

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

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road,
Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Site Code: BAH18/206

(SU 8086 7283)

**Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road,
Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Ms Lisa Spiers

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BAH 18/206

March 2019

Summary

Site name: Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road, Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 8086 7283

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 12th to 25th March 2019

Project coordinator: Danielle Millbank

Site supervisor: Pierre-Damien Manisse

Site code: BAH 18/206

Area of site: within a field of *c.* 0.6 Ha

Summary of results: The groundworks for a new polo pony exercise track, including a land drain, were monitored. No archaeological deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest were recorded.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the relevant recipient museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 26.03.19 Steve Preston ✓ 26.03.19

Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road, Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Report 18/206

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Hurst, Wokingham, Berkshire (centred on SU 8086 7283). The work was commissioned by Neil Davis from Planning Ltd, 19 Woodlands Avenue, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3HL on behalf of Ms Lisa Spiers, Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road, Hurst, RG10 0RE.

Planning permission (Ref. No. 182579) was granted by Wokingham Council for the construction of a new polo pony exercise track. This was subject to a condition (4) pertaining to archaeology and requiring the implementation of a programme of groundworks monitoring.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2018) and Wokingham Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald, principal archaeologist at Berkshire Archaeology, the archaeological advisor for Wokingham Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Pierre-Damien Manisse between 12th and 25th of March 2019. The site code is BAH18/206.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at a local approved Museum or the Archaeology Data Service in due course..

Location, topography and geology

The site is located 2.7km from Hurst village centre, in Wokingham Borough, Berkshire (Fig. 1). It was adjacent to Broadacre Farm, on a field south-west of Broadcommon Road (Fig. 2). It was bordered on the other sides by farmlands. It was currently dedicated to horse pasture. It was fairly flat, at about 38-40m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology as mapped (BGS 2000) is London Clay Formation.

Archaeological background

Generally, the location of the site in the Lower Loddon Valley lies in an area deemed to be archaeological rich and near to areas where a range of sites have yielded artefacts and features of prehistory date (Ford 1987; Ford

1994-7; Gates 1975). Three excavations, that were taken place close to the village create the potential. The first was a Mesolithic site at Whistley Farm (Harding and Richards 1991-3), another, Bronze Age and Iron Age deposits from Lea Farm during gravel extraction (Manning and Moore 2011) and the last, a Roman site (Barnes and Hawkes 1991-3). Further Iron Age deposits have been recently found at Hatch Farm, Winnersh (McNicol-Norbury and Ford 2017).

Various findspots local are also known with the data held by the Berkshire HER, with pottery of Roman and Medieval date found in the vicinity. Whistley Green and Hurst, are presumed to be Medieval settlements, with a small number of Tudor and later farm buildings, though the local church (St. Nicholas), though to have 11th century origins, but much altered in the later Medieval times.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to monitor any intrusive groundworks that could affect the archaeological horizons. Any archaeological deposits threatened by the development would be hand cleaned, excavated and recorded as necessary.

Results (Fig. 2, Pl. 1-3)

Ground reduction

The groundworks were carried out using a 360° tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. Ground reduction took place which comprised removal of 0.20-0.25m of topsoil (a soft mid greyish/beige brown silt with occasional gravel (0-0.05m) for all over the area of the track (*c.* 4m wide; **Pl. 3**). No deposits of archaeological interest were observed but the archaeologically relevant level (top of natural geology) was not generally exposed in this operation..

Drainage trench

The main lengths of the drain) were dug in the middle of the track using a tractor equipped with a drainage trenching machine (**Pl. 2**. The trench was 0.25m wide and *c.* 0.4m deep. The arisings were visually checked for finds but to no avail. The stratigraphy (**Pl. 2**) exposed consisted of about 0.40m topsoil, above a mid yellow or orange clay, light grey or yellowish grey sand and gravel or light beige sandy silt with rare gravels, all corresponding to the top of the natural geology. The trench was dug into the latter by *c.* 0.2m. No archaeology was observed. The drain was extended to the NE to join the the road side ditch and laid in a trench *c.* 0.4m wide.

Finds

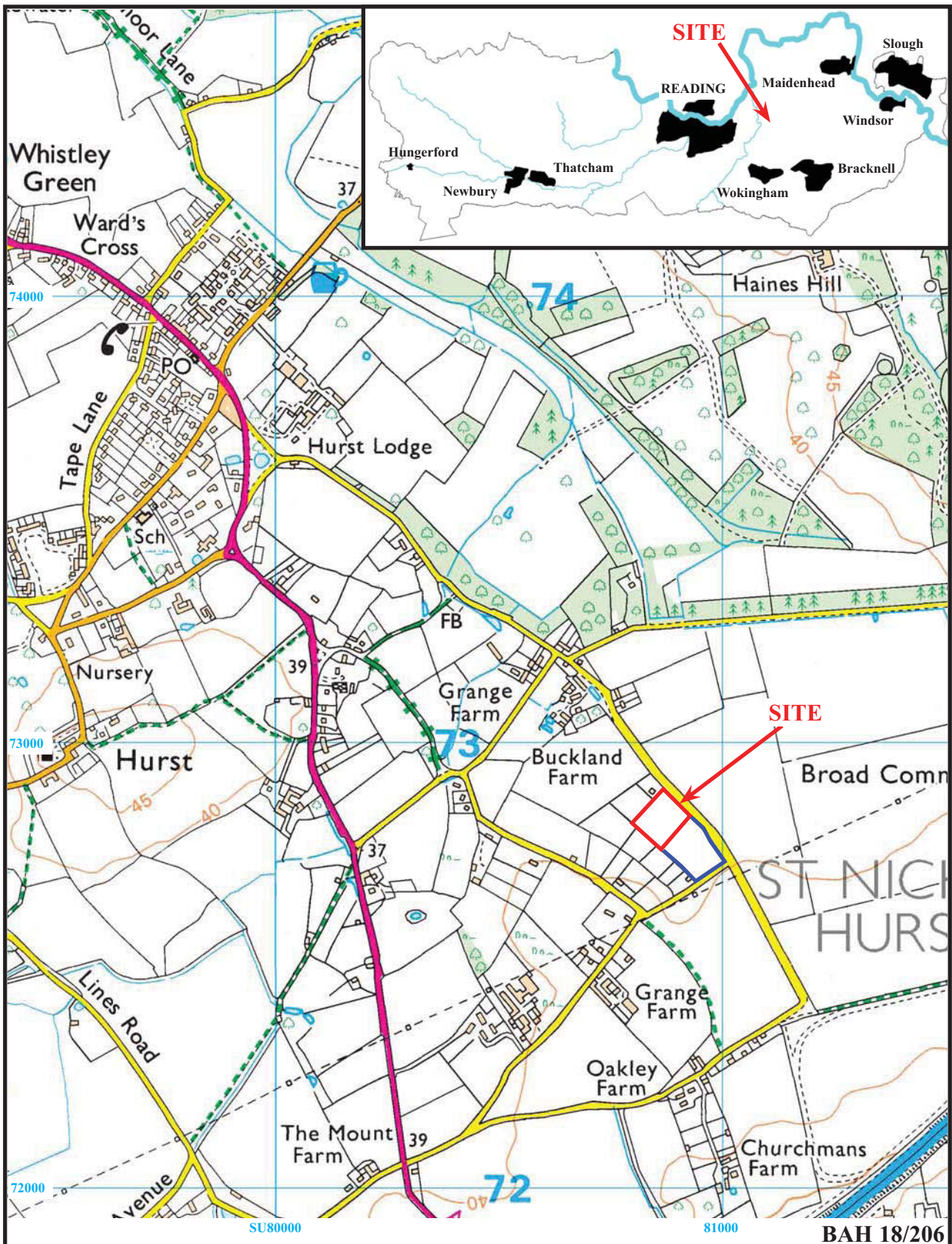
No artefacts of archaeological interest were recovered

Conclusion

No archaeology was encountered during the groundworks, be it the initial ground reduction of topsoil nor the excavation required for the drainage system.

References

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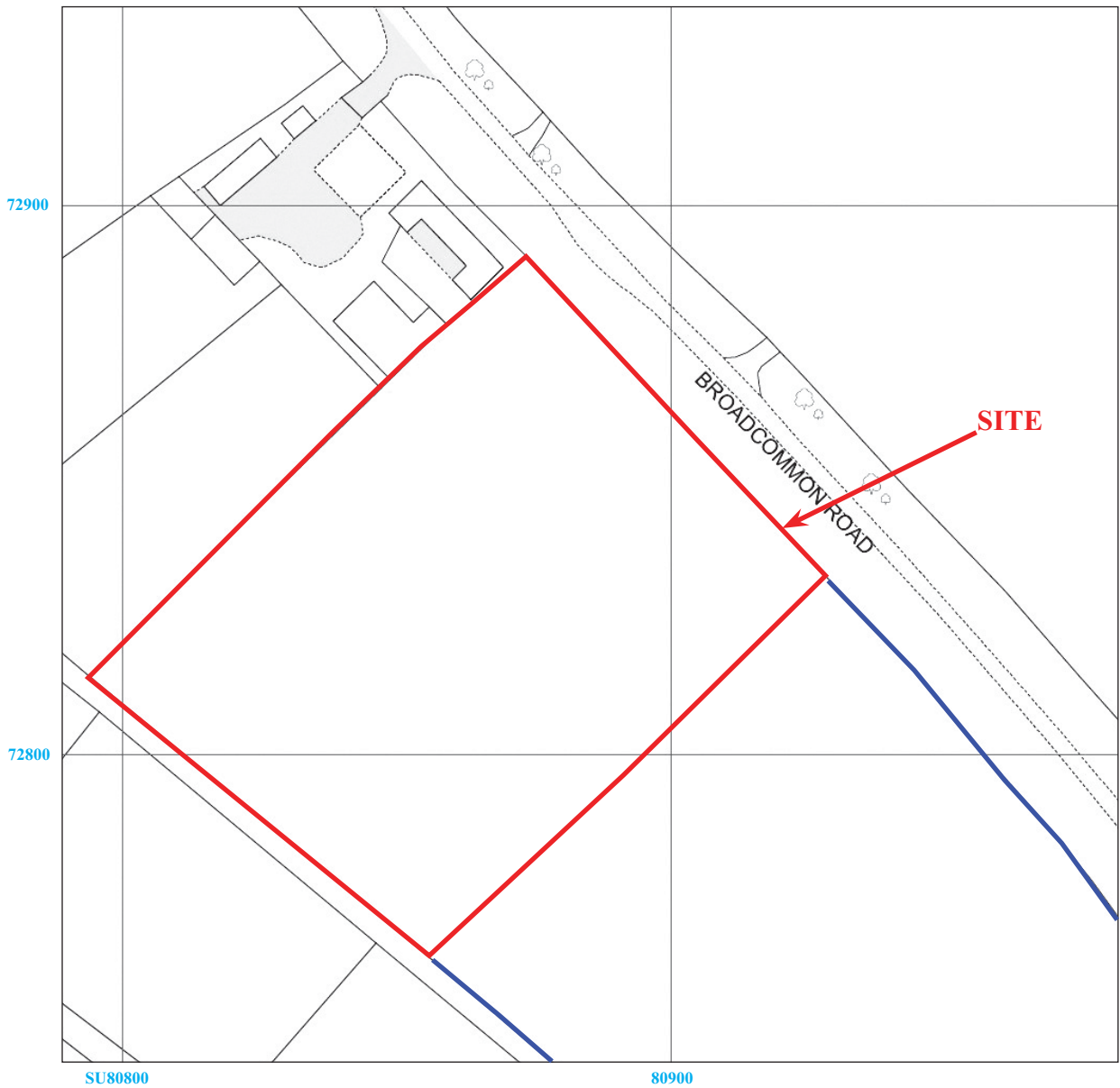
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Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Hurst and within Berkshire.

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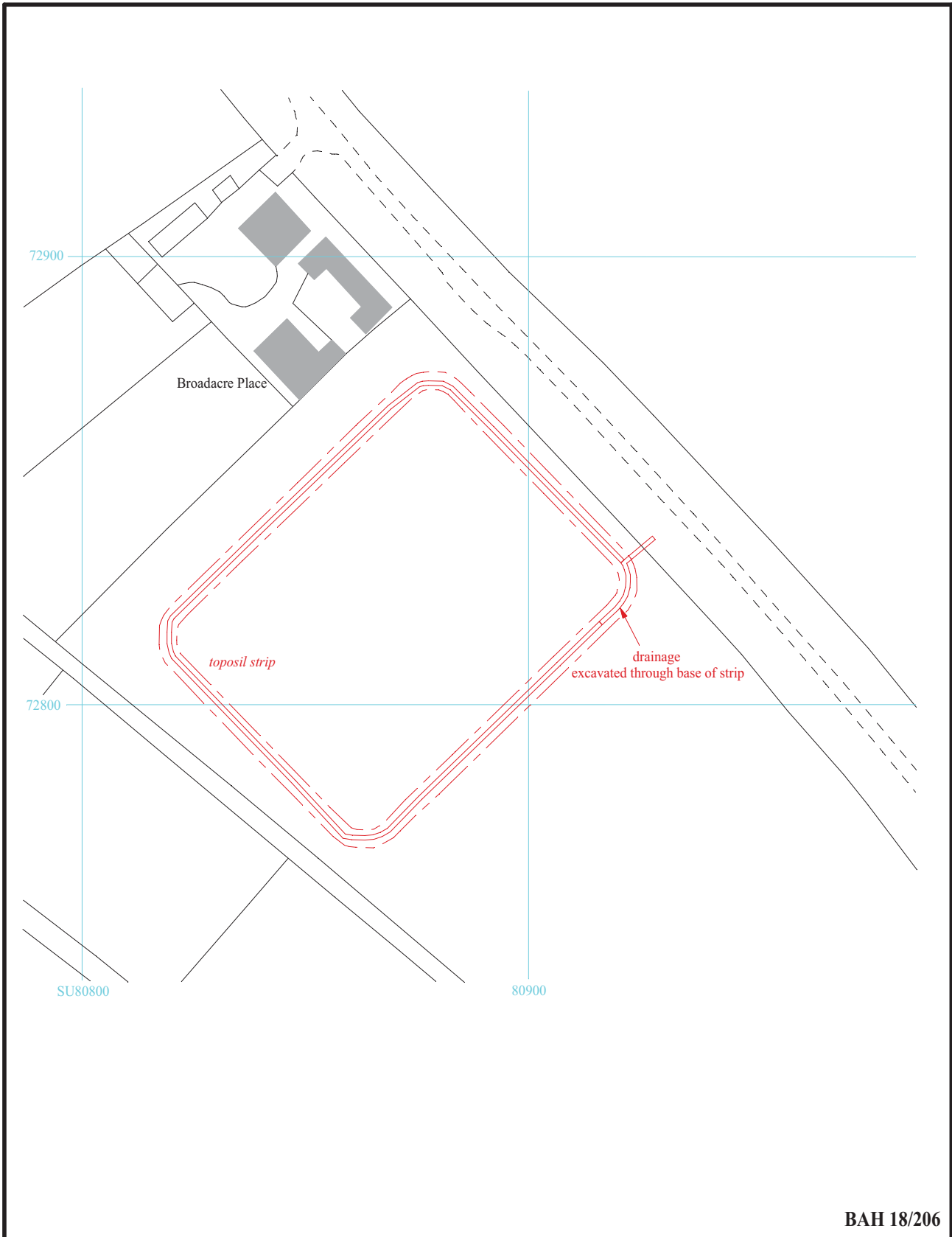
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Broadcommon Road.

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Figure 3. Detail of archaeological works.



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Plate 1. Drain section and on the left side junction with roadside drainage ditch, looking NE, Scales: 1m and 0.30m.



Plate 2. Drain in the middle of the track, looking SSW, Scales: 2x1m.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Panoramic of polo pony exercise track after topsoil reduction, looking S, Scales: 2x1m.

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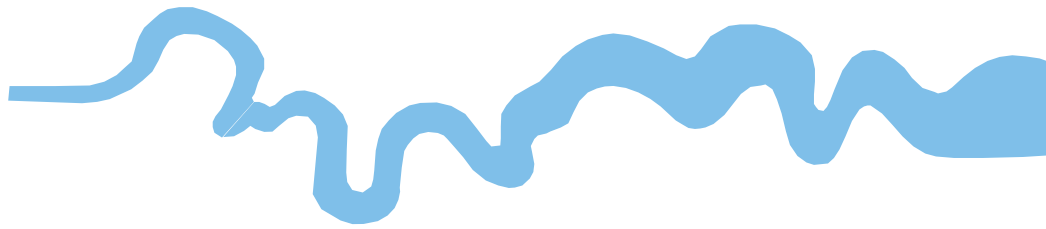
**Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road, Hurst,
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Plate 3**

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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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