

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
Newbury, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Pierre Manisse**

**Site Code: GHG16/113**

**(SU 4815 6570)**

**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
Newbury, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for David Wilson Homes Southern Ltd**

by Pierre-Damien Manisse  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code GHG 16/113

**July 2018**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham, Newbury, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 4815 6570

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 25th June - 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018

**Project Manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Pierre-Damien Manisse

**Site code:** GHG 16/113

**Area of site:** 4.23ha

**Summary of results:** Twenty trenches were excavated, with five containing certain or probable features of archaeological interest. These consisted of linear features, interpreted as field boundaries. Two are possibly of Roman or Medieval date, with the others undated. Apart from these features, it is considered that the archaeological potential of the site is low.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with West Berkshire Museum, Newbury, with an accession number assigned in due course.

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| Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 10.07.18 |
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# Land East of Greenham Road, Greenham, Newbury, Berkshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

**Report 16/113**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land east of Greenham Road, Newbury, West Berkshire (SU 4815 6571) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Michael Cleveland, Architectural Technician of David Wilson Homes Southern Ltd, Norgate House, Charnham Park, Hungerford RG17 0YT.

Planning permission (app 17/00223/FULEXT) had been granted by West Berkshire Council for housing development on a parcel of land for at the aforementioned address. This was subject to a condition (4) relating to archaeology, which requires the implementation of an archaeological field evaluation programme.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Miss Sarah Orr, Acting Archaeological Officer for West Berkshire Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Pierre-Damien Manisse and Anne-Michelle Huvig between 25th and 28th June 2018. The site code is GHG16/113.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the West Berkshire Museum, Newbury in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is on the south-eastern outskirts of Newbury, and also north-west of Greenham village on a remnant of common land on the southern slope of the Kennet Valley, with the river *c.*1.5km, to the north. The site is an irregular shaped parcel of land east of Greenham Road, north-west and south east of housing. The central and southern part of the field are currently grassland pasture, gently sloping from 122m above Ordnance Datum (OD) in the south to 119maOD in the central area. Then it inclines more abruptly, down to 108maOD towards the northern and north-eastern edges. The underlying geology is Silchester Gravel drift (Sixth terrace gravel), over London Clay (BGS Geindex; BGS 2006).

## **Archaeological background**

The potential of the site has been highlighted by a desk-based assessment of the site (Taylor 2016). In summary, the Kennet Valley is a particularly rich and a well-studied landscape of prehistoric sites and finds, with material ranging from the Mesolithic on the valley floor, to Bronze Age settlement, especially east of Newbury (Pine 2010a), and agricultural communities close to the Bath Road (Ermin Street) (Margery 1955, 121; route 41a). The Speen suburb of Newbury is thought to have development from a small Roman settlement, and there is also Roman settlement remains in Thatcham (Fitzpatrick *et al* 1995; Pine 2010b).

Specific potential of the site is limited to nearby findspots in the HER, with Roman coins being found across the site on several different occasions (Taylor 2016, 7). It is noted that none of these finds were recovered during the Lower Kennet Valley fieldwalking survey in 1976-77.

## **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 under threat in the area of development. Works were to be carried out in such a way as not to compromise the integrity of the deposits but sample them to gain information about the deposits. Specifically, research aims were to:

- Determine if archaeologically relevant levels survived on the site;
- Determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present;
- Determine if any deposits were Roman in date;
- Provide information to draw up a programme of mitigation if necessary.

In total, twenty trenches were to be excavated, *c.*25m long and a width of at least 1.6m. They were to be dug using a 360° mechanical, tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Spoil heaps were to be scanned for finds.

## **Results**

All twenty trenches were dug as intended and were between 23 and 28m long and between 0.35 and 1m deep. They were 1.8m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. The recorded geology was confirmed as the local drift geology, and sandy, coarse gravel was noted in all trenching. Rounded stone pebbles were in the subsoil layer contained in a

fine sandy matrix of varied hues: yellowish/orange brown, white or light yellowish grey. The proportion of sand compared to gravels/pebbles could vary occasionally. The topsoil was a dry and dusty soft mid grey sandy silt with frequent coarse gravels or pebbles.

#### Trench 1 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pl.1 and 5)

Trench 1 was aligned SW-NE and was 25.20m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil (50) and 0.25m subsoil overlying natural geology. The subsoil was a brown silty sand with frequent gravels and pebbles but with some darker organic patches within the soil, mostly likely caused by buried roots.

Between 4-7m from the SW end a ditch [5] was recorded, running oblique to the trench. The natural geology dropped to the SW, and the possible continuation of the feature was not present in Trench 2. Ditch 5 was filled with a single fill, a dark grey sandy-clayey silt (56). No finds were recovered from its fill nor from an 8L soil sample, though a large volume of charcoal was recorded.

#### Trench 2 (Fig.3)

This trench was 23.90m long and reached a maximum depth of 0.70m at its northern end, was orientated SSW-NNE. It slightly curved towards the south. Topsoil 0.25m thick overlaid a 0.35m thick subsoil that was a homogeneous brown sandy silt, frequent with pebbles at the top of its fill (0.1m), and a mottled grey silt at its base. Discolouration of the natural sandy silts at the base, gave way to yellow-grey sandy gravels to the NNE. No deposits of archaeological interest were encountered.

#### Trenches 3, 4 and 5 (Fig. 3)

These trenches contained almost no subsoil, or a limited amount and had been disturbed at subsoil level by the plough. The thickness of the topsoil of the Trench 3 (0.3m) and Trench 5 (0.38m) reflected this. Trench 4 was deeper towards its NW end, as it was on the slope of the hill. No deposits were identified in these trenches. There was topsoil directly onto natural geology. Plough scarring of the natural geology was noted in the base of Trench 5 at 0.38m deep.

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

Trench 6 was 28.1m long and 0.75m deep. It was towards the north of the field on a WSW-ENE axis. Topsoil 0.25m thick overlay a 0.5m thickness of subsoil. At 13m from the WSW end of the trench a ditch (2) was

encountered. The ditch was 1.2m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.2m, with a slightly concave base. This feature was roughly perpendicular to the trench, with a slight bend to the SSW. It was filled with a single fill, a grey silty sand (53) that contained a single rim sherd of Medieval pottery and a single prehistoric flint flake. An 8L sample (2) was taken from this fill but recovered neither artefacts nor charred plant remains.

#### Trenches 7 8, 9, 10, 11 (Fig.3)

All these trenches were located on the north east side of the field. Trenches 8, 9 and 11 were closest to the woodland boundary. All were covered with between 0.3m to 0.4m thick topsoil, with thin layers of subsoil in Trenches 8 and 9. Trench 8 had relatively thick subsoil, 0.3m creating a final depth of 0.6m deep. Subsoil in Trench 9 was restricted to the NE half and was at its deepest 0.15m thick at the NE end. Trench 10 had topsoil onto gravel at a depth of 0.38m deep. This trench was 25.3m long. Trench 11 was 29.7m long and 0.35m deep. Plough scarring of the natural geology was visible in the base of the trench on a N-S alignment. No archaeological deposits were identified.

#### Trenches 12 and 13 (Fig.3)

These two trenches were in roughly the central part of the field. Trench 12 was 26.8m long and 0.4m deep. It had topsoil covering natural from 0.3m deep. Trench 13 was 25.8m long and was generally 0.4m deep, apart from the ENE end, which was excavated through the natural sand to test a soft patch of reddish yellow brown sandy silt below a thicker accumulation of subsoil. The subsoil reached a depth of 0.8m deep and the natural gravel was reached at 1m deep. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

#### Trench 14 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pl.3)

This trench was on a S-N axis and was a 26.70m long with 0.35m thick topsoil overlying up to 0.5m of grey silty sand with very frequent rounded pebble gravel. The base of the trench showed patches of reddish brown fine sand and light yellowish/whitish grey fine sand, both with frequent rounded pebble gravels. Between 6.3m and 7.2m from the S end, a 0.4m wide gully (3) was recorded on an ESE-WNW axis. It was shallow in depth with depth of 0.12m, and a concave profile. It was filled by soft to medium grey silty sand with frequent coarse gravels and pebbles (54). It remained undated as no finds were recovered from it. A 8L sample (3) was taken from this fill, but recovered neither artefacts nor charred plant remains. Its continuation was not observed in trench 5.

#### Trench 15 (Figs 3, 4 and 5; Pl. 6)

This 24m long trench, which slightly bent westwards at its NW end. The stratigraphy was 0.20-0.25m thick topsoil, over 0.40m subsoil, though no subsoil was present at the NW end. The base of the trench uncovered a grey, sandy natural at its SE end. As in trench 5, recent ground disturbance had occurred by the work from the ecologists. A ditch (1) was present, at the SE end of the trench, going WSW-ENE axis. Its wide was 1.5m with a concave profile and moderate to steep sides. The ditch was 0.4m deep. It was dated by a Roman rim sherd found in fill (52), a soft to medium compacted, grey silty sand with a high degree of rounded gravel pebble inclusions. An 8L sample (1) was taken from this fill but recovered neither artefacts nor charred plant remains.

#### Trench 16 (Figs 3, 4 and 5: Pl.4)

Trench 16 was 28.30m long, orientated SW-NE. Topsoil, 0.25m thick over natural gravel were observed to a depth of 0.4m. At 5.7m from the SW end, a gully was recorded on a N-S axis [4]. It was a shallow, 0.08m deep with a concave profile and was 0.4m wide with a length of at least 3.20m. The fill was a soft light grey sand containing frequent gravels and pebbles (55). No finds were recovered from the slot. An 8L sample (4) was taken from this fill but recovered neither artefacts nor charred plant remains.

#### Trenches 17, 18, 19 and 20 (Fig. 3)

Like Trench 16, these four trenches were at the south of the area under threat of development. Trench 17 was orientated W-E and was 28m long and 0.38m deep. Plough scarring of the natural deposits were visible on the base of the trench. Trench 18 was 26m long was also topsoil onto natural gravel, with it located at a depth of 0.3m, and the depth of the trench did not exceed 0.6m deep. Trench 19 was orientated SSW-NNE and was 27.7m long. It was 0.55m deep, with the natural gravel identified from a depth of 0.3m deep.



Finally, Trench 20 was 25.9m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy also comprised topsoil directly onto natural geology with gravel found at a depth of 0.28m deep. No archaeological deposits were located in any of these trenches.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery* by Jane Timby

The evaluation produced two sherds of pottery from two features; one Roman; the other medieval. The sherds, both rims, are in moderately good condition suggesting undisturbed archaeology in the vicinity. The assemblage is too small to make any further inferences.

#### Sherd from Trench 15, Ditch 1

1. Rimsherd from a necked jar with a rolled rim, diameter 28 cm. Wt. 56 g. Fabric: Oxfordshire grey ware. Date: Roman. Context: [1] (52).

Sherd from Trench 6, Ditch 2.

2. Rimsherd from a jar/cooking pot, diameter 30 cm. Wt. 25 g. Fabric: Newbury fabric B (sand, flint and limestone) (Vince 1997). Date: late 12<sup>th</sup>/early 13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> century. Context; [2] (53).

### *Struck flint* by Stephen Ford

A single flint flake, which had been burnt, was recovered from ditch 2 (53). It is not closely datable and is probably, but not certainly of prehistoric date.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has successfully sampled the development site and has identified a small number of linear features interpreted as field boundaries. Two of these are possibly of Roman or Medieval date, though dating is reliant on the presence of just single sherds in both cases. The other ditches remain undated. Apart from these features, it is considered that the archaeological potential of the site is low.

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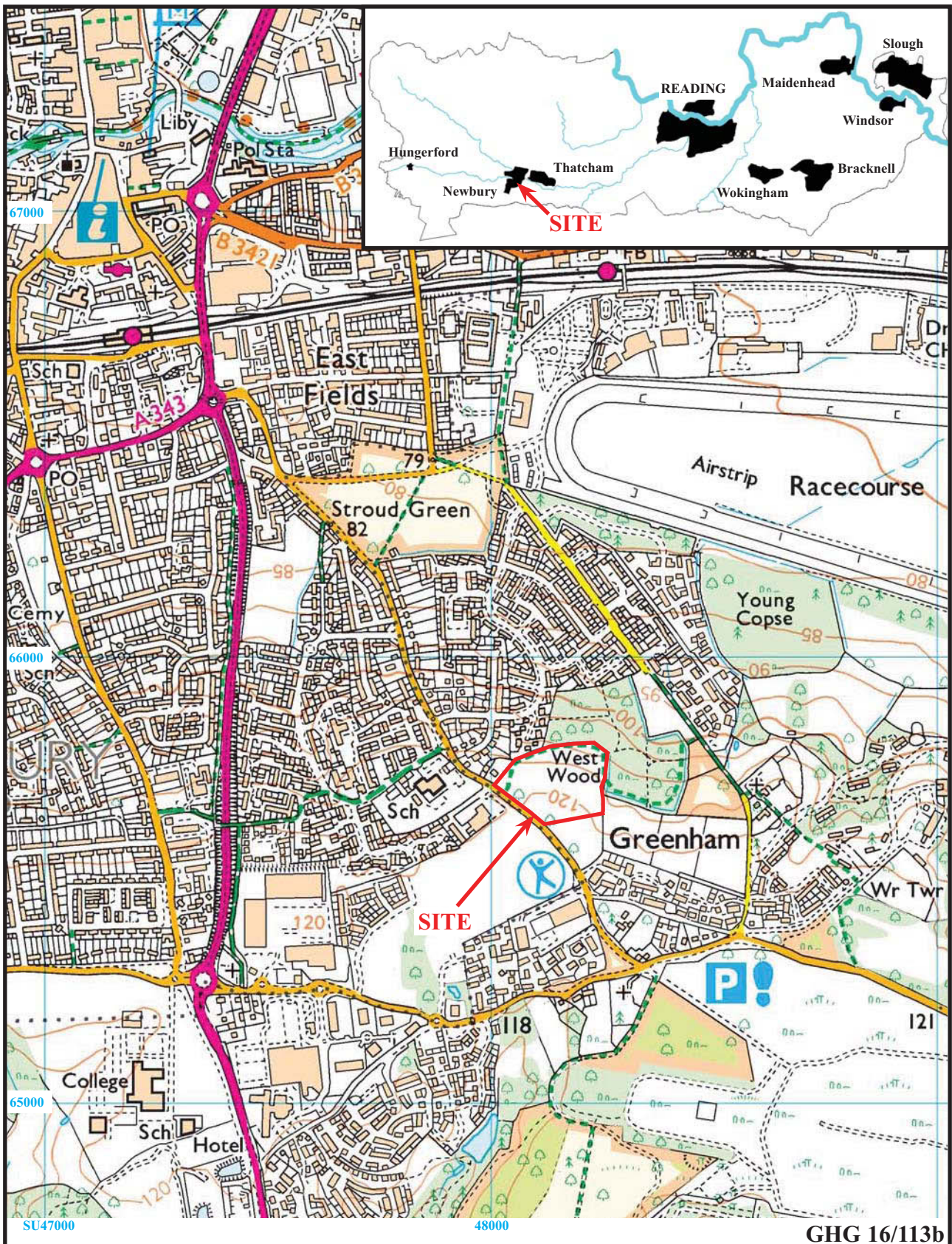
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**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

| <i>Trench</i> | <i>Length (m)</i> | <i>Breadth (m)</i> | <i>Depth (m)</i>     | <i>Comment</i>   |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1             | 25.20             | 1.6                | SSE=0.55<br>NNW=0.5  | 0-0.25m grey brown sandy silt (topsoil); 0.25-0.80m light reddish yellow (subsoil); 0.80->1m light greyish brown sand (natural gravel geology). <b>Ditch [5]</b> |
| 2             | 23.90             | 1.6                | NNE=0.7<br>SSW=0.6   | 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.6m subsoil; 0.60m+ natural gravel geology  |
| 3             | 25.9              | 1.6                | 0.3                  | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 4             | 25.8              | 1.6                | SE=0.38<br>NW=0.5    | 0-0.12m topsoil; 0.12-0.38m subsoil; 0.38m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 5             | 27.50             | 1.6                | N=0.5<br>S=0.38      | 0-0.12m topsoil; 0.12-.38m ground disturbance; 0.38m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 6             | 28.10             | 1.6                | ENE=0.75<br>WSW=0.6  | 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.75m subsoil; >0.75m natural gravel geology. <b>Ditch [2]</b>   |
| 7             | 27                | 1.6                | 0.35                 | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3->0.35m gravel geology  |
| 8             | 27.3              | 1.6                | 0.62                 | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3-0.62m; 0.62m+ natural gravel geology   |
| 9             | 28.6              | 1.6                | 0.85                 | 0-0.4m topsoil; 0.4-0.75m subsoil; 0.75m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 10            | 25.3              | 1.6                | 0.4                  | 0-0.38m; 0.38m+ natural gravel geology   |
| 11            | 29.70             | 1.6                | 0.35                 | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 12            | 26.80             | 1.6                | 0.4                  | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 13            | 25.80             | 1.6                | ENE=1.00<br>WSW=0.35 | 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.8m subsoil; 0.8m+ natural gravel geology.  |
| 14            | 26.70             | 1.6                | N=1.00<br>S=0.35     | 0-0.35m topsoil; 0.35-0.85m subsoil; 0.85m+ natural gravel geology. <b>Gully [3]</b>   |
| 15            | 24                | 1.6                | SE=0.7<br>NW=0.35    | 0-0.2m topsoil; 0.20-0.65m subsoil (contains recent ground disturbance); 0.65m+ natural gravel geology. <b>Ditch [1]</b>   |
| 16            | 28.30             | 1.6                | NE=0.45<br>SW=0.25   | 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m+ natural gravel geology <b>Gully [4]</b>  |
| 17            | 28                | 1.6                | 0.38                 | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ natural gravel geology   |
| 18            | 26                | 1.6                | NE=0.60<br>SW=0.4    | 0-0.3m topsoil; 0.3m+ natural gravel geology   |
| 19            | 27.70             | 1.6                | NNE=0.55<br>SSW=0.35 | 0-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m+ natural gravel geology   |
| 20            | 25.90             | 1.6                | NW=0.4<br>SE=0.3     | 0-0.28m topsoil; 0.28m+ natural gravel geology   |

**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

| <i>Trench</i> | <i>Cut</i> | <i>Fill (s)</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Dating evidence</i>      |
|---------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 15            | 1          | 52              | Ditch       | Roman       | Pottery                     |
| 6             | 2          | 53              | Ditch       | Medieval    | Pottery, residual flintwork |
| 14            | 3          | 54              | Gully       | Undated     | -                           |
| 16            | 4          | 55              | Gully       | Undated     | -                           |
| 1             | 5          | 56              | Ditch       | Undated     | -                           |



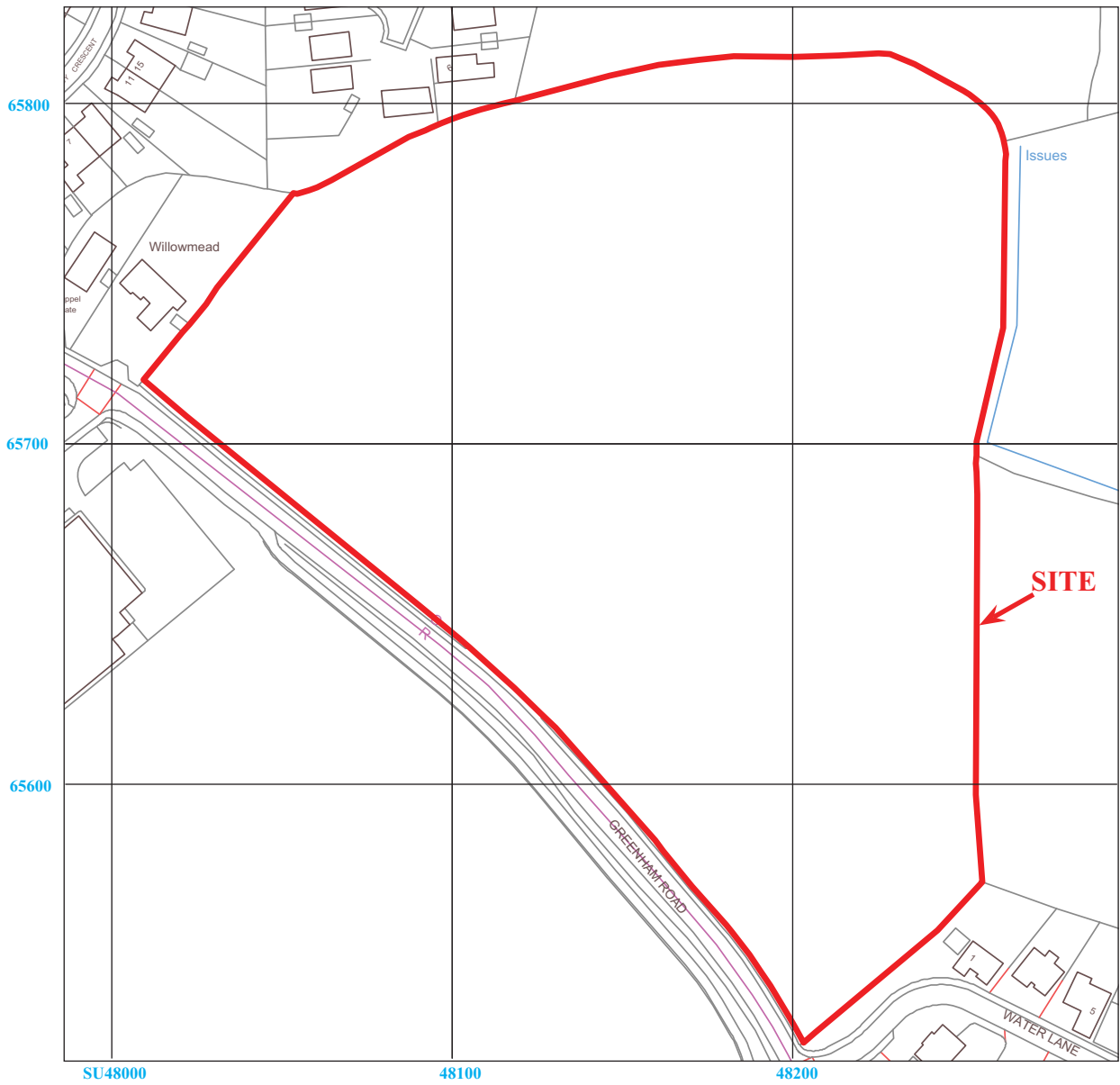
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**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
Newbury, West Berkshire, 2018  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Greenham, Newbury and West Berkshire.

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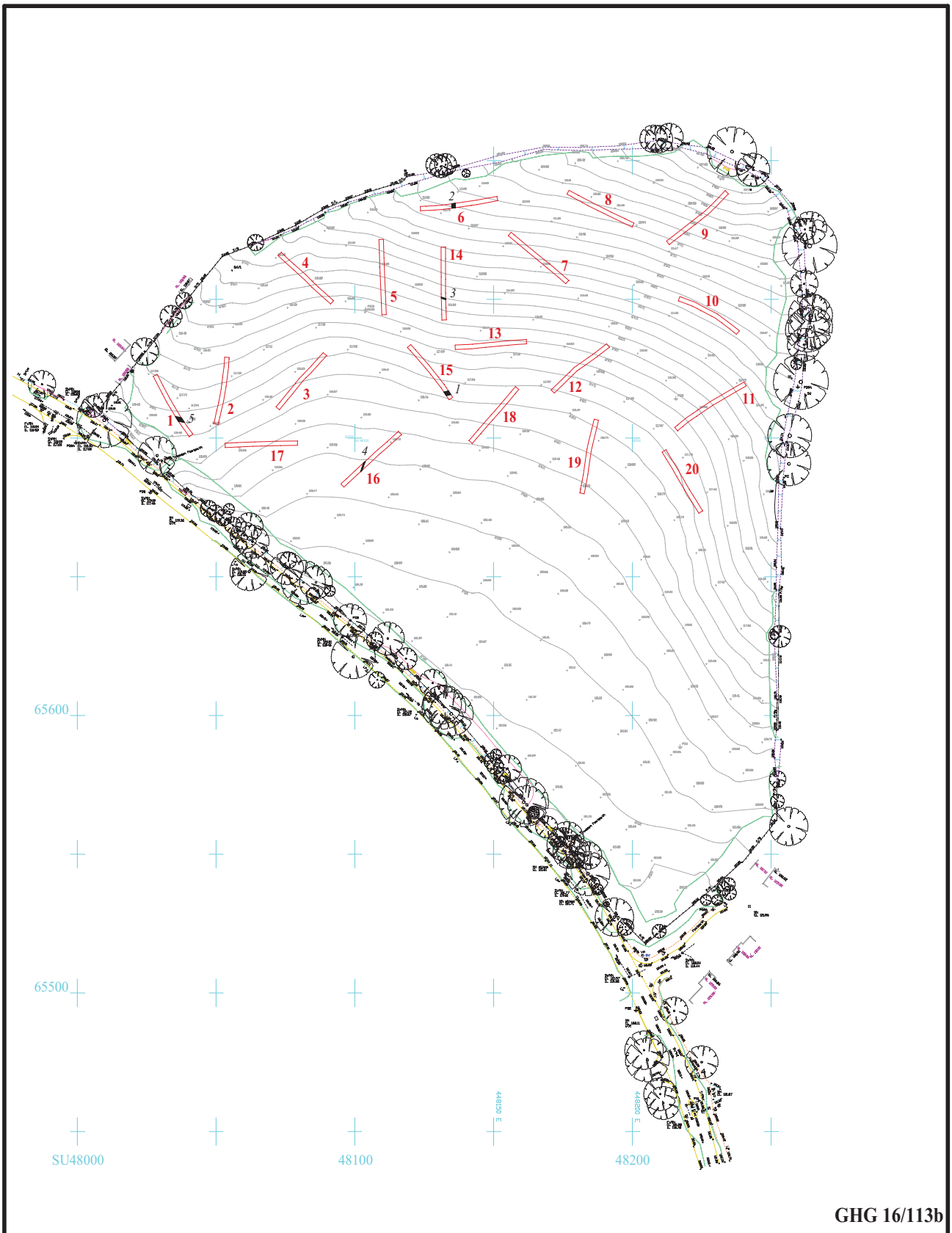
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**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
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Archaeological Evaluation**  
Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Greeham Road.

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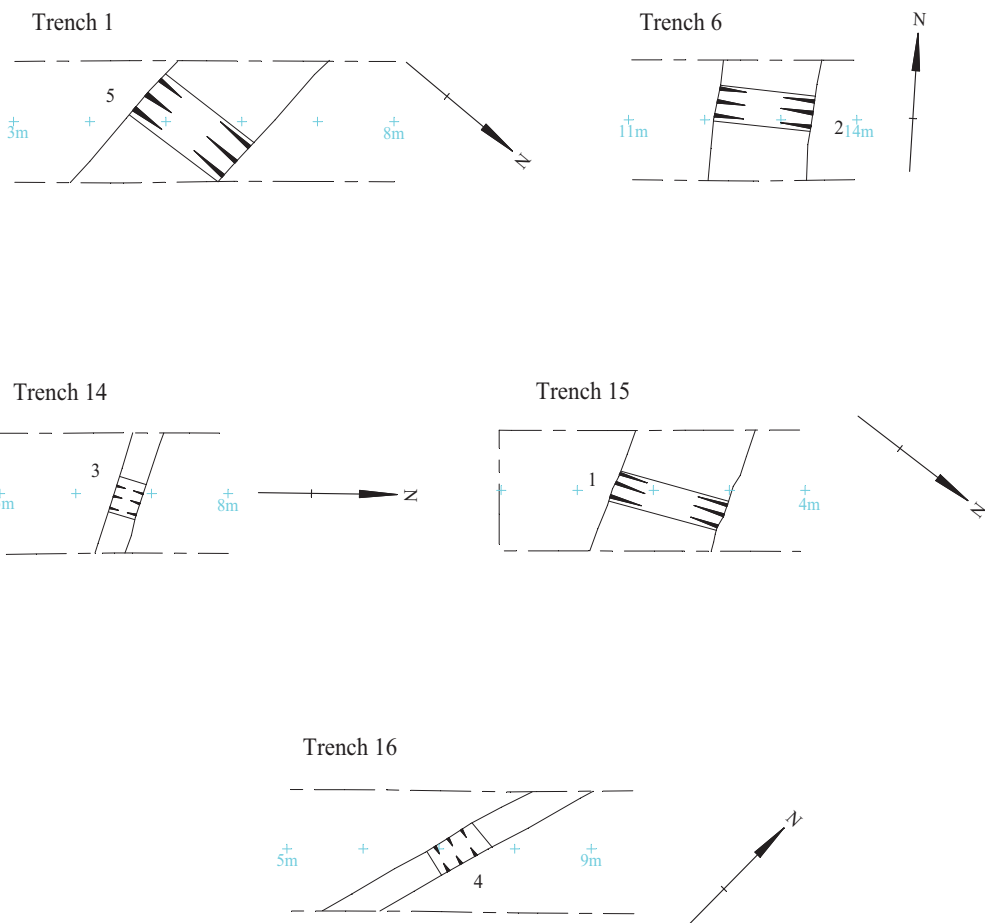
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Figure 3. Location of trenches and features.



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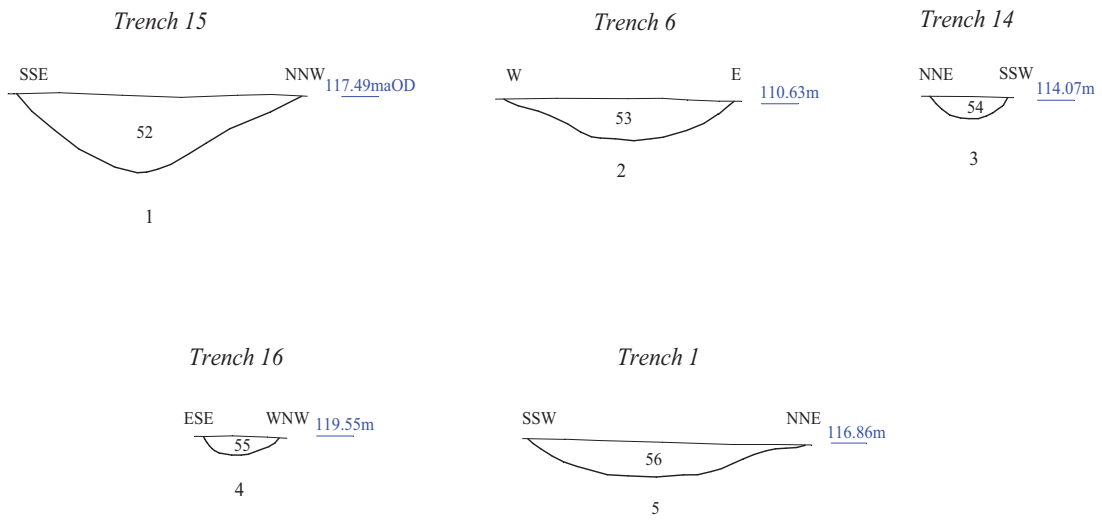
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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.







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Figure 5. Sections..



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north west, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 6, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 14, looking north, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 16, looking north east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
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Plates 3 and 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 1, ditch 5, looking north west, Scales: 1m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Trench 15, ditch 1, looking south west, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.

GHG 16/113b

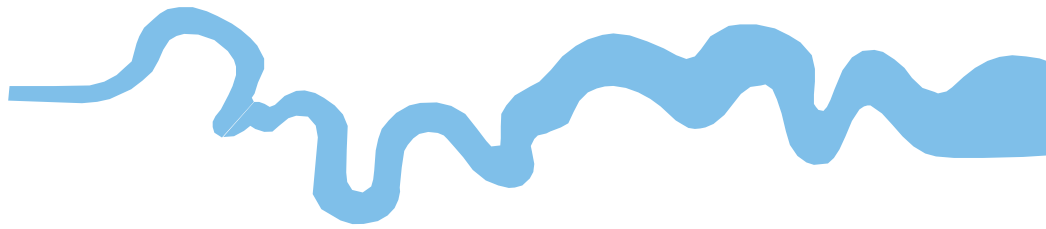
**Land east of Greenham Road, Greenham,  
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Plates 5 and 6.

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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<br>AD 0 BC |
| Iron Age _____             | 750 BC           |
| <br>                       |                  |
| Bronze Age: Late _____     | 1300 BC          |
| Bronze Age: Middle _____   | 1700 BC          |
| Bronze Age: Early _____    | 2100 BC          |
| <br>                       |                  |
| Neolithic: Late .....      | 3300 BC          |
| Neolithic: Early .....     | 4300 BC          |
| <br>                       |                  |
| Mesolithic: Late .....     | 6000 BC          |
| Mesolithic: Early .....    | 10000 BC         |
| <br>                       |                  |
| 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](mailto:tvas@tvas.co.uk)  
Web: [www.tvas.co.uk](http://www.tvas.co.uk)**

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