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ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Croft Farmhouse, 77 Abingdon Road,
Standlake, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Crabb and Cecilia Galleano

Site Code: ARS16/262

(SP 3888 0326)

**Croft Farmhouse, 77 Abingdon Road,
Standlake, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Chesside Homes Ltd**

by Steve Crabb and Cecilia Galleano
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code ARS17/262

January 2018

Summary

Site name: Croft Farmhouse, 77 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SP 3888 0326

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 4th -9th January 2018

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Cecilia Galleano

Site code: ARS 17/262

Area of site: 0.27ha

Summary of results: The evaluation has revealed a moderate number of cut features, but most of these are clearly of modern or late post-medieval date. One gully, dated by a single sherd of pottery is possibly of medieval date and another gully and pit are undated. Although the site seems to have a few deposits of archaeological interest, the potential of the site is considered to be low.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

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

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Croft Farmhouse, 77 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

By Steve Crabb and Cecilia Galleano

Report 17/262

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Croft Farmhouse, 77 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire (SP 3888 0326) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Paul Burman of Key Land Estates, 2 Drayton House Court, Dorchester Road, Drayton St. Leonard, Oxfordshire OX10 7BG on behalf of Chesside Homes Ltd.

A Planning Application will be submitted to develop the site for housing to provide 3 no detached dwellings with associated access and parking. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the development, a field evaluation was requested by Mr Hugh Coddington, Archaeology Team Leader for Oxfordshire County Council, advising the District.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Hugh Coddington and based on a brief supplied by him (Coddington 2017). The fieldwork was undertaken by Cecilia Galleano, Ashley Kruger and Rebecca Constable between 4th January and 9th January 2018 and the site code is ARS 16/262. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the north of the centre of Standlake and to the south of the hamlet of Brighthampton adjacent to the Abingdon Road (Fig. 1). It is a mainly empty field containing a garage on the east side of Martins Lane, with houses fronting Abingdon Road to the south and a larger field to north and east (Fig. 2; Pl. 1). The underlying geology on the site is mapped as first terrace floodplain gravels (BGS 1982), and this is what showed in the trenches.

Archaeological background

The site lies within an area of extensive archaeological potential with evidence of human activity from the Neolithic period to the medieval period. To the east of the site there are extensive cropmarks which include enclosures, pits and trackways. Archaeological monitoring to the north-west of the site revealed the presence of prehistoric pits and ditches that were not visible as cropmarks (Coddington 2017). A Bronze Age settlement complex located to the south of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument consisting of a massive complex of cropmarks representing Bronze Age ring ditches, rectangular enclosures and trackways. This was partially excavated in 1954. There were also four Iron Age sub-rectangular enclosures and a barrow containing Roman pottery. Medieval occupation has also been recorded at Brighthampton (Ford and Preston 2003).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.

Specifically the aims of the project were; to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present and to provide information to allow the preparation of a mitigation strategy if necessary.

Six trenches were to be dug, each between 13m and 16m long and 1.6m wide. They were to be excavated with a JCB-type machine with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Where the archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. Spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

Results

Six trenches were dug, three as intended and three slightly repositioned (Fig. 3). Due to physical constraints on the site, presence of trees, bushes and furniture, Trenches 3, 5 and 6 had to be repositioned and the dimensions have been consequently modified. Modern features were planned and investigated so far as to recover clear dating evidence, but not fully recorded. A bulk soil sample was taken from every linear feature..

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The excavated features are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 3, 4, and 5; Pls 2, 5)

Trench 1 was aligned NW-SE and was 15.7m long and 0.43m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.10m of dark brown silty sand topsoil and 0.24m of mid brown gravelly silty sand subsoil overlying light brown sandy gravel natural geology. At the north-west end of the trench, a gully terminus (1) was recorded, which was 0.44m wide and 0.12m deep and filled with greyish brown silty coarse sand. Sieving recovered a single small sherd of probable Medieval pottery. Towards the south east ditch (2) was recorded, aligned NE-SW which was 2.66m wide but only 0.04m deep and filled with mid greyish brown silty coarse sand. No finds were recovered from either feature but is likely to be the same feature (7) as seen in trench 5 and of post-Medieval date.

Trench 2 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pl. 6)

Trench 2 was aligned N-S and was 14.80m long and 0.43m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of silty sand dark brown topsoil and 0.27m of mid brown gravel silty sand subsoil overlying light brown sandy gravel natural geology. At the south end of the trench, a possible pit (10) was recorded, which was 0.28m wide and 0.08m deep and filled with light brown silt. At 2m north of this, a NE-SW gully (5) was recorded, which was 0.72m wide and 0.09m deep and filled with mid greyish brown silty coarse sand. At the north end of the trench, a ditch (4) was recorded, which was the same as post-medieval ditch 2 in trench 1. In this trench it was 2.95m wide and only 0.06m deep and filled with mid brown silty coarse sand. It is possible that this feature is a furrow. No finds were recovered from any of the features in this trench.

Trench 3 (Figs 3)

Trench 3 was aligned NE-SW and was 14.6m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of dark brown silty sand topsoil and 0.13m of mid brown gravel silty sand subsoil overlying light brown sandy gravel natural geology. No finds nor features were recovered.

Trench 4 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pl. 3)

Trench 4 was aligned W-E and was 13m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.22m of dark brown silty sand topsoil and 0.26m of mid brown gravel silty sand subsoil overlying light brown sandy gravel natural geology. Ditch (3) was recorded, which was 1.80m wide and 0.14m deep and filled with greyish brown silty coarse sand. This was the continuation of post-medieval ditch 2=4=7 in other trenches. The west end of the trench revealed modern truncation (rubble dump layers). A single fragment of unidentifiable animal bone was recovered from the ditch (3).

Trench 5 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pls 4, 7 and 8)

Trench 5 was aligned NW-SE and was 16m long and 0.50m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of dark brown silty sand topsoil and 0.27m of mid brown gravel silty sand subsoil overlying light brown sandy gravel natural geology. A modern pipe bisected the trench. The stratigraphy at the north of the pipe truncation consisted of 0.50m of orange sandy gravel and black sandy clay made ground on top of /truncating the natural geology. At the south end two ditches (7; 6) were recorded, which were 2.5m and 0.71m wide and 0.17m and 0.27m deep. Ditch (7) was filled with reddish brown sandy silt, while ditch (6) was filled with mid brown silty coarse sand. Ditch 7 is of similar profile to features 3,4 and 2 in trenches tr4, tr2 and tr1 and is probably the same feature. Sieving recovered fragments of clinker and this feature is considered to be of fairly modern date. Gully (8) was a continuation of a modern gully found in nearby trench 6. At the northern end a modern posthole (9) was cut through the made ground.

Trench 6 (Figs 3, 4 and 5)

Trench 6 was aligned SW-NE and was 10m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of orange sandy gravel layer, over 0.33m of a black sandy clay layer of made ground overlying/truncating light brown sandy gravel natural geology. At the west end of the trench, a posthole (11) was recorded, which was 0.33m wide and 0.14m deep and filled with greyish brown silty coarse sand but no dating evidence. The trench showed the extension of the modern gully in trench 5 (8) and three other modern truncations. Only modern finds were recovered.

Finds

Pottery

A single sherd of probable medieval pottery (1g) was recovered from a sample taken from gully 1 (52).

Animal bone

The only find recovered was an unidentified fragment of animal bone from the post-medieval ditch 3 in trench 4.

Sieved samples

Seven soil samples were taken as detailed in Appendix 2 and 10L of each sample was wet sieved and floated using a 0.25mm mesh. These revealed very little carbonised plant material but did recover a number of artefacts to provide dating evidence detailed above.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed the presence of several cut features but most of which are clearly of modern or late post-medieval date. A single gully is possibly of medieval date and another gully and small pit are undated. However, it is considered that the archaeological potential of the site is relatively low.

References

- BGS, 1982, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet **236**, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Coddington, H, 2017, 'Croft Farmhouse, 77 Abingdon Road, Standlake: Design Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation', Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, Oxford
- Ford, S and Preston, S, 2003, 'Medieval occupation at The Orchard, Brighthampton' *Oxoniensia*, **68** (for 2002), 287–312
- Hey, G and Hind, J, 2014, *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessments and Research Agendas*, Oxford Wessex Monogr 6, Oxford
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London

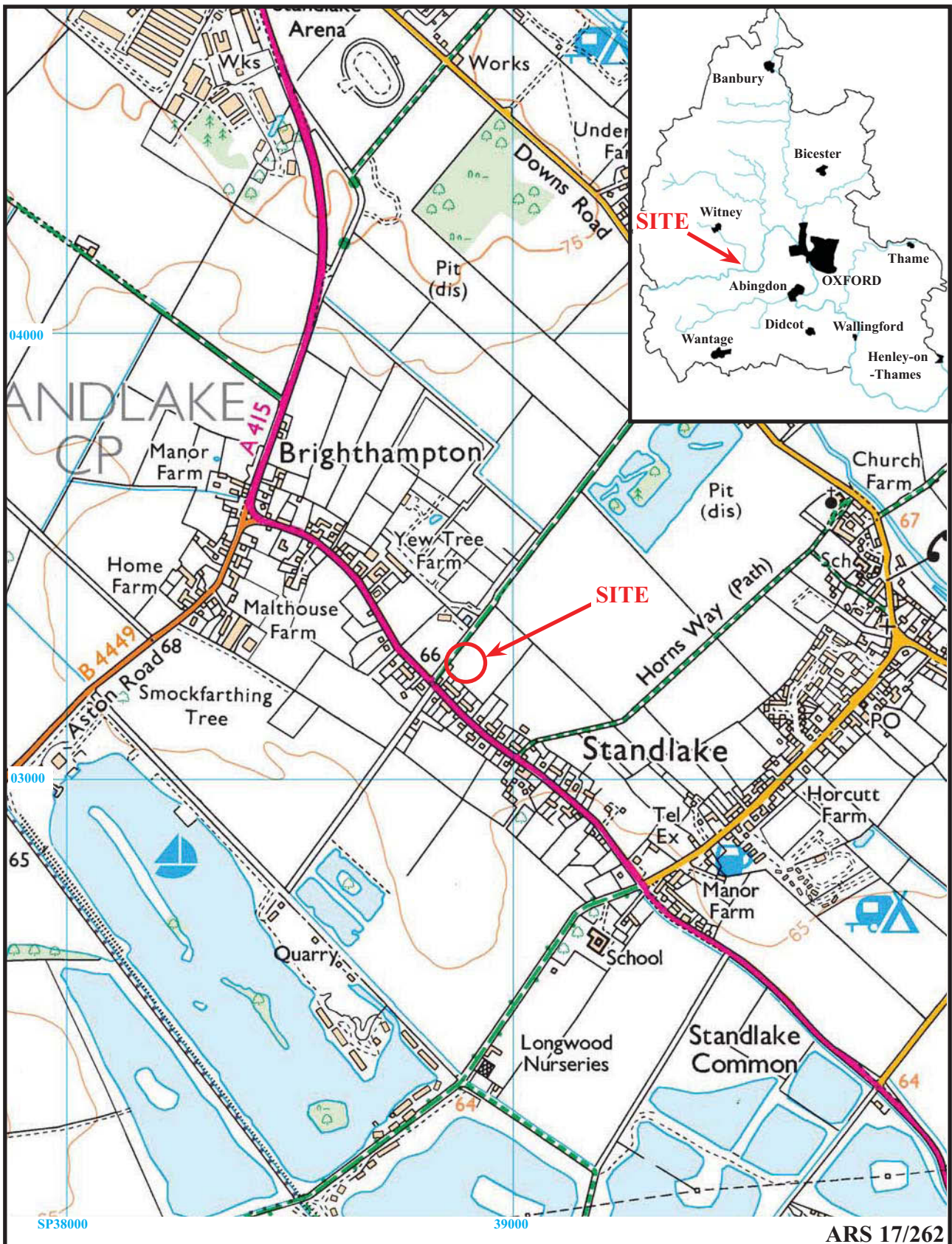
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	15.7	1.6	0.43	0.00-0.10m topsoil (dark brown silty sand); 0.10-0.34m subsoil (mid brown gravel silty sand); 0.34m+ natural geology(light brown sandy gravel). Gully slot 1, ditch slot 2 [Pls 2 and 5] .
2	14.8	1.6	0.43	0.00-0.15m topsoil (dark brown silty sand); ,0.15-0.42m subsoil (mid brown gravel silty sand); 0.42m+ natural geology(light brown sandy gravel). Gully slot 5, ditch slot 4, possible pit 10 [Pl. 6] .
3	14.6	1.6	0.45	0.00-0.20m topsoil (dark brown silty sand); ,0.20-0.33m subsoil (mid brown gravel silty sand); 0.33m+ natural geology(light brown sandy gravel).
4	13	1.6	0.48	0.00-0.22m topsoil (dark brown silty sand); ,0.22-0.48m subsoil (mid brown gravel silty sand); 0.48m+ natural geology(light brown sandy gravel). Ditch slot 3 [Pl. 3] .
5	16	1.6	0.50	0.00-0.23m topsoil (dark brown silty sand); ,0.23-0.50m subsoil (mid brown gravel silty sand); 0.50m+ natural geology(light brown sandy gravel). North side: 0.00-0.30m made ground (orange sandy gravel); 0.30-0.50m (black sandy clay); 0.50m+natural geology (light brown sandy gravel). [Pls 4, 7 and 8]
6	10	1.6	0.55	0.00-0.20m made ground (orange sandy gravel); 0.20-0.55m (black sandy clay); 0.50m+natural geology (light brown sandy gravel).

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>	<i>Sample no</i>	<i>Charcoal</i>
1	1	52	Gully terminus	Medieval?	pottery	7	
1	2	53	Ditch (or furrow)	Post-medieval?	Same as 7	3	
4	3	54	Ditch (or furrow)	Post-medieval?	Same as 7	1	x
2	4	55	Ditch (or furrow)	Post-medieval?	Same as 7	2	x
2	5	56	Gully	Undated		4	
5	6	57	Ditch	Post-medieval	Nail	5	x
5	7	58	Ditch (or furrow)	Post-medieval	Clinker	6	
5	8	61	Gully	Modern			
5	9	62	Posthole	Modern	Stratigraphy		
2	10	59	Possible pit	Undated			
6	11	60	Posthole	Undated			

Charcoal abundance: x rare: xx some: xxx plentiful



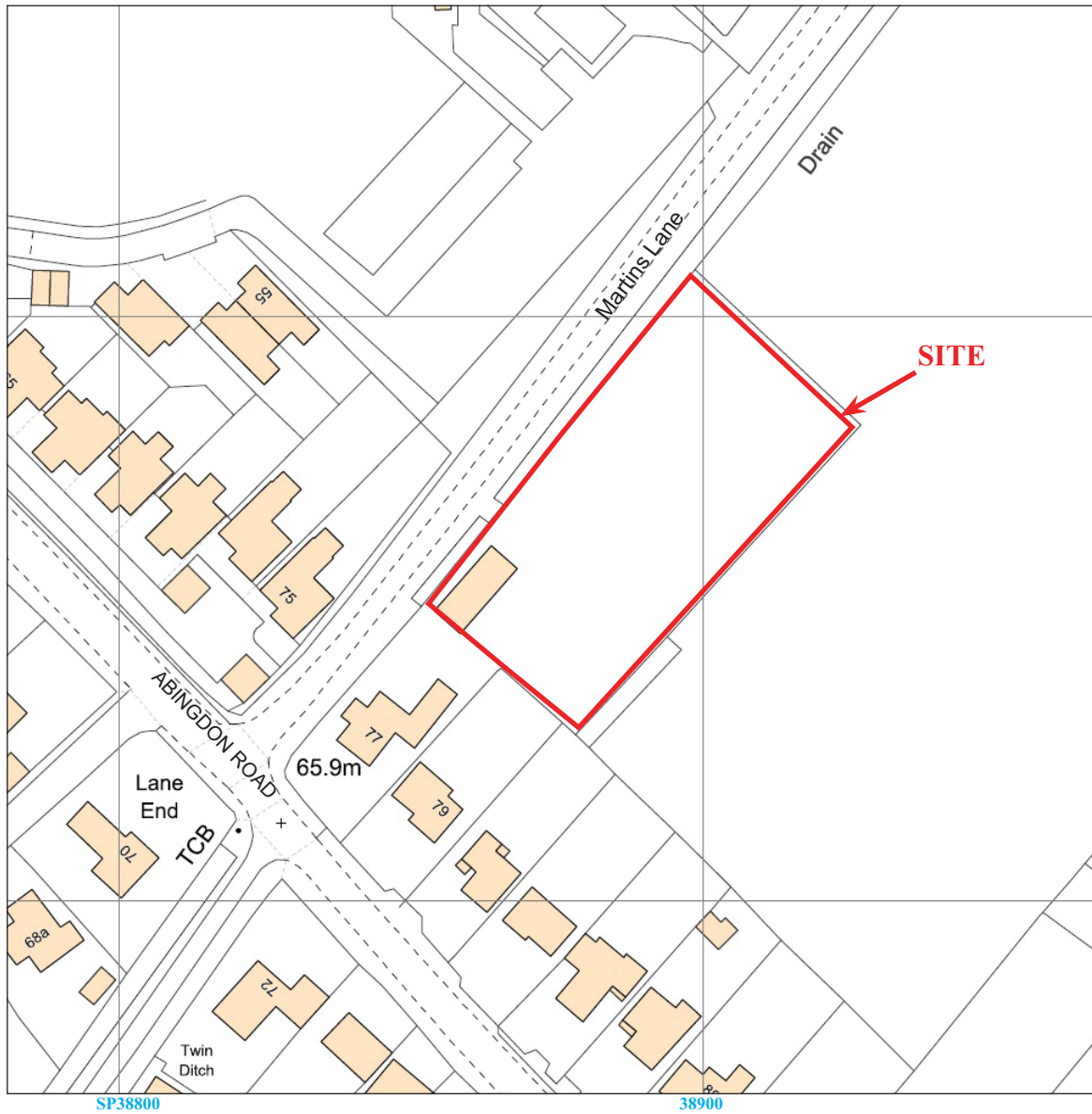
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Figure 1. Location of site within Standlake and Oxfordshire.

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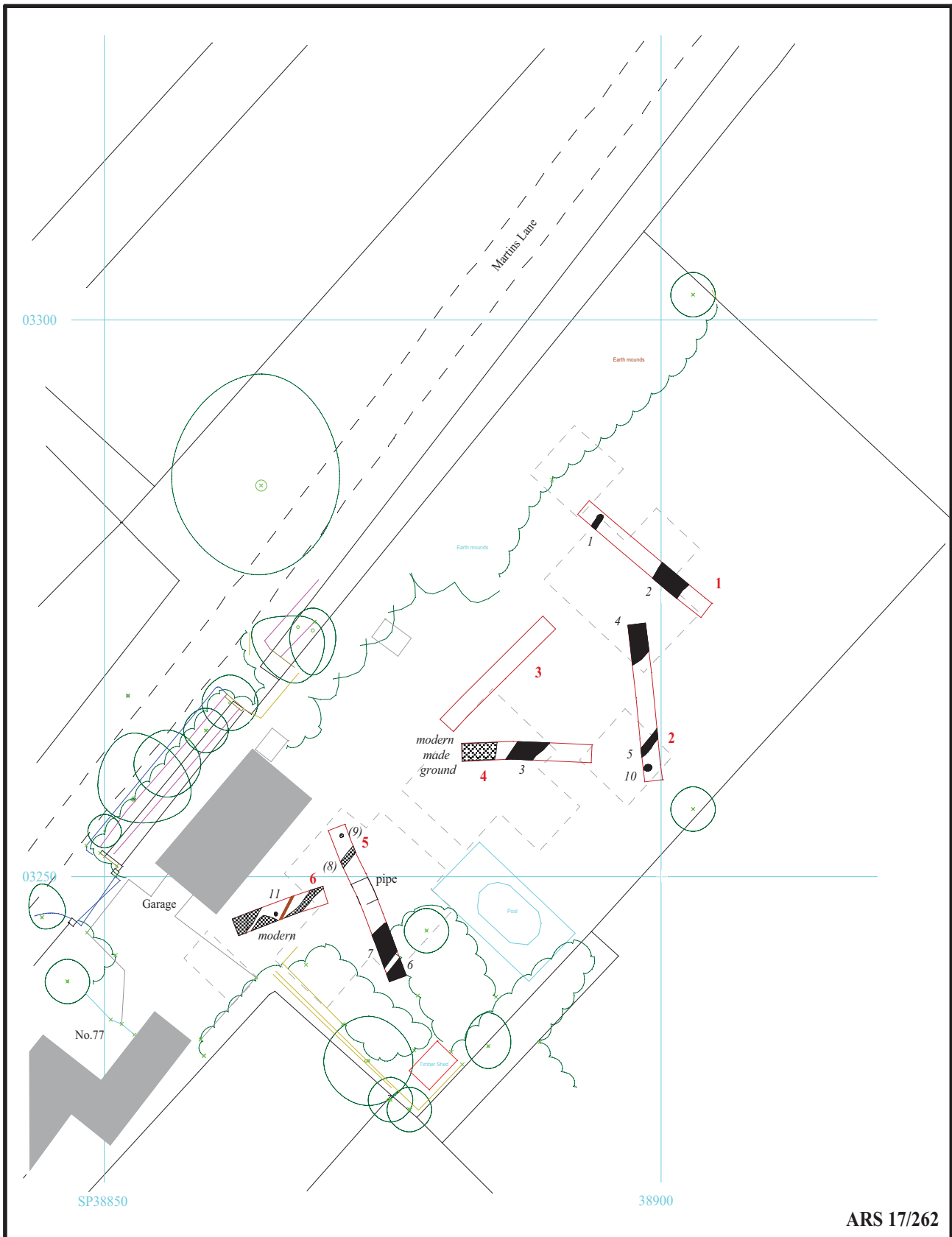
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Abingdon Road.

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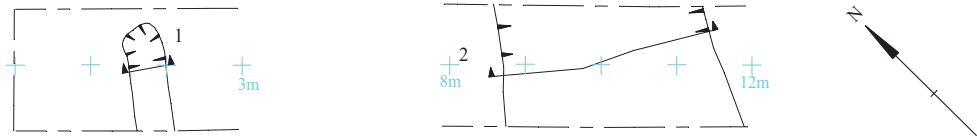
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Figure 3. Location of trenches, with proposed new houses (dashed)

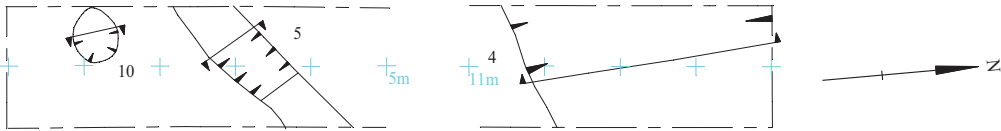


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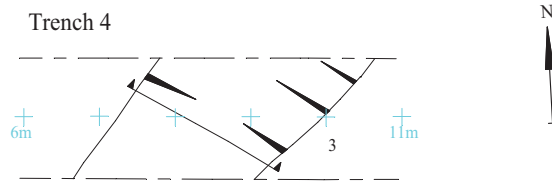
Trench 1



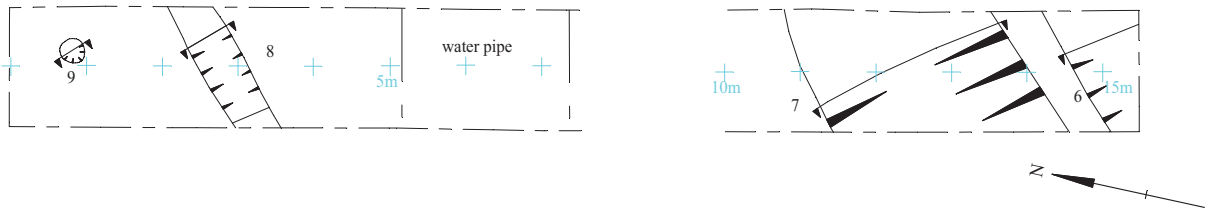
Trench 2



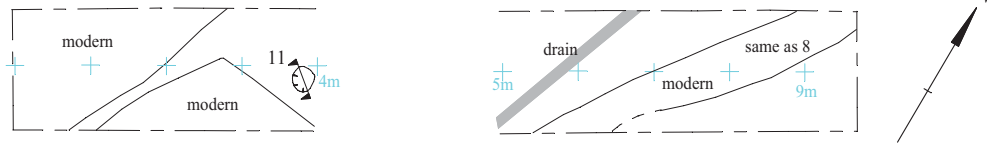
Trench 4



Trench 5



Trench 6

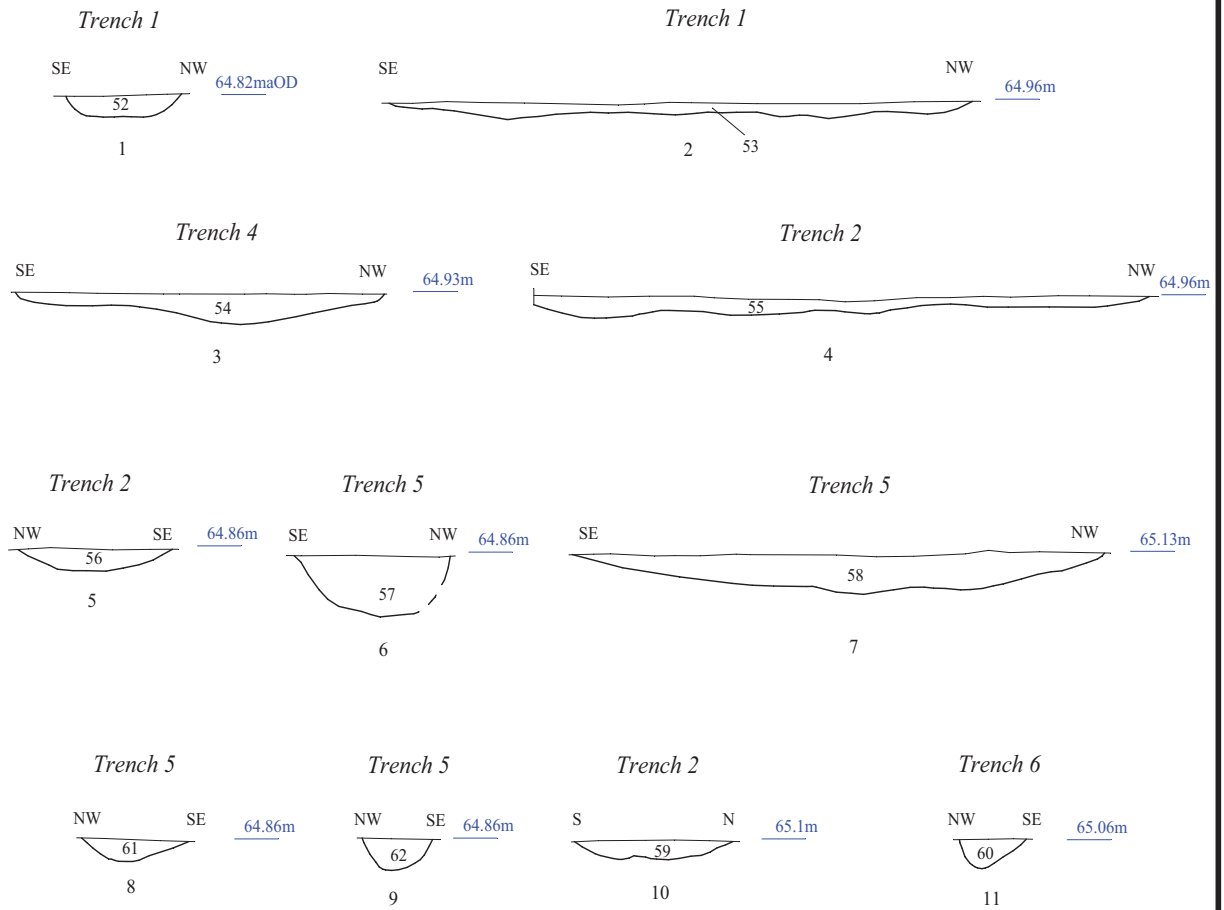


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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.





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Figure 5. Sections.



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Plate 1. Area of trenching, looking southwest.



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

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**Land to the rear of 77 Abingdon Road,
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 4, looking east, Scales, horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.3m



Plate 4. Trench 5, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 3 and 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 1, ditch 2, looking south south west,
Scales, 2m and 0.1m



Plate 6. Trench 2, gully 5, looking south west, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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Plates 5 and 6.**

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Plate 7. Trench 5, ditch 6, looking north east,
Scales, 0.5m and 0.3m



Plate 8. Trench 5, pit 9, looking north east, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.

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Plates 7 and 8.

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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)*