

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Thames Valley Park and Ride, Broken Brow,
Reading, Berkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Danielle Milbank

Site Code: TVP18/120

(SU 7344 7385)

Thames Valley Park and Ride, Broken Brow, Reading, Berkshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Balfour Beatty Living Spaces Limited**

by Danielle Milbank

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code TVP18/120

August 2018

Summary

Site name: Thames Valley Park and Ride, Broken Brow, Reading, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7344 7385

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 23rd July 2018

Project coordinator: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Danielle Milbank

Site code: TVP 18/120

Area of site: c.1.1ha

Summary of results: Two trenches were dug which revealed much dumping of modern made ground and several areas of modern truncation. No deposits nor finds of archaeological interest were revealed and the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

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 ✓ 20.08.18 Steve Preston ✓ 20.08.18

Thames Valley Park and Ride, Broken Brow, Reading An Archaeological Evaluation

by Danielle Milbank

Report 18/120

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Thames Valley Park and Ride, Broken Brow, near Reading, Berkshire (SU 7344 7385) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Shae Gilbert for Balfour Beatty Living Spaces Limited.

Planning consent (161596) has been gained from Wokingham Borough Council for a park and ride facility on site the site. The consent is subject to a condition (5) relating to archaeology, requiring a programme of archaeological investigation prior to the development. This was to take the form, initially, of a field evaluation by means of trial trenching, based on the results of which, further fieldwork might be required.

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 Ellie Leary of Berkshire Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank on 23rd July 2018 and the site code is TVP18/120. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

Location, topography and geology

The site comprises an irregular parcel of land of c.1.1 ha west of Thames Valley Park Drive, Reading, Berkshire (SU 7344 7385) with the river Thames running to its North (Fig. 1). Much of the site has previously been used for dumping spoil with some being used for gravel extraction. The geology is described as Kempton Park gravel (BGS 2000) at a boundary with Upper Chalk, but it was gravel which was observed in the trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site comes from its location in the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a large number prehistoric and later finds in general (Ford 1987; Gates 1975). Work conducted at the site of the former Earley Power Station to the north-east identified a Late Iron Age/ Roman enclosure complex in addition to early Bronze Age burial and a Mesolithic flint working site (Barnes *et al.* 1997). Other finds recorded in the Berkshire Archaeology Historic Environment Record in the vicinity included a Roman coin and Mesolithic flint tools. However, several evaluations to the south-east during redevelopment of Suttons Industrial Park have not

revealed anything of archaeological interest (Lewis 2011; Dawson and Ford 2011; Taylor 2016; Taylor and Esteves 2016; Taylor and Esteves 2016; Beaverstock 2017).

For the site itself, during the construction of the Great Western Railway in the 19th century, digging of a ballast hole discovered an early Saxon inhumation cemetery (Josephs 1894). The exact location and size of the cemetery are not known, but it is thought to lie at the eastern end of the proposal site. A previous evaluation of the site itself had revealed nothing of interest (WA 1990).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. The work was to be carried out in a manner that would not compromise archaeological deposits and features that may warrant *in-situ* preservation or be better excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels survived on site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present on site; and
- to provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

It was proposed to dig two trenches each 10 m long and 1.6-2m wide using a small 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket. Machine excavation was to be under constant archaeological supervision and all spoil heaps were to be monitored for finds. Where archaeological features/ deposits were certainly/ probably present, the stripped area was to be investigated by hand.

Results

The two trenches were dug as close as possible to their intended locations with some alterations due to the constraints of site (Fig. 2). Trenches were respectively 10.10m and 8.80m long and 0.8m and 0.40m in depth. Both were 1.6m wide. Trench 2 was repositioned and shortened on consultation with Berkshire Archaeology due to the presence of services. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Figs 2-4 and Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned west–east and was 10.10m long and 0.80m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of a thin layer of topsoil, 0.21m deep overlying a 0.25m thick layer of brown/grey silt subsoil/made ground with modern

brick/tile and coal inclusions. Between 0.46m and 0.80m there was a layer of red/brown sand and gravel made ground overlying red/brown sand and gravel natural geology. Modern truncation was evident throughout the trench with 19th-century tip lines being visible in the section. A test pit was dug in an area of truncation at the east end of the trench which was bottomed at 1.20m.

Trench 2 (Figs 2-4 and Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was also aligned west–east and was 8.80 m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.1m of topsoil above 0.12m of redeposited chalk with flint inclusions overlying a black/dark grey sandy silt subsoil. Natural geology was found at 0.40m and was a red brown sand and gravel. A modern truncation was observed between 2m and 3.6m from the west end of the trench, and also a telecoms cable running NW-SE from the beginning of the trench to 4m.

Conclusion

Despite the archaeological potential of the site no deposits of archaeological interest were observed and areas of disturbance of the natural geology and modern dumping were revealed. It is considered that the site has low archaeological potential.

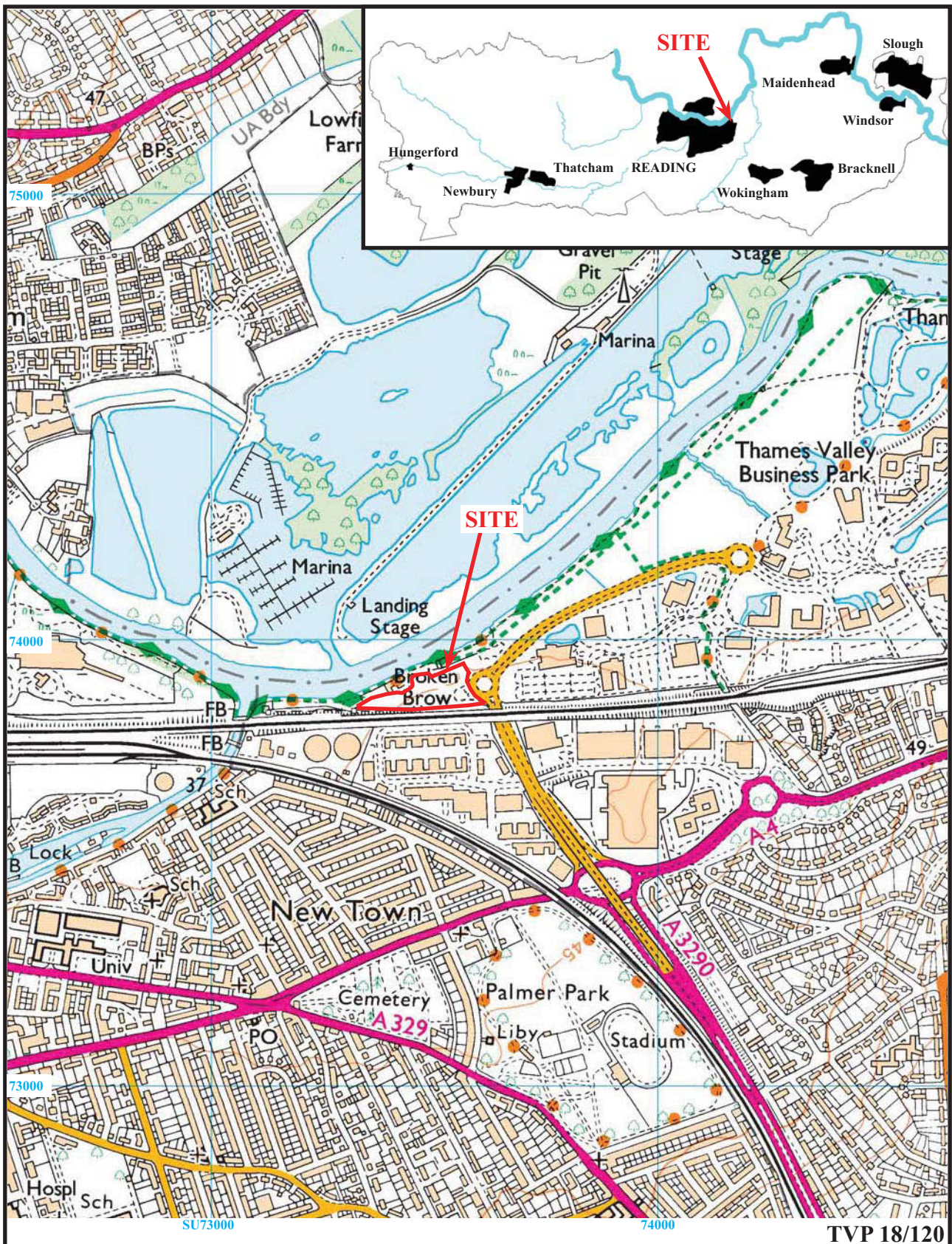
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

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	10.10	1.6	0.80 Test pit 1.20	0-0.21m Topsoil; 0.21m-0.46m sbrown grey silt with brick,tile, coal; (subsoil/made ground); 0.46-0.80m sand gravel made ground, 0.80m+ red/brown sand and gravel (natural geology) [Pl. 1]
2	8.80	1.6	0.40	0-0.10m topsoil; 0.10-0.22m chalk layer flint inclusions; 0.22-0.40m dark brown grey sand silt subsoil; 0.40m+ natural geology. [Pl. 2]

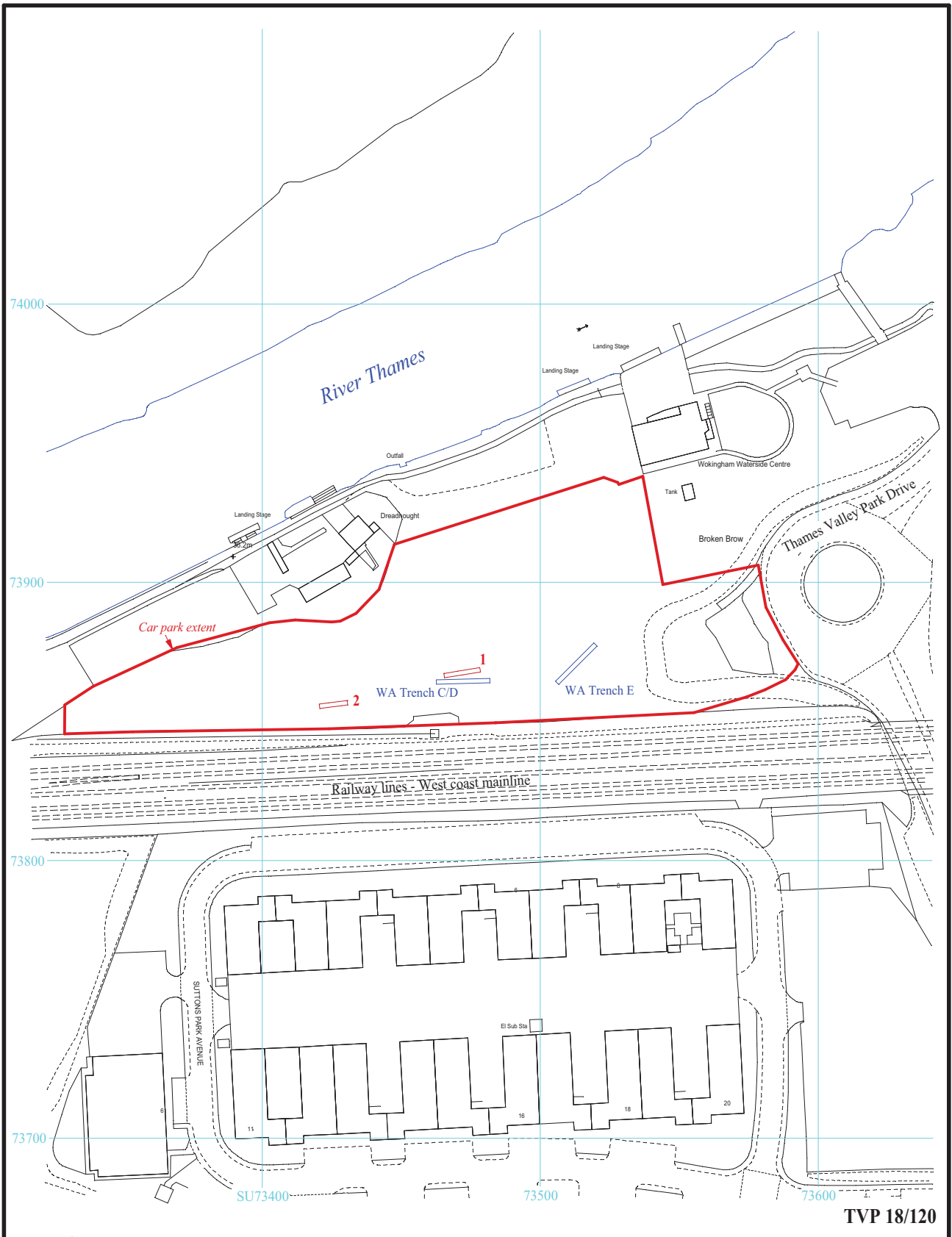


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Figure 1. Location of site within Reading and Berkshire.

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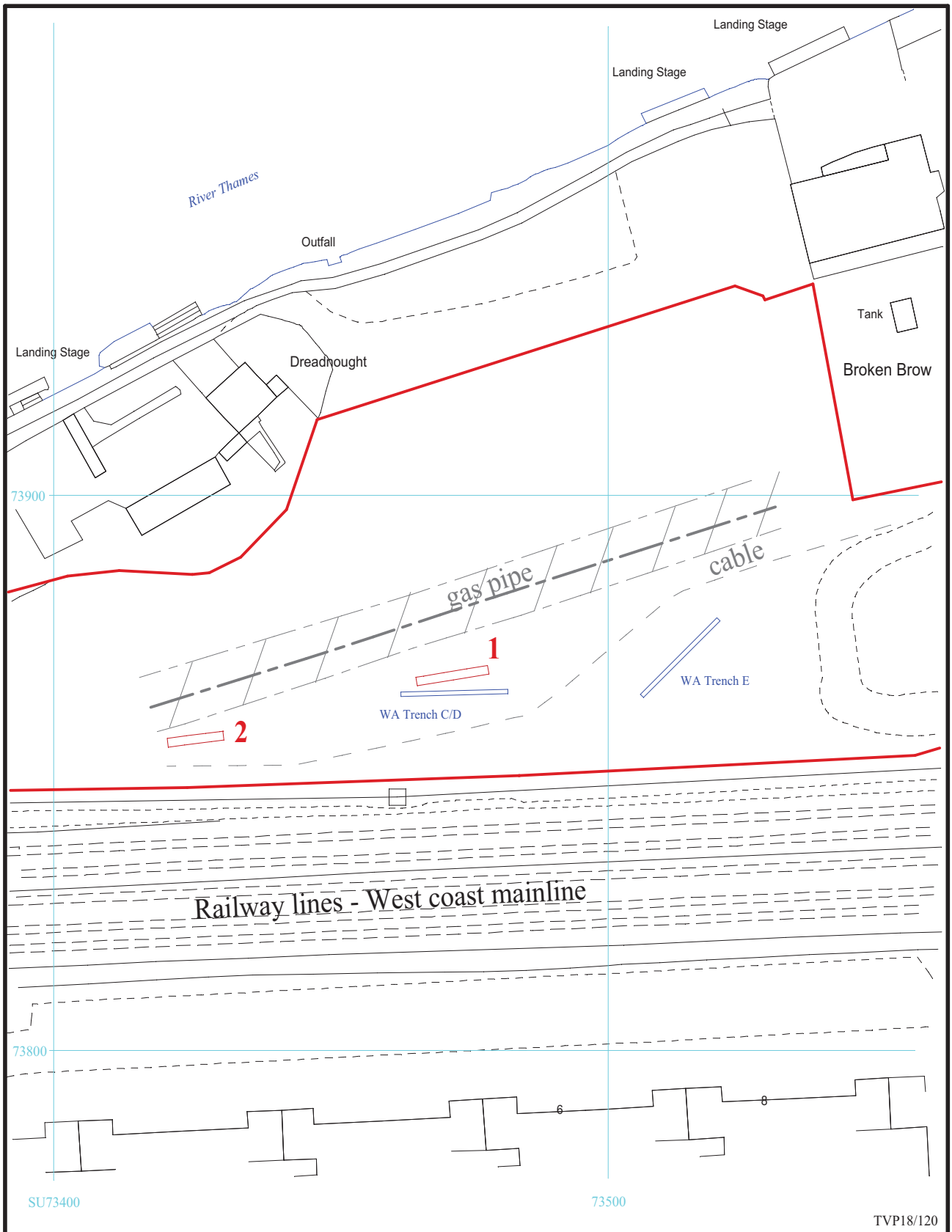
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Figure 2. Location of site





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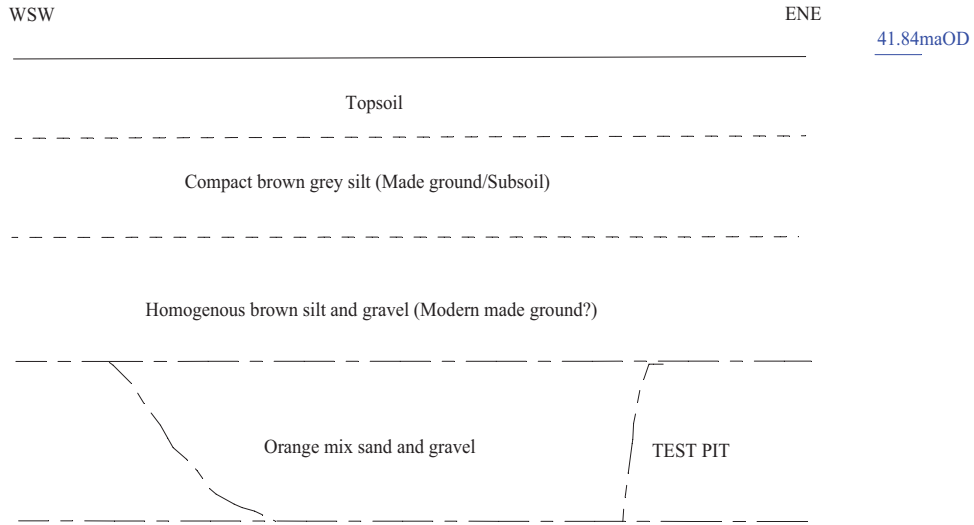
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Figure 3. Detailed location of trenches

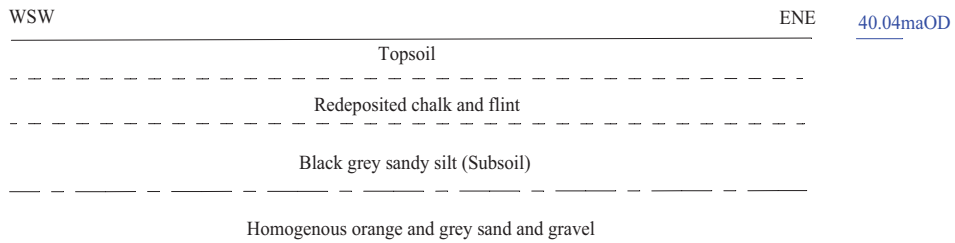


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Trench 1



Trench 2



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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



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

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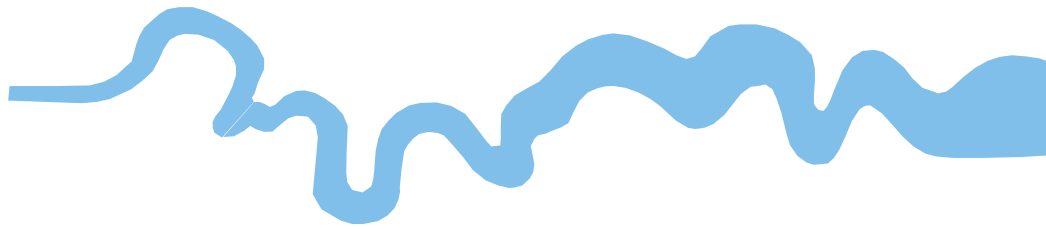
**Thames Valley Park and Ride, Broken Brow,
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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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





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