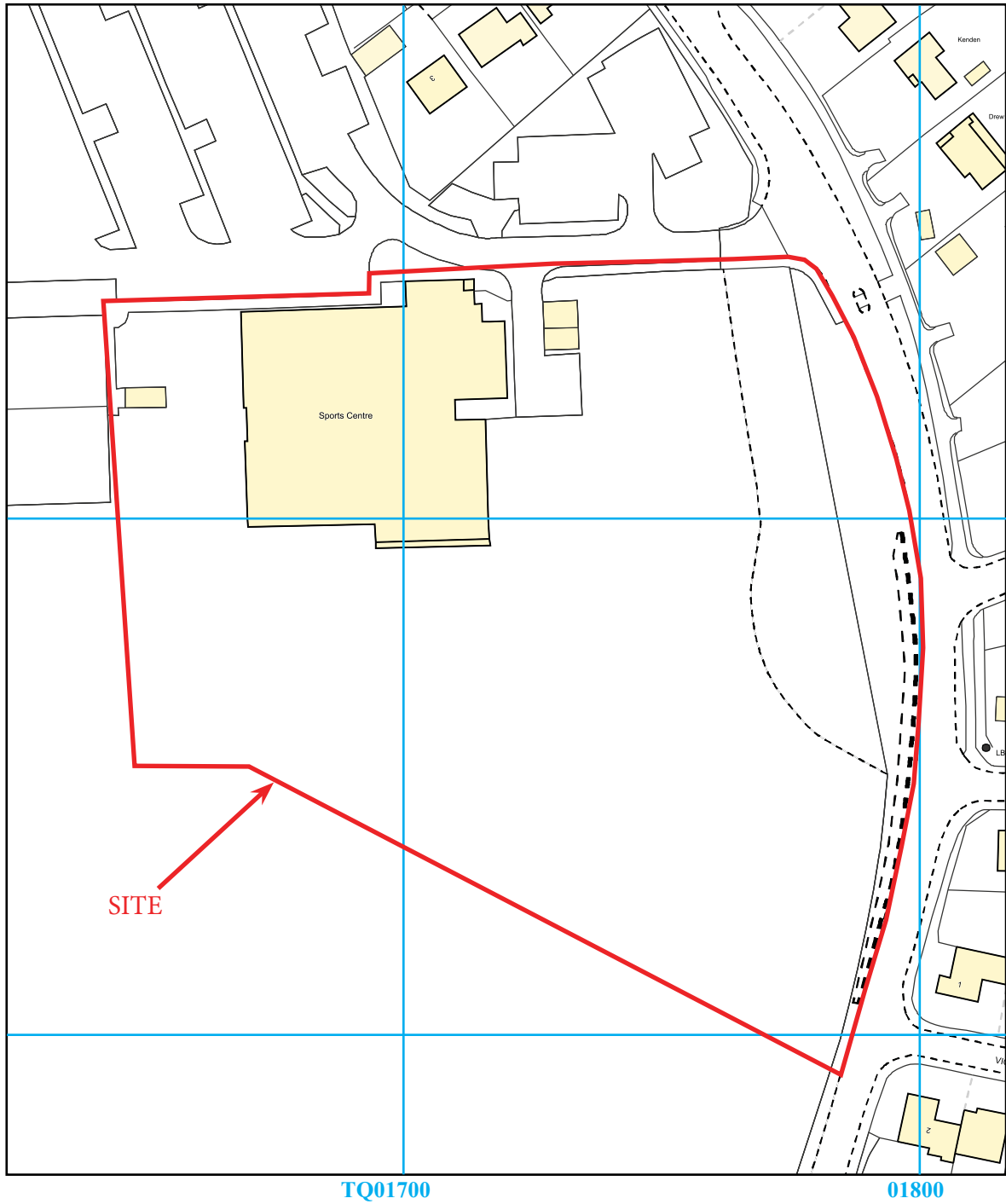


**Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road,  
Egham, Surrey, 2017  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Egham and Surrey

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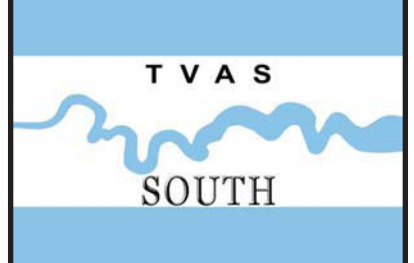
ELC 17/76



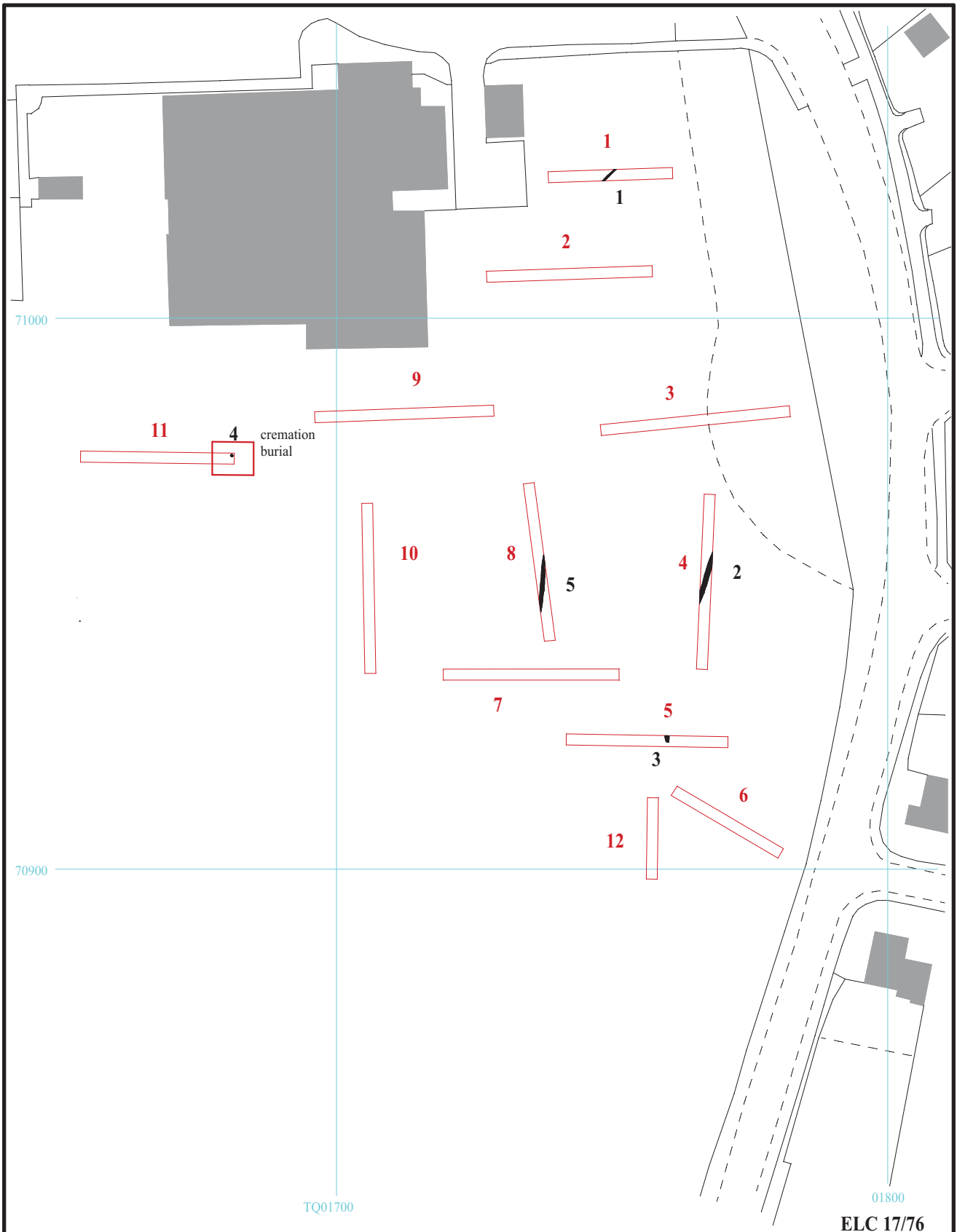
**Egham Leisure Centre, Vicarage Road,  
Egham, Surrey, 2017  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 2. Detailed location of site

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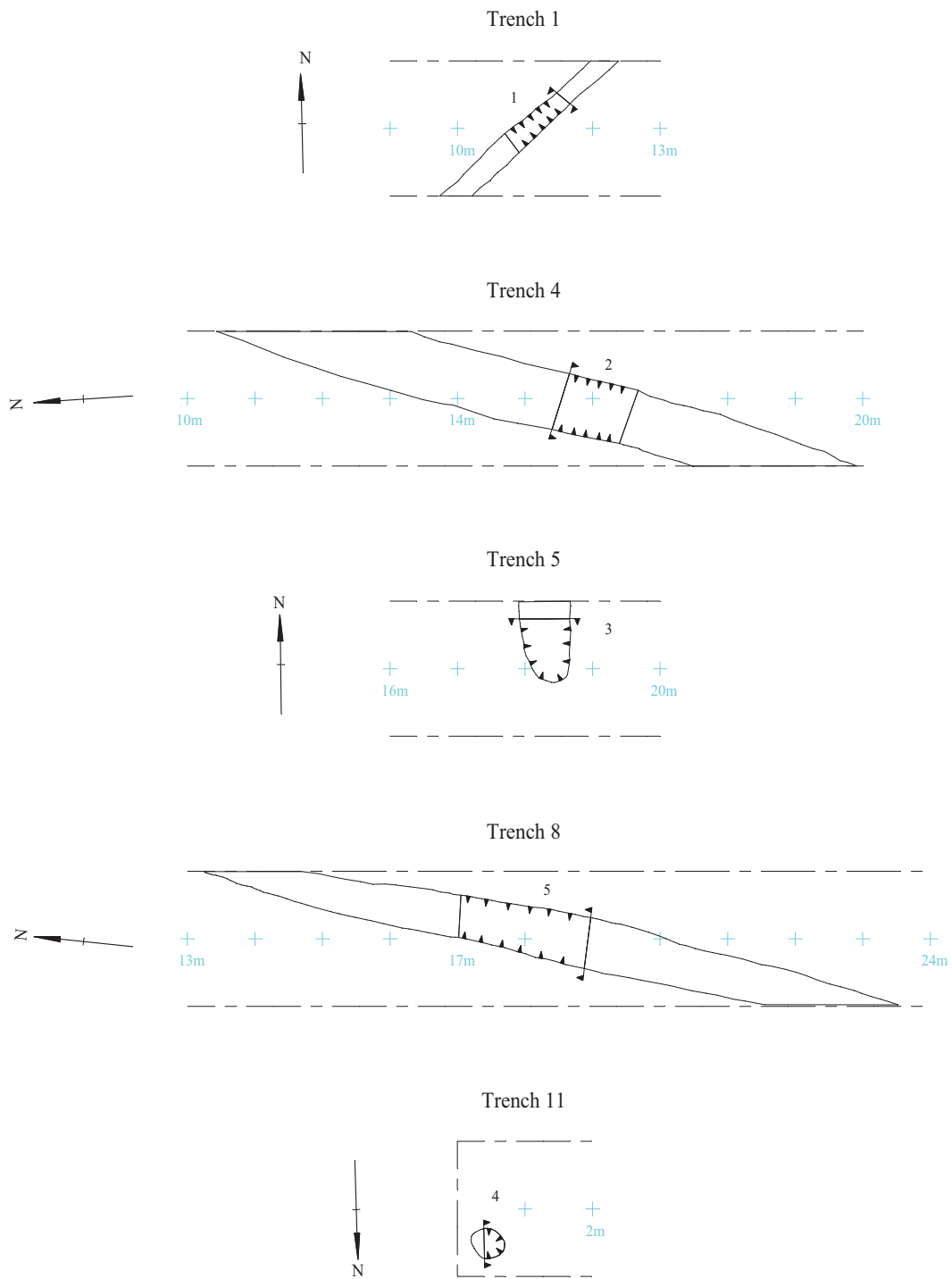
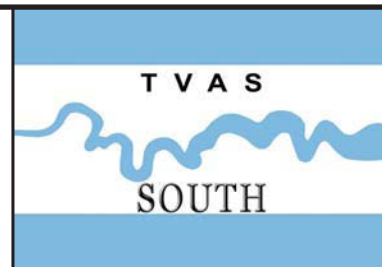
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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches and features.

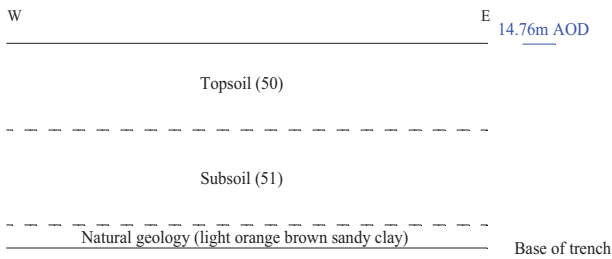


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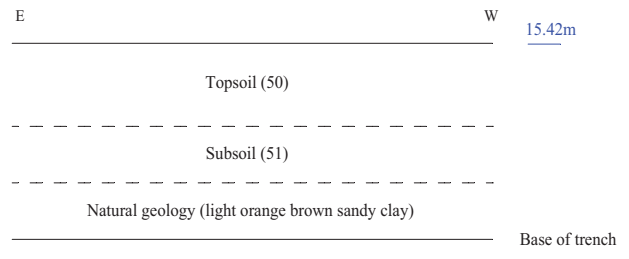
Figure 4. Plan of trenches 1, 4, 5, 8 and 11.



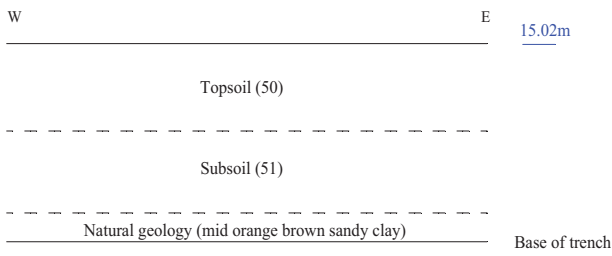
**Trench 1**



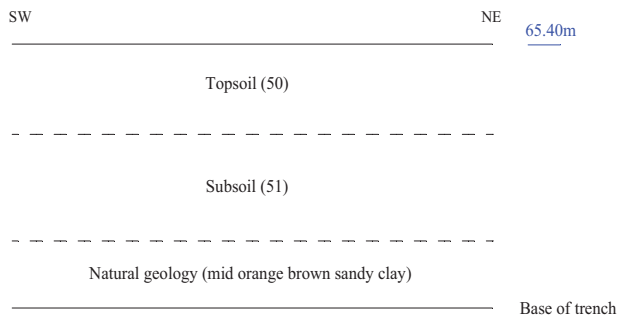
**Trench 3**



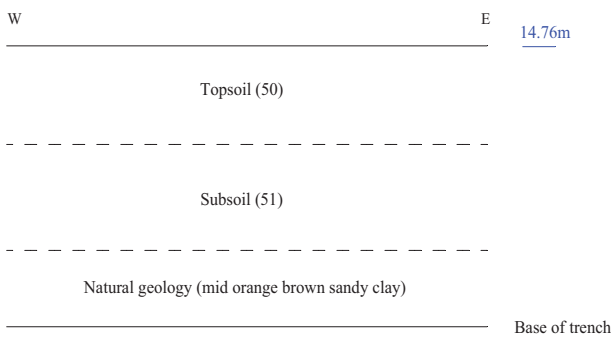
**Trench 5**



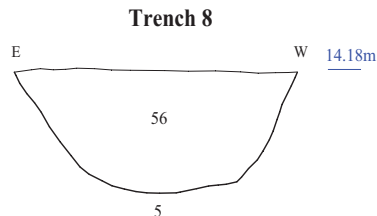
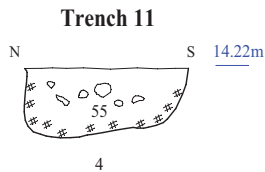
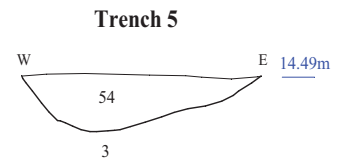
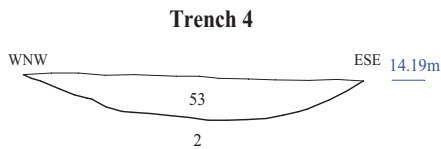
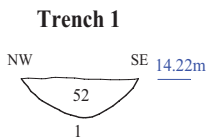
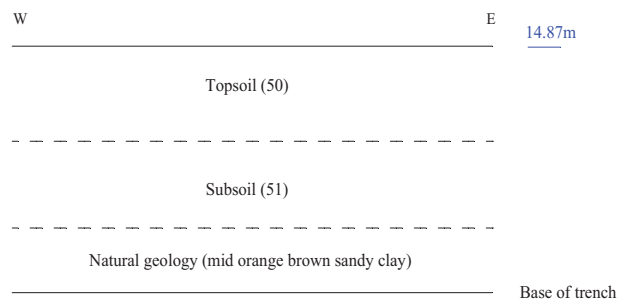
**Trench 8**



**Trench 9**



**Trench 11**



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Figure 5. Sections.

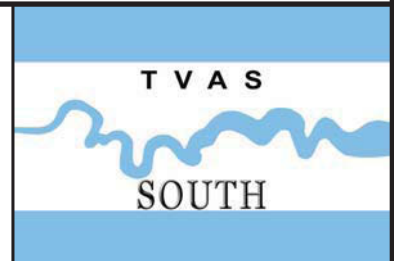




Plate 1. Trench 2, looking south-east. Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.

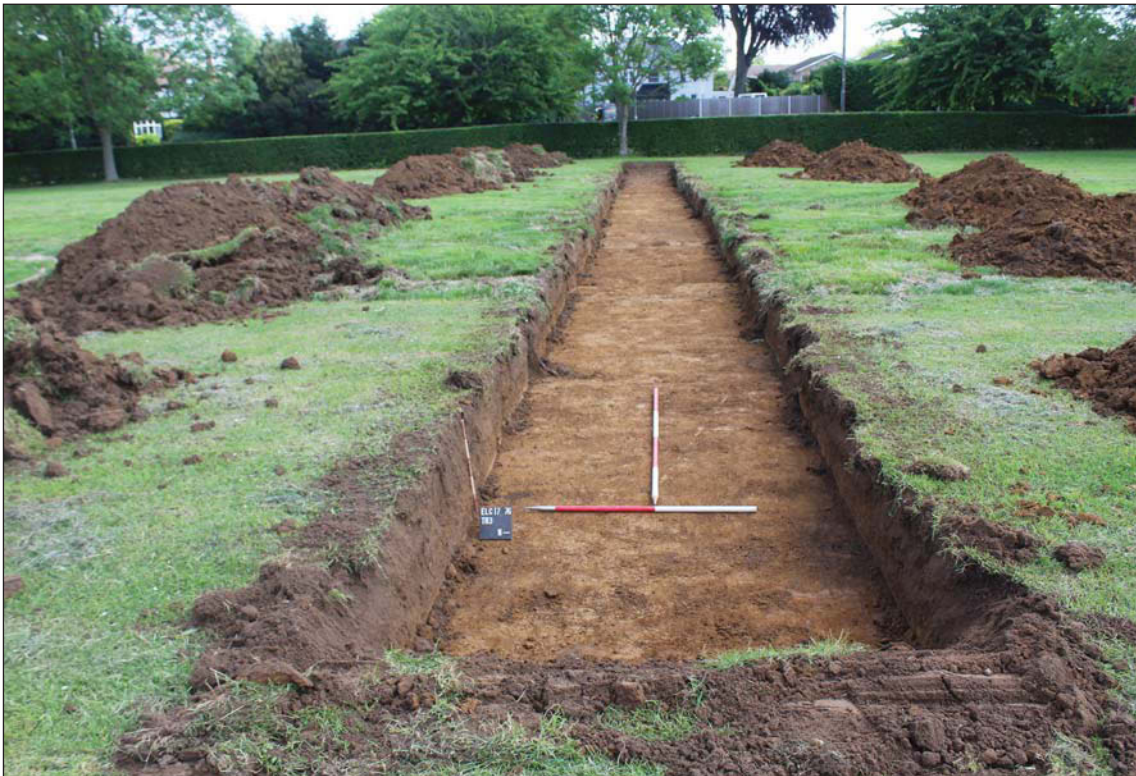


Plate 2. Trench 3, looking east. Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.

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Plates 1 - 2.





Plate 3. Trench 6, looking south-east. Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.



Plate 4. Trench 12, looking south. Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.50m.

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Plates 3 - 4.





Plate 5. Trench 1, Gully 1 looking east. Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Trench 5, Gully 3 looking north. Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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Plates 5 - 6.





Plate 7. Trench 11, Cremation burial 4 looking east. Scales: 0.5, 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 8. Trench 8, Gully 5 looking south. Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.3m.

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Plates 7 - 8.

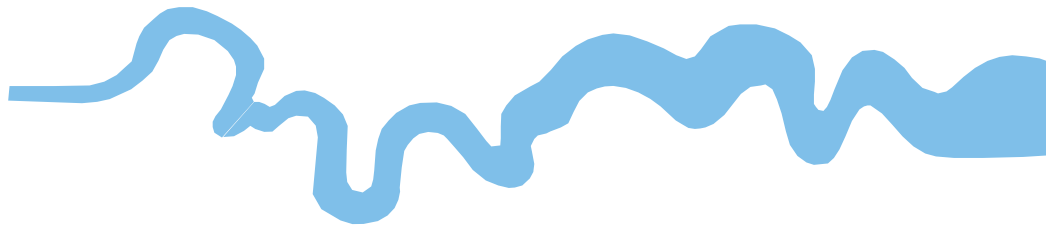


## TIME CHART

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