

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Reddam House School, Astro Pitch,
Sindlesham, Berkshire**

Archaeological Recording Action

by Aidan Colyer

Site Code: RHS17/255

(SU 7736 6943)

Reddam House School, Astro Pitch, Sindlesham, Berkshire

An archaeological recording action

by Aidan Colyer

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code RHS 17/255
17e258ra

June 2018

Summary

Site name: Reddam House School, Astro Pitch, Sindlesham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7736 6943

Site activity: Recording Action

Date and duration of project: 11th – 18th May 2018

Project Manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Tim Dawson, Aidan Colyer

Site code: RHS 17/255

Area of site: 0.65 ha

Summary of results: Excavations for a new sports pitch on the grounds at Reddam House School, Bearwood College were monitored. However, no deposits of archaeological interest were observed nor artefacts recovered.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 04.06.18
	Steve Preston ✓ 07.06.18

Reddam House School, Astro Pitch, Sindlesham, Berkshire An Archaeological Recording Action

by Aidan Colyer

Report 17/255

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological recording action carried out on the construction of a new artificial turf pitch at Reddam House School, Bearwood Road, Sindlesham, Berkshire (SU 7736 6943) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Neil Boddington of Boddingtons Planning, Westfield House, 31 Shirburn Street, Watlington, OX49 5BU on behalf of Bearwood College, Bearwood Road, Sindlesham, Wokingham, RG41 5BG.

Planning permission (171643) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of a new artificial turf pitch at the School. The consent is subject to a condition (10) that requires a programme of archaeological investigation on the site. 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. This investigation was to take the form of a recording action which monitored overburden removal to expose the top of the archaeologically relevant horizon, allowing any features of archaeological interest to be excavated and recorded. The investigation followed a written scheme of investigation approved by Ms Ellie Leary of Berkshire Archaeology, the archaeological adviser to the Borough, and the fieldwork was also monitored by her.

The fieldwork was supervised by Aidan Colyer and Tim Dawson from 11th- 18th May 2018. The site code is RHS17/255. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the east side of Mole Road, west of Bearwood College and south of Winnersh, between Reading and Wokingham in Berkshire (Fig. 1). The site lies on ground at a height of *c.* 56m above Ordnance Datum that slopes down slightly to the north-west. The river Loddon flows northwards to the north-west. The underlying geology is mapped as London Clay (BGS 2000), which was observed in the stripped area. The area was formerly grassland within Bearwood Park.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location on the margins of the Loddon Valley where recent fieldwork has revealed a range of prehistoric and Roman sites. The most significant of these are Bronze Age burials and a large Iron Age iron production site at Sadler's Lane to the south of the site (Lewis *et al.* 2013) and an extensive cropmark complex to the south-west assumed to be a settlement of Iron Age or Roman date (Gates 1975, map 14). Finds and sites of various periods have been revealed by survey work to the west (Ford 1994-7). Recent fieldwork to the north at Hatch Farm, Winnersh has revealed Middle Iron Age and Roman occupation (NcNicoll-Norbury and Ford 2017). Evaluation just to the south-west revealed dispersed Bronze Age and Roman occupation (Taylor 2015).

Objectives and methodology

The general objectives of the project were to:

- excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the development;
- produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site;
- establish the character of these deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, etc.; and to
- produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the region.

Results

An access road was stripped of turf but did not penetrate the subsoil and did not expose the natural geology. No archaeological features or finds were revealed.

For the pitch itself (Fig. 2), overburden comprising turf and a little subsoil to a depth of no more than 0.2m was removed to expose the top of the natural London Clay geology (Pls 1 and 2). The stripping was carried out using a 360⁰ machine fitted with a toothless bucket, under constant archaeological supervision.

Several grey silt patches were observed across the site but these were examined and found to be of natural (geological) origin. A small number of disturbed patches contained late post-medieval or modern artefacts (not retained). Two burnt-out tree holes with irregular plans and profiles were also investigated and found to be infilled with soil containing large amounts of charcoal. These are undated.

Finds

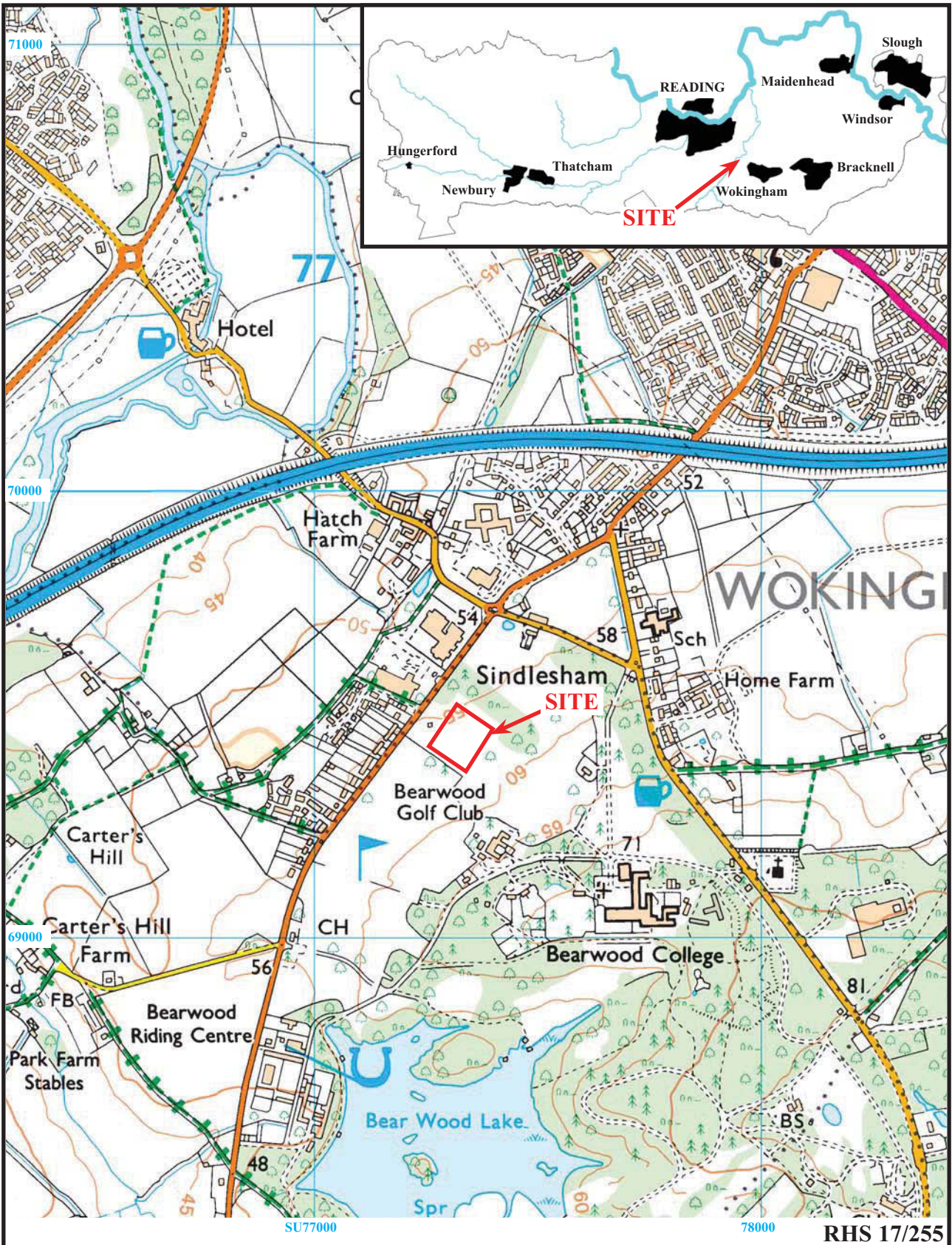
No finds of archaeological interest were recovered; late post-medieval and modern material was not retained.

Conclusion

Despite stripping of a large area to cleanly expose the top of the natural geology, no deposits of archaeological interest were revealed nor artefacts recovered.

References

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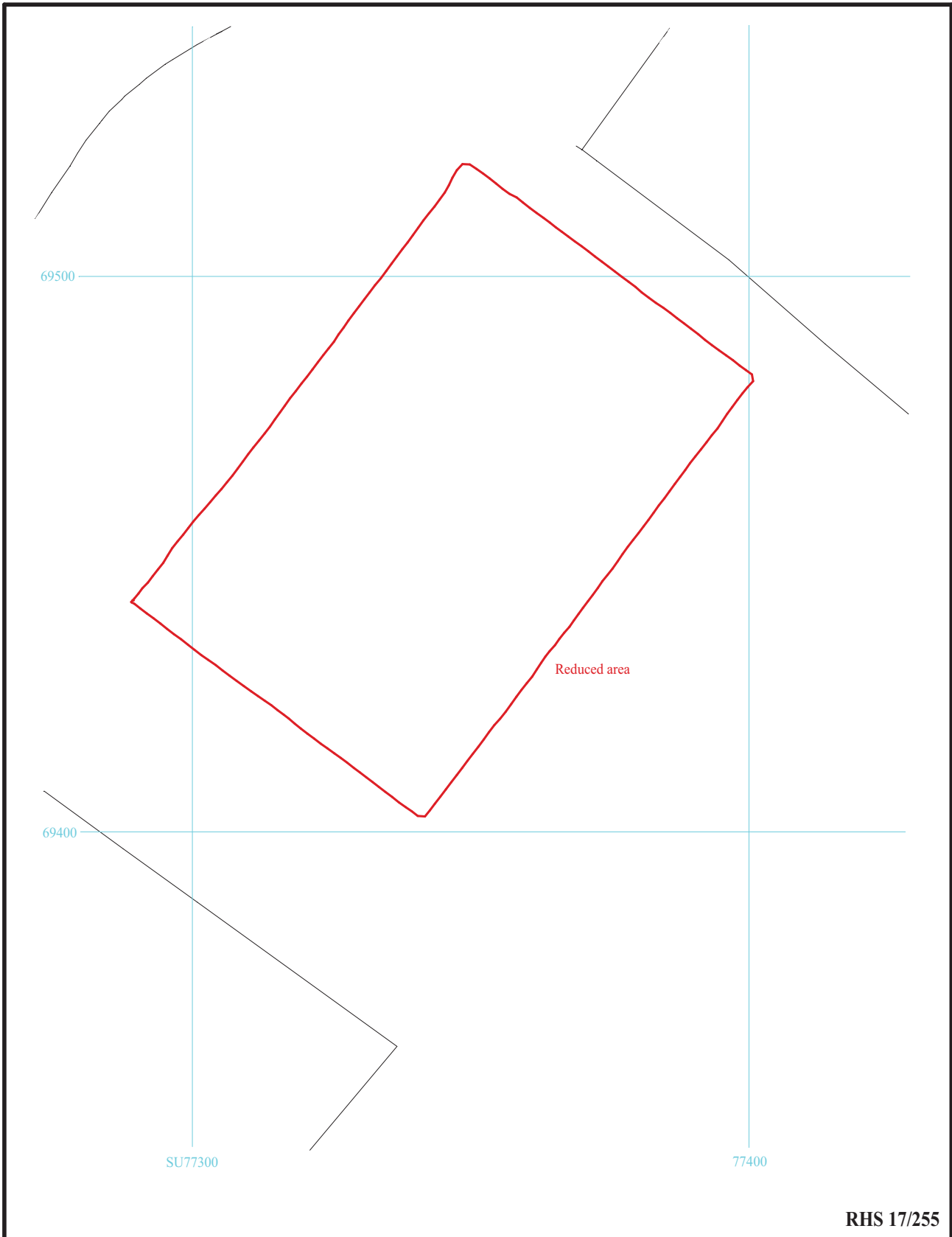
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Archaeological Recording Action

Figure 1. Location of site within Sindlesham and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Location of observed area.



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Plate 1. Reduced area, looking north west.



Plate 2. Reduced area, looking south west.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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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)***